



# Safeguarding statement

## Tees Valley Education MAT



**Safe children**



**Safe people**



**Safe premises & places**

### **Mission**

**Our mission is to deliver educational excellence for all of our children by fostering a culture of creativity, curiosity, care, courage and commitment.**

### **Vision**

**To transform children's life chances**

### **Purpose**

**This Trust Safeguarding Statement outlines how Tees Valley Education MAT supports each academy in its Safeguarding endeavours. To fulfil this commitment, comprehensive safeguarding and child protection systems are in place in line with the DfE statutory guidance, e.g Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE). This system is described in full in the DfE statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.**



# Safe children

Tees Valley Education MAT is committed to rigorous and robust safeguarding practices and promoting the welfare of children within its family of Academies. It expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The Trust aims to provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child, and strive to make sure that every child in the Trust feels safe from harm and abuse, secure, well cared for, and able to reach their full potential and fullness of life through nurturing and supportive endeavours individually, collectively and in the community.

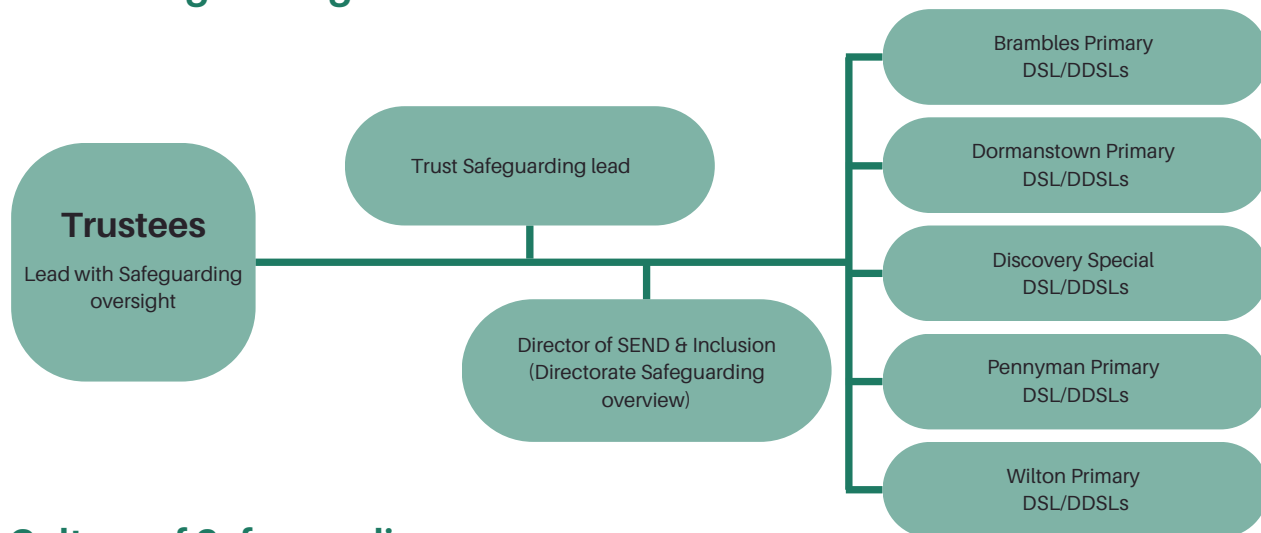
Tees Valley Education MAT and its Academies believe that the child's safety and welfare is always of paramount importance, and that all children have a right to be protected from abuse regardless of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, religious belief or sexual identity. All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately in accordance with Tees Valley Education MATs Child Protection Policy and Safeguarding Policy. To maintain our approach effectively and consistently, we recognise that the Trust and its academies also play an important part in the wider local and national safeguarding system for children.

Tees Valley Education MAT and its Academies recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all its children by protecting them from emotional, sexual or physical harm and from neglect or bullying. Every member of staff has a collective responsibility to providing an environment that helps children feel safe and respected, and a culture that encourages children to talk openly, and have the confidence they will be listened to. Child abuse in all its forms can be a very emotive and difficult subject. It is important to understand the feelings involved but not to allow them to interfere with judgement about the action to be taken.

Every adult is expected to play their part in safeguarding our children. Each Academy supports this through safeguarding and child protection awareness training. **Safeguarding is the proactive stance**, which aims to protect children from abuse or harm, and **Child Protection is the reactive stance**, taken to support children whom the school suspects is or may be in need of protection. All staff in all of our Academies know the procedures that should be followed should they have any concerns about a child. All staff know where to go should they require some information, help and guidance.

At a Board & Trustee level, the Trust Safeguarding Lead, Directors and CEO report relevant Safeguarding items to Audit Risk & Finance Committee and/or Standards Committee (e.g Exclusions, Attendance, Complaints, H&S). Headteachers routinely report to Trustees via Challenge Boards/IMBs. Effective use of MIS enables the Trust Safeguarding Lead to have full oversight of academy level intelligence and report through a Trust lens.

