



# Safeguarding Policy

**Policy Owner:** Heather Ward

**Date of Issue:** 30/12/2025

**Review Date:** 30/12/2026

**Version:** 1.0

## 1. Policy Statement

Polaris Tutoring is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people with whom we work. We recognise that the safety and wellbeing of children is paramount and that all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation, have equal rights to protection.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, and anyone working on behalf of Polaris Tutoring.

## 2. Purpose and Scope

### 2.1 Purpose

This policy:

- Sets out our commitment to safeguarding children and young people
- Provides clear procedures for responding to safeguarding concerns
- Ensures all adults working with children understand their responsibilities
- Demonstrates compliance with current safeguarding legislation and guidance

### 2.2 Scope

This policy applies to:

- All tutoring services provided by Polaris Tutoring
- All online and remote learning sessions
- All communications with children and their families
- All staff, tutors, and representatives of Polaris Tutoring

While Polaris Tutoring is based in North Lincolnshire, we provide services to students throughout the United Kingdom. Where appropriate, we will contact the relevant local authority for the student's area.

### 2.3 Age Groups Covered

This policy covers all children and young people up to the age of 18 years.

### 3. Legal Framework

This policy is based on the following legislation and guidance:

- **The Children Act 1989 and 2004**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023** (UK Government)
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025** (DfE)
- **The Education Act 2002**
- **UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018**
- **The Prevent Duty 2015** (Counterterrorism and Security Act)
- **Online Safety guidance** (UK Safer Internet Centre)
- **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)** requirements

## 4. Key Principles

Polaris Tutoring operates under the following safeguarding principles:

1. **The welfare of the child is paramount** - The child's needs and safety come first
2. **Every child has the right to be protected** from abuse and harm
3. **All concerns will be taken seriously** and investigated appropriately
4. **Working in partnership** with children, parents/carers, and agencies
5. **Prevention** is better than intervention
6. **Transparency and accountability** in all our practices

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities

### 5.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

**Name:** Heather Ward

**Email:** [heather.ward@polaristutoring.co.uk](mailto:heather.ward@polaristutoring.co.uk)

**Phone:** 03301336720

#### **Responsibilities:**

- Overall responsibility for safeguarding within Polaris Tutoring
- First point of contact for safeguarding concerns
- Liaising with external agencies (LADO, Social Services, Police)
- Maintaining safeguarding records
- Ensuring this policy is reviewed and updated annually
- Providing safeguarding training and guidance
- Making referrals to appropriate authorities when necessary

### 5.2 All Tutors and Staff

#### **Responsibilities:**

- Understanding and implementing this safeguarding policy
- Always maintaining professional boundaries
- Being alert to signs of abuse or harm
- Reporting any concerns immediately to the DSL
- Maintaining confidentiality appropriately
- Attending safeguarding training
- Following online safety procedures

## 6. Types of Abuse and Signs to Look For

All tutors must be aware of the four main categories of abuse and their indicators:

### 6.1 Physical Abuse

**Definition:** Physical harm or injury to a child

**Signs may include:**

- Unexplained injuries, bruises, or marks
- Injuries in unusual locations
- Reluctance to discuss injuries
- Fear of physical contact
- Wearing clothes to hide injuries (in video sessions)

### 6.2 Emotional Abuse

**Definition:** Persistent emotional maltreatment causing severe adverse effects on emotional development

**Signs may include:**

- Low self-esteem or confidence
- Sudden changes in behaviour
- Fearfulness or anxiety
- Withdrawal or aggression
- Delayed development

### 6.3 Sexual Abuse

**Definition:** Forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities

**Signs may include:**

- Age-inappropriate sexual knowledge or behaviour
- Sudden changes in behaviour or personality
- Fear of specific people or places
- Nightmares or sleep disturbances
- Physical symptoms (difficulty walking/sitting)

### 6.4 Neglect

**Definition:** Persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs

**Signs may include:**

- Poor hygiene or appearance
- Inadequate clothing
- Constant hunger or tiredness
- Untreated medical needs
- Lack of supervision

## 6.5 Additional Safeguarding Concerns

Tutors should also be alert to:

