Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy 2024-25

Part 1 – overarching Trust policy

(to be read in conjunction with Part 2 - School Policy)

LINKS: Incorporating Raising Concerns at Work (Whistleblowing), Behaviour Management Confidential Reporting Code, Health and Safety, Management of Allegations against staff policy, Safeguarding Children, E-Safety, Use of Photography and recording, Recruitment and Selection Policy, Equal Opportunities, Anti-Bullying, Physical Interventions, First Aid, Drugs and Substance misuse, PSHCRE, SRE, SMSC, Racial Equality, Work Placements, Attendance and Absence, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 (KCSIE), Boarding Schools National Minimum Standards (April 2015)

DATE: September 2023

POSTHOLDER RESPONSIBLE: CEO

DATE RATIFIED BY TRUSTEES: September 2024

DUE FOR REVIEW: September 2025 (annual)

Summary of Changes

Version	Section	Description of Changes
July 22	All	Baseline Document
July 23	All	Reference to KCSIE amended to read 2023 throughout the document
	1.6	References to legislation updated
	1.8	Roles and Responsibilities table updated with current details of roles
	2.5	Details of where DSGs/DSLs should file termly Safeguarding reports added
	3	Table updated with details of termly DSL Supervision sessions and termly DSG visits and reporting
	7.1	Links to individual School's Part 2s updated
	7.2	New bullet added listing what the Part 2 policies cover
	8	Trust contact table updated
May 24	7	St Bartholomew's added to the Trust schools
July 24	All	Updated in line with KCSIE 2024

Contents

1. Introduction

1.1. Quantock Education Trust (QET) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils by: protecting children from maltreatment, exploitation and providing appropriate help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge, preventing the impairment of health or development and by ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

1.2. QET are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in line with Working together 2023 and recognise children can also experience maltreated online and beyond the home within their communities. We are committed to early intervention to ensure protection from harm (both online and offline) and promoting the best outcomes for all children.

1.3. QET is committed to meeting its moral and statutory responsibility, ensuring that robust procedures are in place, outlining the actions that it will take to prevent harm, to promote wellbeing, to create safe environments and to respond to specific issues and vulnerabilities. Safeguarding determines the actions taken to keep children safe and protect them from harm in all aspects of their school life to ensure that they have the best outcomes. This is underpinned by a culture of openness where both children and adults feel secure, able to talk, and believe that they are being listened to.

1.4. QET maintains an attitude of 'it could happen here' and expects that all staff and volunteers share and demonstrate their commitment to protecting children. All schools are required to maintain a single central record to provide reassurance that all staff and volunteers are recruited safely.

1.5. QET is committed to the following safeguarding key principles: -

- Responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance.
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection.
- All staff, volunteers, Local Governors, Trustees and Members must share this commitment.
- All staff, volunteers, Local Governors, Trustees and Members have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm at home, in the community or in one of our schools.
- Staff members are to always act in the interests of the child.
- Students and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate training and support.

1.6. QET expects that each school will follow the guidance and child protection procedures provided by their Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships and Local Authority Children's Services departments. Crucially, there may be safeguarding issues that are specific to a school's local area and communities which should be provided in 'Part 2 – School Policy' documentation.

1.7. The policy outlining the local procedures for each of the schools across the Trust will be made available on the school websites. They have been developed to ensure compliance with legislation including Section 175 the Education Act 2002, Section 11 of the Children's Act 2004, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2024, and What to do if you are worried about a child being abused – advice for practitioners. All schools are expected to follow the escalation policy if they have concerns about the management of a case by Children and Social Care.

1.8. The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy works in conjunction with other relevant policies in place at both Trust and at a local level, safeguarding the interests and welfare of children e.g. recruitment and selection, anti-bullying, whistle blowing, allegations against staff, health and safety, special education needs and disabilities, equality, and staff code of conduct.

