FIVE ACRE WOOD SCHOOL

Growing and Learning Together

Kent County Council
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Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy

October 2026

Key Contact Personnel in School

Nominated Member of Leadership Staff Responsible for the policy: Matthew Jones

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Sarah Costain

DPO: Sarah Costain

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Date of next review: October 2026

Dat reviewed: October 2026

Date of next review: October 2027

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This policy will be reviewed following any concerns and/or updates to national and local guidance or procedures.

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Introduction and Ethos

Five Acre Wood is a foundation school and all those directly connected (staff, governors, parents, families and pupils) have an essential role to play in making it safe and secure. Five Acre Wood recognises our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and adults at risk of harm.

Five Acre Wood recognises the importance of providing an ethos and environment within school that will help students to be safe and feel safe. In our school students are respected and encouraged to talk openly.

Our school's core safeguarding principles are:

- We are an important part of the wider safeguarding system.
- It is our whole school responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of students.
- All students regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection.
- All students have a right to be heard and to have their wishes and feelings taken into account.
- All our staff understand safe professional practice and adhere to our safeguarding policies.

The ethos of the school is to value and respect each pupil and member of staff. Pupils are encouraged to make decisions and choices for themselves and learn that their decisions are listened to, recognised and responded to by their peers and adults in their school community. Developing confidence, positive self esteem and "giving pupils a voice" enables pupils to have the skills to better protect themselves in the wider world. These principles are reflected in the Five Acre Wood Student Charter and the Student Council.

Five Acre Wood will not tolerate the abuse of adults in any of its forms and is committed to safeguarding adults, with care and support needs, from harm.

This policy outlines the steps Five Acre Wood will take to safeguard an adult with care and support needs if they are deemed to be at risk. This policy sets out the roles and responsibilities of Five Acre Wood in working together with other professionals and agencies in promoting the adult's welfare and safeguarding them from abuse and neglect and exploitation.

Five Acre Wood will ensure that decisions made will allow adults to make their own choices and include them in any decision making. Five Acre Wood will also ensure that safe and effective working practices are in place.

This policy is intended to support all staff and volunteers working within Five Acre Wood to understand their role and responsibilities in safeguarding adults. All staff and volunteers are expected to follow this policy.

The key objectives of this policy are for all employees and volunteers of Five Acre Wood to:

- have an overview of adult safeguarding
- be clear about their responsibility to safeguard adults

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- ensure the necessary actions are taken where an adult with care and support needs is deemed to be at risk

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and related guidance. This includes:

- Mental Capacity Act 2005, Mental Capacity Amendment Act 2019
- DfE guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2026 (KCSIE)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2026 (WTSC)
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (2000)
- Kent and Medway Safeguarding Children Procedures (online)
- Care Act 2014 (vulnerable adults)
- Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults Policy, Protocols & Practitioners Guidance for Kent & Medway updated January 2024

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires college governing bodies, local education authorities and further education institutions to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children who are pupils at a school, or who are students under 18 years of age. Such arrangements will have to have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Under the Human Rights Act 1998, everyone has the right to live free from abuse and neglect. https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/human-rights/human-rights-act

Copies of this policy are available within Five Acre Wood. The school will not tolerate the abuse of adults in the organisation. Staff and volunteers should be made aware of how this policy can be accessed.

Safeguarding children

Safeguarding children is defined in the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2026) as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

A child is anyone under the age of 18 years. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change his/her status or entitlements to services or protection.

Safeguarding adults at risk

Safeguarding adults is defined in Care and Support Statutory Guidance (October 2014 and updated July 2025) as protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse, neglect and exploitation. Under section 42 of the Care Act 2014, safeguarding duties apply to adults who:

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- Have needs for care and support (whether or not they are receiving any services); and
- Are experiencing, or at risk of, abuse, neglect and exploitation;
- As a result of those care and support needs are unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect and exploitation.

An adult is anyone aged 18 or over. Where someone is 18 or over but is still receiving children's services and a safeguarding issue is raised, the matter should be dealt with through adult safeguarding arrangements. For example, this could occur when a young person with substantial and complex needs continues to be supported in a residential educational setting until the age of 25.

Care and support needs is the combination of practical, financial and emotional support for adults who need extra help to manage their lives and be independent – including older people, people with a disability or long-term illness, people with mental health problems, and carers.

Care and support includes the assessment of people's needs, provision of services and the allocation of funds to enable a person to purchase their own care and support. It could include care home, home care, personal assistants, day services, or the provision of aids and adaptations.

What is Safeguarding adults?

'Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.'

Care and Support Statutory Guidance, Department of Health, updated July 2025

All adults should be able to live free from fear and harm. But some may find it hard to get the help and support they need to stop abuse.

