

SPARK ACADEMY

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Spark Academy Safeguarding Policy

Last Reviewed: March 2025

Next Review: March 2026

1. Introduction

Spark Academy is committed to promoting the safety and well-being of all students receiving tuition from Spark Academy. We take safeguarding seriously and ensure that all freelance tutors working with us meet the necessary requirements.

However, as Spark Academy is not the direct employer of these tutors, we do not accept responsibility for their behaviour. The safeguarding of children during tuition sessions remains the responsibility of parents or guardians.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Terms and Conditions and will be reviewed annually to ensure continued effectiveness.

2. Tutor Screening and Checks

To ensure a high standard of professionalism and safety, Spark Academy requires that all freelance tutors:

- Hold a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check dated within the last three years or be registered on the DBS Update Service, which will be checked annually.
- Participate in an interview process to assess their suitability and experience.
- Provide references to verify their background, qualifications, and experience.
- Have their identification (ID) checked to confirm their identity.

While we take these steps to ensure the quality and integrity of our tutors, Spark Academy does not assume liability for their actions, conduct, or behaviour during tuition sessions. Tutors are responsible for their own actions at all times.

3. Parent and Guardian Responsibilities

As tuition sessions typically take place within the home or online, it is the responsibility of parents or guardians to safeguard their child during lessons. Parents are expected to:

- Be present within the home for the entire duration of the tuition session.
- Ensure a safe and appropriate learning environment for their child.
- Monitor interactions between the tutor and the student to maintain a secure and positive experience.
- Take full responsibility for the physical environment during the session, ensuring it is safe and suitable for learning.
- Ensure students are fully clothed during both online and face-to-face sessions.

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- Be available for the learner to report any inappropriate behaviour or concerns. Tutors should not be left in sole care of the child.
- Ensure tutors are treated with respect during lessons and not subjected to abusive behaviour. If a child is violent towards a tutor, the lesson will be ended.

4. Reporting Concerns

If a parent or guardian has concerns regarding a tutor's conduct, they should:

- Immediately discontinue tuition with the tutor if necessary.
- Report any issues to Spark Academy so that we can investigate and take appropriate action.
- If the concern is of a serious safeguarding nature, report it to the relevant authorities (e.g. the police or local safeguarding board).
 - Students must report any concerns to a parent or legal guardian immediately.
 - Tutors are also required to report any safeguarding concerns directly to Becky Ingram, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who will determine whether the matter should be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or child protection services. If Becky Ingram is unavailable for any reason then concerns should be reported to Deputy Safeguarding Lead Harriet Millington.
- Concerns will be referred to the LADO/child protection services within 24 hours of them coming to the DSL/DDSLs attention
- The local authorities local threshold toolkit will be used to support assessing the level of safeguarding need

5. Tutor Responsibilities

- Treat students fairly and without prejudice or discrimination, regardless of their age, culture, ability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief, or sexual identity.
 - Work in partnership with parents and children to ensure the protection of children.
- Ensure the language they use is appropriate, professional, and not offensive or discriminatory.
 - Maintain a professional and respectful environment during lessons.
- Not continue a lesson if a parent or legal guardian is not present and they or the learner do not feel comfortable to continue.
 - Immediately report any safeguarding concerns—including suspicions or disclosures of abuse, neglect, or inappropriate behaviour—to Becky Ingram, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Safeguarding Lead - Harriet Millington at Spark Academy.
- The DSL will determine whether the concern meets the threshold for referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
 - The LADO oversees allegations involving individuals who work with or care for children and advises on the appropriate steps to take, including potentially informing the police or other safeguarding agencies.
- Cooperate fully with any safeguarding investigations or actions recommended by the DSL, LADO, or relevant authorities.
- Tutors are provided with a responding to a disclosure and types of maltreatment support documents to support their safeguarding knowledge and understanding

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6. Physical Contact and Behaviour Management

Spark Academy maintains a strict no physical intervention policy. Tutors must not use reasonable force or any form of physical contact to manage behaviour under any circumstances.

- Never physically intervene with a student or attempt to restrain them.
- Avoid any action that could be misinterpreted as physical punishment or force.
- Maintain professional boundaries at all times.
- If a child's behaviour becomes unacceptable or they are physically violent towards a tutor, the session must be ended immediately.
- Any incident involving physical aggression or unsafe behaviour must be reported to Becky Ingram, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), and to the parent or guardian as soon as possible. This ensures a safe environment for both tutors and students and aligns with best practice in safeguarding and child protection.

7. Limitations of Liability

Spark Academy serves as a facilitator of tuition services by connecting students with freelance tutors. As such, we do not accept any responsibility for the behaviour, actions, or misconduct of tutors.

The contractual relationship exists between the tutor and the client (parent/guardian).

8. Commitment to Safeguarding

While Spark Academy does not employ tutors directly, we remain committed to ensuring that all tutors meet our standards for professionalism and safeguarding.

We encourage open communication and take all concerns seriously to help maintain a safe learning environment for all students.

By using Spark Academy's tuition services, parents and guardians acknowledge their role in safeguarding their child and accept that Spark Academy holds no liability for tutor conduct.