



Educate  
Together  
Academy  
Trust

# Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy

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## Rights Respecting

In line with our ethos, we are proud to be a Rights Respecting Trust. This policy advocates the following rights from the UN convention of the rights of the child: Articles 2, 3, 11,12, 13 17,18,19, 20,22, 23,24 28, 29, 31,32,33,34, 35,36,37,38,39,40

## Introduction

Educate Together Academy Trust and the Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) of all our academies fully recognise and take seriously our responsibilities under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. We are committed to working together with other agencies to ensure rigorous and robust measures within our academies to identify, assess and support children and young people who at risk from harm or who are suffering harm. This statement provides the overarching principles that underpin our approach to safeguarding and child protection. The policy applies to Trustees, staff, governors, volunteers, visitors, contractors, trainees and parents. This policy should be read in conjunction with each academies' Child protection and Safeguarding Policy which will reflect and detail the procedures, processes and priorities of each academy's Local Safeguarding Children Board. Educate Together fully recognises that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone in our organisation** who is in contact with children, their families and carers, has a role to play. Educate Together Academy Trust will safeguard and promote the welfare of children by:

- **Protecting** children from maltreatment.
- **Preventing** impairment of children's health or development including impairment of children's **mental and physical** health
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and **effective care**
- Taking action to enable all children to have the **best outcomes**
- Providing a safe environment in which **all** children and young people can learn and flourish.
- Acting on concerns about a child's welfare immediately.
- Fulfilling our legal responsibilities to identify children who may need early help, who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm and acting immediately to protect and support them.

**All action taken within our trust will be in accordance with:**

- **Current legislation** (these are summarised within [Working Together to Safeguard Children: statutory framework](#))
- **Statutory, national, and local guidance – this includes:**
  - **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)**, which sets out the multiagency working arrangements to safeguard and promoted the welfare of children and young people and protect them from harm; in addition, it sets out the statutory roles and responsibilities of schools.
  - **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)** is statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education which all schools and colleges must have regard to when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

- **Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework** is statutory guidance which sets standards that school and childcare providers **(2021)**

## Ethos

The ethos of Educate Together is that all its schools and educational operations must be:

- Equality based
- Child centred
- Co-educational
- Democratically run

These four principles form the foundation for our policy and practice in relation to Safeguarding.

### Equality based

In our approach to safeguarding, Educate Together Academy Trust recognise our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and our general and specific duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

General duties include:

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
3. Foster good relations across all protected characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

We recognise that racism and other forms of discrimination are safeguarding issues. Preventing harm requires addressing and preventing all forms of systemic, institutional and individual racism and discrimination.

### Child-centred

We believe our role and responsibility as educators is to provide a learner-centered education which ensures inclusion, not by treating all pupils in exactly the same way, but through the process of identifying and understanding individual needs and finding solutions to remove or reduce barriers. Understanding the whole child including any physical, emotional or mental health needs, special educational needs and contextual safeguarding factors that may make an individual more vulnerable to discrimination, abuse or poor outcomes and acting to prevent harm and promote best outcomes, is essential in our endeavour to achieve **equity** for all our pupils. Our child centred approach means:

1. Everyone working within Educate Together Academy Trust should always consider what is in the **best interests** of the child.

2. Ensuring children at risk of harm or who are victims of harm are **never** given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse. Never should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
3. Educate Together Academy Trust is committed to ensuring the voices of our children and young people are always heard, taken seriously and acted upon.

### **Co-educational**

As part of our co-educational principle, we strive to:

1. Proactively develop anti-discriminatory practice within all our schools.
2. Create an environment, culture and curriculum which empowers our staff and children to challenge stereotypes and inequalities as well as actively promote and celebrate diversity in all its forms.
3. Equip our children and young people with the knowledge and understanding to keep themselves and their peers safe and healthy.
4. Promote a culture of respect, tolerance and reflection where each child's individual and unique characteristics are recognised and celebrated. We aim for everyone to understand that racism is a safeguarding issue wherever it occurs.