An adult may be unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation due to many reasons, including their mental or physical incapacity, sensory loss or physical or learning disabilities. This could be an adult who is usually able to protect themselves from harm but maybe unable to do so because of an accident, disability, frailty, addiction or illness.

Five Acre Wood adheres to following the six key principles that underpin safeguarding work (See Care Act guidance)

- Empowerment
- Prevention
- Proportionality
- Protection
- Partnership
- Accountability

Five Acre Wood will not tolerate the abuse of adults. Staff and volunteers should ensure that their work reflects the principles above and ensure the adult with care and support needs is involved in their decisions and informed consent is obtained. Five Acre Wood should ensure that the safeguarding action agreed is the least intrusive response to the risk. Partners from the community

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should be involved in any safeguarding work in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse. Five Acre Wood should be transparent and accountable in delivering safeguarding actions.

What is Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP)?

MSP means a case should be person-led and outcome-focused. The individual should be involved in identifying how best to respond to their safeguarding situation by giving them more choice and control as well as improving quality of life, wellbeing and safety.

Five Acre Wood will not tolerate the abuse of adults and will ensure that adults are involved in their safeguarding arrangements and each individual is dealt with on a case by case basis. As adults may have different preferences, histories and life styles, the same process may not work for all.

Who do adult safeguarding duties apply to?

The Care Act 2014 sets out that adult safeguarding duties apply to *any* adult who:

- has care and support needs, and
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse, neglect and exploitation, and
- is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect, because of those needs.

Who do I go to if I am concerned?

The lead DSL for safeguarding is Sarah Costain (Deputy Head). Current DSL and Deputy DSL details are published in the safeguarding section of the staff handbook and safeguarding posters displayed across the school. All staff and volunteers should contact a DSL for any concerns/queries they have in regards to safeguarding adults and the concern must be recorded on Myconcern or a concern form if the online system is unavailable for any reason.
The DSL will be responsible to make decisions about notifying adult social services if required and consider alternative actions, where necessary. The DSL will also ensure that the safeguarding adults policies and procedures are in place and up to date and will keep a rationale for all decisions made. They will ensure a safe environment is promoted for staff and volunteers and adults accessing the school. The DSL will ensure they are up to date with their safeguarding training.

What should I do if I am concerned?

Staff and volunteers at Five Acre Wood who have any safeguarding concerns should:

1. Respond
2. Report
3. Record
4. Refer

In making a decision whether to refer or not, the designated safeguarding lead should take into account:

(1) the adult's wishes and preferred outcome
(2) whether the adult has mental capacity to make an informed decision about their own and others' safety
(3) the safety or wellbeing of children or other adults with care and support needs
(4) whether there is a person in a position of trust involved

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(5) whether a crime has been committed

The designated safeguarding lead will record the reasons for referring the concern or reasons for not referring on Myconcern.

Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple and may affect one person or more. Staff and volunteers should look beyond single incidents to identify patterns of harm. Accurate recording of information will also assist in recognising any patterns.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

- Five Acre Wood recognises that all matters relating to child protection and protecting adults at risk are confidential. The Principal or DSL will only disclose information about a pupil to other members of staff on a 'need to know' basis.
- All members of staff must be aware that whilst they have duties to keep any information confidential, they also have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies to safeguard children and adults at risk.
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.
- DfE Guidance on Information Sharing (May 2024) provides further detail. This can be found in the green safeguarding files.

Complaints

- The school has a Complaints Procedure available to parents, pupils and members of staff and visitors who wish to report concerns. This can be found on the website http://www.fiveacrewood.co.uk
- All reported concerns will be taken seriously and considered within the relevant and appropriate process. Anything that constitutes an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer will be dealt with under the specific Procedures for Managing Allegations against Staff policy. This can be found in the green Safeguarding file in the Staff room**,** Principal's Office or the reception area at Loose. At Snodland the green Safeguarding file is kept at Reception and in Palace Wood it is stored in the staff admin cupboard.

Staff Induction, Awareness and Training

- All members of staff have been provided with a copy of Part One of "*Keeping Children Safe in Education"* (2026) which covers Safeguarding information for all staff. School leaders will read the entire document. School leaders and all members of staff who work directly with children and adults at risk will access Annex A within Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. Members of staff have signed to confirm that they have read and understood Part One and Annex A. This information is kept on the single central record.
- The DSL will ensure that all new staff and volunteers (including temporary staff) are aware of the school's internal safeguarding processes.

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- All staff members (including temporary staff) will receive training to ensure they are aware of a range of safeguarding issues.
- All staff members (including temporary staff) will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, and at least annually
- All staff members (including temporary staff) will be made aware of the schools expectations regarding safe and professional practice via the staff behaviour policy (or code of conduct) and Acceptable Use Policy.
- The DSL and Principal will provide an annual report to the Governing Body detailing safeguarding training undertaken by all staff and will maintain up to date register of who has been trained.
- Although the school has a nominated lead for the governing body (Shobha Ravindra), all members of the governing body will access appropriate safeguarding training which covers their specific strategic responsibilities on a regular basis.

