

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Reviewed and updated: September 2020
Next Review Due: August 2021

This Trust-wide policy applies to all staff, including the Board of Trustees and Central Staff, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency / supply staff, students or anyone working for and on behalf of the Dales Academies Trust. This policy should be read in conjunction with the academy-specific policies published by individual academies.

Introduction

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children's Act 1989, the Education Act 2002, the Children's Act 2004, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) (September 2020 edition) and in line with locally agreed guidance and procedures. Other reference documents are listed at Annex A, including the September 2019 precis of the update to KCSIE distributed to schools.

The Dales Academies Trust (Dales) and the Local Governing Bodies (LGB) of all academies take seriously their responsibilities under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements within our schools to identify, assess and support those children and young people who are suffering harm.

COVID-19

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) remains in force throughout the response to coronavirus (COVID-19). The department has issued non-statutory interim guidance on safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers during the coronavirus outbreak. This guidance supports governing bodies, proprietors, senior leadership teams and designated safeguarding leads to continue to have appropriate regard to KCSIE and keep their children safe. It suggests where schools and colleges might consider safeguarding policy and process differently when compared to business as usual.

Definition

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

The purpose of this policy:

- To protect children and young people who receive Dales' services;
- To provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection; staff and volunteers also need to be au fait with academy policies in situ.

Dales believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

Ethos

Improving outcomes for all children and young people underpins all of the development and work within the Trust.

Safeguarding is considered everyone's responsibility and as such our schools aim to create the safest environment within which every student has the opportunity to achieve. The academies recognise the contribution they can make in ensuring that all students registered or who use our facilities feel that they will be listened to and appropriate action taken.

We will do this by working in partnership with other agencies and seeking to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers and other colleagues to develop and provide activities and opportunities throughout our curricula that will help equip our students with the skills they need. This will include materials and learning experiences that will encourage our students to develop essential life skills and protective behaviours.

Trustees Responsibilities

The Trust Board has a legal responsibility to make sure that the schools have an effective safeguarding policy and procedures in place and monitors that the schools comply with them. The Trust Board will do this by:

- a. commissioning independent safeguarding audits of schools and the MAT on a regular basis.
- b. receiving regular progress reports from the CEO on the overarching Dales Trust Board safeguarding action plan.
- c. delegating operational responsibilities to LGBs as defined below and set out in the Trust Scheme of Delegation

Governors Responsibilities

The local governing board (LGB) of each school will appoint a lead governor to monitor statutory compliance as referenced in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 and the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding and child protection arrangements in conjunction with the full governing board. Staff governors cannot be the lead governor with responsibility for safeguarding and child protection.

The LGB will ensure that the named governor for Safeguarding & Child Protection attends the required training and that they refresh their training every three years.

All governors on the LGB should have a clear understanding of their strategic safeguarding roles and responsibilities as outlined in Part Two of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020.

The LGB will ensure that their school has a Designated Safeguarding Lead on the school's senior leadership team.

Senior Leadership (SLT) in all academies throughout the Trust are required to ensure all staff, volunteers and visitors are provided with up-to-date guidance, in line with the publications from the Department for Education's guidance on Keeping Children Safe in Education . SLT will evidence the distribution of guidance and store this with other essential Child Protection/Safeguarding paperwork.

In addition to the basic requirements and good practice provided within this Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, the Trust require each academy to implement a bespoke Safeguarding and Child Protection policy which is tailored to the needs of each academy setting and reflects the statutory requirements set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020). A copy of the academy policy is to be forwarded to the Trust on publishing. Each academy has the duty to ensure their own Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is up-to-date and is displayed on the academy website.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff refers to all paid adults, volunteers or students on placement, working in any capacity in the school or in activities organised by the school which brings them in to contact with pupils of the school.

The Trust and our LGBs recognise that for this policy to be effective, it is essential that school staff understand what safeguarding is, know how to access safeguarding information, know of any possible contribution that they may be required to make to safeguard our students and how to access further advice, support, or services.

