Safeguarding
Review of academic year 2021-22

Consistency

Promote and demonstrate compliance 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 adapts this to address risks specific to their context and setting.
- The policy approved is the model policy provided by OCC, and 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- The Management of Safeguarding (as a minimum) and sign to confirm this action.
- Governors and Trustees receive safeguarding training at induction, have regular updates through the Trust's Governance Journals and via NGA and Governors For Schools elearning options.
- 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
- Each school uses the OCC audit template to undertake self-evaluations and to support the completion of OSCB required annual returns. This reports compliance against the detailed requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) and s175 requirements.
- School annual audits are compiled into a trust-level document that identifies strengths and areas for improvement trust-wide
- A Trust safeguarding group comprising the DSLs, CEO, safeguarding trustee and safeguarding governors meets regularly to promote joint approaches and determine how to improve Trust practice. against internal and external advice (e.g. OSCB, KCSIE, Ofsted reports). The routine sharing of good practice and learning from serious case reviews takes place.
- Quality assurance checks take place annually through peer review. This is strengthened by external review commissioned every three years to provide independent challenge and benchmarking.

2021-22 actions have included:
- Further developing our assurance framework using learning from training, KCSIE and
    DfE (Covid-19) guidance
    - External reviews confirm good practice
- Systems: embedding the use of CPOMS across the Trust and extending existing systems for recording of concerns to meet statutory guidance
- Training
    - Maintaining staff and governor training via NGA, CST, SMARTLOG and in- house provision
    - Continuing supervision, support meetings for DSLs;
    - Regular reports including action plan reviews to Trust Board;
- Policies: Online Safety Statement confirmed and associated policies reviewed to ensure effective support for remote and on-site learning
- Recruitment
- Policies and procedures updated to meet new requirements;
    - Checks of Single Central Register and Recruitment procedures maintained through remote and on-site reviews

Clarity

Address Safeguarding in your Scheme of Delegation, use data and evidence to support decision-making, ask questions and retain objectivity

- 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 and Local Academy Boards 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.
- Annual s175 school reports to OCC are collated for the Trust to show local and longitudinal benchmarking to support improvement planning and tracking.

2021-22 actions have included:
- Updating Trustee induction leaflet to reflect updates to KCSIE
- AGM presentation highlighting the roles of network groups and benefits of working together
- Further development of data reports to identify trends and impact
- Provision of regularly updated information to governors and trustees as DFE guidance changed over the year to reflect the different phases and requirements of education from fully remote to partial in-school and then full return to face-to-face

Communication

Ensure our Trustees, Local Governors, Schools and 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; o identifying and considering opportunities to develop or join new initiatives; o an opportunity for informal supervision.
- Safeguarding items appear regularly in the Trust's Governance Journal to provide updates, support information sharing and provide guidance on approach.

2021-22 actions have included:
- Developing shared safeguarding strategy goals and an online safety statement;
- Website and Trust documentation updated to reflect new guidance and priorities
- AGM presentation on network group safeguarding work during Covid-19
- DSL collaborations and shared work to:

  - Meet new KCSIE requirements and maintain up to date policies;
  - Develop consistent performance reports to show impact and support planning;

- o Undertake internal peer reviews to support shared learning and compliance, on return to face-to-face education;
- o Regular lessons learned reviews of incidents and case studies.

Continuous improvement

Reflective practice and post-incident reviews resulting in a cross-trust improvement plans with positive impacts for students and the community:

- The safeguarding group agenda includes consideration of learning arising from group members' experiences including post-Ofsted, school, local and national incidents, serous 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.
- 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:
  - o 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
  - o 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.

2021-22 actions have included:
- External safeguarding reviews and Cybersecurity audits;
- Holding a safeguarding strategy session with governors and DSLs, and as a result
- Developing a safeguarding strategy to improve outcomes and build resilience
- Identification of increased casework as a cross-Trust concern for DSLs with each school setting aside additional budget to support increasing capacity/support to DSL teams ☐ Continuing scrutiny and reporting arrangements include regular:
  - o Exception Reporting to Compliance Committee
  - o Cross-trust review of outcomes of internal reviews and Annual Reports identifying opportunities for joint work and investment
  - o OSCB and internal incident reviews for lessons learned o Regular update reports to Trust Board.

Our framework has been developed considering:
- Confederation of School Trusts' (CST): 3 C's for Effective Safeguarding
- the '5 steps for effective MAT safeguarding'