### **Democratically run**

As part of our democratically run principle

1. Educate Together Academy Trust academies do not work in isolation, we promote strong collaborative practice and liaise closely with pupils, parents, external professionals and members of the local community, in order to establish safe and Inclusive learning environments and safeguard our children and young people.
2. We actively encourage children and young people in our schools to discuss, reflect and help decide on important issues that affect them in and outside of school through our Learn Together curriculum and Rights Respecting Councils.
3. We build strong teams around individual children who are vulnerable and in need through effective communication and collaboration with all involved.

4. We value the contributions made by all members of our Trust community and all who we work in partnership with to ensure the safety, welfare and best outcomes for **all** children.

## **Trustees Responsibilities**

All Trustees will understand their safeguarding duties and statutory legislation, regulation and guidance. The Trust Board will approve this policy at each review and hold the CEO to account for its implementation. There will be a lead Trustee on Safeguarding to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with each academy's Child Protections and Safeguarding policy. The designated Trustee for safeguarding will act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against a Headteacher or the CEO. The Trust Board has legal responsibility for safeguarding arrangements throughout the Trust. It will make sure that the academies have effective safeguarding policies and procedures in place and will monitor the implementation of these policies regularly.

### **The Trust Board will do this by:**

- commissioning independent safeguarding audits of ETAT and its academies
- receiving regular updates and reports from the CEO, Executive Head and Trust DSL
- delegating operational responsibilities to LGBs as set out below
- receiving and approving this policy at regular reviews

## **Governor Responsibilities**

Each academy will have a named governor who takes responsibility for the academy's safeguarding to ensure that safeguarding and child protection practice, process, and policy (including online safety) is effective and is compliant with legislation, statutory guidance, and Local Safeguarding Partnership arrangements.

- The appointed Safeguarding Governor will liaise with the Head Teacher and the DSL to produce an annual report for governors and complete the S. 175 (annual safeguarding) audit for their local authority
- Ensure that the school remedies any deficiencies or weaknesses brought to its attention without delay;
- Ensure that the academies' safeguarding policy is current and updated annually (or when there are significant updates)
- Ensure that the DSL is an appropriate senior member of setting's senior leadership team and ensure that they have adequate time, funding, training, resources, and support to carry out their role effectively.
- Ensure that the training and learning for the school community is robust and effective.
- Ensure that learners are taught about safeguarding on the curriculum including online safety in compliance with statutory guidance [Relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education) and [Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/early-years-foundation-stage-eyfs)
- To ensure that teachers, including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers, and contractors have appropriate checks carried out in line with statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021, Part 3).

- Ensure that there are procedures in place to manage safeguarding concerns or allegations against teachers, including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers, and contractors who may not be suitable to work with or pose a risk to learners, this includes having a process to manage low level concerns.
- Ensure that systems are in place for learners to effectively share a concern about a safeguarding issue they are experiencing, express their views and give feedback.
- Ensure that the setting has systems in place to prevent, identify and respond to peer on peer harm (including sexual abuse and sexual harassment) and mental health concerns, and review the effectiveness of the setting's online safety practices.
- Appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement for children in care and other care arrangements.

**Duties are further outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021, Part 2)**

### **Staff responsibilities**

All Educate Together staff will read and understand Part 1 of statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021). Those working directly with children will also read Annex B.

- Be aware of the signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child sexual exploitation (CSE), FGM and radicalisation.
- In addition to this all staff will be aware of the systems in place which support safeguarding including reading this Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy; the Behaviour Policy; the Staff Behaviour Policy (code of conduct); safeguarding response to children who go missing from education; and the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Know who and how to contact the DSL and any deputies, the Chair of Governors, and the Governor responsible for safeguarding.
- All staff will be able to identify vulnerable learners and take action to keep them safe. Information or concerns about learners will be shared with the DSL where it includes those:
  - who may need a social worker and may be experiencing abuse or neglect;
  - requiring mental health support;
  - may benefit from early help;
  - where there is a radicalisation concern;
  - where a crime may have been committed.
- Be clear as to procedures about [peer on peer abuse](#) and [those requiring mental health support](#), and the [impact of technology in relation to online safety](#).
- Be involved where appropriate, in the implementation of individual plans to further safeguard vulnerable learners and understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort.
- Record concerns appropriately and in a timely manner by using the setting's safeguarding systems.
- To be aware of the need to raise to the senior leadership team any concerns they have about safeguarding practices within the school.

