BRENTWOOD DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE
"Supporting Catholic schools to provide excellent education where pupils flourish, and Christ is made known to all."

How confident are governors that the school meets all statutory requirements for safeguarding?

Safeguarding should be the number one priority for all schools. Everyone shares the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, but governing bodies have a strategic leadership responsibility for their school's safeguarding arrangements and **must** ensure they comply with their duties under legislation. Schools are recognised as the eyes and ears of the safeguarding system and their relationship with pupils and families are invaluable in spotting and responding to risk at the earliest possible stage.

The Law
Sections 157 and 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a statutory duty on the boards of maintained schools and academies to have arrangements in place to ensure that they:

- carry out their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and;
- ensure that the school has effective safeguarding policies and procedures in place, in accordance with DfE guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2023 as well as any local or Diocesan guidance and locally agreed inter-agency procedures. **KCSIE places a statutory obligation on all governors and trustees to receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction and to ensure that their training is regularly updated**.

In December 2023 the DfE published a long-awaited update to the statutory guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children (WTTSC). On 23rd February 2024, an update was published, **which includes an important change to the definition of safeguarding.** Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is now defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- **providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge**
- protecting children from maltreatment, **whether that is within or outside the home, including online**
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- **promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children**
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes **in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework.**

Ofsted

In judging the effectiveness of leadership and management, inspectors **must** judge whether safeguarding arrangements in the school are effective. Making sure all policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and align to updates in statutory guidance, and are uploaded to the school's website, will be one of the first things Ofsted check when they visit. Ofsted will also require:

- records of sexual harassment or sexual violence
- records and analysis of bullying, discriminatory and prejudiced behaviour (either directly or indirectly) including racist, sexist, disability and homophobic/bi-phobic/transphobic bulling, use of derogatory language and racist incidents
- a list of referrals made to the designated person for safeguarding for the school and those subsequently referred to the local authority, along with brief details of the resolution

If schools do not have adequate processes in place, it is likely that safeguarding will be considered ineffective resulting in an Inadequate Ofsted judgement.

It is crucial that governors/trustees ensure that robust Single Central Record (SCR) checks as well as an up-to-date child protection and staff behaviour policy are in place at their school. Ofsted will also consider how schools manage allegations of sexual harassment, abuse and violence and governors will need to be able to articulate this.

Sample Ofsted Comments where Safeguarding is a Concern

Leaders and governors have not demonstrated that they understand the national statutory requirements for keeping pupils safe. These weaknesses compromise the quality of the school's leadership and pupils' welfare at the school

The single central record (SCR) is not complete or checked well enough. As a result, inspectors found that information was missing.

The record of recruitment checks on staff (SCR) and the process of employing staff do not reflect the most recent statutory guidance. Consequently, leaders have not ensured all staff that they employ are thoroughly vetted before they begin their employment at the school

The school's website did not meet statutory requirements (for academies)

Leaders failed to recognise or address a evading culture in the school which does not promote equality and respect

Records lack sufficient detail. They do not include dates on which events took place

Leaders do not have sufficient knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities of how to best protect and support pupils. This means that their actions are not always providing the help that pupils require when they need it

Leaders have not ensured that statutory training has been kept up-to-date

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Leaders have not set up robust systems for recording and monitoring pupils who might be at risk. The information they record is not always clearly presented and is not always shared appropriately with other agencies and professionals where necessary

Leaders, including those responsible for governance, are not sufficiently aware of the quality of safeguarding practices within the school. The information leaders have used to support their oversight of safeguarding has not provided an accurate and complete picture of record-keeping and associated follow-up actions. Leaders' oversight of safeguarding is therefore not effective

There are gaps between what senior leaders think is happening in respect of safeguarding and what is actually the case.

Did you know that you can access the latest Ofsted reports at Watchsted?

This checklist covers the essential questions for a governor or trustee to ask to ensure that the school is compliant with statutory requirements.

