

Swale Academies Trust Policy on Safeguarding

Safeguarding Statement

Safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm. It includes issues such as: pupil health and safety; bullying; racist abuse; harassment and discrimination; use of physical intervention; meeting the needs of pupils with medical conditions; providing first aid; drug and substance misuse; educational visits; intimate care and internet safety.

This policy should thus be understood alongside school policies on related safeguarding issues as listed in this document.

The Safeguarding Governors for this School is:

INTRODUCTION

The Directors and staff of Swale Academies Trust take seriously their responsibility under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children; and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements are in place within our school to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering harm.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and related guidance. This includes the DfES guidance Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2007), the Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010). The school will also refer to the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Children Procedures (Purple Book) published in 2007.

Our schools are a community and all those directly connected (staff, governors, parents, families and pupils/students) have an essential role to play in making it safe and secure. We welcome suggestions and comments contributing to this process.

1. GENERAL STRATEGIES

This section gives an opportunity for staff to identify the specific ways in which safeguarding issues are addressed within the curriculum, policies and guidance or through school/community initiatives as part of the Every Child Matters Agenda.

This may include:

- Guidelines for the use of reasonable force
- Behaviour management policy
- Use of reasonable force
- Peer mentoring
- Anti-Bullying strategies
- E-Safety policy
- Photographic images of children policy
- Pupil/Student led initiatives
- Health and safety
- Risk assessments
- Extra-curricular activities
- Whistle blowing policy
- Safe recruitment
- Recruitment procedures
- Specific modules about E-Safety taught in ICT
- E-Safety advice
- Complaints Procedure

2. ETHOS

The Trust recognises the importance of providing an ethos and environment within our schools that will help children to feel safe, secure and respected; encourage them to talk openly; and enable them to feel confident that they will be listened to.

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence are likely to have low self-esteem and may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. Our school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in their lives.

As part of the ethos of the Trust we are committed to:

- Maintaining children's welfare as a paramount concern.
- Providing suitable support and guidance so that pupils/students have a range of appropriate adults whom they feel confident to approach if they are in difficulties.
- Using the curriculum to provide opportunities for increasing self awareness, self esteem, assertiveness and decision making so that pupils/students have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others. Ensuring child protection is included in the curriculum to help children stay safe, recognise when they do not feel safe and identify who they might/can talk to.
- Working with parents to build an understanding of the school's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children including the need for referral to other agencies in some situations.
- Ensuring all staff are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and are aware of the school's procedures and lines of communication.
- Monitoring children and young people who have been identified as 'in need' including the need for protection; keeping confidential records which are stored securely and shared appropriately with other professionals.
- Developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies.
- Ensuring all steps are taken to maintain site security and pupils'/students' physical safety.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trust is responsible for ensuring that all action taken is in line with Kent's Child in Need/Child Protection procedure.

The role of the schools in the Trust within this procedure is to contribute to the identification, referral and assessment of children in need including children who may have suffered, be suffering or who are at risk of suffering significant harm. The role of the educational communities in the Trust may also have a role in the provision of services to Children in Need and their families.

All adults in the educational communities in the Trust have a role to play in relation to:

- Protecting children from abuse
- Promoting the welfare of children
- Preventing children from being harmed.

The role of the educational communities in the Trust in situations where there are child protection concerns is NOT to investigate but to recognise and refer.

The designated child protection coordinator (DCPC) has overall responsibility for the day to day overview of safeguarding and child protection systems in school, including:

- Co-ordinating safeguarding action for individual children
- Liaising with other agencies and professionals
- Ensuring that locally established procedures are followed and making referrals as necessary
- Acting as a consultant for staff to discuss concerns
- Maintaining a confidential recording system
- Representing or ensuring the school is appropriately represented at inter-agency safeguarding meetings (including Child Protection conferences)
- Managing and monitoring the school's part in Common Assessment Framework (CAF) / Child in Need / Child Protection plans
- Organising training for all school staff

The Local Governing Body and school leadership team will ensure that the DCPC is properly supported in this role at a time and resource level. However, Child Protection and welfare are the responsibility of all staff in school and ANY observation, information or issue which results in concern for a pupil's/student's welfare MUST be reported to the Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator(s) (DCPC).

In order to protect confidentiality, safeguarding information about individual children is shared on a need to know basis only and thus, what may seem to be a minor issue to one staff member, may be highly significant to the bigger picture of risk.

4. SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

The Trust adheres to the local KSCB Safeguarding Children Procedures (2007). A copy of the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Children Handbook (KSCB 2007) (purple book), 'What to do if you are Worried About a Child Being Abused' (DfES 2006) and the Kent and Medway Inter-Agency Threshold Criteria for Children in Need are on site.

Additional extended KSCB procedures relating to specific safeguarding issues can be found on the KSCB website www.kscb.org.uk

It is the responsibility of the DCPC to gather and collate information obtained on individual children, to make immediate and on-going assessments of potential risk and to decide (with parents/carers in most cases) on the appropriateness of referrals to partner agencies and services. To help with this decision s/he may choose to consult with the Area Children's Officer (Safeguarding). Advice may also be sought from Children's Social Services Duty Social Workers who offer opportunities for consultation as part of the Child in Need / Child Protection process. Issues discussed during consultations may include the urgency and gravity of the concerns for a child or young person and the extent to which parents/carers are made aware of these. Some concerns may need to be monitored over a period of time before a decision to refer to Children's Social Services or other services is made.

Such referrals might include referral to Children's Social Services as either Child Protection or Child in Need, to Police where there are potential criminal issues, referral to the Common Assessment Framework process or referral to services such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service and counselling and MARAC.

Referrals to Children's Social Services will be made using Kent's inter-agency referral form and with reference to the Kent and Medway Inter-agency Threshold Criteria for Children in Need. In situations where there are felt to be urgent or grave concerns, a telephone referral will be made prior to the form being completed and sent to the County Duty Team. All referrals are now made via the County Duty Team / KCAS.

In all but the most exceptional cases parents/carers will be made aware of the concerns felt for a child or young person at the earliest possible stage and in the event of this becoming necessary, their consent to a referral to Social Services will be sought.

In the absence of the availability of a DCPC to discuss an immediate and urgent concern, advice should be sought direct from the Children's Safeguards Team or Children's Social Services by an alternative senior member of staff or by the member of staff who has the concerns.

On occasion, staff may pass information about a child to the DCPC, but remain anxious about action subsequently taken. Staff should feel able to clarify with the DCPC further progress (although they should not expect to be given confidential detail), so that they can reassure themselves the child is safe and their welfare being considered. If following this process, the staff member remains concerned that appropriate action is not being taken, it is the responsibility of that staff member to seek further direct consultation from either a member of the Children's Safeguards Team or the local Children's Social Services Team who will be able to discuss the concern and advise on appropriate action to be taken.

The nominated LGB Safeguarding Governor will take the lead role in ensuring that the school has an effective policy which interlinks with related policies; that locally agreed procedures are in place and being followed; and that the policy and structures supporting safeguarding children are reviewed annually.

5. RECOGNITION AND CATEGORIES OF ABUSE

All staff in school should be aware of the definitions and signs and symptoms of abuse. There are four categories of abuse. These are:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

www.kenttrustweb.org.uk contains a range of information available for staff including definitions and signs and symptoms of abuse.

Indicators and signs of abuse are listed in the leaflet "Safeguarding Children and Child Protection - Induction Leaflet Guidelines for School Staff" distributed to all staff.

Staff need to remember that child abuse can occur within all social groups regardless of religion, culture, social class or financial position. Children who have a disability are statistically subject to greater risk of abuse and are particularly vulnerable.

It is also important to remember that those who abuse children can be of any age, gender, ethnic group or background and it is important not to allow personal preconceptions to prevent recognition or action taking place.

6. INDUCTION AND TRAINING

All school-based staff will have an appropriate level of safeguarding training (to include internal school procedure and responsibilities; child protection process; how to recognise and respond to signs and symptoms of concern and abuse; safe working practice) and must undergo refresher training every three years. Training is organised by the DCPC in line with government guidance. A 3 year statutory cycle of training for all staff is in place.

The nominated safeguarding governor should receive safeguarding training from a strategic perspective on a three yearly basis, to be disseminated to the rest of the Governing Body. DCPC(s) will attend the required DCPC safeguarding training when initially appointed and update their knowledge on an on-going basis and formally at least every 2 years as required by guidance.

The DCPC will ensure that all new staff and volunteers are appropriately inducted as regards the school's internal safeguarding procedures and communication lines. A summary information sheet is available to be given to staff and volunteers to support this process.

The DCPC and Head of School will provide an annual report to their Local Governing Body detailing safeguarding training undertaken by all staff and will maintain up to date registers of who has been trained.

7. RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

Concerns for a child or young person may come to the attention of staff in a variety of ways, for example through observation of behaviour or injuries or disclosure. Any member of staff who has a concern for a child or young person, however insignificant this might appear to be, should discuss this with a DCPC as soon as is practically possible. More serious concerns must be reported immediately to ensure that any intervention necessary to protect the child is accessed as early as possible. If a DCPC is not immediately available, the concern should be drawn to the attention of the Head of School. The names of all DCPC are given to staff during induction and training.

If a child makes a disclosure of abuse to a member of staff they should:

- Allow the child or young person to make the disclosure at their own pace and in their own way.
- Avoid interrupting except to clarify what the child is saying (attentive listening/reflective feedback).
- Not ask leading questions or probe for information that the child or young person does not volunteer.
- Reassure the child or young person that they have been heard and explain what you will do next and to whom you will talk.
- Record the conversation as soon as possible.

8. RECORD KEEPING

Records are kept with reference to Kent County Councils 'Guidelines for Safeguarding Record Keeping in Schools. (February 2012)

Staff must record any welfare concern that they have about a child and pass this to a DCPC. Records must be signed and dated. The school's safeguarding form should be used. Guidance for completing a safeguarding form is on the reverse of the form.

Safeguarding records are kept centrally and securely by the DCPC and are shared on a 'need to know' basis only. They should be held separate from the child's curriculum file. The Head of School will be kept informed of any significant issues by the DCPC.

All safeguarding Records are forwarded to a child's subsequent school under confidential and separate cover to the new DCPC or Head Teacher.

These basic details are vital to the information gathering process and do not constitute an investigation. Written information should be passed to a DCPC. The Head of School should always be kept informed of any significant issues. The Head of School must be informed if any allegation involves a member of staff.

9. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST MEMBERS OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

The Trust recognises that it is possible for staff and volunteers to behave in a way that might cause harm to children and takes seriously any allegation received. Any concerns that involve allegations against a member of staff should be referred immediately to the Head of School (or Trust Principal if the allegation is against the Head of School and Chair of Directors if the allegation is against the Trust Principal) who may contact the Area Children's Officer (Child Protection) to discuss and agree further action to be taken in respect of the child and the member of staff.

Further information regarding the procedure for managing situations involving members of staff, the Head of School or the DCPC can be found in the Child Protection Procedures for Managing Allegations Against Staff. Copies of this document are held by the Head of School and are available at www.kenttrustweb.org.uk.

All staff need to be aware that it is a disciplinary offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk. When in doubt – consult, as for all Child Protection issues.

10. WORKING WITH OTHER AGENCIES

The Trust recognises and is committed to its responsibility to work with other professionals and agencies both to ensure children's needs are met and to protect them from harm. We will endeavour to identify those children and families who may benefit from the intervention and support of external professionals and will seek to enable referrals (in discussion with parents/carers) as appropriate.

Schools are not the investigating agency when there are child protection concerns and thus, the school will pass all relevant cases to the statutory agencies, which we will support in

undertaking their roles. Staff should understand that alongside this, the school may have a crucial role in supporting the child whilst investigations and assessments take place.

The Trust recognises the importance of multi-agency working and will ensure that staff are enabled to attend relevant safeguarding meetings, including Child Protection Conferences, Core Groups, Strategy Meetings, Child in Need meetings and teams around the family meetings.

The senior leadership team and DCPC will work to establish strong and co-operative relationships with relevant professionals in other agencies.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

Safeguarding and child protection information is confidential and personal. Other than the agreed communication lines in school, it is for the DCPC(s) to decide what information needs to be shared, with whom, how and when, and whether consent needs to be gained for this process. If in any doubt, the DCPC can seek advice from the Children's Safeguard's Team.

If a member of staff needs to seek advice about a safeguarding situation for a child independently for the purposes of keeping a child safe (specifically with the Children's Safeguards Team or Children's Social Services), it is appropriate for the detail to be discussed, although the staff member may choose to maintain the anonymity of the child whilst initial consultation takes place.

All staff should remain aware that they cannot keep 'secrets' and absolute confidentiality with children, and that if children disclose abuse or give information that suggests they may be unsafe, this **MUST** be passed on to the DCPC as soon as possible. The child should be told who their disclosure will be shared with and what will happen next. Further advice on dealing with disclosures can be found in the document "Child Protection - Dealing with Disclosures in School"

12. THE USE OF SCHOOL PREMISES BY OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Where services or activities are provided separately by another body using the school premises, the Trust will seek assurance that the organisation concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place with regard to safeguarding children and child protection. The Trust will require assurance that all relevant safeguarding checks have been made in respect of staff and volunteers. If assurance is not achieved, an application to use premises will be refused.