- **Peer-on-peer abuse** (bullying, sexual harassment)
- **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**
- **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)** (including county lines)
- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**
- **Forced Marriage**
- **Honour-based violence**
- **Radicalisation and extremism** (Prevent Duty)
- **Online abuse** (cyberbullying, grooming, inappropriate content)
- **Domestic abuse** visible or audible during online sessions
- **Mental health concerns**
- **Self-harm**

## 7. Safe Recruitment and Vetting

### 7.1 DBS Checks

- All tutors and staff must hold an **Enhanced DBS check with Barred List check**
- DBS checks will be renewed every 3 years
- Original DBS certificates must be sighted and recorded
- We subscribe to the **DBS Update Service** where possible

### 7.2 References

- Two professional references required for all tutors
- References must be verified before commencing work
- At least one reference should be from employment involving children

### 7.3 Identity and Qualification Verification

- Photo ID must be verified
- Teaching qualifications verified (where applicable)
- Right to work in the UK confirmed

### 7.4 Ongoing Monitoring

- Regular supervision and performance reviews
- Annual safeguarding training
- Observation of teaching practice
- Review of feedback and concerns

## 8. Online Safety Procedures

As Polaris Tutoring operates entirely online, specific online safety measures are in place:

### 8.1 Video Session Requirements

#### Before Sessions:

- Sessions conducted via secure platforms (eg Microsoft Teams, Zoom or Google Meet)
- Parent/carer consent obtained before first session
- Parent/carer informed of session times and platform used

#### During Sessions:

- Parent/carer must be in the home during all sessions with children under 18
- Sessions must take place in a communal area of the home (not bedrooms)
- Tutor and student must both be in appropriate locations with suitable backgrounds
- Camera must remain on throughout the session for both parties
- Sessions are not recorded unless explicit written consent is obtained
- Professional dress and behaviour are always maintained

#### Communication:

- All communication with students under 18 must include parents/carers
- Direct messaging with children outside scheduled sessions is prohibited
- All communication via official Polaris Tutoring email/platforms only
- No personal social media contact with students

### 8.2 Platform Security

- Password-protected sessions
- Waiting rooms enabled where possible
- Screen sharing controlled by tutor only
- No external participants allowed
- Sessions use secure, encrypted connections

### 8.3 Online Content

- Age-appropriate materials only
- Content reviewed before sharing with students
- No sharing of inappropriate images, videos, or links
- Respect for diverse backgrounds and beliefs

### 8.4 Digital Footprint

- Professional online presence maintained



- Social media privacy settings reviewed regularly
- No tagging or posting about students online
- Photos of students only with explicit written parental consent

## 9. Reporting Procedures

### 9.1 What to Do If You Have a Concern

#### Step 1: Recognise

- Trust your instincts - if something doesn't feel right, report it
- Never ignore concerns or assume someone else will act

#### Step 2: Respond

- If a child discloses abuse to you:
  - Listen carefully and calmly
  - Do not promise confidentiality
  - Do not ask leading questions
  - Reassure the child they've done the right thing
  - Explain what you will do next
  - Do not investigate yourself

#### Step 3: Record

- Write down exactly what was said/observed as soon as possible
- Use the child's own words
- Include date, time, location, people present
- Distinguish between fact and opinion
- Sign and date your record
- Keep records secure and confidential

#### Step 4: Report

- Report immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- If the DSL is unavailable or the concern is about the DSL, contact:
  - **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):** LADO Contact of Student's Regional Authority
  - **Local Authority Children's Services:** Regional Authority contact closest to the Student
  - **NSPCC Helpline:** 0808 800 5000

#### Timeline:

- **Urgent concerns** (child at immediate risk): Report immediately - same day
- **Non-urgent concerns:** Report within 24 hours

### 9.2 Recording Concerns

All concerns must be recorded using the Safeguarding Concern Form, which includes:

- Child's details (name, age, address)
- Date, time, and location of concern/incident
- Nature of concern (be specific and factual)
- Child's account (in their own words if disclosed)
- Actions taken
- Name and signature of person reporting

