Effective Safeguarding for Schools, Academy Trusts and Colleges

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You educate, we support

2023-2024
Edition

Strictly Education eGuides

Contents

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Introduction

Staying abreast of the risks and expectations involved in safeguarding children and young people in our schools and colleges, is an ongoing challenge.

This e-book and the pointers within it, provide the ideal backdrop to inform regular conversations between school leaders and everyone involved in safeguarding in the school/college. It should be read alongside Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) and can be used in conjunction with our interactive safeguarding checklist, designed to help schools create a safe and nurturing environment. This tool helps educators, support staff, and safeguarding leads in assessing their current practices, identifying areas for improvement, and ultimately, uphold the highest standards of care for children and young people.

We hope that you will find the contents helpful, if you need further support with your safeguarding please get in touch on 0330 123 2549.

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"It is essential that everybody working in a school or college understands their safeguarding responsibilities."

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023

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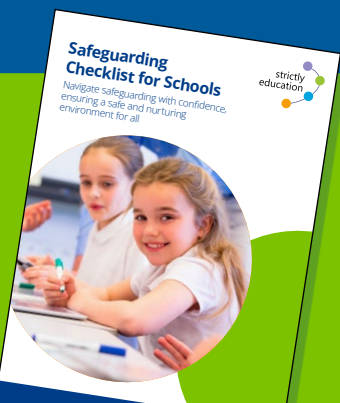education

Effective Safeguarding

Effective safeguarding depends on schools and colleges adhering to the statutory guidance within Keeping Children Safe in Education.

This eBook focuses on the key aspects of safeguarding and facilitates quick and easy monitoring of practice which enable schools and colleges to ensure compliance, awareness and effectiveness of policy.

To ensure your school or MAT meets safeguarding requirements there are a number of areas covered in the following pages that you should consider:

➕ **Policy and procedures**

➕ Staff induction

➕ **Record keeping**

➕ **Continuous Training & Development**

➕ **Safer Recruitment**

➕ **Leadership & Governance**

➕ **Designated Safeguarding Lead**

➕ **Culture of Vigilance**

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Safeguarding Checklist for Schools
Navigate safeguarding with confidence, ensuring a safe and nurturing environment for all

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The checklist assists schools in creating safe and nurturing environments. It serves as a guide to help evaluate current safeguarding practices and identify areas for improvement.

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Establishing Robust Policies and Procedures

The foundation of effective safeguarding is a robust framework of policies and procedures. Having a well-structured safeguarding policy **aligned with local authority guidelines** and the **2023 KCSiE update** is the starting point for creating a culture of vigilance where safegaurding and promoting children's welfare are prioritised.

All schools and colleges should have a **safeguarding policy** and accompanying procedures which, together with other related policies should, be **provided to all school staff**. Each school should ensure their policy complies with local arrangements published by the Local Authority.

Having an **up-to-date Safeguarding Policy** and accompanying procedures ensures that key aspects are in place, from acknowledging the policy's existence to ensuring compliance with the latest KCSiE provisions. It reinforces the establishment's **commitment to creating a safe and nurturing environment** for children and young people.

The rigour that schools and colleges apply to policy setting plays a significant part to whole school culture. Thorough review and ensuring compliance with the latest KCSiE and LA guidance underpin this.

Things to consider:

➕ Has your safeguarding policy been shared with all staff?

➕ Does it comply with current LA guidance?

➕ Does it reflect KCSiE 2023?

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Safer Recruitment for a Secure Environment

Effective safeguarding begins with safer recruitment. 'Safer recruitment' refers to a culture and a set of safe practices which help recruit staff who are suitable to work with children and young people. These practices should **ensure rigour and compliance** with the statutory framework at all stages of the recruitment process, establishing procedures that **deter, prevent, reject, and identify those unsuitable** to work with children, securing a safe learning environment.

Things to consider:

✚ **Do you have an up to date Recruitment and Selection Policy that reflects the requirements of Safer Recruitment?**

These policies set the expectation for schools to develop a culture that safeguards the welfare of children underpinned by robust recruitment procedures. Part three of KCSiE focuses on Safer Recruitment and reflects current legislation, expectation and good practice for schools and colleges to follow.

Download the full safeguarding checklist which covers all aspects of pre-employment and post-employment safeguarding, and what you need to consider.