### Trust Safeguarding structure



### Culture of Safeguarding

Tees Valley Education MAT believes that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is the responsibility of everyone. This is demonstrated through our shared culture of safeguarding. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play and all staff make sure their approach is wholly child-centred. This means that at all times, they consider what is in the best interests of the child.

Our culture of safeguarding demonstrates the Trust's:

- moral and statutory responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expectation that all staff and volunteers share this commitment.
- expectation that everyone working within Trust academies will contribute to the creation of an environment in which all children and adults have an equal right to protection regardless of gender, religion, ethnicity, sexual identity or culture.
- expectation that Directors, LAC members and staff maintain an open mind and attitude of it could happen here where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members always act in the best interests of the child.

- expectation that all adults within the wider Trust community are aware that they 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 school. Everyone is aware that they can make a referral and reporting procedures are established in every Trust academy to ensure information is shared with key safeguarding and child protection staff as soon as possible after any concern arises.
- expectation that every academy will follow the guidance provided by the Trust's three local safeguarding partners (local authority, police and clinical commissioning group)





# Safe people



## **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks**

The Trust meets all statutory requirements in relation to Disclosure and Barring Service checks. All staff, members, trustees and volunteers are required to undergo an enhanced DBS check prior to employment or engagement. The Trust's DBS Policy and Single Central Record (SCR) includes further detail of the Trust's DBS procedures.

## **Safer Recruitment**

All applicants for employment at Tees Valley Education MAT and its Academies will be fully vetted in accordance with DfE Guidelines Safeguarding Children: Safer Recruitment and Selection in Education Settings.

## **Safer Recruitment Practices**

The Trust is committed to creating a culture of safe recruitment and, as part of this, adopts recruitment procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might present a risk to children. The Trust and its academies act reasonably in making decisions about the suitability of any prospective member of staff based on these checks and evidence, including criminal record checks, enhanced DBS checks, online checks, barred list checks and prohibition checks, together with references and interview information.

Tees Valley Education MAT supports each Academy in the following ways:

- Fully adopting the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) Guidance circulated each September and section 3 of the Early Years Framework March 2021;
- Undertaking safeguarding external/internal reviews on an annual and bi-annual basis, including SCR compliance checks;
- Ensuring each Academy adheres to Tees Valley Education MAT Child Protection Policy and Safeguarding Policy and other safeguarding policies and procedures that details Academy specific advice and designated safeguarding officer details;
- Having a Director with special oversight of safeguarding, who liaises with the Trust Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Safeguarding Trustee;
- All staff receive regular training on child protection procedures, including Prevent and Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance.
- Ensuring each academy DSL and DDSL is offered termly supervision from a qualified external professional.

# Safe premises & places



Our children are taught and staff teach in safe, welcoming and inspiring learning environments. Tees Valley Education MAT supports each academy in ensuring they are aware of their duties in relation to:

- Adhering to DfE and Trust policies regarding Standards for school premises; Health, safety and site security, including accessibility.  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-and-college-security/site-security-guidance> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/standards-for-school-premises>
- Commissioning professional services in relation to site management visual inspections, incidence logs and dated actions in relation to Asbestos, Legionella, Fire safety, Security, COSHH.
- Safe evacuation and invacuation procedures, including termly drills and effective use of child and adult PEEPs and PHPs.
- The actions and communications required, and by whom, in the event of an emergency closure of an academy.
- Ensuring all visitors to an academy site are given instructions when signing in upon arrival on expected conduct whilst on site, who to contact in relation to a safeguarding concern, and what to do in the event of an emergency.
- Lettings - transfer of controls, policies and procedures for any academies that are let for public use.
- Safe usage of academy sites for extended school activities and mass public gatherings (e.g school fair).

## Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL)

Although Trustees have ultimate responsibility for safeguarding, operationally it is overseen by the Trust Safeguarding Lead who works alongside the Designated Safeguarding Leads within each Trust academy and holds termly safeguarding, pastoral and welfare meetings. Every academy has Designated Safeguarding Leads and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads who take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection within their own academy. They are clear about their role, have sufficient time, resources and receive relevant support and training to carry out their duties.

## Professional development & training

A programme of regular professional development and training is provided to Trustees, Directors, LAC members and staff at every level. This ensures everyone has the knowledge and skills required to carry out their role and responsibilities safely and with confidence. Across the Trust and its schools all staff are aware of the systems, policies and procedures used to support child protection and safeguarding. All TVED staff have access to the Virtual Learning Community (VLC) where blogs, news items and research items are posted. These are explained as part of staff induction and reviewed with all staff at the start of each academic year.