1.9. QET has the following roles and responsibilities in place to ensure that all academies are compliant and have a strong safeguarding culture:

Roles	Responsibilities
Designated Trustee for Safeguarding (DTS)	A Trustee who has an oversight of trust-wide safeguarding and reports directly to the board.
Executive Safeguarding Lead (ESL)	A member of the executive team who has an oversight of trust-wide safeguarding and leads on the development of the QET safeguarding policy. ESL: Chrysta Garnett
QET Strategic Safeguarding Lead (SSL)	A lead practitioner who takes responsibility for peer audits, facilitates the DSL peer network and who liaises closely with the DTS and ESL. The lead practitioner maintains an up-to-date knowledge and understanding of developments relating to Keeping Children Safe in Education and shares and discusses with the DSL network. The SSL is an externally commissioned Safeguarding Consultant.
Safeguarding & Care Improvement Consultant	Sexey's School commissions an external consultant to support their annual external scrutiny of care and boarding provision. Named consultant: Amy Weir
Designated Safeguarding Governor (DSG)	A member of the Local Governance Committee who has an oversight of safeguarding in their individual school and reports back to the LGC. They also have the DTS as point of contact to the board.
Designated Safeguarding Lead/s (DSL)	Member/s of staff responsible for safeguarding and child protection within their individual school. They liaise closely with key stakeholders, such as their staff, headteacher, DSG and relevant external agencies.

2. Governance

2.1. QET's Designated Trustee for Safeguarding (DTS) oversees the governance arrangements for Safeguarding and is a point of contact for the LGCs' Designated Safeguarding Governors (DSG).

2.2. The QET designated Trustee meets with the QET Executive Safeguarding Lead (ESL) and the QET Strategic Safeguarding Lead (SSL) Practitioner regularly to evaluate the outcomes of scheduled audits, training, policy updates, emerging trends and DSG visits etc. The QET Trustee reports a summary of findings at the full board meeting.

2.3. All schools are required to follow the Local Safeguarding Children Board's interagency policies and procedures and the Local Governance Committee (LGC) are responsible for the implementation of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy at school level. Safeguarding will be included on the agenda and monitored at every full Local Governance Committee meeting.

2.4. Each Local Governance Committee is required to have a DSG to provide feedback at LGC meetings. The DSG meets at least termly with the school's DSL to discuss:
- Safeguarding peer audits or external reviews;
- Risks/vulnerabilities;
- Compliance issues;
- The effectiveness in the application of practices;

- Any lessons that can be shared; and
- Best practice.

2.5. When a school visit is conducted by the DSG they must use the agreed QET Safeguarding Governor Visit Checklist (see Appendix A) and use this checklist as the basis of their feedback to their LGC (see 2.4 above). These Checklists will then be filed centrally here: DSGs Monitoring Visits Reports

3. The Supporting Structural and Quality Assurance Arrangements

Focus	Process
Quality Assurance	Schools will have an annual safeguarding audit. Light touch monitoring of the DSLs work will be part of the DSL supervision process as well as checking on progress of actions from full audit. If concerns are raised about safeguarding, or a school is not judged to be good, then more regular external checks will take place. If a full external audit is carried out, the Headteacher and DSL will be required to provide regular updates to the CEO and DTS and demonstrate how change has been implemented to address any concerns. If serious concerns are raised in peer audits or external checks, they will be shared immediately with the CEO and DTS
Strategic oversight and connection with the trust board	The DTS meets with the SSL and ESL on a termly basis to evaluate findings from audits, training, policy updates, emerging trends and DSG visits etc. Findings will be reported back to the full board. The DTS also has regular meeting with the school's DSGs and reports back to the Board.
LGCs	LGC DSG meets with DSL in school on a termly basis, using an agreed QET pro-forma (see Appendix A). DSGs can contact the DTS if they have concerns in relation to safeguarding in their individual school. The termly proforma that captures their findings from their school visit should be shared with the DTS and the CEO. Safeguarding is a standing agenda item to be discussed at each LGC meeting.
Peer support and collaboration	The SSL will facilitate a half termly DSL network to provide an 'action learning' approach to safeguarding cases, reflecting on particular cases they have dealt with, sharing best practice etc.
Supervision	In order to support the work of DSLs, the Trust is committed to providing regular, supportive and reflective supervision to enable them to discharge their roles effectively. This will take the form of termly 1:1 supervision in person with our SSL, and termly group supervision which provide an opportunity for peer support and challenge.
Other duties (including statutory)	The QET safeguarding policy reviewed and updated annually or as and when required. HR carry out Single Central Record checks on a termly basis.

