

Background to Strategy

Local authorities have overarching statutory responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people in their area. Whilst local authorities play a lead role, safeguarding children and protecting them from harm is everyone's responsibility.

Under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 duties are placed on a range of organisations and individuals to ensure their functions are discharged with regards to the safeguarding of children and young people. The statutory guidance (Working Together) does not identify a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) as a separate organisation. Schools within a MAT are not named under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 but they are captured under other legislation, for example Sections 157 and 175 of the Education Act 2002, Sections 94 (1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the Education Regulations 2011 and 2014.

In March 2015, the DfE published 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' statutory guidance for schools and colleges. This guidance contains information on what schools, including academies, should do and sets out the legal duties which they must comply with.

In law, individual schools are deemed to be 'relevant partners' of their local authority and as such are under a duty to co-operate in that local authority's Local Safeguarding Children's Board arrangements. The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 apply a duty on proprietors of independent schools including academies to make arrangements for ensuring that their functions are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

This legal requirement along with the values and principles that underpin Ninestiles Academy Trust, mean that it is essential for us to demonstrate compliance at the local level and take on the strategic responsibility for ensuring that safeguarding practice in all our provision is of the highest quality.

In addition, we will ensure that GDPR requirements are met in all schools/college and in the Trust under the umbrella of the safeguarding imperative.

Ninestiles Academy Trust (through School Improvement Directors, Academy Councils representatives and Safeguarding Trustee representative) will ensure that all NAT schools:

- Implement and adhere to the common Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Staff Code of Conduct Policy and that leaders provide evidence that all staff have read and agreed these policies
- Have a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and a designated Academy Councillor for safeguarding
- Have in place safeguarding arrangements which are designed to take account of all possible safeguarding issues including Child Sexual Exploitation and Preventing Radicalisation
- Adhere to safe recruitment practices
- Have arrangements for working together with other agencies and for sharing information with other professionals
- Take account of their local authority's procedures and practices established by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and comply with any requests from that Board
- Develop a culture of listening to children and take account of their wishes and feelings
- Provide appropriate supervision and support for staff including undertaking safeguarding induction and training

- Follow clear policies for dealing with allegations against people who work with children
- Have clear procedures in place to handle allegations of abuse against children
- Have clear whistleblowing procedures
- Consider how children may be taught about safeguarding, including online safety, through teaching and learning opportunities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum
- Appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after and ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keeping looked after children safe
- Put in place appropriate safeguarding responses to children who go missing from education
- Fulfil all of their statutory responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

School Improvement Directors will:

- Ensure an accurate record and register of DSLs and their training records in their phase schools; liaise with the HR Directorate to ensure that all staff receive the right training for their roles from the right providers at the right time
- Monitor the quality of safeguarding practices and their impact on outcomes for children across the Trust and provide termly reports to the Chief Executive and the Trust Board drawn from the schools' reports to Academy Councils
- Support Principals in post-incident reflection after any safeguarding issue and include this in reports to AC and in the SID report to the Board
- Attend the ½ termly DSL meetings
- Meet termly with the CEO and the Trustee Safeguarding representative
- Work with the Principals of Primary and Secondary schools and the 6th Form College to ensure that the performance of vulnerable learners is effectively monitored and that appropriate support is made available to those learners who are at risk of achieving poor outcomes because they are the subject of a CAF (Common Assessment Framework) or Children's Social Care intervention
- Report on the outcomes of vulnerable learners who are in need, subject to Child Protection plans or who are Looked After.
- Liaise with local authority lead professionals for safeguarding, LSCBs, Ofsted, EFA and other agencies as required.

The CEO (advised by SIDs) will:

- Produce an annual Safeguarding report and action plan as part of the Trust's business planning arrangements
- Ensure that the Scheme of Delegation is clear around the responsibilities for safeguarding at all levels
- Meet termly with the Trustee Safeguarding representative
- Commission external challenge and support where appropriate to ensure academies meet their statutory responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Policy in respect of safeguarding is mainly determined at national and local authority level and it is the responsibility of each academy to implement such policy. NAT's safeguarding service ensures adherence to national and local policy in the interests of vulnerable children and young people. Failure to implement appropriate arrangements in academies to safeguard and promote the well-being of children carries significant reputational risk for the Trust.

Each individual academy is responsible for ensuring compliance with its Local Safeguarding Children's Board procedures and policies and for publishing its own safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory requirements.