### **9.3 Confidentiality**

Information about safeguarding concerns:

- Is shared on a "need to know" basis only
- May be shared with external agencies without parental consent if necessary to protect the child
- Is stored securely in line with GDPR and data protection requirements
- Is retained for safeguarding purposes even after tutoring has ended

## 10. Referral to External Agencies

### 10.1 When to Refer

The DSL will make a referral to external agencies when:

- A child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm
- A crime may have been committed
- Immediate action is required to protect a child
- Professional advice is needed

### 10.2 Who to Contact

#### **Immediate Danger:**

**999 - Police** (if child at immediate risk)

#### **Safeguarding Concerns:**

##### **North Lincolnshire Children's Services:**

**Phone:** 01724 296500 (Office Hours)

**Phone:** 01724 296555 (Out of Hours)

##### **North Lincolnshire Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):**

**Phone:** 01724 289293

**If the student is in a different local authority area, contact their local children's services for concerns about that student.**

**NSPCC Helpline:** 0808 800 5000

#### **Prevent Concerns (Radicalisation):**

**Police non-emergency:** 101

**Anti-Terrorist Hotline:** 0800 789 321

#### **Online Safety:**

**CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection):** [www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre](http://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre)

**Report harmful content:** [www.reportharmfulcontent.com](http://www.reportharmfulcontent.com)

### 10.3 Referral Process

When making a referral:



1. Contact the relevant agency (phone first for urgent concerns)
2. Follow up in writing within 24 hours
3. Keep detailed records of the referral
4. Obtain a reference number
5. Follow up if no response within 3 working days

## 11. Allegations Against Staff

### 11.1 Procedure

If an allegation is made against a tutor or member of staff:

1. **Report immediately** to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
2. If allegation is against the DSL, report to:
  - o **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):** Phone: 01724 289293
3. **Do not investigate** yourself
4. **Do not inform** the person against whom the allegation has been made
5. **Preserve evidence** - do not delete emails, messages, recordings
6. The DSL will contact the LADO within **one working day**

### 11.2 Types of Allegations

Allegations that a staff member has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may harm a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates unsuitability to work with children
- Behaved in a way that calls into question their suitability to work with children (including outside of work)

### 11.3 Suspension

Suspension may be considered in cases where:

- There is a risk of harm to children
- The allegation is serious enough to warrant investigation
- It is necessary to allow investigation to proceed

Suspension is a neutral act and not an assumption of guilt.

### 11.4 Support

Both the child/family and the staff member will be offered appropriate support during investigations.

## 12. Whistleblowing

### 12.1 Duty to Report

All staff have a duty to report concerns about:

- Poor or unsafe practice
- Potential failures in safeguarding
- Concerns about another staff member's behaviour

### 12.2 How to Raise Concerns

Staff should raise concerns with:

1. The Designated Safeguarding Lead
2. If concerns are about the DSL: Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Phone: 01724 289293
3. **NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline:** 0800 028 0285

### 12.3 Protection

Staff who report genuine concerns in good faith will be protected from victimisation or disciplinary action.

## 13. Information Sharing and Confidentiality

### 13.1 General Principles

- Information sharing is essential for safeguarding
- Concerns about sharing information must not prevent safeguarding action
- GDPR and data protection laws do not prevent information sharing for safeguarding purposes

### 13.2 When to Share

Information should be shared when:

- It is necessary to protect a child
- It is proportionate to the risk
- It is relevant to the concern
- It is timely and accurate
- It is shared securely

### 13.3 With Whom to Share

Information may be shared with:

- Parents/carers (unless doing so would place the child at risk)
- Police
- Children's Social Care
- Schools
- Health services
- Other professionals involved in the child's care

### 13.4 Recording

All information sharing decisions must be recorded, including:

- What information was shared
- With whom
- When
- Why
- Outcome

## 14. Training and Awareness

### 14.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL will complete:

- **Initial DSL training** (formal course)
- **Refresher training** every 2 years minimum
- **Updates** through bulletins, guidance, and networking (ongoing)

### 14.2 All Staff and Tutors

All staff and tutors will complete:

