



## INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOR TRUSTEES & GOVERNORS: SAFEGUARDING

### WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING?

Safeguarding includes the actions required (and taken) to protect people from harm and the procedures in place to manage incidents and complaints.

**Safeguarding is a governance priority for the Trust, a fundamental part of our operations as a charity for the public benefit**

The Charity Commission describes safeguarding as 'the range of measures in place to protect people in a charity, or those it comes into contact with, from abuse and maltreatment of any kind.'

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) defines safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children (everyone under the age of 18) as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Making sure that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Safeguarding adults (18+) means protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. This includes having an outcomes approach and supporting individuals in making choices and having control in how they choose to live their lives.

**Safeguarding is pro-active = prevent harm    Child protection is reactive = response to harm**  
**Child protection is one part of safeguarding** (NGA)

### WHAT IS A SAFEGUARDING CULTURE?

An effective safeguarding culture looks beyond compliance and Child Protection to make safeguarding a fundamental part of every day life, backed up by training, robust processes and regular, forensic use of data to ensure intervention and support is targeted to protect the vulnerable and is effective so that

- We minimise the risks of harm or abuse
- Everyone has confidence their concerns will be dealt with appropriately
- We work in partnerships, internal and external, using our combined skills and resources to help children and young people to be safe so they can **thrive now and for the future**

### WHAT MUST TRUSTEES DO?

The Charity Commission expects Trustees to make sure their charity:

1. Identifies and manages risks including the use and regular review of a risk register;
2. Has suitable policies and practices in place which everyone understands and uses;
3. Carries out necessary checks to ensure that people are suitable to act in their roles and policies and procedures remain relevant and effective;
4. Protects volunteers and staff including having policies on bullying, harassment, whistleblowing and appropriate insurance;
5. Handles and reports incidents appropriately including
  - Handling and recording reports in a secure and responsible way
  - Acting quickly to ensure harm or damage is minimised
  - Reporting to and working with relevant agencies

### SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

**Never keep concerns about the safety or well-being of a child or vulnerable adult to yourself**

**Remain vigilant – 'it could happen here'**

## REPORT CONCERNS TO:

School Designated Leads (DSL), School Head or the Trust's CEO

Out of hours/school holidays contact: Oxfordshire MASH:  
0345 050 7666 or (out of office hours) 0800 833408

**If you think a child is in immediate danger call the Police on 999**

## WHAT DOES THE BOARD DO?

The Abingdon Learning Trust Board sets four core expectations relating to safeguarding:

- Set an **organisational culture** that prioritises safeguarding
- Work to provide a **safe and trusted environment** to safeguard everyone in our organisation
- Establish and regularly review **policies and procedures** to keep our learning community safe
- Establish clear procedures for **listening, dealing with, reporting and learning** from incidents in an open way that does not downplay failure and seeks to continually improve

WE DO THIS BY working with our schools to:

- ⇒ Clearly delegate and define roles and responsibilities through the scheme of delegation, role descriptions and codes of conduct;
- ⇒ Ensure that all staff and volunteers are appointed with appropriate checks, that they receive the training they need to carry out their roles and to understand their responsibilities, including for safeguarding;
- ⇒ Put policies in place, informed by good practice, customised to reflect local context and regularly reviewed to ensure compliance and effectiveness;
- ⇒ Keep safeguarding high on our agenda, rigorously evaluating our procedures with regular monitoring, analysis of data, reporting, reflection and external review;
- ⇒ Maintain a vigilant ('it could happen here'), transparent, listening culture that encourages early identification and sensitive handling of concerns to help us continually improve our practice;
- ⇒ Holding ourselves to account (individually and as a Board) for ensuring that we undertake appropriate training and follow statutory guidance

**Safeguarding forms part of the work of all Trust Committees**

## GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The Safeguarding Trustee is: **Lynn Fathers** [lfathers@abingdonlearningtrust.org](mailto:lfathers@abingdonlearningtrust.org)

The Committee with oversight of safeguarding is: **Educational Standards Committee**

The Executive lead for safeguarding is: **Chief Executive Officer** [CEO@abingdonlearningtrust.org](mailto:CEO@abingdonlearningtrust.org)

The Trust Board has delegated responsibility for ensuring effective safeguarding arrangements are in place for each school to: the **Local Academy Committee (LAC)** of each school. LAC oversight provides assurances that risk assessments, action plans and approaches are responsive and reflect local context. Each LAC is expected to appoint a safeguarding governor to lead on this work.

## SAFEGUARDING TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trust Board appoints a Safeguarding Trustee to:

- Act as the key link between the Trust Board, LACs and their nominated safeguarding governor
  - supporting the induction of new trustees/governors
  - chairing the Trust's Safeguarding Group meetings
  - Alerting the board to safeguarding risks
- Participate in policy and scheme of delegation reviews

In the event of a significant incident, the Safeguarding Trustee will liaise closely with the Chair of the Trust and the CEO, supporting the Trust in making any public statement or media response.

## KEY READING AND TRAINING FOR TRUSTEES & GOVERNORS

- **Essential:** [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (Part 2 as a minimum [Part 3 if involved in recruitment; Part 4 if involved in disciplinary or complaints panels])
- [NGA e-learning](#): Safeguarding – How to fulfil the governance role
- Trust/School Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy

**SUGGESTED GOVERNANCE QUESTIONS:** [SAFEGUARDING NGA](#) AND [ALT DASHBOARD](#) ([GOVERNOR HUB](#))