

Role of Designated Safeguarding Lead

The role of the DSL

A practitioner must be designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children. Before identifying your lead, it is important for the person with overall responsibility for the academy to ensure this person understands the responsibilities of this role and to consider whether this person is confident and competent to act upon any concerns appropriately. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is responsible for liaison with local statutory children services agencies and with the Local Authority Safeguarding Children Board. They must provide support, advice and guidance to any other staff on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issue as required. The lead practitioner must attend a child protection training course that enables them to identify, understand and respond appropriately to signs of possible abuse and neglect. We would recommend that a deputy DSL is also identified and trained to cover in case the lead DSL is called away from the academy or is off sick.

Points to consider:

- Do you have a lead and deputy DSL?
- It is considered best practice for the principal not to be the DSL, if an allegation against the principal occurs it can be difficult to investigate if they are the DSL.
- Have DSLs completed the recommended safeguarding training for this role? Do they refresh their training every two years?
- Do all staff and parents know who the named DSLs are for your academy and what their role and responsibilities are?

Job description for DSL

Job Title: Designated Safeguarding Lead

Responsible to: Principal

1. Main function of the job

Acting as the main point of contact within the setting for safeguarding and child protection.

2. Skills required

- The ability to foster good relationships with parents/carers, children and adults
- working/volunteering with children within the setting.
- An interest in the well-being of children and in safeguarding and child protection matters.
- A willingness to challenge opinion, where necessary, and to drive the child protection agenda.

- Strong listening skills and the ability to deal with sensitive situations with integrity.
- The confidence and good judgment to manage situations relating to the poor conduct/behaviour of others towards a child.
- Sound understanding of the safeguarding agenda.

3. Main Tasks

Safeguarding Children:

- Implementing, promoting and reviewing the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies and Procedures within the academy ensuring that all statutory requirements are met and adhered to.
- Acting as the main point of contact within the academy, receiving and acting upon any reported concerns. This includes ensuring that the completed paperwork is accurate, correct, fully completed and reviewed as necessary and stored in a secure and safe place and meets the statutory requirements.
- Ensuring all staff are familiar with and adhere to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy that is in place and know the procedures to follow and who to go to should the need arise. This should be included as part of the staff induction programme.
- Providing support, advice and guidance to any other staff on an ongoing basis or on any specific safeguarding issue as required.
- Implementing, maintaining and updating the policy and procedures on an annual basis or as required in a timely manner.
- Ensuring that all relevant contact names and numbers are known to staff and displayed in an accessible place at all times in order that all staff and visitors are aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and to whom they should report any concerns.
- Keeping abreast of developments and understanding the latest information on data protection, confidentiality and other legal issues that impact on the protection of children, including attending appropriate regular training and ensuring all staff have appropriate and up to date training.
- Ensuring all relevant information around Safeguarding and Child Protection is communicated to the staff team through staff meetings.
- Providing guidance on relevant matters to all staff members as appropriate and promoting best safeguarding practice at all times.
- Advocating the importance of Safeguarding and Child Protection to parents so that they know we have their child's best interests at the heart of our practice.
- Monitoring child attendance, including non-attendance, accidents logs, pre-existing injury reports, concern forms and incident forms to exclude any possible child protection issues. Ensure any relevant information is recorded and acted upon accordingly.

- Representing key link to statutory agencies (Social Care or Police) during and following any formal investigations that may have to take place. This includes maintaining confidential records of reported cases, action taken, liaising with the statutory agencies and ensuring they have access to all necessary information.
- Liaising with local children's services and the LSSCB as necessary.
- Advocating the importance of Safeguarding and Child Protection to parents, staff, volunteers and students.
- Ensuring that when on leave or absent from work for any significant period, that the role of DSL is suitably covered by the Deputy DSL or another suitably trained member of staff.
- Ensuring that the Prevent agenda is implemented and adhered to.