The checklist includes specific recruitment guidance on:

✚ Advertising

✚ Application

✚ Checks prior to interview

✚ Interview and selection

✚ Shortlisting

✚ References

✚ Job offer

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Comprehensive Staff Induction

Induction will vary according to the role that is being undertaken and each new recruit's experience. KCSiE states that "all staff should be aware of systems within their school or college which support safeguarding, and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction". This should include:

➕ **Child protection policy**

➕ **Staff behaviour policy (Code of Conduct)**

➕ **The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead**

➕ **Behaviour policy**

➕ **Safeguarding response to pupil absence**

➕ **Maintaining a culture of vigilance**

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A thorough, safeguarding-focused induction for new staff members into school is essential for effective safeguarding and this should be tailored to the role and experience of each recruit.

The ideal recruitment and onboarding process:

1 Before employment commences, provide necessary paperwork, complete pre-employment checks such as **DBS** and **social media checks**, and ensure the provision of instructions for the first day. Internal arrangements such as IT setup, mentorship, and payroll, should also be considered.

2 On their first day, new employees should be equipped with policies, including the staff code of conduct. Introducing them to safeguarding systems and designated safeguarding leads creates a foundation for vigilance.

3 In their first three months schedule regular meetings to facilitate discussion, feedback, and monitor progress aligned with set targets. Effective training further hones the skills and knowledge necessary for their role.

4 During their first six months, continued vigilance by line managers ensures consistent growth. Addressing any concerns promptly and providing necessary support maintains a positive environment for staff development.
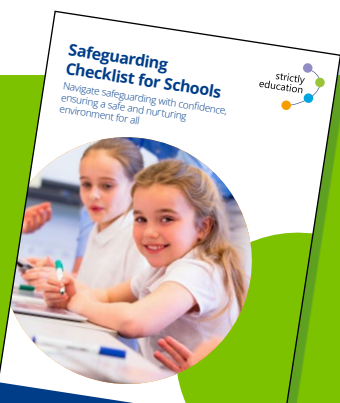
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Continuous Training & Development

Paragraph 124 of KCSiE serves as a compass, directing all staff to **undergo comprehensive safeguarding and child protection training,** including online safety and understanding roles and responsibilities in filtering, monitoring, and online security. This should be **regularly updated** and in line with any advice from the safeguarding partners.

Well planned training, which is regularly updated not only keeps safeguarding at the forefront of staff thinking, it ensures they are equipped with the most up-to-date information.

At Strictly Education we offer training and development sessions, which can be tailored to bespoke programmes for indvidual schools or whole trusts. Contact us to talk about your needs.

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Neglect

Early Help

Online Safety and Age ratings

Emotional Abuse

Sexual Abuse

Physical Abuse

Child on Child Abuse

Referrals to outside agencies

Teachers' Standards

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Record Keeping

Accurate record keeping serves as the **backbone of effective safeguarding**.

From documenting concerns raised about individual children to recording data in the **Single Central Record**, every piece of information contributes to comprehensive record keeping. Accurate and sufficiently detailed records evidence concerns raised, and outcomes achieved, forming the basis for both **internal reviews and Ofsted inspections**.

Detailed and accurate records, that follow guidance in KCSiE will assist schools in responding to any complaints that may arise, or to enquiries from other safeguarding partners.

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"All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing."

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023

Things to consider:

➕ Is there a separate file for each child where a concern and referral has been made?

➕ Do records include a clear & full summary of the concern?

➕ Do records detail how concerns are followed-up/resolved?

➕ Do records show actions, decisions and outcome?

➕ Are details of false allegations removed from HR files?

➕ Are details of all other allegations retained in HR files?

➕ Are records of low-level concerns reviewed, to identify patterns?

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Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

At the heart of safeguarding lies the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The DSL operates as a focal point for communication, coordination, and collaboration on safeguarding matters. Their role encompasses not only **direct involvement in incidents** but also the establishment of a **comprehensive safeguarding culture**.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) should take lead responsibility for all safeguarding matters within the school or college, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place.

It is for schools to decide if they wish to have others in the DSL team. Any deputy DSL should be trained to the same standard as the DSL.

The role of the DSL should be explicit in the job holder's job description. DSLs should be given the additional time, funding, be given the training, resources and support they need to carry out the role effectively.
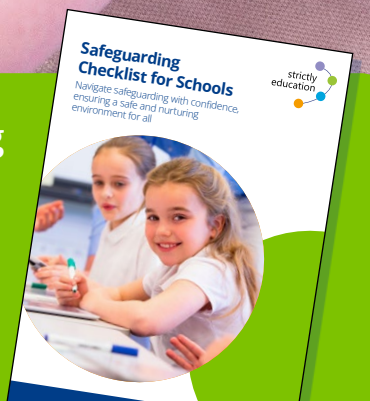
Through leading on all aspects of safeguarding, the DSL serves as a knowledgeable advocate, **fostering confidence** among staff, parents, and children alike.