3.1. The DSLs across QET meet and network on a termly basis, to pool expertise, knowledge and experience in the development and application of policies and procedures, to share good practice and to develop and embed best practice. This ensures that the core competences on child protection and safeguarding matters are being fully utilised.

3.2. Each DSL will produce an annual Safeguarding Report to the LGC using the agreed QET pro-forma. This report provides a summative overview in the summer term of safeguarding data (eg., numbers of vulnerable pupils, data on exclusions, referrals and incidents) and enables the DSL and DSG to reflect on their strengths and areas for further improvement to inform next year's planning (see Appendix B).

4. Training

4.1. QET will be assured by DSLs and through regular monitoring, that schools comply with training requirements as defined in KCSIE 2023. All staff and Governors and Trustees will undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction, including whistle-blowing procedures to ensure they understand the school's safeguarding system and their responsibilities, and can identify signs of possible abuse, neglect or exploitation. This training will be updated on a regular basis, at least annually, and aligned to the advice from the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), e-bulletins, DSL meetings, and our trust.

4.2. The DSL must offer regular opportunities for safeguarding training to ensure that all staff and governors, including all new staff, are trained and up-to-date with policies and procedures.

4.3. The DSL and any deputy DSLs will undergo training that provides them with the knowledge and skills needed to perform the role. This training will be updated as a minimum, every two years, with regular updates.

4.4. All staff will be given KCSIE Part 1 (2024), and annex A of KCSIE (2024), on induction. They will be asked to sign that it has been read and understood.

4.5. All governors and Trustees will be given KCSIE (2024) Part 2, and annex A of KCSIE (2024), on induction. They will be asked to sign that it has been read and understood

4.6. All staff and governors will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (e.g. through emails, ebulletins and staff meetings as required), but at least annually. Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable.

4.7. All staff will have training on the Government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas.

5. Supporting Systems and Practices

5.1. QET will standardise systems and practices across the trust for reporting to assist with the identification of trust-wide concerns and patterns. Such systems should maximise the support for managing casework and facilitate more effective working arrangements with other agencies.

5.2. Identified trust executive and central team members will have appropriate clearances in place that will provide them with direct access to all of the schools' systems within the trust, eg. the SCR, MyConcern etc.

5.3. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) should keep records of all relevant concerns, discussions and decisions and the rationale for the decisions made (including not referring).

5.4. A QET recommendation for school staff, governors and trustees to use the DfE Data Protection guidance for schools to understand data protection and its robust application.

6. Policy Review

6.1. The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed and agreed as a minimum on an annual basis. This may be more frequent if national guidance requires ensuring that key statutory requirements are incorporated.

7. Local Arrangements

7.1. Part 2 contains each of the school's local arrangements and procedures for Safeguarding and Child Protection. Copies are available via each school's website:
- https://www.haygroveschool.co.uk/Policies-and-funding-information/
- https://www.spaxton-school.co.uk/web/policies/217900
- https://www.stogurseyprimaryschool.co.uk/web/policies/566570
- https://www.sexeys.somerset.sch.uk/reports_policies/safeguarding-policies/
- https://www.st-bartholomews.somerset.sch.uk/key-information/policies/
- https://merriottfirstschool.co.uk/policies/
- https://haselburyplucknettschool.co.uk/policies/
- https://www.ashlandsprimaryschool.co.uk/our-school/policies/

7.2 The policies cover the following:

1. Roles and Responsibilities: Clarifies the roles and responsibilities of school staff, governing bodies, and designated safeguarding leads in ensuring child protection.

2. Safer Recruitment: Outlines best practices for safer recruitment processes to ensure that individuals working with children are suitable, including checks and references.

3. Staff Training: Highlights the significance of providing appropriate training to staff members to recognize and respond to safeguarding concerns.

4. Identifying and Responding to Concerns: Details how to recognize signs of abuse, how to respond to concerns, and when to make a referral to children's social care.

