

Role of the Governance Safeguarding lead

1. Introduction

The overall responsibility for ensuring that safeguarding procedures, policies and training are in place, being effectively managed and comply with the law, lies with the Governing Board (GB) and Designated Safeguarding Lead Officers (DSL) within each school. The responsibilities of the GB are set out in the statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (KCSiE) 2024.

2. Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE)

KCSiE is the DfE's statutory safeguarding guidance which is updated every September. It should be read annually and understood by all governors and trustees, paying particular regard to Part 2 which sets out the management of safeguarding (see Essential Reading, below).

Governors and trustees also need to be assured that *all staff who work directly with children* have read at least Part 1 of KCSiE. Governing bodies and proprietors, working with their senior leadership teams and especially their DSL, should ensure that *those staff who do not work directly with children* read either Part 1 or Annex A (a condensed version of Part 1) of KCSiE. Governors and trustees also need to be assured that staff understand their responsibilities under the guidance, that the school adopts recommended good practice across all areas of its work, and that safeguarding is monitored.

In line with KCSiE, all governors and trustees should receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training should be regularly updated and equip governors and trustees with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that safeguarding policies and procedure are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. The [Governance Guide](#) for maintained schools and [Academy Trust Governance guide](#) from the DfE reiterates the importance of training to ensure that all governors and trustees have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions, understand their responsibilities and assure themselves that their school's safeguarding arrangements are robust. Training should also reflect duties set out in [Working together to safeguard children](#) so governors and trustees understand local



arrangements, are aware of advice and guidance provided by [Birmingham Safeguarding Children's Partnership](#) and are aware of the thresholds for action. It is up to GBs to determine how this training is delivered and updated.

3. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

Together with school staff and volunteers, it is mandatory for all governors and trustees to hold an enhanced DBS certificate and to have a completed Section 128 check (which identifies whether a person has been prohibited from being involved in the management of a school). These should be applied for within 21 days of a governor's/trustee's election or appointment. Governors and trustees do not need a children's barred list check unless, in addition to their governance duties, they also engage in regulated activity.

4. Role of the Governance Safeguarding lead

Whilst the GB remains the accountable body, KCSiE sets out that GBs and proprietors should have a senior board level (or equivalent) lead to take leadership responsibility for their school's safeguarding arrangements.

This nominated Governance Safeguarding lead (who should not be a member of school staff) has an important role working alongside the DSL to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements and to report back on these to the full GB. A list of suggested questions can be found below.

KCSiE sets out the expectation that all governance safeguarding leads undergo appropriate training to provide them with the skills and knowledge required to carry out their role. This training should be updated every 2 years but with regular refreshers of skills and knowledge, as it is for the DSL.

The core responsibilities of the Governance Safeguarding lead, along with the DSL:

- To ensure there are policies and procedures in place for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare. This should include a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (see Essential Reading, below) that is updated at least annually, a Staff discipline, conduct and grievance policy, a statement of procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against all staff, contractors and volunteers (including low level concerns), and appropriate safeguarding responses to children who go missing from education.
- To ensure that all staff are briefed on, and follow, the school's adopted Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- To ensure that temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the school's arrangements for safeguarding and child protection and their responsibilities.
- To ensure a senior member of the leadership team is appointed to the role of DSL.
- To ensure that at least one other deputy DSL is appointed so that the school will have DSL cover whenever it is open.
- To ensure the role of DSL and deputy DSL is explicit in the role-holder job descriptions and that they undergo formal training every 2 years with regular refreshers (minimum annually) to ensure their knowledge and skills remain current.

- To ensure that staff have received annual training (together with regular updates as needed) on safeguarding issues, to include child protection, early help process and online safety.
- To ensure that safeguarding is integrated into a broad and balanced curriculum that teaches children about safeguarding in such a way that the pupils know how to keep themselves safe.
- To ensure there is a whole school approach to online safety that is reflected in the school's child protection and safeguarding policy, although school may also choose to adopt a standalone policy.
- To ensure school complies with the [Prevent Duty](#) to ensure children are protected from the risk of being drawn into radicalisation (see Useful Reading).
- To ensure that the school contributes to multi-agency working in line with the statutory guidance, [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).
- To ensure that the school systems in place adequately capture the views of staff, pupils and parent/carers.
- To ensure that the Section 175 – Safeguarding Self-Assessment Tool annual response (see Essential Reading, below) is completed annually by the July deadline set by the BSCP.
- To ensure that the GB understands the Section 175 Assessment, that it utilises it to ensure effective procedures are in place and that progress against the action plan is reported to and monitored by the full GB.
- To ensure a designated teacher with relevant qualifications and experience has been appointed to promote the educational achievement of looked after and previously looked after children (see Useful Reading, below).
- To ensure the designated teacher for looked after and previously looked after children is appropriately trained and receives ongoing updates.
- To ensure that, as a minimum, an annual report is received by the GB from the designated teacher for looked after and previously looked after children and the GB acts on any issues that the report raises.

5. Fulfilling the Role

The Governance Safeguarding lead should meet regularly with the school's DSL and report to the full GB once a term.

- Does the school have all the appropriate policies and procedures in place that include an effective Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Staff discipline, conduct and grievance policy and procedures for managing safeguarding allegations about staff and volunteers?
- Does the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy include procedures to minimise the risk of child on child abuse and set out how allegations will be recorded, investigated and dealt with and how those affected (both victim and perpetrator) will be supported?