Safe Working Practice

- All members of staff are required to work within clear guidelines on Safe Working Practice / the school's Code of Conduct.
- Staff should be aware of the school's Behaviour Management and Physical Intervention Policies, and any physical interventions must be in line with agreed policy and procedures.
- Staff should be particularly aware of the professional risks associated with the use of social media and electronic communication (email, mobile phones, texting, social network sites etc.) and should adhere to the school's online safety and Acceptable Use policies.

Staff Supervision and Support

- Any member of staff affected by issues arising from concerns for an adult's welfare or safety can seek support from the DSL.
- The induction process will include familiarisation with child protection responsibilities and procedures to be followed if members of staff have any concerns about an adults safety or welfare.
- The school will provide appropriate supervision and support for all members of staff to ensure that:
    - All staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our students
    - All staff will be supported by the DSL in their safeguarding role.
    - All members of staff have regular reviews of their own practice to ensure they improve over time.

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The DSL will also put staff in touch with outside agencies for professional support if they so wish. Staff can also approach organisations such as their Union, the Education Support Partnership or other similar organisations directly.

Safer Recruitment

- Five Acre Wood is committed to developing a safe culture and ensuring that all steps are taken to recruit staff and volunteers who are safe to work with pupils and adults at risk
- The Governing Body and Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring that the school follows safe recruitment processes outlined within guidance.
- Five Acre Wood is responsible for ensuring that the school maintains an accurate Single Central Record (SCR) in line with statutory guidance.
- The Governing Body will ensure that there is at least one of the persons who conducts an interview has completed safer recruitment training.
- We are also committed to supporting the statutory guidance from the Department for Education on the application of the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2018 and related obligations under the Childcare Act 2006 in schools.
- We advise all staff to disclose any reason that may affect their suitability to work with children including convictions, cautions, court orders, cautions, reprimands and warnings.

Allegations Against Members of Staff and Volunteers

- Five Acre Wood recognises that it is possible for staff and volunteers to behave in a way that might cause harm to children and adults at risk and takes seriously any allegation received. Such allegations should be referred immediately to the Principal or deputy in their absence who will first contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to agree further action to be taken in respect of the child and staff member. In the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Principal then staff are advised that allegations should be reported to the Chair of Governors who will contact the LADO in the first instance.
- All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and such concerns will always be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.
- All members of staff are made aware of the school's Whistleblowing procedure and that it is a disciplinary offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk. Staff can also access the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline if they do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 (8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Monday to Friday) or email: help@nspcc.org.uk
- Five Acre Wood has a legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person. If these circumstances arise in relation to a member of staff at our school, a referral will be made as soon as

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possible after the resignation or removal of the individual in accordance with advice from the LADO and/or Schools Personnel Service.

Low level concerns

- Any concern, no matter how small, about the conduct of an adult working in or on behalf of the school should be reported in accordance with the school's Low-Level Concerns Policy. Creating a culture where concerns are shared and recorded helps identify patterns of behaviour and protects both pupils and staff. All staff have a responsibility to maintain an open and transparent safeguarding culture where concerns are identified, shared, recorded and acted upon promptly.

Online safety

- Staff should remain vigilant to safeguarding risks arising from online activity, including exploitation, coercion, radicalisation, financial abuse, image-based abuse and emerging technologies.

Mental Capacity

- Where safeguarding concerns involve adults aged 18 years and above, consideration will be given to the Mental Capacity Act 2005. Where an individual lacks capacity to make a specific decision, actions will be taken in their best interests in accordance with statutory guidance.

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When in doubt – consult

Safeguarding Children and Adults with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

- Five Acre Wood acknowledges that students with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges as they may have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse.
- Five Acre Wood will ensure that students with SEN and disabilities, specifically those with communication difficulties will be supported to ensure that their voice is heard and acted upon.
- Members of staff are encouraged to be aware that students with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionally impacted by safeguarding concerns such as bullying. All members of staff will be encouraged to appropriately explore possible indicators of abuse such as behaviour/mood change or injuries and not to assume that they are related to the child's disability and be aware that students with SEN and disabilities may not always outwardly display indicators of abuse.

Training, awareness raising and supervision?

Five Acre Wood ensures that all staff and volunteers receive training on safeguarding adults who may be at risk of abuse. Those adults may report things of concern to staff or volunteers who should be equipped with the basic knowledge around safeguarding adults and be confident to identify that abuse is taking place and action is required. All staff and volunteers should be clear about the core values of Five Acre Wood and commitment to safeguarding adults at risk.