5. Sharing Information: Provides guidance on sharing information appropriately and lawfully when concerns arise.

6. Online Safety: Includes information on safeguarding children in the digital world and addressing online safety issues.

These documents are regularly updated to reflect changes in legislation and best practices.

8. Trust Contacts

QET Designated Trustee for Safeguarding (Trust Board) (DTS)	Anna Hammond
QET Executive Safeguarding Lead (ESL)	Chrysta Garnett
QET Strategic Safeguarding Lead (SSL) Practitioner	Gary Sanders (externally commissioned)

The Role of the Safeguarding Link

Purpose of Role

One of the most important duties that a Local Governance Committee (LGC) fulfils is to ensure that their school is creating safe environments for pupils through robust safeguarding practices. If at an Ofsted inspection a school is found to have inadequate safeguarding arrangements and compliance the school will be judged inadequate or requires improvement (if it can prove urgent remedial action is being undertaken).

The LGC must appoint a governor to take leadership responsibility for their school's safeguarding arrangements.

Where the LGC within multi academy trusts have sufficient delegated management responsibility, QET recommend each the Trust appoints a safeguarding lead to help maintain trust wide oversight.

The appointed governor should take the lead on safeguarding. However, the LCG retains collective responsibility for making sure that safeguarding procedures are properly followed.

Safeguarding Governor Duties

1.   Work with the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is a senior member of the school/trust leadership team who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. The safeguarding governor/trustee is the LGC's main point of contact with the DSL and so they should:

- build an effective relationship with the DSL that allows for appropriate support and challenge
- arrange monitoring visits with the DSL to learn about the school or trust's context and how this influences the approach to safeguarding
- through discussion with the DSL (and other stakeholders within the school community), understand the school/trust's safeguarding strengths and areas for development
- meet with the DSL termly to discuss (without specific pupil details) any safeguarding incidents; conversation should be around the suitability of policies, whether any amendments are necessary and whether there are lessons to be learnt
- use meetings and visits with the DSL to monitor progress on any strategic safeguarding priorities
- ensure the DSL has received the training they need and is well supported to carry out their role
- talk to the DSL about staff safeguarding training, seeking assurance that staff are up to date with policy and practice and know what steps to take if they have concerns about a pupil

2.   Understand how safeguarding works in practice

The safeguarding governor/trustee should be aware of the legal duties that schools, and their LGC, must comply with to keep pupils safe. It's also important to build an understanding of how safeguarding procedures work in practice. This should focus around:

- reading and understanding Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE), the DfE's statutory safeguarding guidance (this is a requirement for all governors and trustees)

- building a knowledge and understanding of the school or trust's safeguarding policies and procedures, ensuring these are effective, regularly reviewed and updated
- observing (through arranged visits) how the culture of safeguarding is working within the school
- understanding how safeguarding is built into the school curriculum and how pupils are taught about staying safe (including online safety)
- using any safeguarding assessments or audits (sometimes conducted by local authorities) to help ascertain the robustness of safeguarding procedures and systems
- using data (often supplied within DSL safeguarding reports) to spot trends, for example, absence rates for looked-after children
- safeguarding includes ensuring that the school, and places used for learning, is a safe environment for learning so the role should either include H&S or show a clear link to it.
- There is also a role for anti-radicalisation, definitely e-safety and pupil on pupil abuse.

It is a requirement of KCSiE that all governors receive safeguarding training on their induction and regular updates. We recommend that all governors and trustees undertake safeguarding training, and Prevent training, such that everyone has current knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities. It is also a recommendation that sufficient governors complete safer recruitment training

3.   Report back to the LGC and keep them up to date

As the LGC's specialist on safeguarding and child protection, the safeguarding link governor/trustee should:

- stay up to date on relevant guidance and policy (including local guidance), ensuring the LGC are made aware of any changes to their safeguarding responsibilities
- report to the LGC at each meeting and following monitoring meetings with the DSL and any visits/interactions with staff and pupils
- ensure safeguarding is given suitable coverage and prominence within the LGC's strategic discussions
- feed in to LGC discussions, ensuring that decision making is based on a sound understanding of both the legal requirements and the school/trust procedures and culture
- ensure that the results of safeguarding audits are shared with the LGC and any concerns addressed
- support the LGC's oversight of the school/trust record of pre-appointment checks (the single central record); often this oversight comes from DSL reports to the L(not through the LGC directly administrating the record)
- support the LGC's wider training/understanding of safeguarding and monitor that it is considered as part of any school visit.

