



Trust Safeguarding Policy Tees Valley Education Trust

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Directorial lead:	Emma Lowe
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Trust Safeguarding Policy

At Tees Valley Education (TVED), safeguarding is the foundation of all we do. Protecting and promoting the welfare of children and young people is a statutory responsibility and central to our ethos. Our Trust-wide Safeguarding Policy provides a consistent framework, while each academy's Child Protection Policy sets out the school-level procedures to ensure children are safe, supported, and empowered. Together, these documents ensure that every child, parent, staff member, and trustee understands how safeguarding is enacted in practice.

Safeguarding is much broader than child protection alone. It encompasses protecting children from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and harm, preventing impairment of health or development, and creating safe, supportive environments where children can thrive. It also involves acting early to offer support and intervention when children are vulnerable, while ensuring that staff, leaders, and trustees have the training, knowledge, and confidence to act effectively.

The Trust Board has ultimate accountability for safeguarding across TVED. Trustees ensure that policies comply with statutory guidance, are implemented effectively, and result in meaningful outcomes for children. The named Safeguarding Trustee, Richard Hodges, and the Trust Safeguarding Lead, Louise Stogdale, provide oversight, challenge, and support to academies. Each school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and deputies have operational responsibility to safeguard children, supported by Headteachers and senior leaders.

The Five Key Elements of Safeguarding Across TVED

1. Prevention and Interception

At TVED, we prioritise early identification of vulnerability and proactive intervention. This includes preventing harm such as bullying, harassment, exploitation, domestic abuse, serious youth violence, radicalisation, and honour-based abuse. Child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment, sexual violence, upskirting, initiation/hazing-type violence, bullying, and harmful sexualised behaviour, is explicitly included. Staff are trained to recognise the early signs of concern, such as changes in behaviour, attendance, emotional wellbeing, or health needs, and to act swiftly to reduce risks.

2. Safeguarding and Protection

All staff are responsible for understanding their safeguarding duties, responding quickly to concerns, and knowing how to access support and guidance. DSLs and deputies provide advice and leadership, ensuring that cases are referred appropriately to social care, the police, or other agencies where thresholds are met. The Trust ensures that safeguarding training is embedded across all levels of staff, with updates at least annually, and that everyone is familiar with KCSIE 2025, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023), PREVENT, and the FGM mandatory reporting duty.

3. Escalation

No child should be left without help. The Trust ensures that staff are empowered to escalate concerns persistently if they feel a child remains at risk, whether internally to senior leaders or externally to statutory agencies. Escalation is supported by clear reporting lines, supervision, and multi-agency collaboration, so that delays or inaction do not compromise the safety or wellbeing of children. Trustees monitor that escalation processes are understood and effective in every academy.

4. Scaffolding and Supporting

TVED recognises that safeguarding requires continual learning, reflection, and professional support. Staff are given training, coaching, and opportunities for reflective practice to understand and respond to vulnerabilities effectively. DSLs and deputies meet regularly across the Trust to share best practice, discuss emerging risks, and ensure consistency in safeguarding approaches. Particular attention is given to children with SEND, those with mental health needs, young carers, children in care or previously in care, and children at risk of exploitation or serious violence. Tailored pastoral support is provided where appropriate.

5. Timely Record Keeping

Accurate and timely record keeping underpins safe practice. All concerns, decisions, and actions are recorded factually and promptly on CPOMS or other secure systems. Safeguarding files are maintained, transferred securely, and shared only on a need-to-know basis, in line with GDPR and statutory guidance. Trustees and senior leaders monitor that records are complete, auditable, and support effective safeguarding interventions.

Recognising Vulnerability

Children may be more vulnerable due to age, SEND, mental health needs, family circumstances, or experiences of trauma or exploitation. Staff are trained to recognise these risks and act early, applying professional curiosity and vigilance. Contextual safeguarding is central: staff are aware that risks may arise from external settings, peer relationships, online spaces, or community influences. Children with SEND, disabilities, or additional needs are given extra support and time, and assumptions are never made about their capacity to disclose concerns.

Safe People and Safer Recruitment

All adults working in TVED schools are expected to operate safely and professionally. Safer recruitment practices are implemented Trust-wide, including appropriate pre-employment checks and ongoing monitoring. Staff are aware of the Staff Behaviour Policy, Code of Conduct, Whistleblowing Policy, and Low-Level Concerns procedures. Allegations against adults are managed rigorously through established procedures and in line with Part 4 of KCSIE 2025. Staff training ensures that all adults understand their personal responsibility to act if they see unsafe practice.

Safe Places

All physical and virtual environments where children learn are considered in safeguarding arrangements. Health and safety, fire safety, building checks, risk assessments for trips and off-site activities, and online safety measures are rigorously maintained. The Trust Board ensures that safeguarding standards extend to any organisation or individual using Trust premises.

Safe Children

Children's safety and wellbeing is central to all policies, procedures, and curricula. Children are taught to understand relationships, manage risk, stay safe online, recognise abuse, and know how to report concerns. Mental health, social-emotional learning, and resilience are embedded in practice, ensuring children are supported holistically. All children's voices are actively listened to, particularly those with SEND or additional vulnerabilities.

Monitoring and Accountability

The Trust ensures that safeguarding is effective through ongoing audits, reporting, and challenge. Trustees receive regular reports from DSLs, Safeguarding Leads, and Headteachers. Learning from case reviews, Section 11 audits, and local safeguarding partnership recommendations inform continuous improvement.

Policy Review

This policy is reviewed annually or in response to legislative or guidance changes. It must be read alongside each academy's Child Protection Policy and related safeguarding policies to ensure a coherent, Trust-wide approach.

References and further reading

Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025

Children Act 1989/2004

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2015

Education Act 2002 (section 175)

Education (Independent School Standards) Regulation 2014 (including Academies/Free Schools)

Education Non Maintained Special schools (England) Regulation 2015

Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021

OFSTED School Inspection Handbook, Updated 2024

Safeguarding Partners Section 11 Tool

Data Protection Act 2018 & GDPR 2018