

Eastern Learning Alliance

Framework for Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies

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Document Control

New Version Number	Key changes from previous version	Date of ratification by Trust Board
2	Updated with name change and change of personnel	Interim update approved by CEO April 2021
3	Reviewed following updates to KCSIE 2022	September 2022
4	Reviewed following updates to KCSIE 2024	September 2024

The purpose of this framework

The vision of Eastern Learning Alliance (ELA) is to provide excellent education and learning as standard for all its children, young people and adults. This can only happen if the safety and well-being of everyone is a foremost priority.

The aim of this framework is to help support a culture of safeguarding in each Academy (ELA Active Ltd is included alongside every reference to Academy). Every Academy needs to ensure that training is regular and comprehensive, staff are vigilant, systems are coherent and understood, responses are timely, communication is smooth, record keeping is meticulous and every member of staff understands that no concern is too small to pass on.

Every Academy must have its own Child Protection and Safeguarding policy (based on the locally agreed policy within its county/local authority) which is tailored to its own individual context. These policies must be consistent with the guidance within this framework (as set out in the Trust's Scheme of Delegation). They will also be consistent with the most recent iterations of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* and *Working Together to Safeguard Children*. The definitions of any key terms used in Academy policies must be consistent with those in these statutory documents. These documents also outline the wider legislation and statutory guidance context which must shape every school's child protection and safeguarding policy and practice.

Each Academy's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy will sit alongside a range of other policies to support this culture of safeguarding. Some of these policies are common across the Trust. These include policies on online safety, equality and diversity, whistleblowing and safer recruitment.

Academies will have a range of their own policies which will also contribute to this culture of safeguarding. These will include policies concerning behaviour, anti-bullying, health and safety, sex education, special educational needs, supporting pupils with medical conditions and, where relevant, the early years and foundation stage (EYFS).

The ultimate responsibility for ensuring effective safeguarding across ELA lies with the Trust board. The Trust will identify a named trustee who will be appropriately trained and report to the Board about the effectiveness of child protection and safeguarding in the academies of the Trust.

The Trust's executive officers will support the Board in discharging its responsibilities. Each academy will have an HR Officer who will ensure that their recruitment practices and single central record (SCR) are compliant. The Deputy CEO will work with relevant academies to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding practice.

Roles and Responsibilities

Each Academy policy must clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of key personnel. This will include:

- the name and contact details of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL)
- the names and contact details of any deputy designated safeguarding leads
- the name and contact details of the safeguarding governor on the local governing body (LGB)

Each Academy policy must clearly outline the systems which are in place for any member of staff to communicate with the identified safeguarding team in all relevant scenarios.

The policy must make it clear that it is the responsibility of **all staff** to know the key personnel and systems described above.

Identification

Each policy must provide clear and useful guidance about recognising different types of abuse (physical, emotional and sexual abuse or neglect) and the action that staff should take in response to any signs of abuse. Each policy will include sufficient information to support a member of staff in their decision making, with links to further, more detailed information.

Policies will make specific reference to particular contexts in which abuse can occur, including

- child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- child criminal exploitation (CCE)
- female genital mutilation (FGM) and 'breast ironing'
- radicalisation
- children missing from education (CME),
- Child-on-child abuse (including online and sexual abuse and/or harassment)
- 'sexting' (youth-produced sexual imagery).
- Domestic Abuse

It must explain how members of staff must respond to any evidence of these particular safeguarding concerns. Policies will explain how the Academy will safeguard the welfare of children/young people who may be particularly vulnerable, such as those with special educational needs or who are looked after.

The policy must make it clear that it is the responsibility of **all staff** to

- understand the indicators of abuse and neglect
- understand which groups of children/young people are most at risk and which might benefit most from early help
- understand specific safeguarding issues, including CSE, FGM, radicalisation, CME and child on child abuse, sexting and the processes that are in place to respond to these, including the statutory responsibility of teaching staff to report FGM to the police.

Systems and processes

The policy must make it clear what any member of staff must do

- if a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm
- if they have concerns about a child's welfare but the child is not in immediate danger
- if a child tells them he/she is being abused or neglected
- if a child reports an incident(s) of sexual abuse or harassment
- if they have a concern and a member of the safeguarding team is not available
- if they have concerns about another staff member who may pose a risk of harm to children
- if they have concerns about safeguarding practices within the Academy.

