LEICESTER BLINDMAKERS

Barlow

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School Safeguarding Policy

Contractor policy | Lorna Coleman, Director (HR)

1. Purpose and scope

Barlow Blinds Ltd is committed to safeguarding children and young people while measuring, supplying, installing, repairing or maintaining blinds and shading products in schools and other education settings. This policy applies to employees and any other personnel authorised to attend a school on our behalf. It complements, and does not replace, each school's safeguarding, visitor and site-safety procedures.

2. Responsibility

Lorna Coleman, Director responsible for HR, is the proposed Company Safeguarding Lead. She will oversee staff briefing, appropriate vetting records, incident handling, policy reviews and liaison with schools. The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) retains responsibility for its safeguarding procedures and decisions. If a concern involves Lorna, it must be raised with another company director and directly with the school DSL or appropriate external authority; reporting must not be delayed.

3. Planning school visits

We aim to arrange installation work outside teaching hours or during school holidays where practical. Measuring, surveys and occasional urgent work may take place during the school day. Before each visit we confirm the school contact, permitted work areas, pupil presence (including clubs and holiday provision), supervision arrangements, access, safeguarding reporting contact and any specific school requirements. We do not assume that a school is child-free merely because it is outside normal hours.

4. Vetting, checks and identification

The school and Barlow Blinds will agree the appropriate checks and supervision arrangements for the actual role and level of contact. DBS eligibility and the appropriate level of check must be assessed for each role; an enhanced or barred-list check must not be requested unless legally eligible. No worker without the checks required for their assignment may work unsupervised or undertake regulated activity with children. Employees must carry company identification, present it when requested, sign in and out, and wear any school visitor pass.

5. Conduct on site

Our personnel must follow the school's visitor rules, remain in authorised areas, and maintain professional boundaries. They must not initiate unnecessary conversations or physical contact with pupils, exchange personal contact details, photograph or film pupils, use personal devices to record children, or arrange one-to-one contact. If a pupil enters an isolated work area, work should pause and the school contact should be asked to manage the situation. Personnel must not undertake unsupervised work involving children unless explicitly authorised with all legally required checks and controls in place.

6. Work areas and safeguarding controls

Before commencing, staff will agree with the school how rooms and access routes will be managed. Tools, fixings, cords, packaging and equipment must be secured and kept away from children. Staff should prevent unauthorised access to work areas, follow agreed health-and-safety controls and leave rooms safe on completion. Child-safety requirements for blind installations are addressed through our product and installation procedures as well as this safeguarding policy.

7. Recognising and reporting concerns

Staff do not investigate allegations. If a child discloses a concern, listen calmly, do not promise secrecy, ask no leading questions, and explain that the information must be passed to someone who can help. Report any safeguarding concern immediately to the school DSL or deputy and notify Lorna as soon as safe and appropriate. Record facts, exact words where possible, date, time, place and who was informed; store records securely. If a child is in immediate danger call 999. If the DSL cannot be reached and there is a risk of significant harm, contact local authority children's social care or police without waiting. Do not allow internal reporting to delay an urgent referral.

8. Allegations involving our personnel

Any allegation or concern about a Barlow Blinds worker must be promptly referred to the school DSL/headteacher and Lorna (or another director if Lorna is implicated). The school and relevant statutory agencies will determine whether the local authority designated officer (LADO), police or other bodies need to be involved. Do not investigate, confront the subject, promise confidentiality or destroy records. The company will cooperate with appropriate external processes and manage employment matters separately.

9. Training, records and confidentiality

Before school assignments, relevant personnel will receive a practical safeguarding briefing covering boundaries, reporting, the school's procedures and emergency escalation; attendance will be recorded. Lorna will review training needs and vetting eligibility, and maintain restricted-access records. Information will be shared only where necessary for safeguarding, with secure retention in line with applicable data protection and records requirements.

10. Review and approval

Review at least annually and sooner if guidance, work patterns or an incident warrants it.

Approved by: Lorna Coleman Date: 16 / 11 / 2026 Next review: 16 / 11 / 2027

Key references: Department for Education, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026; NSPCC Learning, School visitors and safeguarding (updated April 2026).