All staff must be aware of in-school policies, procedures and processes which support safeguarding, who their DSL is and the role of the DSL. All staff must be provided with the following documents

- Part 1 of KCSiE and Annex A at the start of each school year (or on joining if later).
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice (2019/2020),
- The school's safeguarding and child protection policy
- The school's behaviour policy
- The school's safeguarding responses to children who go missing from education during the school day or otherwise.

It is the responsibility of LGB and senior designated leads to ensure:

- All staff read the aforementioned documents and speak directly to their DSL if they require any further clarity. All staff sign to confirm they have read and understood the content of the documents referenced.
- All staff are aware of the early help process and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment.
- All staff are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation; staff should be aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.
- All staff are aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead

(and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.

- All staff understand the process for making referrals to local authority children's social work service and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play. Annex A- Flowchart of in-school procedures to follow where there are concerns about a child (Page 13) illustrates the procedure to follow if you have concerns about a child's welfare. Wherever possible, speak to the DSL, deputy DSL or head teacher (in the absence of a DSL) first to agree a course of action. In the absence of a DSL or head teacher being available, staff must not delay in directly contacting children's social work duty and advice team or the police if they believe a child is at immediate risk of significant harm.
- All staff understand the procedures for identifying, reporting and responding to sexual harassment and violence in schools as outlined in Part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020).
- All staff understand the process for reporting safeguarding concerns or allegations against a member of staff or person in school.
- All staff understand their responsibility and the procedures to report any safeguarding concerns that compromise the safety and wellbeing of children/undermine a safe school culture and ethos that they believe they are unable to report directly in school, in keeping with the Trust's whistleblowing procedures.

Designated Safeguarding Lead Responsibilities

Each academy will appoint at least one Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who will have day to day responsibility for dealing with safeguarding in the school.

The DSL is the person appointed to take lead responsibility for child protection issues in school. The person fulfilling this role must be a senior member of the school's leadership team, and the DSL role must be set out in the post holder's job description. All DSL's (and where appropriate any deputies) are expected to carry out the full range of roles and responsibilities outlined in Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2020). All designated staff will update their training every 2 years.

It is good practice to nominate a Deputy DSL to cover the role of the designated safeguarding lead when they are unavailable. In large schools it is advisable to have other senior staff who can also take on this role and work as part of a 'designated safeguarding team'. The lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the DSL.

The DSL and any deputies are responsible for liaising with the three safeguarding partners, working with other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) and follow their locally agreed safeguarding partnership arrangements in all cases of suspected child abuse or neglect.

The guidance document "When to call the police" (NPCC 2020) should help the DSL and any deputies understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do.

The DSL and (where appropriate any deputies) are responsible for promoting the educational outcomes of children with a social worker and other pupils deemed vulnerable.

DSL's must ensure that all other members of staff are provided with appropriate opportunities (including appropriate training) in order to carry out their statutory duties to safeguard children and promote their welfare as defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2020) .

In the case of serious concern, all staff must ensure that Chief Executive Officer (CEO), is informed of all issues/ concerns/ incidents. In the absence of the CEO they should inform the Finance and Operations Director (FOD) who will inform the CEO. Where there is doubt about what constitutes a 'serious concern' the Trust should be informed.

Managing allegations or safeguarding concerns against a member of staff or person in school.

The LGB must ensure that there are clear procedures for staff to follow in any case in which it is alleged that a member of staff (including supply staff), governor, visiting professional or volunteer has:

- a) behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child
- b) possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- c) behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he may pose a risk of harm to children
- d) behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

The procedures for managing allegations or safeguarding concerns against a member of staff or person in school must reflect the requirements set out in Part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) and be clearly outlined in each school's safeguarding and child protection policy. All concerns that meet the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) criteria must be reported to the LADO immediately in keeping with the agreed local three safeguarding partnership protocols. If a referral to LADO, Children's Social Care, or anyone else is not made, the decision, rationale for the decision and the name and post of the decision maker must be recorded.