Safeguarding Checklist for Governors		
Date of completion:	**Completed by:**	
Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 (KCSiE) **Ofsted requirements**	**Governors questions, actions, checks and sources of evidence**	**Next Steps**
1.Child Protection Policy The school has a child protection policy and procedures in place – including a staff behaviour policy (Code of Conduct) that are in accordance with government, Diocesan and local authority guidance, made available to parents on request. These are reviewed at least annually. The child protection policy includes procedures which set out how allegations of child on child abuse will be investigated and dealt with.	**Child Protection Policy** Review date: Provided to all staff (including volunteers) at Induction: (It is good practice for staff to sign a record that they have received this) **Staff Code of Conduct** Review date: Provided to all staff (including volunteers) at Induction: (It is good practice for staff to sign a record that they have received this)	
2. An up-to-date child protection policy has been published on the school website (for academies) and parents are made aware of the school's statutory responsibilities in accordance with the policy. **Governors should ensure that child protection files are maintained as set out in Annexe C of KCSIE**	Website checked (date): Q How is this communicated to parents? Q Does the governing board receive a regular report outlining how the school is fulfilling the statutory requirements for safeguarding? Q Are these reports and any identified actions clearly referenced in the minutes of governor meetings? Q How are child protection files kept and maintained?	

3. **Designated Safeguarding Lead** (DSL) A senior member of the school's leadership team has been designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. Job description of DSL includes specific reference to this role They have received appropriate training to equip them to fulfil the role; this is updated every two years. In addition to their formal training, their knowledge and skills should be updated at regular intervals but at least annually, to keep up with any developments relevant to their role.	Name of Designated Safeguarding Lead: Y/N Training completed: Date: Q How is this reported to the governing board?	
4. Deputy Safeguarding Lead/s There are one or more deputy designated safeguarding leads to fulfil the role in the DSL's absence and there is always cover for this role. Any deputy should be trained to the same standard as the DSL	Name of deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead/s: Training completed: Date: Q Is a succession plan in place for child protection roles within the school and GB? Is training taken in advance of assuming roles?	
5. Safeguarding/Child Protection Governor It is recommended practice, but not statutory, to appoint a nominated governor to champion child protection and monitor safeguarding.	Name of safeguarding governor: Training completed: Date:	

	Q Is an annual safeguarding audit and report to governors completed and shared with the full governing body?	
6. Prevent Duty The Designated Safeguarding Lead has received Prevent Awareness training and the school has appropriate arrangements in place to prevent pupils being drawn into terrorism in line with the Prevent policy	Date of last training: Q Have you seen evidence of clear procedures for protecting children at risk of radicalisation? Q Are staff confident to challenge extremist ideas and refer children when necessary to appropriate authorities? Q Does the behaviour policy make it clear that discriminatory behaviour in any form will not be tolerated? Is this policy publically available?	
7. Staff Training All staff members are aware of indicators of abuse or neglect and extra-familial harm, including child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE) such as County Lines and female genital mutilation (FGM)	Q Are governors confident that all staff can recognise signs of neglect, exploitation or abuse, and know how to report these? Q How are child protection concerns recorded? Q Are records stored securely? Where?	
All new staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety and filtering and monitoring) as part of their induction	Y/N	
All staff members receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training and updates (including	Y/N Date of last training:	

online safety and filtering and monitoring) as required, but at least annually. The school keeps up to date records of all staff safeguarding training including levels of training and dates. All staff members are aware of the systems which support safeguarding	Record seen: Date: All staff have read Part 1 of the guidance: Keeping Children Safe in Education: Y/N Q Have you carried out a staff survey or discussed with staff during a governor visit?
8. Governor/TrusteeTraining All governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online) as part of their induction The school keeps up to date records of all governor/trustee safeguarding and child protection training All governors are aware of their statutory responsibilities for child protection and safeguarding Governors and trustees are regularly updated of changes to safeguarding and child protection guidance and good practice	Y/N Record seen: Date: All governors have read Part 1 of the guidance: Keeping Children Safe in Education (recommended): Y/N Q How are governors and trustees kept updated? Q Do governors/trustees have the opportunity to attend staff safeguarding briefings or receive these updates?

