

CODA MUSIC ACADEMY

80 Buttermarket Street, Warrington, WA1 2NN

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Policy

Last Reviewed: January 2026

Next Review Due: January 2027

1. Introduction

This policy sets out the responsibilities, duties, and support structure for the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at CODA Music Academy. The DSL plays a critical role in protecting children, young people, and vulnerable adults from harm and ensuring that safeguarding procedures are implemented effectively across the academy.

2. Purpose

This policy ensures clear accountability for safeguarding at CODA Music Academy and confirms that there is always a trained, visible, and supported DSL available. It supports compliance with statutory safeguarding guidance and legislation.

3. Appointment of DSL

CODA Music Academy has appointed the following Designated Safeguarding Leads:

Primary / Joint DSLs:

- Oliver Thomas
- Stuart Fagan

The DSLs are responsible for leading safeguarding practice across the academy and may act jointly or deputise for one another to ensure continuous cover. The DSLs are supported by safeguarding-trained staff where appropriate.

4. Role and Responsibilities of the DSL

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:

4.1 Managing Safeguarding Concerns

- Receiving, recording, and responding to safeguarding concerns or disclosures
- Making referrals to social care, police, or other statutory agencies where appropriate
- Maintaining accurate, secure, and confidential safeguarding records

4.2 Training and Awareness

- Holding appropriate safeguarding training (minimum Level 3)
- Completing refresher training at least every two years
- Delivering safeguarding induction and updates to staff and tutors

4.3 Liaison and Partnership

- Acting as the main point of contact with local safeguarding partners and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- Working collaboratively with families, professionals, and agencies

4.4 Policy and Procedure Oversight

- Leading annual reviews of safeguarding policies
- Supporting safer recruitment and whistleblowing practices
- Advising senior leadership on safeguarding risks and strategy

5. Availability and Delegation

At least one DSL will be available during academy operating hours, either on-site or contactable by phone. When a DSL is unavailable, safeguarding responsibilities will be delegated to the other named DSL to ensure continuity.

6. Information Sharing and Record Keeping

Safeguarding records are maintained securely and shared only on a need-to-know basis in line with GDPR and safeguarding legislation. Decisions not to escalate concerns externally are documented with clear rationale.

7. Supervision and Support

The DSLs will receive appropriate support, including time for training, reflection, and case management, and may access external safeguarding supervision where required.

8. Escalation Procedures

If a safeguarding concern involves a DSL or is not addressed satisfactorily, staff should escalate concerns to senior leadership or an appropriate external body such as the LADO or NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline.

9. Review and Audit

The DSLs will lead an annual safeguarding audit and report findings to senior leadership to inform continuous improvement.

10. Declaration of Understanding and Acceptance

All Designated Safeguarding Leads must confirm their understanding of and commitment to the responsibilities outlined in this policy.