Central Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Roles and responsibilities, as set out in this policy.

Responsible Trustee/Director	Rob Pizii
Chief Executive	Canon Andrew Teale
Director of Safeguarding	Ben Straker

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1.0 Purpose

1.1   The Diocese of Hereford Multi-Academy Trust (Trust) believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. Across the Trust, at all levels, each adult has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. Our organisational culture and practice at each level of the organisation is reflective of this duty.

1.2   The Trust Local Academy Boards (LAB), including Strategic Task Groups (STG) of all academies take seriously their responsibilities, under section 175 of the Education Act 2002, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and to work together with other agencies, to ensure adequate arrangements within our schools to identify, assess and support those children and young people who are suffering harm.

1.3   The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of requirements for safeguarding and child protection that are shared across the Trust. This includes both the role of the Trust in the leadership, oversight and quality assurance of safeguarding and child protection arrangements, and practice in the Trust academies.

1.4   The Trust provides a template safeguarding and child protection policy for use in each academy. It remains important that individual academy policies are reflective of local context and characteristics. Each academy within the Trust will provide site specific detail in their policy document. Individual academy policies are published on each academy website. A list of Trust academies and their respective websites are included in Appendix 1 of this document.

1.5   This policy should be read alongside the following documents:

- Academy Child Protection policies
- DHMAT: Managing Allegations Against Adults Working within the Trust Policy
- DHMAT: Central Recruitment Policy (encompassing safer recruitment)
- DHMAT: Staff Code of Conduct
- DHMAT Low Level Concerns Policy
- DHMAT Confidential reporting/Whistleblowing Policy
- DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education – September 2023

- Working Together to Safeguard Children – (change imminent)
- Local Child-on-Child Abuse Protocols
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017
- The Education Act 2002

2.0   The Law and National Framework

2.1   The requirements of the Trust and each academy to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and young people are set out in legislation and departmental guidance. The policy and protocols of the Trust are determined by these. Directors, Staff and LAB/STG members should also be aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 , the Equality Act 2010, (including the Public Sector Equality Duty).

2.2   **Departmental Guidance**

The government guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024' are the essential national safeguarding documents and give practical guidance on implementing legal requirements. Each academy should have at least one copy of each, which should be accessible to staff.

2.3   All adults working within the Trust must be issued with their own copy of Part 1 and Annex A of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024', **and each subsequent update**. Annually, time must be given for staff to read and comprehend the document. Staff must confirm by return that they have both read and understood the document. This confirmation should be stored on MyConcern.

2.4   **Local Partnership Arrangements**

Local Safeguarding Partnerships are currently made up of senior managers from Children's Services, Health and Police in order to oversee, at a local level, the working together arrangements for safeguarding. Each partnership arrangement has an individual offer that relates to the community they serve. This body produces local procedures in line with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 which influence each organisation's own procedures. Each academy must show due regard to local partnership arrangements. It is also an expectation of the Trust that

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL's) will attend update events and training as required or requested by their local partnership arrangements.

2.5 Local academy arrangements

Each academy maintains its own safeguarding policy, based on the Trust template policy,the arrangements of which are reflective of the requirements set out above.

These site-specific documents must be published on individual academy websites and must be renewed annually. It is also the responsibility of individual academies to implement associated policies, including (not exhaustive):

- Safer Recruitment
- Administration of School Medicines
- Pupil Behaviour
- Child on Child Abuse
- Relationships and Sex Education
- E-safety
- The Staff Code of Conduct
- Low Level Concerns Policy.

2.6   Academies will complete the Trust's annual safeguarding audit, whilst Academy Improvement Partners (AIP's) will forward their reports linked to safeguarding and the Single Central Register (Sentry).

2.7 Definitions

'*Safeguarding*' encompasses everything that is done to support children and young people in order to keep them safe and promote their welfare. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 defines safeguarding as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of a child's health and development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.