Child Protection and Safeguarding policies will explain the role of staff in local early help processes and the processes for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments. They will explain principles and procedures for contacting parents, the local authority and other external agencies when necessary. They will outline approaches to record keeping, including the maintenance of effective child protection files. They will cover issues of confidentiality and the passing on of information at points of transition. They will outline how the quality of these records and files is monitored.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead

It is the responsibility of the Head of Academy to appoint an appropriate Designated

Safeguarding Lead (DSL) within the senior leadership team. Deputy Designated safeguarding leads (DDSL) may also be appointed, and each policy will make these distinct roles clear and explain how they work together. The Head of Academy will provide the DSL and deputies with sufficient time and resources to undertake their responsibilities effectively, and to ensure their role is explained in their job description. Each Academy policy will explain

- the available pathways open to the DSL as an appropriate response to any concern raised with them, for example, whether to manage any support for the child internally via the school's or college's own pastoral support processes, undertake an early help assessment or make a referral for statutory services
- the role of the DSL in liaising with the local authority in cases of a child in need, or a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm
- the role of the DSL in instigating, supporting, monitoring and escalating cases where a referral has been made to the local authority.

ELA will ensure that all DSLs and DDSLs are fully supported in their roles by providing a combination of group and 1:1 supervision. Supervision is a space to share openly about challenges in work, understand reactions to them and how they can work towards a better outcome.

Governance

Each LGB will appoint a governor with a particular oversight of safeguarding. They will need to receive appropriate and regular training. The policy will name this governor and outline how they will liaise with the DSL to understand the effectiveness of safeguarding within their Academy and also with the designated Trust lead/s to report on this effectiveness. These responsibilities will be outlined in the policy.

Each Academy Child Protection and Safeguarding policy will explain how the LGB will review and approve the policy at least annually and hold the Head of Academy to account for its implementation.

Recruitment checks

Child Protection and Safeguarding policies will make reference to safer recruitment and the maintenance of the single central record (SCR). This is formally and comprehensively covered within the Trust's Safer Recruitment policy, so any reference must be consistent with this policy.

Each safeguarding policy should, however, explain clearly how the Academy monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of its SCR and associated record keeping.

Training

Each Child Protection and Safeguarding policy will outline the Academy's approach to training and how all staff, and those in particular positions of responsibility, receive the training and continually updated information they require to undertake their roles. It will confirm how the Academy will provide, and evaluate the impact of,

- a) training for all new staff on induction
- b) regular safeguarding training for all staff (at least every three years)
- c) appropriate safeguarding training for the DSL and deputies (at least every two years)
- d) updates on developments in safeguarding practice for all staff (at least annually).

It will also explain how it will ensure that all staff and governors have read and understood Part 1 of the latest iteration of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Teaching and learning

Each Child Protection and Safeguarding policy will outline how pupils/students will be taught crucial information about how to keep themselves safe through the curriculum. They will explain the Academy's approach to ensuring that mobile phones, cameras and other electronic devices are used safely in the Academy, both within and outside lessons. They will make reference to the approach to online-safety, although this will be formally and comprehensively covered within the Trust's online-safety policy, so any reference must be consistent with this policy.

Visitors

Policies will explain how the Academy ensures that those who visit the site do so safely.

EYFS

Schools which have an early years and foundation stage (EYFS) will ensure that their policy also meets requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the relevant statutory framework. If these requirements are covered in a separate policy then this should be cross-referenced within the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy.

Audit

Eastern Learning Alliance will keep an audit checklist to assure that safeguarding systems and processes are working. The annual audit will include the monitoring of each:

- School's Single Central Record
- Child Protection Record
- Relevant school policies
- Training for all employees, governors and volunteers

The purpose of the audit is to:

- Ensure all ELA schools have a robust approach to safeguarding and embedded a positive safeguarding culture.
- To support the development of best practice across the Trust through collaboration

Each audit will be overseen by the Deputy CEO and an independent DSL who will review implementation and record keeping.