

Child Protection Policy & Incident Response Procedure

Statutory Guidance & Escalation Framework for Tom Wicks Tutoring

Tutor / Lead (DSL):	Tom Wicks
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Applicable Local Authority:	Rushcliffe Borough Council
Policy Review Date:	August 2026 (Annual Review)

1. Purpose and Scope

While the Safeguarding Statement sets the preventative framework and operational codes of conduct for tutoring sessions, this Child Protection Policy establishes the statutory protocols for recognising, handling, recording, and escalating specific child protection concerns, disclosures of abuse, and allegations.

As a sole practitioner, I act as my own Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and hold ultimate accountability for making external referrals in accordance with the UK statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'.

2. Recognising the Signs of Abuse and Neglect

I maintain active vigilance regarding the four primary categories of child abuse, recognising physical, behavioural, and emotional indicators during both in-person and online interactions:

- **Physical Abuse:** Unexplained bruises, marks, burns, fractures, or inconsistent explanations for physical injuries.
- **Emotional Abuse:** Severe changes in self-esteem, extreme anxiety, fearful behaviour around adults, developmental regression, or persistent distress.
- **Sexual Abuse / Exploitation:** Inappropriate sexualized language or knowledge for the student's age, sudden secretive online behaviour, or explicit disclosures.
- **Neglect:** Consistent unwashed appearance, inappropriate clothing for weather conditions, chronic fatigue, untreated medical or dental needs, or severe hunger.

3. Step-by-Step Procedure for Managing a Direct Disclosure

If a student makes a direct disclosure regarding harm or abuse:

- 1. Listen Actively:** Allow the student to speak freely without interruption.
- 2. Reassure Calmly:** Reassure the student that they did the right thing by speaking up, but never promise absolute secrecy. Explain gently: "I want to help you stay safe, which means I will need to speak to people who are trained to help with this."
- 3. Avoid Leading Questions:** Clarify only if necessary using the TED model (Tell me, Explain to me, Describe). Do not interrogate, investigate, or prompt specific answers.
- 4. Never Confront Alleged Abusers:** I will not approach, interview, or confront any person named in a disclosure.

4. Incident Recording Protocols (The Safeguarding Record)

Within 24 hours of any disclosure, incident, or cumulative concern, I will create a secure, written child protection log containing:

- **Context & Setting:** Exact date, time, and setting of the observation or disclosure (in-person location or online session).
- **Verbatim Notes:** The exact words used by the student (in quotation marks), avoiding paraphrasing or clinical interpretation.
- **Factual Observations:** Observable behaviours, physical markings, body language, and immediate context (strictly distinguishing verifiable facts from professional opinions).
- **Actions Taken:** Details of anyone contacted, advice received, and timestamps of external notifications.

All records are encrypted, password-protected, and retained securely in line with UK GDPR guidelines, separate from standard academic feedback.

5. Escalation and External Reporting Pathways

Concerns are escalated immediately based on severity and risk:

- **Emergency Danger:** If a child is in immediate physical danger, call 999 without delay.
- **Non-Parental Concerns:** If the concern does not involve parents/guardians, discuss with them within 24 hours. If unresolved or significant, proceed to Children's Social Care.
- **Parental Involvement / Significant Harm:** If abuse involves parents/guardians or suggests significant harm, bypass parents immediately and contact the Local Authority Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) or the NSPCC.

Key Child Protection Contacts Directory

Emergency Services (Police / Ambulance)	999
Non-Emergency Police	101
Local Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	0300 500 8080
Out-of-Hours Social Care Duty Team	0300 456 4546
NSPCC Helpline (24/7 Professional & Public)	0808 800 5000 / help@nspcc.org.uk
Childline (Direct Support for Children)	0800 1111

6. Allegations Against the Tutor

To ensure complete transparency and accountability as a sole provider:

- **Right to Independent Escalation:** If a parent, student, or third party raises an allegation of misconduct, abuse, or boundary breaches against me, I will immediately advise them of their right to contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or the police.
- **Provision of Details:** I will provide the direct contact details for the local LADO upon request and cooperate fully with any statutory multi-agency investigation.
- **Suspension of Services:** Tuition sessions with the family in question will be suspended immediately pending the outcome of any formal review.

7. Training and Policy Review

- **Continuous Professional Development:** I complete accredited Child Protection and Safeguarding training at least every 2 years (or annually where local guidance dictates).
- **Annual Review:** This policy is formally reviewed every 12 months to align with updates to UK statutory guidance ('Working Together to Safeguard Children') and local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.