LIMITLESS ALTERNATIVE PROVISION • STATUTORY POLICY

VULNERABLE CHILDREN POLICY

POLICY VERSION	REVIEW DATE	DSL	DEPUTY DSL	PROPRIETOR
1.0 (Feb 2026)	Annually – Feb 2027	Harriet Ann Fry	Dwayne Paul	Dwayne Paul

1. POLICY STATEMENT & 3. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Limitless Alternative Provision (LAP) recognises that many of our students may be considered vulnerable due to their personal circumstances, educational history, or safeguarding concerns. Pupils placed with us are statistically more likely to experience SEMH difficulties, exclusion or risk of permanent exclusion, trauma and adverse childhood experiences, family instability, criminal or sexual exploitation, poor attendance, and SEND needs.

We are committed to identifying, supporting and protecting vulnerable children through robust safeguarding practice, early intervention, and multi-agency collaboration.

3. Legal Framework: Operates in accordance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, *Children Act 1989*, *Children Act 2004*, *Equality Act 2010*, and the *Ofsted* Education Inspection Framework.

2. DEFINITION OF A VULNERABLE CHILD

For the purposes of this policy, a vulnerable child may include (but is not limited to) a child who:

- Is subject to a Child Protection Plan or is a Child in Need
- Is Looked After (LAC) or previously looked after
- Is at risk of exclusion or is persistently absent
- Has experienced abuse or neglect, or is affected by domestic abuse
- Has SEMH needs, mental health difficulties, or a disability/SEND
- Is at risk of criminal exploitation (CCE) or sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Is a young carer
- Is at risk of serious youth violence or radicalisation

4. OUR APPROACH TO SUPPORTING VULNERABLE CHILDREN (PROACTIVE & TRAUMA-INFORMED)

4.1 Early Identification

- Gather detailed background information at referral.
- Review EHCPs, risk assessments, and safeguarding files.
- Liaise with commissioning schools and local authorities.
- Conduct baseline SEMH assessments.
- Identify patterns of absence or behaviour change.

4.2 Individual Risk Assessments

Each vulnerable student has an individual risk assessment, personalised support plan, clear behaviour/safety strategies, supervision plans (particularly in the gym), and review dates/measurable targets.

Considers: physical safety in the gym, emotional triggers, peer dynamics, supervision levels, and external risks (exploitation, gangs, missing episodes).

5. CHILDREN WITH SOCIAL CARE INVOLVEMENT

Where a child is subject to a Child Protection Plan, a Child in Need, or Looked After, the DSL will:

- Attend review meetings and case conferences & contribute written reports.
- Ensure staff are aware of relevant safeguarding information (need-to-know basis).
- Monitor attendance closely and escalate concerns immediately

6. CHILDREN AT RISK OF EXPLOITATION

AP students are statistically at higher risk of Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), County Lines involvement, and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). Staff are trained to recognise indicators: unexplained money or gifts, sudden behaviour change, association with older peers, missing episodes, and use of multiple phones. Concerns are reported immediately to the DSL.

7. MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

Mental health difficulties may be a safeguarding concern, indicate underlying trauma, and impact behaviour and attendance. Support includes:

- Emotional regulation strategies & mentoring
- External referrals (e.g., CAMHS)
- Safe spaces within the provision
- Structured physical activity

All self-harm disclosures or suicide ideation are treated as safeguarding concerns.

8. ATTENDANCE & ABSENCE

Persistent absence is treated as a safeguarding risk. We will:

- Monitor daily attendance
- Conduct first-day contact
- Liaise with parents/carers and commissioning schools
- Conduct welfare checks where necessary
- Escalate concerns where children are missing education

9. GYM SAFEGUARDING

Additional protections in place:

- Enhanced supervision ratios & controlled access to equipment
- Clear boundaries regarding physical contact
- Supervised transitions & risk assessment of all physical activities
- Monitoring of peer interactions

Supervision is never compromised.

10. BEHAVIOUR & VULNERABILITY

Challenging behaviour may be a form of communication. Rather than labelling children "problematic," we:

- Use restorative approaches
- Identify underlying triggers & implement de-escalation strategies
- Avoid exclusion wherever possible & balance discipline with safeguarding

Suspension/exclusion always considers safeguarding impact.

11. MULTI-AGENCY WORKING

We actively work with:

- Local Authority safeguarding teams & social workers
- Youth offending teams & CAMHS
- Police (where necessary)
- Commissioning schools

Information sharing follows statutory guidance and GDPR principles.

12. STAFF TRAINING

All staff receive annual safeguarding training plus training on:

- Trauma-informed practice
- Exploitation indicators & Prevent duty awareness
- Behaviour, de-escalation & mental health awareness

DSL receives enhanced statutory training.

13. CONFIDENTIALITY

Information regarding vulnerable children will be stored securely, shared on a need-to-know basis, and transferred securely when pupils move settings, following lawful safeguarding information-sharing principles.

14. MONITORING & OVERSIGHT

The Proprietor ensures oversight of safeguarding practice, regular safeguarding audits, annual policy review, and compliance with Ofsted safeguarding expectations. Safeguarding culture is regularly evaluated.

15. POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually, updated following legislative change, reviewed following serious incidents, and approved by the Proprietor.

COMMITMENT STATEMENT

Limitless Alternative Provision recognises that vulnerable children require consistency, stability, high expectations, safe boundaries, and trusted adults. We are committed to providing a safe, structured, and supportive gym-based educational environment where vulnerable children can re-engage, develop resilience, and achieve positive outcomes.