

Governors, Safeguarding and Ofsted

This document aims to support the Safeguarding Governor to perform their role well. This should not be seen as a replacement for a good culture of safeguarding in a school, but an adjunct to it. The safeguarding message to all schools is to “maintain an attitude of it could happen here”.

The Safeguarding Governor must be:

- An official governor (either elected or appointed) – they can't be an associate member
- Separate from the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) – this is to make sure there's sufficient challenge to your school's safeguarding arrangements and performance

Governors overall role in safeguarding

Schools and their governing boards have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This responsibility is outlined in statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).

Governors should make sure the school has an effective:

- Child protection policy
- Staff code of conduct
- Whistleblowing policy
- Policy for handling allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers
- Safeguarding response to children who go missing from education
- Online monitoring system and online filters

The governing board (GB) is accountable for ensuring the school has effective policies and procedures in place for safeguarding children and monitoring the school's compliance with them. Neither the governing board nor individual governors have a role in dealing with individual cases or a right to know details of cases, (except when exercising their disciplinary functions in respect of allegations against a staff member).

Role of the Safeguarding Governor

Key Areas of Responsibility

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on the governing bodies of maintained schools, and regulations under section 157, about safeguarding pupils in independent schools (which include academies) require academy trusts to have arrangements in place to ensure that they:

- Carry out their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children; and
- Have regard to the statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State in considering what arrangements they need to make for the purpose of that section.

Key Tasks

- Ensure that the GB approves the child protection and safeguarding policy annually.
- Make sure the curriculum covers safeguarding, including online safety.
- Check and report to the GB that the policy is on the school website.
- Meet the DSL(s) regularly – agree on how often.
- Make sure the school has appointed a designated teacher/s to promote the educational achievement of LAC and CIN, and that this person has appropriate training.
- Ensure there are effective policies for tackling bullying, sexual harassment, online sexual abuse and sexual violence between children and learners.
- Undertake required training, including Safeguarding, Safer Recruitment, Prevent and On-line Safety.
- Understand and report to the GB how the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is being implemented.
- Talk to stakeholders and go on learning walks with DSL.
- Ensure the school makes effective use of early help services to provide children and learners with additional support when they need it.
- Ensure that safeguarding and child protection is always an agenda item at GB meetings.
- Ensure that all governors are familiar with the issues of safeguarding.
- Ensure all governors have completed safeguarding training.
- Ensure that all governors understand the need for complete confidentiality e.g. if they recognise the identity of a child who is discussed.
- Ensure that all governors have completed DBS checks.

1. Reporting to the governing board
 - a. The annual Section 175 safeguarding audit has been returned to the LA in a timely manner.
 - b. Status of the Single Central Record (annual but best practice termly).
 - c. The school has a Designated Safeguarding Lead and a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.
2. Training records for all staff are current and up to date in respect of:
 - a. Induction for new staff
 - b. Universal safeguarding training for all staff and volunteers
 - c. Designated person training
 - d. Safer recruitment training for staff
 - e. Prevent
 - f. Any other relevant training, e.g. H&S, First Aid, etc
3. DBS checks are completed for all governors and recorded on the SCR.
4. All governors have completed safeguarding training for governors with due regard for the induction of new governors.
5. Other training for governors provided by or signposted by the DSL.
6. Be assured by seeing evidence that school has:
 - a. Robust systems for recording, storing, and reviewing child welfare and child protection concerns.
 - b. Mechanisms for working well with relevant agencies and individuals and with parents/carers and families
7. Recruitment

The school conducts all recruitment with due regard for safer recruitment procedures.

The Safeguarding Governor should be reporting to the GB termly.

Documents to be familiar with

- School Single Central Record
- School Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and procedures AND all allied supporting policies identified within it
- School recruitment procedures
- School whistleblowing policy
- School behaviour policy/principles statement
- School website
- OFSTED School Inspection Handbook (Section on Safeguarding)
- OFSTED Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings
- OFSTED Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges
- DfE – Keeping Children Safe in Education

Safeguarding action may be needed to protect children and learners from the following risks, which include abuse perpetrated by other children as well as by adults:

- neglect
- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- bullying, including online bullying and prejudice-based bullying
- racist, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse
- gender-based violence/violence against women and girls
- sexual harassment, online sexual abuse and sexual violence between children and learners. Online abuse can include sending abusive, harassing and misogynistic messages; sharing nude and semi-nude images and videos; and coercing others to make and share sexual imagery
- radicalisation and/or extremist behaviour
- child sexual exploitation and trafficking
- child criminal exploitation, including county lines
- risks linked to using technology and social media, including online bullying; the risks of being groomed online for exploitation or radicalisation; and risks of accessing and generating inappropriate content, for example youth produced sexual imagery
- teenage relationship abuse
- upskirting (taking a picture of someone's genitals or buttocks under their clothing without them knowing, either for sexual gratification or in order to humiliate or distress the individual. It is a criminal offence)
- substance misuse
- gang activity and serious violence, particularly affecting young males who have been excluded, have experienced trauma and have been involved in offending
- domestic abuse
- female genital mutilation
- forced marriage
- fabricated or induced illness
- homelessness
- so-called honour-based violence
- other issues not listed here but that pose a risk to children, learners and vulnerable adults

Safeguarding is not just about protecting children, learners and vulnerable adults from deliberate harm, neglect and failure to act. It relates to broader aspects of care and education, including:

- children's and learners' health and safety and well-being, including their mental health
- meeting the needs of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)
- the use of reasonable force
- meeting the needs of children and learners with medical conditions
- providing first aid
- educational visits
- intimate care and emotional well-being
- online safety and associated issues
- appropriate arrangements to ensure children's and learners' security, considering the local context

Meeting with the DSL/s

The purpose of meeting with the DSL/s throughout the year is to:

- Ensure that statutory responsibilities are being discharged by the school.
- Monitor the SCR to report to the governing board that it is completed and compliant.
- See evidence that staff training/induction records are current and compliant.
- See policies in action to understand how pupils and staff alike are aware of the policies and implement them.
- See that leadership and management are taking a proactive approach to keeping children safe and are up to date with changes and requirements.
- See that the child protection policy and procedures are on the school website and are current and compliant.
- Enable the Safeguarding Governor to report with confidence at GB meetings.
- Enable the Safeguarding Governor to talk with confidence at inspection about the robustness of the school's approach to safeguarding.

Allegations against staff/volunteers

Governors should be clear about the procedures in place for dealing with abuse allegations against school staff and volunteers. The procedures must aim to strike a balance between the need to protect children from abuse, and the need to protect staff and volunteers from false or unfounded accusations.

If an allegation is made, the Head or Chair of Governors should immediately discuss the case with the LA designated officer for safeguarding (LADO). Chairs of governing bodies are expected to work with the Head (unless the allegation concerns the Head) and the local officer to confirm the facts about individual cases.

In August 2011, the Department for Education published statutory guidance on Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and Other Staff — Guidance for Local Authorities, Headteachers, School Staff, Governing Bodies and Proprietors of Independent Schools.

Ofsted Inspections

School safeguarding arrangements are included in Ofsted inspections. As part of this judgment inspectors will expect GB to ensure they have robust safeguarding arrangements in place, including safe recruitment procedures. Inspectors should consider how well their leaders and managers have created a culture of vigilance, where children's and learners' welfare is promoted and where timely and appropriate safeguarding action is taken for children or learners who need extra help or who may be suffering, or likely to suffer, harm. In

this regard, Ofsted may request evidence that each recruitment panel includes at least one member trained in safer recruitment.

Inspectors will look for evidence of the extent to which leaders, governors and managers create a positive culture and ethos where safeguarding is an important part of everyday life in the setting, backed up by training at every level. Inspectors will consider the content, application and effectiveness of safeguarding policies and procedures. They will consider the quality of safeguarding practice, including evidence that staff understand and follow the setting's safeguarding procedures and are aware of the signs that children may be at risk of harm either within the setting or in the family or wider community outside the setting.

The Safeguarding Governor should expect to be part of the team of governors who meet with the Inspector. Governance should appreciate that there will be a focus on this area. Inspectors will consider the extent to which leaders and Governors ensure that arrangements to protect children and learners:

- meet statutory requirements
- follow the applicable guidance
- promote their welfare – including the prevention of radicalisation and extremism

You might be asked to comment/talk about/provide evidence on the following

- How do you know the school is covering safeguarding?
- How do you monitor safeguarding?
- How do you keep children safe while sharing premises with xxxxxx?
- Are you aware of any safeguarding issues that the school has dealt with?
- What safeguarding courses have you attended?
- Who has done training on the governing board?
- How do you ensure safeguarding is strong in the school?