Safeguarding Link Governor Visitor Form

School	
Date of Visit	
Link Governor Name	

Questions the safeguarding link or LGC should ask	Evidence seen on the visit – as provided by the school:	Notes and findings to be shared with the LGC:
How safe do the children and young people feel at your setting?		
How does the school make sure that all pupils know what they should do if involved in a safeguarding incident?		
Do children know what to do if they feel they are being bullied or they see other children being bullied?		
How well is discriminatory behaviour tackled in school?		
Are there effective processes in place to challenge inappropriate behaviour such as bullying, racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination?		
Do we have effective systems in place for children to confidently report child on child abuse and clear processes as to how victims, perpetrators and any other children affected by child on child abuse will be supported?		
Are all relevant child protection/safeguarding policies up to date and on the website?		
Does the behaviour policy make it clear that discriminatory behaviour will to be tolerated and is the policy publicly available?		
How do you know that **all** staff, including non-teaching, know the correct procedures for safeguarding incidents?		
Who has responsibility for inducting new members of staff with reference to safeguarding and keeping them up to date?		
Are safeguarding/child protection concerns recorded and stored securely and shared with relevant agencies or authorities.		

How many safeguarding incidents have there been in the last year?			
Has anything changed in response to them?			
How does the school make sure that all parents and carers are aware of the need to observe e-safety in their homes?			
Does the SCR demonstrate compliance in terms of:	All staff and those in governance have appropriate level of DBS checks		
	Gaps in employment history have been checked		
	Staff are entitled to work in the UK checked		
	New staff - have start dates / permissions to start been checked?		
	Contractors are covered?		
Have all staff undertaken appropriate training			
Is there sufficient staff training in safer recruitment procedures?			
Keeping Children Safe guidance document up to date / staff signed?			
Check DSL training up to date			
Staff signed code of conduct?			
Is there a system for logging S/G? How is this used and monitored?			
How are front line staff passing S/G to DSL? Ask random staff member.			
Check random staff S/G training			
How safe and secure is the physical environment of the school?			
Site safety upon arrival for visitors? Gates / doors locked?			
Are all posters / helplines up to date that are displayed? • Safeguarding leads posters visible? • NSPCC / Whistleblowing poster displayed?			
Safeguarding leaflet / information for visitors?			

Safeguarding report to the governing board

- Date of report:
- Name of designated safeguarding lead:
- Name of nominated governor for safeguarding:
- Date the single central record was last checked by a senior member of staff:

Training and safeguarding updates

Role	Number of people	Date of training	Course attended
e.g. Teaching staff	12	1 September 2020	INSET pack from The Key's Safeguarding Training Centre

Vulnerable pupils

	Number of pupils
Children with an education, health and care (EHC) plan or statement of SEN	
Looked after children	

Attendance and exclusions

	Number
Fixed-term exclusions	
Permanent exclusions	
Attendance rate	
Number of pupils being persistently absent	

Referrals and incidents

	Number
Allegations made against staff	
Child protection referrals	
Reported bullying incidents	
Reported online safety incidents	
Reported racist incidents	
Number of extremist concerns	
Number of female genital mutilation concerns	
Number of forced marriage concerns	
Number of mental health concerns	

Approval and review dates of relevant policies and procedures

Policy	Date of last review	Date of next review
Safeguarding/child protection		
Online safety (including sexting)		
Children going missing from education		
Allegations made against staff		
Anti-bullying		
Behaviour		
Health and safety		
Recruitment and selection		
Staff code of conduct		

Whistle-blowing		
Strengths		
•		

Areas to develop (including areas identified in the safeguarding audit)	Actions to achieve this
•	•