9. **Child on Child Sexual Abuse and Harassment** The school has robust procedures for responding to allegations of child on child abuse. All staff are aware of indicators of child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment and know how to respond to any concerns (including those that have happened outside the school or online)	**Q** What procedures are in place for responding to allegations of child on child abuse? **Q** Are governors confident that staff know how to respond to any concerns? How do you know this? **Q** Can governors articulate how the school handles allegations of sexual harassment, abuse and violence? **Q** How is inappropriate behaviour addressed?	
10. **Safer Recruitment** The school operates safer recruitment procedures and makes sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on staff and volunteers, including governors. Schools should consider online searches as part of their due diligence on shortlisted candidates. Governors are required to have an enhanced criminal record certificate from the DBS. It is the responsibility of the governing body to apply for a certificate for any of their governors who does not already have one. Schools should also carry out a section 128 check for school governors.	All safer recruitment checks are evidenced in the Single Central Record (SCR). Good practice is for a governor to carry out an audit of accuracy once a term. Monitored by: Date: **Q** Does the school's policy include in the wording that online searches may be conducted? Governors check all DBS are completed Date:	

11. Safer Recruitment Training The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009 require governing boards of maintained schools to ensure that at least one person on any appointment panel has undertaken safer recruitment training.	The headteacher and at least one governor have completed safer recruitment training. Name of member/s of staff Date Name of governor/s Date	
12. Safeguarding concerns and allegations made about staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors The school has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers, including low-level concerns	Q Are low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistleblowing included in the staff behaviour policy? Q Do all staff sign the Code of Conduct each year? Q How are low-level concerns recorded and addressed?	
13. A member of the governing board (usually the chair) is nominated to be responsible for liaising with the local authority and/or partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the headteacher	Nominated member of the governing board: Date:	
14. **Children Looked After** A designated teacher has been appointed to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after and has had appropriate training	Name of designated teacher: Date training completed:	

15. Opportunities to teach safeguarding Pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.	Q How is the curriculum preparing pupils for life in modern Britain? Q Can governors give examples? This may include PSHE, assemblies, books in the school library, wall displays Q How safe do pupils feel at school? How do you know? Q Do children know what to do if they feel bullied or see other children being bullied? Q Are any safeguarding concerns voiced on parent view?	
16. Online Safety The school has a clear policy on the use of mobile and smart technology with appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place to protect pupils from potentially harmful and inappropriate online content. Online safety is viewed as part of a school's statutory safeguarding responsibilities. This includes the importance of schools communicating regularly with parents to reinforce the importance of children being safe online. KCSIE 2023 added a new focus around filtering and monitoring. As part of this process, governing bodies and school leaders should ensure their school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness.	Q Does the school have an up-to-date online safety policy and acceptable use policy? When was this last reviewed? Q What filters are in place to protect pupils? Q How do pupils know how to keep themselves safe online? Q How does the school make parents and carers aware of the dangers of unsupervised internet access? Q Do staff receive regular appropriate and relevant online safety training, including around filtering and monitoring? Q Have governors reviewed the DfE filtering and monitoring standards? Is there a clear plan for implementing the standards? Q Has 'lead responsibility for Filtering and Monitoring' been added to the DSL job description? Do they understand what this involves?	

17. Attendance The school has an admission register and attendance register. All staff are aware that children absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions or for prolonged periods, can act as a vital warning sign that there may be safeguarding concerns	**Q** Who takes responsibility for this in school? **Q** How proactive are the school in pursuing children whose attendance is poor? **Q** Do you have a school attendance policy? When was this last reviewed? **Q** How does the governing body monitor school attendance?	
18. Appropriate responses are in place to safeguard children who are absent from education All schools must inform the Local Authority within five days when a child is removed from the school role or starts at school out of normal transition dates.	**Q** What procedures are in place to deal with a child who goes missing from school?	
19. Security of School Premises The main legislation covering this area is the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and regulations made under that Act. Information about the law on pupil health and safety is in guidance on Health and Safety for schools (academies and maintained schools).	**Q** When was your Health and Safety policy last reviewed? **Q** How safe and secure is the physical environment of the school? How do you know? **Q** Do you have a governor with responsibility for health and safety? Who is it? **Q** How does the school assess and manage risks to the health and safety of staff and pupils? **Q** How are all visitors to the school, including contractors, made aware of their responsibilities in terms of conduct? **Q** What training is given to staff on health and safety matters?	

