



SAFEGUARDING - ABINGDON LEARNING TRUST

Review of academic year 2019-20

1. Promote and demonstrate compliance, consistency and good practice including in dissemination and training:

- The Trust Board approves a Child Protection (Safeguarding) policy to apply across all the Trust's schools. Each school can adapt as necessary where the school has identified risks specific to their context that they need to address in the policy.
- The policy approved is the model policy provided by OCC. This ensures that the policy meets both statutory and local requirements; and is adapted locally for each school's context.
- The policy is promoted via the Trust and individual school websites and to all staff via training events organised by each school to ensure full coverage. Staff awareness of the policy is tested during internal and external reviews.
- Trustees are made aware of the policy during its annual review and in summary via an information leaflet. All Trustees are required to annually read KCSIE part 2 - The Management of Safeguarding (as a minimum) and sign to confirm this action;
- Each school uses the OCC audit template to undertake self-evaluations and to support the completion of OSCB required annual returns, and to the Board. This promotes compliance against the detailed requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).
- School annual reports are reviewed by the CEO to ensure completion and to identify any emerging trust-wide gaps, inconsistencies, strengths and themes.
- A safeguarding group comprising the DSLs, CEO and safeguarding trustee and governors meets regularly to promote joint approaches. Discussions additionally help to develop good practice and encourage consistency in approach where this does not compromise local needs.
- Annual peer reviews provide internal challenge and promote good practice across the Trust. This quality assurance process will be further strengthened by an external review commissioned every three years to provide independent challenge and benchmarking.

2019-20 actions have included:

- Reviews and confirmation of practice
 - against of NGA Governance of Safeguarding Guidance (2019) with all actions recommended for a MAT in place;
 - against COVID-19 requirements (DfE) March 2020 onward.
- Training
 - Staff events opened up across the Trust to improve efficiency and compliance so that any staff or volunteers can attend any event;
 - Board approval of expectations for Trustee training; set as annual reading of KCSIE part 2 as a minimum. This action to be confirmed to and recorded by the Clerk;
 - Safeguarding presentation provided to Trust Board;
 - Induction (including safeguarding) for new governors developed and delivered (remotely).
- Policies:
 - Lettings Policy reviewed for consistency across the Trust and to ensure coverage of safeguarding requirements;



- Development and adoption of policies and procedures with associated guidance for staff and students as required under Covid-19 interim arrangements (March onward).
- Recruitment
 - Single Central Record (SCR) requirements reviewed with Trust format agreed to be implemented from September. Trust reviews of SCR and HR checklist undertaken to assess compliance and identify improvements;
 - Safer Recruitment checks reviewed across the Trust with a compliance checklist established and reviewed.
- Communication:
 - Expansion of website to include clear statement of principles and approach across the trust and to provide users with information about how we discharge our responsibilities including for Central Team staff;
 - Expansion of Governor Hub to provide a shared reference library including for safeguarding information.

2. Address Safeguarding in your Scheme of Delegation:

- Responsibility for the approval and monitoring of the Trust's Safeguarding Policy is clearly defined in the Scheme of Delegation.
- The Trust Board appoints a safeguarding trustee and this role is defined with a role description making responsibilities clear.
- Oversight of safeguarding is clearly allocated to the Trust's Compliance committee through the Scheme of Delegation and associated Terms of Reference. The committee's Compliance Framework sets out how it monitors compliance across its remit including receiving an annual report on Safeguarding arrangements and standing 'exception reports' to consider issues as they arise.
- Local Academy Boards (LAB) have responsibility for determining how they organise and distribute their delegated responsibilities but all are expected to have a safeguarding governor. Role descriptions are available for the LABs to use if required.
- Information on trustee responsibilities for safeguarding, including how the Trust governance structures cover these duties is included in a Trustee safeguarding leaflet.
- Roles and responsibilities for safeguarding are set out in the Trust's induction course for new governors.

2019-20 actions have included:

- Review of the Trust Scheme of Delegation and Terms of Reference with recommendations for changes made to maintain clarity for and up to date coverage of safeguarding responsibilities;
- Ensuring safeguarding responsibilities are included and clear in proposals to restructure Secondary School leadership.