Things to consider:

➕ **Has the DSL accessed training to provide them with the knowledge required to carry out their role?**

➕ **Has the training been updated every two years?**

➕ **Has the DSL attended Prevent awareness training?**

➕ **Does the DSL lead on Online safety**

➕ **Does the DSL fully understand the school/trust 's filtering and monitoring systems and processes?**

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Leadership and Governance

School and college leadership, including governance, carry significant responsibility for safeguarding. Their influence extends to **fostering a robust safeguarding culture** where it is a shared priority for all staff.

To do this, leaders should ensure that they are **monitoring the application of and adherence to all safeguarding policies and procedures** and that the outcomes of their monitoring are fed back to governors. This ensures transparency, demonstrates accountability, and compliance.
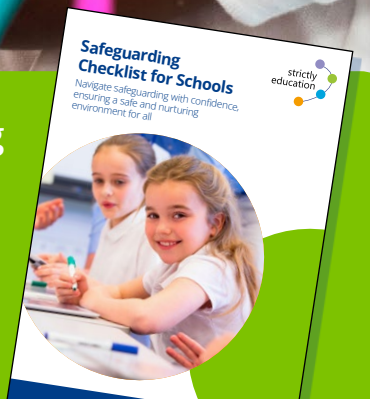
Regular, relevant training in all aspects of safeguarding is essential for leaders irrespective of who holds the DSL role.

Things to consider:

➕ Is regular monitoring of safeguarding established and assigned?

➕ Are the outcomes of monitoring routinely discussed at SLT meetings?

➕ Is safeguarding a recurring governing body agenda item?

➕ Do governing board minutes evidence the safeguarding role/overview of governance?

➕ Is safeguarding training part of new governor induction?

➕ Does the whole governing board ensure that it engages in regular (i.e. at least annually) safeguarding training?

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A Culture of Vigilance

For safeguarding to be effective a culture of vigilance is essential, and this entails the **whole school community prioritising safeguarding** in all its aspects and ensuring that children and young people's safety and wellbeing are consistently their number one priority.

Whilst the **leadership sets the tone and ethos for safeguarding**, it is important to acknowledge that **every adult within the school or college has a critical role to play**. The shared responsibility is to champion safeguarding and make it a living reality.

Leaders including governors are entrusted with a specific role in developing and maintaining this culture. They should consistently **seek and provide assurance** that safeguarding principles are actively and consistently applied throughout the school or college. Leadership should ensure that the schools culture is characterised by commitment, consistency and regular conversation on children's safeguarding and the promotion of their welfare. The environment should be one where safeguarding **conversations and practices** are routine.

When safeguarding becomes firmly embedded in the ethos, each action taken – no matter how small – contributes to the **larger mission of ensuring children's safety** and nurturing an environment where they can learn, grow, and thrive with confidence.

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How Strictly Education can help – Safeguarding

Services to support you with effective safeguarding

✓ **DBS Service**

With our DBS service you're in control; you can choose from our standard DBS Service or DBS Plus to ensure a safe recruitment process and compliance with statutory legislation.

✓ **Social Media Checks**

Have peace of mind and save time with our social media checks, results are fast and comprehensive.

✓ **Safer Recruitment Advice & Support**

Your recruitment practices are safe and robust with expert guidance from CIPD specialists.

✓ **Support & Investigations**

Support and help in handling sensitive situations and safeguarding concerns.

✓ **Single Central Record Reviews**

Reassurance that your statutory requirements are met with a through review of your school's SCR.

✓ **Safeguarding Audit**

Strengthen and improve your safeguarding with in-depth audits to identify areas for improvement.

✓ **Safeguarding INSET training**

Ensure child safety and regulatory compliance with expert-led, practical, tailored sessions.

✓ **Resources & Hot Topics**

Be up to date and on top of safeguarding in your school with the latest safeguarding updates and emerging issues.

✓ **Training & Webinars**

Make sure your staff have the knowledge they need to keep children safe, we have training and webinars for governors, trustees and staff.

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Premises & Infrastructure

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