Prevent

Radicalisation and extremism of adults with care and support needs is a form of emotional/psychological exploitation. Radicalisation can take place through direct personal contact, or indirectly through social media.

If staff are concerned that an adult with care and support needs is at risk of being radicalised and drawn into terrorism, they should treat it in the same way as any other safeguarding concern.

For more information about Prevent see: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance

The policy and procedures are reviewed annually by the Designated Safeguarding Lead in line with the Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance.

Links

Adult safeguarding for professionals - Kent County Council

Report adult abuse | Adult abuse and safeguarding | Medway Council

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Appendix 1

What are the types of safeguarding adults abuse?

The Care and Support statutory guidance sets out the 10 main types of abuse:

- Physical abuse
- Neglect
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological
- Financial abuse
- Discriminatory
- Organisational
- Domestic violence
- Modern Slavery
- Self-neglect

However, you should keep an open mind about what constitutes abuse or neglect as it can take many forms and the circumstances of the individual case should always be considered.

For more information, read section 14.17 of the Care and Support Statutory Guidance.

What are the possible signs of abuse?

Abuse and neglect can be difficult to spot. You should be alert to the following possible signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation:

- Depression, self-harm or suicide attempts
- Difficulty making friends
- Fear or anxiety
- The person looks dirty or is not dressed properly,
- The person never seems to have money,
- The person has an injury that is difficult to explain (such as bruises, finger marks, 'non-accidental' injury, neck, shoulders, chest and arms),
- The person has signs of a pressure ulcer,
- The person is experiencing insomnia
- The person seems frightened, or frightened of physical contact.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness or sexually explicit behaviour
- The person is withdrawn, changes in behaviour

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- Poor attendance

You should ask the person if you are unsure about their well-being as there may be other explanations to the above presentation.

Who abuses, neglects and exploits adults?

Abuse can happen anywhere, even in somebody's own home. Most often abuse takes place by others who are in a position of trust and power. It can take place whether an adult lives alone or with others. Anyone can carry out abuse or neglect, including:

- partners;
- other family members;
- neighbours;
- friends;
- acquaintances;
- local residents;
- people who deliberately exploit adults they perceive as vulnerable to abuse;
- paid staff or professionals; and
- volunteers and strangers

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Appendix 2

Adult Safeguarding Response Framework (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults Policy, Protocols and Practitioner Guidance for Kent and Medway, 2026)

A Safeguarding Concern begins a process of gathering facts, assessment of the concern and adult's needs and wishes; and a risk assessment to decide if a statutory or non-statutory enquiry should take place and within any organisation, an employee or volunteer must alert their line manager or designated officer:

You are alerted by a member of staff or become aware that abuse or neglect has occurred or is suspected

1. Where possible, ensure the immediate safety and welfare of the adult at risk (and of any other adult or child at risk)

2. Is urgent medical or police attention required? Call **999**

3. Does a crime need to be reported? Be aware of the possible need to preserve forensic evidence. Call **101** (non-emergencies). If life is in danger or crime is in progress call **999**

4. Decide on whether to raise an Adult Safeguarding Concern by gathering only initial information

The tools in appendix 4, will support decision making

- for **Medway** - Report an Adult Safeguarding Concern, using the online form.
- for **Kent** - Kent Safeguarding Adults form

Members of the public can make referrals by phone, e-mail or in writing.

If concerns are raised out of hours, the **Out of Hours Team** will take any immediate protective action and pass the concern to the appropriate team. Kent and Medway Out of Hours number is 03000 416161.

5. Document the incident and any actions or decisions in your records

6. Inform the relevant Regulatory Body and Commissioners if relevant

7. Inform line manager of actions

8. Where possible ensure person who raised concern is offered support

Appendix 3

RECORD OF CONCERN:

To be used to record a concern about a pupil. On completion please give the form to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

Pupils Name:	Dob:
Address:	
Name of reporter:	Job title:
Date of incident:	Are any other members of staff aware of your concern:

Is the cause for concern related to:		
Injury	Change in behaviour	Anything the pupil has said , gestured or signed
Behaviour of member of staff	Information given to you by another person	
Appearance or cleanliness of pupil	Behaviour of another pupil	
Comments behaviour of parent/ carer	Inappropriate behaviour of pupil causing concern	
If the concern is associated with an injury please give details here and draw location of injury on the body map shown below		

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If the cause for concern is any of the above reasons or are in addition to an injury please give details here:
Did the pupil say, sign or gesture anything? If so please give any exact details including any response you made to the pupil.
Are there any other details relevant to your concerns? E.g. have there been any changes in the pupil's life?
Have you taken any other action not mentioned above?
Have you discussed your concerns with anybody else? Yes No If yes, please state who.

Reporters signature: Date:	Received by DSL: Date:
Action agreed with DSL:	

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