This includes reminders about the Trust's:

- Shared Culture of Safeguarding
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and procedures
- Behaviour Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Governance and leadership of safeguarding
- CPOMS user guidelines
- Subscription to Safeguarding services and CPD (Pam Gartland Safeguarding Pro, Andrew Hall, The National College, NSPCC).

## Intended impact of our Trust wide culture of safeguarding

At child level:

- Children tell us they feel safe, look forward to school and enjoy learning.
- Children have a clear voice in matters that concern and involve them.
- Children know what to do if they are being bullied or witness bullying.
- Children know what to do if they experience child on child sexual abuse.
- Relationships between adults and children are strong, supportive and nurturing.
- Relationships between children are kind and caring.
- Every child is noticed and their needs are responded to.
- Children are listened to and their concerns responded to promptly.
- Children are kept as safe as possible and risks are well managed at all times.

## **At academy level:**

- **A safe environment is maintained in which children can learn and develop confidently.**
- **There are clear lines of communication between the academy DSL and the members of staff with responsibility for attendance and welfare.**
- **All academy DDSLs are trained to act in the absence of the academy DSL.**
- **Appropriate supervision is in place to support the DSL and deputy DSL's to feel confident in their role and to raise any issues.**
- **Single Central Record is kept up to date and appropriate staff files are maintained (see Appendix for content of staff files).**
- **A signed record of training attended by leaders, staff, trustees and members is kept in line with latest version of DfEs KCSIE. This includes volunteers.**
- **All certificates of training received by the DSLs, leaders, staff and volunteers are retained at school level for scrutiny.**
- **There is a designated tab on academy websites for safeguarding documentation and information including contact names and details of designated safeguarding leads and their deputies.**
- **All members of staff (including temporary, supply staff and volunteers) know the name of the academy designated safeguarding lead and any deputies and understand their role within the Trust's culture of safeguarding.**
- **The academy designated safeguarding lead and/or their deputy are always available during academy hours and have made adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term time activities.**
- **Staff and volunteers understand their responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead or headteacher in a timely manner and are aware that they may also raise concerns directly with the Trust executive leaders, trustee safeguarding lead and local authority children's social care services if they believe their concerns have not been listened to or acted upon.**
- **All staff and volunteers have read (and signed to confirm) the Academies' Child Protection Policy and Safeguarding Policy including its appendices alongside Part 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 as appropriate to their role.**

- All staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities and are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect, including the specific issues of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Children Missing Education (CME) and Radicalisation and Extremism and maintain an attitude of it could happen here at all times.
- Staff new to the academy are fully inducted about the Trust's culture of safeguarding and provided with personal copies of important child protection and safeguarding information and documentation.
- Community users/lettings organising activities for children are aware of and understand the need for compliance with the Trust's child protection and safeguarding guidelines and procedures and compliance is monitored by individual schools as appropriate.

#### **At Trust level:**

- Child Protection Policy and Safeguarding Policy is compliant and updated annually to include and changes to statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).
- An executive leader (Director) and trustee are nominated as Trust Safeguarding liaison leads alongside the Trust Safeguarding Lead, and have received appropriate training and support for the role alongside a clear role descriptor.
- The Single Central Register at Trust and school levels is up to date.
- A signed record of training attended by leaders, staff, trustees and members is kept in line with the latest version of DfE's KCSIE.
- Resources are made available to academies to maintain the highest quality safeguarding practices.
- All Trust staff receive an annual training refresh of the most recent DfE KCSIE policy, and the Trust's Safeguarding Policy and procedures and sign to say they have read this, understood it and will follow. This includes the following policies: Whistleblowing, Child Protection, Safeguarding, Staff Code of Conduct, Health and Safety and E-Safety, Behaviour.



- Members and Trustees review the Trustee Code of Conduct (NGA Code of Governor Conduct) annually and sign their agreement to follow it in their behaviours and relationships. They receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction, and annually thereafter. This training provides them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that academies have effective safeguarding systems in place.

<https://www.teesvalleyeducation.co.uk/governance/>

- At Board level the safeguarding reporting includes scrutiny, oversight, report and challenge. This includes reviewing external audits.

## Reporting Concerns about a Child

Concerns about the welfare of a child at any of our Academies should be directed to the relevant Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy (DDSL) in each Academy. Details can be found on each Academy website [www.teesvalleyeducation.co.uk](http://www.teesvalleyeducation.co.uk)

## Reporting Concerns about an Adult Working or Volunteering in Our Academies

Concerns about an adult working or volunteering in any of our Academies should be directed to the Head teacher, or if it is a concern against the Headteacher, then this should be reported to the Chair of the Trustees.

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