North Durham Academy

Safeguarding in the Curriculum Overview

Academic Year 2025–2026

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1. Rationale and Context

At North Durham Academy, safeguarding is embedded across all aspects of school life and the curriculum. We recognise that young people face a wide range of safeguarding risks including:

- Online exploitation (sextortion, grooming, deepfakes)
- Criminal exploitation (county lines, knife crime)
- Mental health challenges (anxiety, loneliness, self-esteem)
- Child-on-Child abuse (bullying, misogyny, discrimination)
- Financial exploitation (fraud, scams)

we adopt a **proactive, curriculum-led approach** to safeguarding, ensuring all pupils develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to stay safe.

We ensure pupils:

- Understand what **safe and unsafe situations look like**
- Know **how and where to seek help**
- Develop the **language and confidence to report concerns**

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2. Whole-School Safeguarding Culture

Safeguarding is delivered through:

Key Structures

- Daily tutor **check-ins**
- Strong **pastoral system**
- Access to **wellbeing support**
- Clear **reporting routes**
- Partnerships with:
    - CAMHS

    - Police
    - Social care
    - Safeguarding teams

Student Voice & Support Systems

- Trusted adults / tutors
- Safe reporting systems (verbal + digital)
- Assemblies and awareness weeks
- Careers and life-skills mentoring

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3. Key Curriculum Drivers (North Durham Adaptation)

North Durham adopts:

Our Key Drivers

- **Safety** (physical, emotional, online)
- **Wellbeing** (mental and physical health)
- **Respect** (relationships, diversity, British values)
- **Independence** (life skills and careers readiness)

These underpin:

- All lessons
- Tutor programme
- Assemblies
- Personal Development curriculum

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4. Curriculum Delivery Model

A. Discrete Curriculum (From Your Uploaded Plan)

Delivered through PSHE / RSHE / RE / Citizenship:

- Relationships & Sex Education
- Mental and physical health
- Careers and finance (RGR strands retained)

- Online safety & digital literacy
- Criminal exploitation and personal safety

Your **spiral curriculum** is retained and strengthened:

- Concepts revisited with increasing complexity
- Safeguarding themes revisited across KS3–KS4

B. Tutor Time Programme (Big Questions Model)

Your **Big Questions calendar becomes the backbone of safeguarding delivery**, ensuring:

- Weekly safeguarding discussions
- Real-world context (awareness days)
- Consistent reinforcement

Example:

Theme	Example Question	Safeguarding Link
Mental Health	How can you support your mental health?	Anxiety, resilience
Relationships	How can we stand against bullying?	Child abuse, reporting
Equality	What does it mean to be an ally?	Discrimination
Online Safety	Can literacy change your life?	Media literacy, misinformation

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C. Assemblies & Drop-Down Days

North Durham Academy Model:

- Safeguarding assemblies (weekly themes)
- Themed weeks:
    - Anti-bullying
    - Online safety
    - Careers

    - Mental health
- Responsive sessions for emerging risks (AI, misogyny, local issues)

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5. Safeguarding Through the Curriculum (Core Areas)

PSHE (Core Safeguarding Strand)

All pupils access PSHE weekly, covering:

- Healthy and unhealthy relationships
- Consent and the law
- Mental health and self-care
- Substance misuse
- Financial safety

RSE (Relationships & Sex Education)

Delivered through:

- PSHE
- Science
- Pastoral sessions

Content includes:

- Consent
- Contraception
- Sexual health
- Healthy relationships
- Online sexual risks (sexting, pornography)

Aligned with statutory guidance and future 2026 updates.

Personal Safety

Explicit teaching across all year groups:

- Road, rail and water safety
- Knife crime awareness
- Stranger danger
- Consent and personal boundaries
- Recognising abuse

Students are taught:

- How to **identify unsafe situations**
- Who to **go to for help**

Online Safety

A progressive model:

Year	Focus
Year 7	Online behaviour, safety basics
Year 8	Digital footprint
Year 9	Social media risks & cyberbullying
Year 10	AI, deepfakes, misinformation
Year 11	Online reputation & employment

Includes:

- Sexting and sextortion
- Grooming risks
- Data privacy
- Misinformation

Wellbeing

Wellbeing is embedded across all curriculum areas.

Provision includes:

- Mental health awareness weeks

- Tutor check-ins
- Access to support services
- Resilience curriculum

Themes:

- Anxiety and stress
- Loneliness
- Self-esteem
- Emotional regulation

Religious Education & SMSC

Supports safeguarding through:

- Understanding diversity and beliefs
- Challenging prejudice
- Promoting tolerance and respect

Topics include:

- World religions
- Ethics
- Human rights
- Cultural awareness

Careers & Independence (RGR strands retained)

Strong safeguarding link:

- Financial safety (fraud, debt, scams)
- Employment awareness
- Decision-making skills
- Life skills (budgeting, independence)

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6. Safeguarding Themes Across Year Groups

From your uploaded curriculum:

Key recurring themes:

- Criminal exploitation (county lines, knife crime)
- Online safety (deepfakes, pornography)
- Mental health (anxiety, depression)
- Relationships and consent
- Discrimination and equality
- Financial exploitation

New priority areas (retained from your plan):

- Misogyny and incel culture
- AI literacy
- Sextortion and online abuse
- Grief, loss and loneliness

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7. Communication & Reporting

Students are explicitly taught:

- How to report concerns
- Who the safeguarding team are
- What happens when they report

Support systems include:

- Tutors and pastoral staff
- Safeguarding team (DSL)
- External services
- Explicit teaching of reporting
- Accessible communication routes

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8. Response to Contextual Safeguarding

The curriculum is **dynamic and reactive**, including:

- Local safeguarding risks
- National trends
- Emerging online threats

Delivered via:

- Tutor sessions
- Assemblies
- Drop-down days

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9. Alignment to Ofsted Personal Development

This model ensures:

Safety and Safeguarding

- Strong coverage across curriculum and tutor programme

Personal Development

- Character, resilience, independence

Behaviour & Attitudes

- Respect, tolerance, anti-bullying

Preparation for Next Steps

- Careers, finance, employability

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10. Summary

The North Durham Academy safeguarding curriculum:

- Is **fully embedded across subjects and tutor time**
- Builds **knowledge progressively**
- Responds to **real-world risks**
- Supports **all students to stay safe and thrive**