



ASCENSION

CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

Safeguarding Statement of Intent

ACAT aims to ensure all are safe from harm and abuse and where every person is encouraged and enabled to enjoy the fullness of life in Jesus Christ through the prayerful, caring, nurturing, supportive and protective endeavours of our Catholic community, both individually and collectively.

ACAT will seek to have a culture of:

- Openness and Transparency
- Love and Respect
- Responsibility and Accountability
- Compassion and Support
- Justice and Integrity
- Honesty and Humility
- Questioning and Challenging
- Learning and Changing

The Board and Directors have the ultimate responsibility to ensure that:

- They are adequately informed about safeguarding matters in order to make informed decisions.
- Adequate policies and procedures are in place across the ACAT schools that meet the most up to date version of Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance.
- All members of staff, directors and local governors understand their responsibilities to keep children safe.
- Policies and procedures are implemented and monitored.
- Adequate safeguarding resources are available at Local Governing Body level to minimise the risk of harm to all of our young people.
- Directors, staff and local governors recognise that they have a duty of care and a duty to act.
'It could happen here'

The ACAT Board will take reasonable and proper steps to protect vulnerable pupils from harm or abuse by:

- Having adequate and proper safeguarding policies and systems in place, including appropriate vetting procedures for those who work with children and vulnerable adults and also for Members and Directors themselves.
- Having safer recruitment practice in place at each academy within the Trust, and at least one member of any interview panel with recognised and recent *Safer Recruitment in Education* training.

- Ensuring allegations of abuse or concerns are dealt with seriously and responsibly in line with DfE policies and Local Safeguarding Board policies and procedures.
- Ensuring the information about serious incidents is reported as soon as possible. ACAT is associated with the Local Safeguarding Children Board of each Local Authority in which it operates through its academies. Any issues related to safeguarding children will be discussed at these boards if judged appropriate.
- Having good induction programmes and on-going training/updates for staff (and others) in minimum standards for child protection.
- Listening to concerns of children and their parents with an open mind and promoting a culture of safeguarding children acknowledging always that **'It could happen here'**.
- Having a clear and accessible complaints policy across the Trust together with whistleblowing procedures.
- Having good supervision of staff and volunteers.
- Ensuring regular compliance audits by Safeguarding Governors reported to Local Governing Bodies and subsequently the ACAT Board.
- Developing a Trust-wide system for monitoring child protection (CPOMs and Safeguard my School)
- Enabling annual Trust-wide safeguarding reviews led by specialists.
- Keeping policy and practice under continuous review.

The Board of ACAT has ultimate responsibility for safeguarding issues. This responsibility is delegated to Peter Manns as the Trust Safeguarding Lead to lead on policy issues in relation to the safeguarding of children and adults at risk across ACAT.

Within each academy across the Trust there are Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)/Child Protection Officers who lead on child protection and safeguarding issues within their relevant location. They are clear about their role, have sufficient time and receive relevant support and training to undertake their roles, which includes close contact with outside agencies including social services, the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and relevant health care organisations.

Statement Approved by the ACAT Board of Directors for publication by the Trust and all academies on June 2023.