



## Appendix A: Child Protection, Safeguarding and Low-level concerns for Initial Teacher Training (ITT)

### *Vantage North Humber Teacher Training (VNHTT)*

#### 1. Purpose, Scope, and Status

This appendix translates the **St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust (SCRCAAT)** Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Low Level Concerns Policy into the context of **Vantage North Humber Teacher Training (VNHTT)**. It forms an integral part of these Trust policies and ensures trainees understand their responsibilities while the Trust provides support for their wellbeing.

**Scope:** This policy applies to all trainees, including:

- SCITT and fee-funded trainees.
- Salaried trainees.
- Trainees in partner schools outside SCRCAAT or in alternative/specialist provision.

For ITT purposes, all references to "staff" or "employees" in the main policies include VNHTT trainees.

#### 2. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility (SCITT context)
<b>St Cuthbert's Trust Board</b>	Strategic leadership for all safeguarding across SCRCAAT and VNHTT.
<b>Vantage Strategic Board</b>	Provides support and challenge to the Vantage Leadership Team ensuring compliance with ITE statutory criteria including safeguarding and online safety.
<b>Director of Safeguarding (SCRCAAT)</b>	<b>Nicola Spray</b> – Trust Strategic Safeguarding lead with responsibility for policy and procedure.
<b>Head of VNHTT / Safeguarding Contact</b>	<b>Jonathan Boden</b> – SCITT safeguarding central contact; implements policy and monitors safeguarding compliance and training.
<b>SCITT Professional Tutors / Programme Leads</b>	Act as first point of contact for concerns; support trainee understanding through scenario discussions; reinforce statutory responsibilities.



**Placement School ITT Lead / DSL** Provides school-specific day-one induction and safeguarding training; ensures school-specific procedures are followed; liaise with SCITT on concerns

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### 3. Status and Protection of Trainees

The Trust recognises the **dual professional status** of trainees, who are adult learners working in regulated educational environments but are not employees of the Trust or placement school.

- **Power Imbalances:** The Trust acknowledges that trainees may face power imbalances when raising concerns about those responsible for their supervision or assessment.
- **Protection from Detriment:** No trainee raising a concern in good faith shall suffer academic, professional, or placement detriment, including adverse impacts on assessments or progression.
- **Escalation:** Trainees are not required to raise concerns solely within placement schools and have clear escalation routes to VNHTT leadership.

### 4. Dual Safeguarding Responsibility

VNHTT and SCRCAT recognize a two-fold responsibility:

1. **Protection of Children:** Trainees must maintain an attitude of "it could happen here," recognise signs of abuse or neglect, model professional behaviour and adhere to statutory reporting requirements.
2. **Protection of Trainees:** The Trust provides pastoral, professional, and academic support, including mentoring and counselling, for trainees involved in safeguarding processes. This includes clear procedures for reporting concerns, including whistleblowing.

### 5. Induction and Training Requirements

Trainees must complete the following **before or at the start of the programme**:

- Read and confirm understanding of **Part 1 of KCSIE (2025)**.
- Sign the **VNHTT Trainee Agreement** (Code of Conduct, Fitness to Teach, and Acceptable Use of IT & AI).
- Complete the National College **Annual Certificate in Safeguarding** and the government **Prevent Radicalisation** module.
- Complete any other online safeguarding modules as directed during the course.



- Complete the **Vantage Policy Checklist**, confirming they have read policies on: Child Protection and Safeguarding, Low-level Concerns, Trainee Code of Conduct, Health & Safety, Whistleblowing, Data Protection, and Online Safety.
- Attend **SCITT induction** covering practical scenarios and reporting procedures and trainee well-being support. (Note – safeguarding and trainee well-being are regularly revisited during the course as well.)

## 6. Procedures for Child Disclosures

If a child makes a disclosure, trainees must follow the **5 Rs**:

1. **Receive:** Listen actively and calmly without showing shock.
2. **Reassure:** Show empathy; never promise secrecy.
3. **React:** Ask only necessary open questions to clarify the need for referral; do not interrogate.
4. **Record:** Make a factual record including the child's own words, date, time, and location.
5. **Report:** Immediately inform the **placement school DSL**.

**Escalation:** If the trainee feels the school's response is insufficient or unsafe, they must escalate to the **Head of VNHTT** or Trust safeguarding leads without delay.

## 7. Trainee disclosures

- If a trainee makes a disclosure, the Head of VNHTT as Safeguarding Contact should be notified as soon as possible.

## 8. Allegations Against Trainees

- Handled according to procedures under the **Vantage Disciplinary Policy**
- Trainees may be suspended from placement while investigations occur. Suspension is a neutral act and would only be taken in line with guidance given in the disciplinary policy.

### LADO Referrals:

- VNHTT will liaise with the placement school and **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** for allegations meeting the harm threshold.

### Continuation of Training:

- Decisions on access to central training or online learning during investigations are made on a case-by-case basis, balancing trainee support with safeguarding obligations.



### **Record Keeping:**

- All safeguarding incidents are logged.
- Sharing in future references follows LADO guidance and confidentiality requirements.

### **Support Measures:**

- Trainees under investigation are offered mentoring, counselling, and regular updates on process outcomes.

## **9. Low-Level Concerns**

- A Low-level concern is defined as any concern about an adult's behaviour towards, or concerning, a child that does not meet the harms threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral at the time of its reporting.
- The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant – a low-level concern is any concern that suggests an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work.
- While low-level concerns are less serious than concerns which meet the harms threshold, many serious safeguarding concerns often begin with low-level concerns (e.g. being overly friendly with children) and it is important to raise concerns before they have an opportunity to escalate from low-level to serious.
- Please refer to the SCRCAT Low-level Concerns policy for further detail
- If a trainee has a Low-Level Concern regarding a member of staff in a placement school, they should follow the placement school's safeguarding procedures.
- If a trainee has a Low-Level Concern in relation to another trainee, a subcontracted SCITT trainer (e.g. SCITT subject lead, SCITT Professional tutor) or a member of SCITT staff, they should complete a **VNHTT Concerns Form**. [Vantage North Humber Teacher Training Concerns Form – Fill out form](#)
- If the Low-Level Concern relates to Jonathan Boden, Head of VNHTT or Nikki Hawxwell, Operations Manager, then it should be reported directly to Marc Cooper, the Director of Vantage Teaching School Hub.

## **10. Whistleblowing**

Trainees should follow the VNHTT/SCRCAT Whistleblowing Policy if they have concerns about safeguarding practices.

1. Notify the Head of VNHTT.
2. Document concerns in writing.



3. Escalate via the Whistleblowing Policy or contact the NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline (0800 028 0285) if they feel unable to raise concerns internally.

## 11. Partnership Integration and Oversight

All partner schools must sign the VNHTT Partner School Agreement, committing to provide a day-one safeguarding induction, the identity of the DSL, and clear reporting procedures.

VNHTT maintains oversight through:

- Quality assurance and partnership reviews.
- Governance reporting and monitoring of safeguarding culture across placements.
- Central logging of all training and safeguarding incidents.

## 12. Additional Resources and Review

- **KCSIE (2025):** [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK](#)
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026):** [Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK](#)
- **NSPCC Whistleblowing Guidance:** [Whistleblowing Advice Line | NSPCC](#) Tel. 0800 028 028

This appendix is reviewed annually to reflect changes in statutory guidance, Ofsted ITT inspection expectations, and learning from safeguarding practice.