- **Safeguarding induction** before starting work
- **Annual safeguarding refresher training**
- **Prevent training** (counter-terrorism awareness)
- **Online safety training**

### 14.3 Training Records

Records of all safeguarding training will be maintained, including:

- Name of attendee
- Date of training
- Type of training
- Provider
- Certificate (where applicable)

## 15. Safe Working Practices

### 15.1 Professional Boundaries

All tutors must:

- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact
- Never engage in any sexual activity with a child (this is a criminal offence)
- Not share personal information with students
- Not develop personal relationships with students outside tutoring
- Not communicate with students via personal phones/social media

### 15.2 Gifts and Rewards

- Small rewards/praise are acceptable (stickers, certificates)
- Monetary gifts or expensive gifts are not permitted
- Gifts from students should be discouraged
- Any gifts received must be reported to the DSL

### 15.3 Photography and Video

- Photos/videos of students only with explicit written parental consent
- Images must be stored securely
- Images used only for agreed purposes
- Session recordings only with written consent and legitimate purpose

### 15.4 Language and Behaviour

All staff must:

- Use appropriate, professional language
- Model positive behaviour
- Avoid favouritism
- Treat all students with equal respect
- Never use physical punishment
- Not make sexually suggestive comments
- Not engage in rough physical games

## 16. Safer Recruitment Checklist

Before any tutor commences work:

- [ ] Enhanced DBS check completed and sighted
- [ ] Identity verified (photo ID)
- [ ] Qualifications verified
- [ ] Two references obtained and verified
- [ ] Right to work confirmed
- [ ] Safeguarding induction completed
- [ ] Safeguarding policy read and signed
- [ ] Code of conduct signed
- [ ] Emergency contact details obtained
- [ ] Staff file created with all documentation

## 17. Partnership with Parents/Carers

### 17.1 Parental Responsibility

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- Ensuring a safe environment for online tutoring sessions
- Being present in the home during all sessions with under-18s
- Supervising their child's online activity
- Reporting any concerns to Polaris Tutoring
- Ensuring sessions take place in communal areas

### 17.2 Communication

Polaris Tutoring will:

- Inform parents of our safeguarding policy
- Provide parents with online safety guidance
- Communicate clearly about session expectations
- Respond to parental concerns promptly
- Work in partnership with families

### 17.3 When Parental Consent is Not Required

Information may be shared without parental consent when:

- A child is at risk of significant harm
- Seeking consent would place the child at further risk
- It would prejudice a criminal investigation
- It is not possible to seek consent

## 18. Record Keeping and Data Protection

### 18.1 Safeguarding Records

All safeguarding concerns and incidents must be recorded:

- **Securely** - locked digital storage, password protected
- **Separately** - apart from general student records
- **Confidentially** - accessible only to DSL and relevant parties
- **Retention** - retained for 6 years after the raised concern

### 18.2 What to Record

- Date and time of concern/incident
- Names of people involved
- Detailed description (factual, not opinion)
- Action taken
- Outcome
- Name and signature of person recording

### 18.3 Data Protection

Safeguarding records:

- Are processed under the legal basis of "legitimate interests" or "legal obligation"
- May be shared without consent for safeguarding purposes
- Are retained in line with safeguarding requirements (overrides standard retention periods)
- Are subject to secure disposal when no longer required

## 19. Quality Assurance and Monitoring

### 19.1 Annual Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if:

- There are changes in legislation
- Following a serious incident
- Following recommendations from external agencies
- Best practice guidance is updated

### 19.2 Monitoring

The DSL will monitor:

- Number and nature of concerns raised
- Patterns or trends in concerns
- Effectiveness of procedures
- Training completion rates
- Compliance with policy

### 19.3 Reporting

An annual safeguarding report will be produced covering:

- Number of concerns raised
- Actions taken
- Training completed
- Policy updates
- Recommendations for improvement



