

Winchmore Tutors is committed to providing safe, high-quality and child-centred services. We welcome feedback, concerns and complaints as opportunities to improve our practice and safeguard children and young people. We recognise that complaints may identify safeguarding concerns, unmet needs or risks to children and therefore all complaints will be taken seriously, investigated fairly and managed in accordance with safeguarding responsibilities and statutory guidance.

Statutory Framework

This policy should be read alongside:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).
- Alternative Provision Statutory Guidance.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children.
- Local Authority Managing Allegations Procedures.
- The Equality Act 2010.
- Winchmore Tutors Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Whistleblowing Policy.
- Staff Code of Conduct.

Winchmore Tutors recognises that complaints, concerns and disclosures can be important safeguarding indicators and will ensure that all concerns are managed in accordance with statutory safeguarding responsibilities.

Child-Centred Approach

Winchmore Tutors is committed to ensuring that the views, wishes and feelings of children and young people are heard, valued and acted upon.

Children and young people have the right to raise concerns, make complaints and be listened to. No child or young person will be treated unfairly, disadvantaged or discriminated against because they have raised a concern or complaint.

The welfare of the child is paramount and will remain at the centre of all decisions made under this policy.

Safeguarding Concerns

Winchmore Tutors recognises that some complaints may raise safeguarding concerns.

Complaints involving:

- Abuse or neglect.
- Physical harm.
- Emotional harm.
- Sexual harm.

- Peer-on-peer abuse.
- Online safety concerns.
- Exploitation.
- Discriminatory behaviour.
- Staff conduct towards children.

will be immediately referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and managed under safeguarding procedures rather than through the standard complaints process where appropriate.

Safeguarding concerns will always be treated as a priority and investigated without delay.

Children's Right to Complain

Children and young people may make a complaint directly, with support from:

- A parent or carer.
- A tutor.
- A trusted adult.
- A social worker.
- An advocate.
- Another professional involved in their care.

Complaints may be made verbally, in writing, electronically or through another agreed communication method.

Information about how to complain should be provided in a format that is accessible, age-appropriate and easy to understand.

Supporting Children with SEND

Winchmore Tutors recognises that children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) may face additional barriers when expressing concerns, making complaints or disclosing abuse.

These barriers may include:

- Communication difficulties.
- Difficulty recognising poor practice or abuse.
- Reliance upon adults for care and support.
- Social isolation.
- Fear of not being believed.
- Neurodivergent communication styles.

Staff will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to enable children with SEND to raise concerns safely and effectively.

Appropriate support may include:

- Additional time.
- Alternative communication methods.
- Visual aids.
- Advocacy.
- Support from familiar trusted adults.

All complaints involving children with SEND will be considered in line with the Equality Act 2010 and SEND Code of Practice.

Safeguarding Contacts

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Craig Varney

Director & Designated Safeguarding Lead

Email: craigv@winchmoretutors.com

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

Dan Stagg

Compliance Manager & Deputy Safeguarding Lead

Email: dan@winchmoretutors.com

The Winchmore Tutor's Child Protection Number is : 01372 940 808

Role of the DSL

The DSL is responsible for:

- Managing safeguarding concerns.
- Receiving complaints that raise child protection concerns.
- Liaising with Children's Social Care, the Police and Local Authority professionals.
- Making safeguarding referrals.
- Ensuring safeguarding records are maintained.
- Advising staff regarding safeguarding responsibilities.
- Determining when allegations should be managed under safeguarding procedures rather than the complaints procedure.
- Liaising with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where appropriate.

Allegations Against Adults Working with Children

Where a complaint or concern suggests that an employee, tutor, volunteer or contractor may have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against a child.
- Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk to children.
- Behaved in a manner which may impact their suitability to work with children.

the matter will be managed in accordance with local procedures and referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Such concerns will not be investigated through the standard complaints process.

Referrals to the LADO will be made without unnecessary delay and in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

Procedure for Allegations Against Staff

Where an allegation is made against a member of staff:

1. The concern will be reported immediately to the DSL.
2. If the allegation concerns the DSL, it must be reported directly another Director or LADO as appropriate.
3. No internal investigation will commence before consulting the LADO where required.
4. Appropriate safeguarding measures will be implemented to protect children during the investigation.
5. Accurate records will be maintained.
6. Relevant agencies will be informed as required.
7. Outcomes and lessons learned will be reviewed following conclusion.

The welfare of the child will remain the primary consideration throughout the process.

Whistleblowing

Staff have a professional responsibility to report concerns regarding:

- Unsafe practice.
- Safeguarding failures.
- Professional misconduct.
- Poor practice affecting children.
- Breaches of policy or statutory guidance.

Staff may raise concerns through the Whistleblowing Policy and will be supported in doing so.

Concerns relating to safeguarding should never be withheld because of loyalty to colleagues or fear of consequences.

Complaints Procedure

A complaint should be raised as soon as possible when an individual becomes aware of an issue.

Reports should include, where possible:

- Details of the concern.
- Names of individuals involved.
- Dates, times, and locations.
- Any supporting evidence available.

Complaints may be reported to:

Primary Contact

Craig Varney – Director & Designated Safeguarding Lead

Email: craigv@winchmoretutors.com

Telephone: 01372 940 809

Alternative Contact

Dan Stagg – Compliance Manager & Deputy Safeguarding Lead

Email: dan@winchmoretutors.com

Telephone: 01372 940 808

Where the complaint relates to either of the above individuals, reports may be made to another member of the board or an independent external adviser.

Next steps

- We will send you an email acknowledging your complaint and asking you to confirm or explain the details set out. We will also let you know the name of the person who will be dealing with your complaint. You can expect to receive our email within 2 weeks of us receiving your complaint.
- We will record your complaint in our central register within a day of having received it.
- We will acknowledge your reply to our acknowledgment email and confirm what will happen next. You can expect to receive our acknowledgement email within 14 days of your reply.
- We will then start to investigate your complaint. This will normally involve the following steps;
 - We may ask the member of staff who dealt with you to reply to your complaint within 5 days of our request;
 - We will then examine the member of staff's reply and the information you have provided for us. If necessary we may ask you to speak to them. This will take up to 7 working days from receiving their reply.
- Craig Varney will then contact you to discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint. He will do this within 7 working days of the end of our investigation.
- Within 7 working days of your discussion with Craig Varney he will write to you to confirm what took place and any solutions he has agreed with you.

If we have to change any of the time scales above, we will let you know and explain why.

Should you not be satisfied with the outcome of your complaint, please contact us and we will provide you with details of the relevant body to enable you to escalate your complaint accordingly or for further advice please contact Citizens Advice on 0808 223 1133.

Safeguarding Override

Where a complaint raises concerns about a child's safety, welfare or wellbeing, safeguarding procedures will take precedence over the standard complaints process.

Winchmore Tutors will always act in the best interests of the child and take appropriate steps to protect children from harm, even where this means sharing information with safeguarding agencies or suspending normal complaint handling procedures.

Issue Date: July 2026

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Review Date: July 2027

Signed:



Craig Varney : Director