Academy 21

September 2026

To whom it may concern

Academy21 Letter of Assurance: Safeguarding and Welfare

Academy21 adheres to the guidance laid down in the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), dated September 2026 (accessed **here**). Safeguarding is a primary concern and focus for all staff in all parts of the organisation.

Safeguarding Policies and Procedures

- We have a current and regularly reviewed Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy in place, which reflects the principles and requirements of the latest version of KCSIE. This provides full detail of our aims, approaches, and processes relating to safeguarding.
- Our safeguarding policy is understood and implemented by all staff and is publicly available via https://academy21.co.uk/our-policies/.
- We have appointed a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL), who have received appropriate and up-to-date training.
- We have robust, clear, reliable and known cover arrangements for when the DSL is unavailable, including a confidential shared mailbox so concerns are acted on without delay.
- Safeguarding is a standing item at all governance/management meetings and is subject to regular audit and review.
- Safeguarding supervision is in place for leaders to ensure the monitoring and evaluation of cases and processes.
- We receive support from our Global Safeguarding Lead and other schools in the group to review processes and incidents as required.
- We engage with local services and referral processes swiftly and fully, to ensure effective multi-agency working. This includes referral to the LADO, if appropriate, for teachers at any career stage.
- We ensure the commissioner of the placement can supervise, monitor, and has sufficient detail to perform their own safeguarding duties and oversight, including assigning a specific child protection contact.
- Our Ofsted Online Education Accreditation Scheme (OEAS) inspection report has judged that the *'arrangements for keeping children safe at Academy21 are appropriate' - report* **here**.
- We follow the DfE's statutory Mobile Phones in Schools guidance as is possible for an online school and are phone-free by default.

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Safer Recruitment

Our recruitment processes adhere to safer recruitment standards, and all offers of appointment are conditional until satisfactory completion of the mandatory pre-employment checks which includes:

- Enhanced DBS checks with Children's barred list checks for all engaging in regulated activity with children. This includes all roles carrying our regulated activity regardless of supervision per the removal of the supervision exemption.
- Verification of identity (3 forms), references, employment history, and qualifications.
- Verification of the individual's mental and physical fitness to conduct their work
- Prohibition from teaching check through the Teaching Regulation Agency. We can confirm that no staff have been employed that are prohibited from teaching or working with children.
- Professional qualifications check, including qualified teacher status.
- Further checks, if relevant, on people who have lived or worked outside the UK.
- Right to work in the UK checks.
- Where appropriate, section 128 checks.
- At least two references obtained and examined in line with KCSIE guidance. This includes one from the current employer completed by a senior person with appropriate authority and confirmed by the headteacher/principal. It also includes a reference from the last time the applicant worked with children.

We maintain a Single Central Record (SCR) in full compliance with the statutory requirements set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE). The SCR is regularly updated, audited, and subject to oversight by senior leaders to ensure that all required pre-employment checks are accurately recorded and that safeguarding standards are consistently upheld.

Our approach to recruiting staff who are suitable for our learners' needs is validated by our OFSTED Online Education Accreditation Scheme report (February 2024), which confirmed that leaders appoint staff who are well-suited to their pupils and that parents and mentors consistently report high-quality engagement and support in learning.

Staff Training

All staff receive:

- Induction and ongoing training covering safeguarding and child protection, which includes full training on identifying concerns, responding to, escalating, and recording concerns as well as supporting the student directly.
- Training on specific contextual safeguarding themes prevalent online, delivered by senior and fully safeguarding-trained colleagues.
- Training on our staff code of conduct and whistleblowing.
- Regular updates and annual training in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

- Specific training on relevant safeguarding issues is updated every year across the year. All training is refreshed annually through dedicated staff development sessions held throughout the year. The courses include:
    - Child Protection in Education (all new starters and every 3 years for others)/Child protection Refresher 2026 (for all other education staff)/Child Protection Fundamentals (for office roles)
    - Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1
    - Safer recruitment in education (for all hiring managers)
    - A guide to data protection UK Schools
    - Online Safety
    - Child-on-Child Sexual Violence and Harassment
    - Raising Awareness of Child-on-Child Abuse
    - UK Schools – Equality and Diversity
    - Female Genital Mutilation
    - Prevent duty: Radicalisation
    - Health and Safety in Education: Staff Awareness
    - Inspired Code of Conduct
    - Child Protection Advanced (every 3 years for those in DSL/DDSL roles)

The above ensures we maintain high standards with staff recruitment and achieve the mandatory guidance, thus ensuring that inappropriate people are not placed in positions of trust.

Please do not hesitate to ask any questions.

Yours faithfully



Alessandro Capozzi
Director of Operations