## Responsibilities of named persons

### The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is named in each Academy's Policy, as well as other DSL trained staff available in their absence. Details of each DSL and Deputy DSL are available on each of our school's website and notice boards. The DSL in each school will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to fulfil their role.

- The DSL is a senior member of staff who undertakes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection within the setting.
- The DSL works with the headteacher, and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that learners in need are experiencing or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on learner's attendance, engagement and achievement at school or college.
- Activities include the management of work undertaken by any Deputy DSLs.
- Manages early identification of vulnerability of learners and their families from staff through cause for concerns or notifications. This will ensure detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals.
- Manages referrals to local safeguarding partners where learners with additional needs have been identified. These can include those –
  - who need a social worker and may be experiencing abuse or neglect;
  - requiring mental health support;
  - who may benefit from early help;
  - where there is a radicalisation concern;
  - where a crime may have been committed.

### The DSL in will also:

- Work with others – acting as a point of contact for outside agencies about safeguarding.
- Support and advise other staff in making referrals to other agencies.
- When required, liaise with the case manager and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in relation to child protection cases which concern a staff member.
- Coordinate safeguarding training and raise awareness and understanding to the school community around policies and practice in relation to safeguarding.
- Help promote educational outcomes by sharing information about vulnerable learners with relevant staff. This includes ensuring that staff:
  - know who these children are,
  - understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort.
  - Are supported to identify the challenges that children in this group might face.
  - Provide additional academic support or make reasonable adjustments to help children who have **or have had** a social worker to reach their potential.
- Ensure the successful transfer of the Safeguarding/Child Protection File when a learner moves on to a new setting within 5 days for in year transfer or the first 5 days of the start of a new term.

- Ensure appropriate safeguarding cover and availability during term time/ any out of hours/out of term activities managed by the school.
- Duties are further outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021, Annex C)

## Headteachers

The Headteacher of each school is responsible for the implementation of their school's Child protection and Safeguarding policy, including:

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers are informed of the policy as part of their induction
- Communicating their Child protection and Safeguarding policy to parents/ carers when their child joins the school and via the school website
- Ensuring that the DSLs have appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if a DSL is absent
- Ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training and update this regularly
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer
- Ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met
- Making sure each child in the Early Years Foundation Stage is assigned a key person.

## LADO

A Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) operates in each Local Authority area and is there to support staff across all organisations who work with children and young people if any concerns arise regarding any practitioner who works with children and young people. Each academy within our Trust will have the name and contact details of the LADO for their Local authority clearly set out in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy as well as on the website and staff handbook.

The LADO should be alerted to all cases in which allegations have been made that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child
- may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against a child/children

If a person working within ETAT has concerns regarding the conduct of a colleague then they should in the first instance report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Headteacher within their own academy, who is required by law to report this concern to the LADO. If there is a concern about the Headteacher or DSL then the Trust CEO should be informed. However, anyone can contact the LADO if they need to do so for advice or support, especially if concerns are regarding SLT, the CEO or Trustees.

## Whistleblowing procedures

Staff in each school are made aware of the following whistleblowing channels for situations where they feel unable to raise an issue with the senior leadership team or feel that their genuine concerns are not being addressed:

- General guidance can be found at: Advice on whistleblowing <https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>.



- The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available [here](#) for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and Email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).
- The above channels are clearly accessible to all staff (in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, staff handbook, code of conduct and staff notice boards).

## **Safer recruitment**

Educate Together Academy Trust pays full regard to the safer recruitment practices detailed in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2021; Part 3)

- This includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, checking previous employment history, and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. References are always obtained, scrutinised and concerns resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed.
- It also includes undertaking appropriate checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), the barred list checks and prohibition checks (and overseas checks if appropriate), dependent on the role and duties performed, including regulated and non-regulated activity.
- All recruitment materials will include reference to Educate Together Academy Trust's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of learners.
- Interview panels will have at least one member of staff in any interview process with accredited and up to date training in safer recruitment

## **Confidentiality**

Educate Together Academy Trust has a data protection policy and is committed to relevant data protection principles which allow for sharing (and withholding) personal information as provided for in the Data protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulations. This includes how to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information which is sensitive and personal and should be treated as 'special category personal data'. Each academy will have guidance on confidentiality and sharing information in their Child and Safeguarding Policy.