## 20. Policy Review

**Next Review Date:** 30/12/2026

**Reviewed by:** Heather Ward, Designated Safeguarding Lead

**Approved by:** Heather Ward, Designated Safeguarding Lead

## 21. Key Contacts

### Polaris Tutoring

**Designated Safeguarding Lead:** Heather Ward

**Email:** heather.ward@polaristutoring.co.uk

**Phone:** 03301336720

### External Agencies

**Emergency Services:** 999

**North Lincolnshire Children's Services:**

**Phone:** 01724 296500 (Office Hours) 01724 296555 (Out of Hours)

**North Lincolnshire Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):**

**Phone:** 01724 289293

**If the student is in a different local authority area, contact their local children's services for concerns about that student.**

**North Lincolnshire Prevent Education Officers:**

**Phone:** 01724 297024

**NSPCC Helpline:**

**Phone:** 0808 800 5000

**Email:** help@nspcc.org.uk

**Childline (for children):**

**Phone:** 0800 1111

**Website:** [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

**Police (non-emergency):** 101

**Prevent (Counter-Terrorism):**

**Phone:** 0800 789 321

**CEOP (Online Safety):**

**Website:** [www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre](http://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre)

## Appendix A: Safeguarding Concern Form

[To be completed when a concern is identified]

**Date of concern:**

**Time of concern:**

**Your name:**

**Your role:**

**Child's Details:**

- Full Name:
- Age/DOB:
- Year Group:
- Parent/Carer Name:
- Contact Details:

**Nature of Concern:** [Describe what you have observed, heard, or been told. Be specific and factual. Use the child's own words where applicable.]

**Physical Indicators:** [Note any visible signs, injuries, or changes in appearance]

**Behavioural Indicators:** [Note any changes in behaviour, mood, or demeanour]

**Action Taken:** [What immediate action have you taken? Who have you informed?]

**Your Signature:**

**Date:**

**To be completed by DSL:**

**Date received:**

**Action taken:**

**Referral made:** Yes / No

**If yes, to whom:**

**Reference number:**

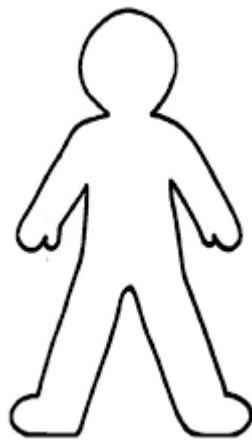
**Outcome:**

**DSL Signature:**

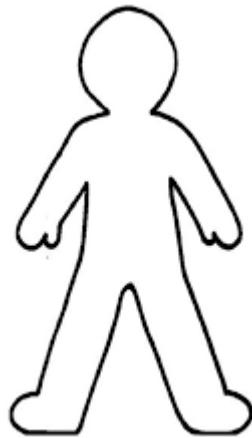
**Date:**

## Appendix B: Body Map

[Diagram of child's body - front and back view - for recording location of injuries/marks]



Front



Back

**Instructions:**

- Mark clearly the location of any visible injuries
- Use different colours/symbols for different types of marks
- Include a key
- Add measurements where possible
- Note date observed
- Sign and date the body map

## Appendix C: Safeguarding Induction Checklist

**Tutor Name:**

**Start Date:**

The following must be completed before commencing work:

- [ ] Safeguarding Policy read and understood
- [ ] Code of Conduct read and signed
- [ ] Designated Safeguarding Lead identified
- [ ] Types of abuse and signs explained
- [ ] Reporting procedures understood
- [ ] Confidentiality expectations clear
- [ ] Professional boundaries discussed
- [ ] Online safety procedures explained
- [ ] Prevent duty awareness completed
- [ ] Emergency contacts provided
- [ ] Questions answered

**Tutor Signature:**

**Date:**

**DSL Signature:**

**Date:**



## Declaration

I, **Heather Ward**, confirm that I have read, understood, and will comply with this Safeguarding Policy.

I understand my responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

I understand that failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action, including termination of my position.

**Signature:** Signed electronically by Heather Ward

**Date:** 30/12/2025

**Print Name:** Heather Ward

**Role:** Founder and Lead Tutor

### End of Policy

*This policy is a working document and will be reviewed annually or sooner if required by changes in legislation, best practice, or following a serious incident.*

**Polaris Tutoring - Your North Star in Learning**

*Keeping Children Safe*