13. SECURITY

All staff have a responsibility for maintaining awareness of buildings and grounds security and for reporting concerns that may come to light. We operate within a whole-school community ethos and welcome comments from pupils/students, parents and others about areas that may need improvement as well as what we are doing well.

Appropriate checks will be undertaken in respect of visitors and volunteers coming into school as outlined within guidance. Visitors will be expected to sign in and out via the office

visitors log and to display a visitors badge whilst on school site. Any individual who is not known or identifiable should be challenged for clarification and reassurance.

The school will not accept the behaviour of any individual (parent or other) that threatens school security or leads others (child or adult) to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse access for that individual to the school site. (more guidance in appendix 2)

14. CODE OF PRACTICE / SAFE WORKING PRACTICE

Staff are required to work within clear Guidelines on Safe Working Practice / the school's Code of Conduct.

Children may make allegations against staff in situations where they feel vulnerable or where they perceive there to be a possible risk to their welfare. As such, all school staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position regarding child protection or potential allegations. For example, it is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults. Physical intervention should only be used when the child is endangering him/herself or others and such events should be recorded and signed by a witness. Staff should be aware of the school's Behaviour Management and use of reasonable force guidelines and any physical interventions must be in line with agreed policy and procedure.

Staff should be particularly aware of the professional risks associated with the use of electronic communication (e-mail; mobile phones; texting; social network sites) and familiarise themselves with advice and professional expectations outlined in Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People (2009) and the KSCB document: Safer Practice with Technology – Guidance for Adults who Work with Children and Young People. Both available at <http://www.kenttrustweb.org.uk>

15. SAFER RECRUITMENT

The Trust is committed to ensure that all steps are taken to recruit staff and volunteers who are safe to work with our pupils/students and have their welfare and protection as the highest priority. The Local Governing Body and School Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring that the school follows safe recruitment processes outlined within Guidance, including accurate maintenance of the Single Central Record; and an application, vetting and recruitment process which places safeguarding at its centre, regardless of employee or voluntary role.

The Governing Body of each school will ensure that the Head of School, other senior staff responsible for recruitment and one member of the Governing Body complete accredited Safer Recruitment Training in line with government requirements.

16. E-SAFETY

It is recognised that the use of new technologies presents particular challenges and risks to children both inside and outside of school. The trust will ensure a comprehensive curriculum response to enable all pupils/students to learn about and manage the associated risks effectively and will support parents and the school community (including all members of staff) to become aware and alert to the needs of keeping children safe online.

17. CURRICULUM AND STAYING SAFE

Schools play an essential role in helping children to understand and identify the parameters of what is appropriate child and adult behaviour; what is 'safe'; to recognise when they and others close to them are not safe; and how to seek advice and support when they are concerned. Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010) states that the curriculum should ensure opportunities for "developing children's understanding, awareness and resilience".

The trust will use the curriculum to provide opportunities for increasing self awareness, self esteem, social and emotional understanding, assertiveness and decision making so that pupils/ students have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others. Systems have been established to support the empowerment of children to talk to a range of staff when they are in difficulty and to raise comments, complaints and feedback about their school experience. Children will be listened to and heard and their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate.

18. MONITORING AND REVIEW

All school personnel and governors will have access to and can request a copy of this policy. This policy has been written in April 2012 to reflect the new guidance and legislation issued in relation to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare within schools.

The policy will be reviewed annually, or as a consequence of experience. The policy forms part of educational community development plan and will be reviewed annually.

Appendix 1

Safeguarding Form (minor differences exist between the separate schools and they are yellow).