- Is the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy available publicly either via the school website or by other means?
- Does the school/GB have a checklist or inventory of all policies and procedures relating to safeguarding including dates when policies need to be reviewed?
- Have **all** staff at the school read and understood at least Part 1 of KCSiE?
- Have appropriate staff read and understood Annex A of KCSiE?
- Does the DSL have the appropriate status, authority, time, funding, training, resources and support to carry out their role effectively?
- Is the school's DSL and deputy DSL appropriately trained, when is this training due to be refreshed (every 2 years) and how are their knowledge and skills kept up-to-date at regular intervals (at least annually) to keep up with any developments relevant to their role?
- Do all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) at induction?
- Do all staff receive regular updates to child protection and safeguarding training (at least annually) and are more regular updates provided as required (for example by email, e-bulletins, staff briefings) throughout the year?
- Can we look at the staff training records?
- Is Online safety training clearly established within the school's wider safeguarding training?
- Does the school have up to date policies that address online safety, mobile and smart technology, social media and acceptable use of technology in place?
- Does the school have appropriate online filtering and monitoring systems in place and is this regularly reviewed?
- Are Safer Recruitment procedures followed in the vetting and recruitment of all staff? Are all appropriate checks carried out in respect of applicants and prospective volunteers working with children?
- Has at least one person on all recruitment panels received Safer Recruitment training and is their accreditation up to date?
- Is the school's Single Central Record up to date, compliant with the requirements of KSCiE and, as a matter of best practice, checked half termly for accuracy by a member of the SLT?
- Can we point to examples where immediate action was taken to tighten up safeguarding arrangements as a result of any deficiencies or weaknesses identified, or demonstrate where school practice has been changed as the result of published serious case reviews, domestic homicide reviews, or lesson learnt reviews? See [BSCP 'Learning Lessons' from Serious Cases](#).

- How is the school meeting its statutory duties in respect of the Prevent Duty (see Useful Reading, below)?
- Is there a proactive response to managing child absence?
- Do we transfer children's child protection file to new schools/settings within the appropriate time frame as set out in KCSiE?
- How do we identify children with a mental health need and what support do we offer?
- How is safeguarding being taught in our school: does our curriculum ensure children are taught how to keep themselves and others safe, including online?
- What additional resource/help is being provided for looked after and previously looked after children, internally or externally and how is their progress monitored?
- How does the school ensure that relevant staff have due regard to the data protection principles in respect of sharing information for safeguarding purposes?

The Governance Safeguarding lead can also consider additional ways to fulfil the role by, for example:-

- Undertaking a pupil survey or meeting student council.
- Meeting with pastoral support staff.
- Undertaking a school visit to look at pupil behaviour.
- Meeting the PSHE lead to discuss the curriculum.

Scrutinising trends in data (numbers of referrals, types of referral, numbers and types of behaviour incidents, exclusion numbers, trends/comparison to previous years etc.) should be an ongoing and intrinsic part of the role.

A more extensive and detailed list of questions is available upon request to those schools who subscribe to S&GS.

6. Essential Reading

Keeping children safe in education 2024	DfE statutory guidance for schools and colleges on safeguarding children and safer recruitment. All governors should read and follow this guidance.
Safeguarding Model Policy-Schools and Colleges 2024 Birmingham City Council	Birmingham's Model Policy which can be adapted by Headteachers/Principals and GBs to reflect the ethos of individual schools.
BSCP website Right Help Right Time Guidance	Advice and guidance on Birmingham's multiagency working RHRT advises what support is available whatever children's needs are and is the collective framework and practice guide on how all individuals, agencies, partners and practitioners work together in Birmingham.

7. Other Useful Reading

Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)	DfE statutory guidance on inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
Schools, colleges and children's services : Safeguarding children - detailed information	A useful summary of links to detailed safeguarding information from a range of government agencies
Protecting children from radicalisation: the prevent duty Educate against hate Prevent duty self-assessment tool for schools	DfE departmental advice to help recipients understand the implications of the Prevent duty. Practical advice for parents, teachers and governors on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation. This tool helps schools understand how well embedded their existing policies and practices are and encourages a continuous cycle of review and improvement.

Online safety in schools and colleges: Questions from the Governing Board The National Grid for Learning - Online Safety Audit (lgfl.net)	Examples of questions that governors and trustees can ask to help ensure school leaders are keeping children safe online. Free audit tool
Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children	DfE statutory guidance that includes the role of the GB (see page 9: Role of the GB).
Maintained schools governance guide - Guidance Academy trust governance guide - Guidance	DfE advice and guidance outlining the roles and duties of GBs.
Safeguarding and school inspection	Useful joint advice from the NGA and NAHT for GBs on safeguarding and school inspection

8. Training and Keeping Updated

Safeguarding Children – The Role of the Safeguarding Governor/Trustee is available through [S&GS's Training Programme](#).

The Governance Safeguarding lead should keep abreast of current developments and undertake role specific training that is available to them.

We also recommend that the Governance Safeguarding lead refers to the S&GS Agenda Briefing. The Agenda Briefing is emailed direct to the Chair, HT, Clerk, Safeguarding leads of all schools and academies that subscribe to S&GS for the beginning of each term. To request a copy of the Agenda Briefing email governors@birmingham.gov.uk

School & Governor Support

Children and Families Directorate
 Birmingham City Council

Email: governors@birmingham.gov.uk

Web: [School and Governor Support Webpage](#)