



## **SAFEGUARDING - ABINGDON LEARNING TRUST**

### **Review of academic year 2020-21**

#### **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 should adapt this 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. With the option for local schools to adapt the model (with CEO approval), this approach ensures that the policy meets both statutory and local requirements.
- 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 in post training surveys and 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;
- Staff receive regular updates through briefings, emails, newsletters, notice boards; governors, trustees are also kept up to date through regular reports (HT/CEO/SG lead reports to Boards), network meetings and via the CEO's Governance Journal with training provided via the NGA's learning link and Governors for Schools modules
- Each school uses the OCC audit template to undertake self-evaluations and to support the completion of OSCB required annual returns. This promotes compliance against the detailed requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).
- School annual reports to OCC are reviewed by the CEO to ensure completion and to identify improvement opportunities from any emerging trust-wide gaps, inconsistencies, strengths and themes.
- A Trust safeguarding group comprising the DSLs, CEO and safeguarding trustee and governors meets regularly to promote joint approaches and consider Trust practice against internal and external advice (e.g. OSCB, SCRs, Ofsted reports). 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 and continual improvement 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.

#### 2020-21 actions have included:

- Reviews and confirmation of practice undertaken to consider
  - Ofsted guidance including review of Sexual Abuse in Schools;
  - DfE COVID-19 requirements, March 2020 onward;
  - Implementation of KCSIE.
- Systems
  - Trust investment to support use of CPOMS across the Trust (including development of consistent reporting)
- Training
  - Developing and sharing remote training delivery and evaluations across the Trust through MS Teams and SMARTLOG;



- Implementing Trust induction (inc safeguarding) for new governors (remotely)
- Confirming and implementing training expectations for all Trustees (Induction leaflet and KCSIE);
- Establishing supervision, support meetings for DSLs;
- Extending governor training options to include NGA learning link
- Regular reports including action plan reviews to Trust Board;
- Policies:
  - Post-16, Images and Online Safety Policies developed and implemented through Safeguarding network group collaboration;
  - Peer-Peer abuse procedures reviewed and assessed in light of Everyone's Invited learning and Ofsted guidance
- Recruitment
  - Checks of Single Central Register and Recruitment procedures maintained through remote and on-site reviews
- Communication:
  - Website and Trust documentation updated to reflect new guidance and priorities

## **2. Address Safeguarding in your Scheme of Delegation:**

- Responsibility for Safeguarding is clearly defined in the Scheme of Delegation and supporting Roles and Responsibilities Matrix;
- 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.

### 2020-21 actions have included:

- Delivery of remote induction training to new governors
- Updating the Trust's Scheme of Delegation and Terms of Reference to reflect new secondary governance structure
- Updating Trustee induction leaflet to reflect updates to KCSIE

## **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.

#### 2020-21 actions have included:

- DSL collaborations and shared work on policy developments;
- Joint responses and collaboration to ensure safe and effective delivery of education and pastoral support under Coronavirus regulations;
- Increased frequency of group meetings to provide additional support and opportunities to share approaches during pandemic;
- Internal reviews, including DSLs, restored post Covid-19 restrictions to support shared learning and compliance.

#### **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, serious case reviews, 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.

#### 2020-21 post incident reviews have resulted in:

- Peer-Peer abuse procedures reviewed in light of Ofsted guidance on sexual abuse (Everyone's Invited);
- Investments in improvements to Fitzharrys' entrance and successful Condition Improvement Fund bids to address recommendations from Health and Safety audits.

#### **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.

#### 2020-21 actions have included:

- Continuing scrutiny and reporting arrangements to include regular:



- Exception Reporting to Compliance Committee (inc RSHE)
- Increased frequency of Trustee-CEO meetings with termly SWOT and action plan reviews
- Cross-trust review of outcomes of internal reviews and Annual Reports identifying opportunities for joint work and investment
- Regular update reports to Trust Board

### **Safeguarding Action Plan Review**

#### **Actions planned for 2020-21 included**

- Establish cross-Trust quality assurance procedures to:
  - Embed and ensure Trust standard SCR format through regular school and Trust reviews: **complete** - used both remotely and during site visits
  - Embed and ensure Trust recruitment check procedures (checklist and SCR) partially **complete**
  - Embed, ensure and further develop the Trust's internal review process
    - Maintained via remote access, SmartLog (SCR) with onsite reviews re-established term 3: **complete**
  - Strengthen DSL supervision through the appointment of a safeguarding lead:
    - revised to provide external supervision with regular meetings for all DSLs: **complete**
- Implement CPOMS across the Trust: **complete**
- Develop Trust induction for new governors to include safeguarding: **complete**
- Ensure educational provision is compliant for safeguarding content (curriculum: RSHE): CEO/Secondary Director reviews **complete**
- Complete post-incident review of COVID-19 arrangements once operations return to normal practice. **Planned**

#### **Action proposals for 2021-22**

- Review delivery of training for staff, and curriculum for students - to show greater consistency in understanding about all protected characteristics, and Prevent (radicalisation and extremism).
- Review capacity and assess options to manage changing demands;
- Ensure HR procedures remain compliant and meet new statutory requirements

#### **Reviewed against the '5 steps for effective MAT safeguarding': July 2021**

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