	Q What risk assessments are carried out when planning school trips?	
20. Use of School Premises Where schools are used for non-school activities, those providers are expected to meet the guidance in [Keeping Children Safe in Out of School Settings](#) (see paragraph 167). If schools receive allegations related to an incident that 'happened when an individual or organisation was using their school premises for the purposes of running activities for children … the school should follow their (own) safeguarding policies and procedures including informing the LADO'	Q How are out-of-hour hire organisations working with children made aware that, in the event of an incident, the school will follow its own policy including informing the LADO?	

Appendix A

Model Role Description

Safeguarding Link Governor – Leading on the governance of safeguarding	✓Has a good understanding of safeguarding requirements and compliance ✓Meets regularly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and other relevant staff and asks the right questions ✓Ensures safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and regularly reviewed - including policies on child protection, pupil behaviour and staff behaviour ✓Checks the Single Central Record is compliant ✓Reports to the governing body or relevant committee ✓Ensures the DSL receives formal safeguarding training every two years and that all school staff receive formal safeguarding and child protection training on induction ✓ Ensures all school staff receive regular, updated safeguarding and child protection updates and that all governors also receive regular, up-to-date safeguarding training and as part of their induction ✓Ensures that there is appropriate monitoring and tracking in place for vulnerable pupils ✓Ensures pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online safety

Additional Responsibilities in a MAT	✓Ensures that a senior member of staff is appointed as the trust-wide designated safeguarding lead ✓Ensures trustees and local governors receive regular training, including at induction ✓Meets the nominated safeguarding local governors and disseminates best practice ✓ Ensures the trust's Child Protection Policy is understood across the layers of governance and by all stakeholders. This should be ratified at local governing body level ✓Oversees the trust's Single Central Record, and ensure the proper procedures are in place for it to be administered correctly.

Appendix B

Quick Questions for Governors and Trustees

- Are governors confident that the school meets all statutory requirements for safeguarding? How do you know?

- Does the governing board receive an annual safeguarding report - so all governors can be aware and monitor their school's safeguarding procedures

- Is there a governor with responsibility for monitoring safeguarding? Do they monitor/meet with the DSL termly? How do they report back to the governing board?

- Who is the Designated Safeguarding Lead? Is their job description and training up-to-date?

- What are the arrangements for deputising for the DSL if they are unavailable?

- Are all child protection policies up-to-date and on the school website? Is there an annual review of these policies?

- How do governors monitor the Single Central Record to ensure it is complete and up-to-date?

- Are governors confident that all staff can recognise signs of potential mental health concerns or abuse and know how to report these? How are new staff inducted?

- How are child protection concerns recorded, stored securely and reported as appropriate?

- Who has done safer recruitment training? Is it up-to-date?

- Do children feel safe in school? How do you know? What about on-line safety, including filtering and monitoring? What about the physical environment of the school?

- Can governors articulate how the school handles allegations of sexual harassment, abuse and violence?

Appendix C

Further Reading

Children Missing Education - Statutory Guidance (DfE Sept 2016)

Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings (Ofsted 2022)

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE Sept 2023)

Keeping Children Safe in Out-of-School Settings – Code of Practice (DfE 2022)

Online Safety in Schools and Colleges - questions from the governing board (UK Council for Child Internet Safety 2020)

Preventing and Tackling Bullying – advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies (DfE 2017)

Promoting Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing (Public Health England - updated 2022)

The Prevent Duty - DfE revised statutory guidance (2023)

Working together to improve school attendance (DfE guidance revised 2023)

Working together to safeguard children (DfE statutory guidance)

Debbi Botham, Diocesan Governance Development Officer

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