The Headteacher (or if appropriate, Chair of Governors) must report all serious incidents relating to an adult working/volunteering with children to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) immediately as well as the CEO. All notifications are to be followed up by email and in the case of pupils, recorded on CPOMS (or equivalent) or in the case of staff, recorded in their personnel file.

It is the responsibility of the LGB to ensure that there are clear procedures in place for any staff/volunteers who are dismissed by the school for gross misconduct or cumulative misconduct relating to safeguarding of children/young people will be referred to the DBS for consideration of barring. Similarly, where the school has a reasonable belief that the member of staff/volunteer would have been dismissed by the school had they been employed at the time of the conclusion of investigations, they will be referred to the DBS. The school will keep written records of all of the above.

Whistleblowing

It is the responsibility of the LGB and the head teacher/principal to ensure that all staff members are aware of the Trust's Whistleblowing procedures in situations that a member of staff feels unable to raise an issue with their employer or feels that their genuine safeguarding concerns are not being addressed. There should be a clear reference to the Trust whistleblowing procedures in each academy safeguarding and child protection policy. The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is also available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00am to 8:00pm, Monday to Friday and Email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

Multi-agency working

Schools and colleges have a pivotal role to play in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that the school or college contributes to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (2020) and the local safeguarding board partnership arrangements. The three safeguarding partners should make arrangements to allow all schools (including those in multi-academy trusts) and colleges in the local area to be fully engaged, involved and included in safeguarding arrangements. All Dales' schools are under a statutory duty to co-operate with the published arrangements.

Parent Role

All parents/carers are made aware of the school's responsibilities in regard to child protection procedures through publication of the individual academy Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy on the school website. In keeping with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020), wherever possible parents/cares should supply at least two emergency contacts in case of emergencies, and in case there are welfare concerns at the home.

Community

Community users organising activities for children are to be made aware of and understand the need for compliance with the Trust and academy child protection guidelines and procedures. This will be undertaken in partnership with the organiser during the planning stages for events and activities. In cases where a third party hires or lets school grounds for the purposes of providing activities or services for children, LGB's must seek written assurances that the organisation has appropriate child protection policies and procedures in place and that they follow safer recruitment principles as outlined in Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020).

Recruitment

The Dales Academies Trust pays full regard and commitment to following the safer recruitment, selection and pre-employment vetting procedures as outlined in part three of KCSiE (2020) for all staff employed across the Trust. The Trust will maintain a single central record detailing checks carried out in each academy within the MAT. Whilst there is no requirement for the MAT to maintain an individual record for each academy, the information should be recorded in such a way that allows for details for each individual academy to be

provided separately, and without delay, to those entitled to inspect that information, including Ofsted inspectors.

LGBs and the head teacher of each school are responsible for ensuring that all recruitment panels include at least one person that has undertaken safer recruitment training.

All Trust schools must ensure that written risk assessments are undertaken in situations where information provided on DBS certificates necessitates so. Written risk assessments must be undertaken for all volunteers not engaging in regulated activity as outlined in Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020).

Information sharing and GDPR

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect. As part of meeting a child's needs, it is important for governing bodies and proprietors to recognise the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies. This should include ensuring arrangements are in place that set out clearly the processes and principles for sharing information within the school or college and with the three safeguarding partners, other organisations, agencies and practitioners as required. School and college staff should be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to the local authority children's social care.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

The Trust's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedures will be reviewed and updated annually or when circumstances necessitate.

ESSENTIAL READING

1. The complete guidance, Keeping children safe in education Statutory guidance for schools and colleges September 2020
2. Part one and Annex A: Keeping children safe in education Statutory guidance for schools and colleges September 2020 Information for all school and college staff
3. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (Updated 2019)
4. Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers 2019
5. The Education Inspection Framework Ofsted May 2019
6. The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) Inspection Framework 2019
7. Teaching online safety in school June 2019
8. Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18

9. Statutory guidance on FGM, which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
10. The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
11. Statutory Guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
12. Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings (GSWP) (Safer Recruitment Consortium May 2019)
13. Children Missing Education – Statutory guidance for local authorities (DfE September 2016)