3. Ensure the Designated Safeguarding Leads work as a team:

- A Safeguarding group network was established in the early days of the Trust's formation. Chaired by the Safeguarding Trustee and with membership including school DSLs, the CEO and school safeguarding governors, the primary purpose of the group is to promote joint working.
- The group's meetings provide regular examples of a team approach. This includes
 - sharing information from training events;
 - sharing resources that DSLs have come across or use in schools;



- peer reviews of safeguarding arrangements and SCRs;
- post-event reflection and action planning;
- identifying and considering opportunities to develop or join new initiatives;
- an opportunity for informal supervision.

2019-20 actions have included:

- Continuing the programme of internal reviews using the experience of knowledge of the DSLs to check and challenge schools' compliance;
- Developing proposals for a lead DSL secondment role to support quality assurance and DSL supervision arrangements.

4. Post incident reflection resulting in a cross-MAT improvement plan:

- The safeguarding group agenda includes consideration of learning arising from group members' experiences including post-Ofsted, school, local and national incidents, peer or external review and audit as well as no-name discussion of incidents in school.
- Annual reports, audits, incidents and risks are regularly reviewed by the CEO, safeguarding trustee and DSLs to develop individual school and Trust action plans which are then reviewed through regular monitoring meetings and reviews.

2019-20 post incident reviews have resulted in:

- Behaviour and Safeguarding Policies more closely linked up to ensure significant incidents are coherently managed and monitored
- Introduction of a standard Trust SCR to promote compliance and support joint working;
- Development of a recruitment policy to ensure consistent application of safe recruitment practice.

5. MAT action plans and reporting to the Board:

- The board receives an annual report from the CEO and Safeguarding Trustee providing an overview of Trust schools' safeguarding activity and providing assurance that required statutory returns have been completed.
- Additionally, the CEO provides regular exception and performance reports to the Trust Compliance Committee as the Board's appointed group with oversight of safeguarding arrangements. Reports include actions taken to address any issues arising and the status of those actions (open/closed).
- The CEO also meets and reports regularly (2-3 times per year) to the safeguarding trustee to review progress against agreed actions and to consider issues that have arisen between meetings. Ad hoc meetings are also arranged as necessary to consider and respond to specific incidents.
- The safeguarding trustee reports:
 - verbally and through notes of visit/meetings to the Compliance Committee (and or Trust Board) to provide an update on emerging risks and the progress of action plans
 - through queries, checks and challenges raised against appropriate agenda items at Board and Trust committee meetings
- The safeguarding trustee and CEO work together to provide the board with an annual statement on safeguarding arrangements for inclusion in the statutory Annual Report.

2019-20 actions have included:



- Expanding reporting arrangements to include a Safeguarding Action plan and to ensure Looked After Children are included in data reports;
- Active monitoring through
 - Exception Reporting to Compliance Committee
 - Regular trustee-CEO meetings increasing to every two weeks, through COVID-19 and framework shared across safeguarding governor network
 - Cross-trust review of outcomes of Annual Reports identifying opportunities for joint work
 - Regular update reports to Trust Board through COVID-19 arrangements

Safeguarding Action Plan Review

Action proposals for 2019-20 included:

- Embed the monitoring and reporting schedule outlined in governance meeting plans; **complete**
- Review the Trust level safeguarding activity report with the DSL network to check, challenge and share approaches: **complete**
- Develop Trust webpage to promote and disseminate safeguarding arrangements: **complete**
- Common safeguarding recording and reporting system implementation across the Trust: **in progress**
- Update Trust job descriptions to include consistent statement on safeguarding responsibilities for new appointments and revisions as they arise
- Implement and monitor compliance against HR Safer Recruitment checklist: **complete**
- Review trustee/governor induction and safeguarding monitoring procedures with safeguarding governors and DSLs to identify and share good practice: **complete**

Action proposals for 2020-21

- Establish cross-Trust quality assurance procedures and strengthen DSL supervision through the appointment of a safeguarding lead to:
 - Embed and ensure Trust standard SCR format through regular school and Trust reviews
 - Embed and ensure Trust recruitment check procedures (checklist and SCR)
 - Embed, ensure and further develop the Trust's internal review process
- Implement CPOMS across the Trust
- Embed Trust induction for new governors: Effective governance surveys
- Ensure educational provision is compliant (curriculum content): CEO/Secondary Director reviews
- Complete post-incident review of COVID-19 arrangements once operations return to normal practice.

Reviewed against the '5 steps for effective MAT safeguarding': June 2020

<https://schoolsimprovement.net/safeguarding-in-mats/>