Appendix 2

Good practice regarding safeguarding guidance for volunteer and visitors

Adopted by Directors 6 December 2012/v01

APPENDIX 2

Swale Academies Trust Safeguarding Policy

Good practice regarding safeguarding guidance for volunteer and visitors:

To ensure that access to, and use of, the sites within in the Trust by voluntary workers and visitors matches wider safeguarding procedures, please adopt the guidelines below if you are:

- a member of staff who will invite adult guests or visitors on site for any curriculum based or out of hours activity in which students are also involved.
- a member of the office or administrative staff arranging for visitors to work on site or use accommodation, with or without students being present.
- responsible for arranging temporary or longer term visits to the site linked to external bodies or organisations. This will include activities involving students either singly or in small/class groups or in larger groups.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. For all pre-arranged visits to or uses of the site, ensure that information has been forwarded to the relevant staff who will be advised of planned visits.
2. If you are responsible for a visit by guests or volunteers to the site, ensure that you have made arrangements for their arrival at the main site reception. On arrival all

visitors to the site will be issued with a visitors' badge and their name recorded in a signing in and out book.

3. If you are aware of a visitor on site whom you do not recognise, explain our visitor procedures to them and direct them to the main reception. Should you have any doubts about a visitor's right or need to be on site direct them to wait off the premises and contact a member of main reception area for assistance.
4. To ensure that general visitor guidelines can be effectively adhered to, staff are required to wear identification badge at all times.
5. Do not allow visitors to the site unsupervised access to classrooms or any areas used by students. Visitors and voluntary workers in the school/college will be given appropriate directions suited to the duration and purpose of their visit by the supervising or responsible member of staff on their arrival in the college or soon thereafter as part of our expected meeting and greeting protocols.
6. When planning a visit to the school/college site by outside agencies or persons in any capacity linked to pupil/student activity, make provision for any checks or preparatory investigation commensurate with the role to be undertaken.
7. For visits or work alongside pupils/students that is of a regular extended duration, all persons must be CRB checked. For assistance with this, contact the designated personnel officer.
8. If you are responsible for the visit, planned or unplanned, of parents to the site use the appropriate member of SLT for guidance or to acquire any information that may affect or restrict the purpose or conditions of such a visit.

Safeguarding Form

SAFEGUARDING INCIDENT / CONCERN FORM / SAFEGUARDING INFORMATION

Pupil name	Year Group
Name and position of person completing form (please print)	
Date of incident /concern: dd/mm/yy	
Incident / concern (who what where when)*	
Any other relevant information (witnesses, immediate action taken)*	
Action taken*	

Signature	Date form completed (dd mm yy)
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*Continue on a separate sheet if necessary

Guidance for completing this form is on the reverse

Why is recording important?

We have a statutory duty to promote the well-being and safety of every pupil who attends our school. This is a whole school task. Since staff have differing roles in school we observe pupils in a range of settings and activities throughout the school day. Pupils may show or tell us that something is wrong in a variety of ways. We all have an important role to play in helping to identify welfare concerns for pupils and possible indicators of abuse or neglect at an early stage. For some pupils a "one off" serious incident or concern will come to your attention and you will have no doubt that you must immediately record and report this. Most often however it is the accumulation of a number of small incidents, events or observations – "the jigsaw" - that provide the evidence that a pupil is being harmed. It is vital therefore that any concern you have for a pupil's welfare *however small* is recorded and passed to the identified DCPC. (a serious "one off" incident should go to any DCPC in the event of the identified DCPC not being available)

What is a "welfare concern"?

As a general rule anything that you consider unusual or out of the ordinary for the pupil constitutes a concern. Mostly these will arise in one or more of the following areas:

- The pupils behaviour changes or a particular behaviour is observed
- The pupil has a physical injury
- The pupil tells you something has happened to them
- The pupil's physical presentation
- You receive information from or observe unusual behaviour in a parent

Disclosure

If a pupil discloses abuse or harm to you your role is to recognize and refer, **not to investigate.**

- Listen
- Reassure
- Do not show shock (this may discourage a pupil)
- Never promise confidentiality ("I'm really concerned about what you have told me, and I have a responsibility to help ensure you are safe. To help you I have to tell _____")

What do I record?

- This form should be dated, signed and your details legible
- The incident / event / observation of concern is described clearly and concisely
- This form is written using straightforward language, and fact and opinion are differentiated.
- If recording a disclosure, the pupil's own words are recorded and any questions you may have asked are included
- Physical marks and injuries are recorded on a body picture where appropriate
- Any action you have taken
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What will the DCPC record?

- Requests to staff for monitoring specific aspects of the pupil's presentation, behaviour, attendance etc.
- Discussions and telephone calls (with colleagues, parents and pupils / young people and other agencies or services)
- Professional consultations
- Letters sent and received
- Referral forms (both for external and education-based services)

A DCPC is a designated child protection coordinator trained on behalf of the school according to local authority guidelines.