'*Child protection*' however is defined as:

- part of safeguarding and promoting welfare; and the activity to protect specific children who are suffering, or who are likely to suffer, significant harm.

2.7.1   Therefore, *protection* is a specific element of safeguarding, whereas safeguarding legislation in general is about the promotion of children's needs and the prevention of harm. This emphasises the need for all staff to be able to respond early when they have a concern rather than wait until this is more defined and certain.

The most critical message from the legislation is that "**the child's welfare is paramount".**

3.0   Roles and Responsibilities

3.1   Everyone has a role to play in ensuring the well-being and safety of children, young people, their families and each other.

Below is a brief description of those core responsibilities.

3.1.1   **All Staff**

All staff will:

- make sure they have undertaken the appropriate training for their role;
- take responsibility to report any concerns, no matter what their role;
- ensure they have a copy of part 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 and that they have read and understand these;
- be aware of the need to minimise their own vulnerability in not being alone with children or in situations that could render them vulnerable to poor practice and/or allegations against them; and
- always be aware of the needs of young people and be vigilant for any possible signs of abuse.

3.2 **The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

3.2.1 The DSL is the member of the academy's Senior Leadership Team who is responsible for the strategic leadership of safeguarding.

3.2.2 The DSL is the person to whom staff should pass their concerns and who will ensure a practical and efficient way of dealing with those concerns. Whilst practical aspects of this work may be allocated, by the DSL, to Deputy DSLs and other pastoral staff. Leasdership of safeguarding and associated activities remain the responsibility of the DSL, as specified in job descriptions.

3.2.3 **It is imperative that DSLs (or substitute staff) should attend and contribute to Trust-wide development and learning events.**

3.2.4 The DSL will:

- be available for consultation during normal school hours. The DSL will usually be available on site. However, availability may also be via Teams or telephone.
- ensure an open and efficient route for staff to bring concerns to them of any sort and to have their concerns taken seriously;
- ensure they are appropriately trained to carry out the role;
- support staff in ensuring that they receive appropriate training;
- promote the procedural pathway within the Academy so staff are aware of the way to report concerns (via MyConcern);
- ensure the academy procedures are followed and adhered to with regard to referring a child if there are concerns about possible abuse;
- offer clear advice and support to staff bringing concerns or needing help;
- consider whether concerns referred to him/her need to be referred to Children's Services/Social Care;
- offer appropriate feedback, as necessary, as to the progress of the concern;
- maintain written records of concerns about a child, even if there is no need to make an immediate referral and to keep a record system to ensure consistency;
- discuss with the Headteacher any complex concerns;
- ensure that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from pupil records;
- ensure that an indication of further record-keeping is marked on the pupil record;
- ensure complex and concerning cases are referred without delay;

- follow the LSP's escalation policy, when cases are not progressing in an acceptable manner;
- gather, collate and analyse as appropriate all relevant information for purposes of quality assurance;
- hold the responsibility to ensure that children who have, or have had, a social worker maintain academic and attendance standards;
- Understand the role of the 'Appropriate Adult' within a police investigation.

3.3 Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Deputy DSL)

Each academy within the Trust will appoint at least one Deputy DSL, who will formally provide cover and additional capacity for the DSL. Each Deputy DSL will be trained to the same level as the DSL. There will always be, present on site, either the DSL or a DDSL.

3.3.1 In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL, the Headteacher will identify a Deputy DSL to undertake the duties of the DSL listed above.

3.4 The Academy Headteacher

3.41 The Headteacher in each academy is responsible for ensuring that the DSL is effective in their role of providing and accessing high quality services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people accessing provision from their academy. The Headteacher will :

- Provide day to day support and guidance to the DSL as necessary;
- Over the promotion of safeguarding throughout the academy, ensuring all staff are appropriately trained and aware of their responsibilities;
- ensure cover is provided where necessary, in the absence of the DSL;
- offer supervision, from an appropriate professional, to the DSL in relation to their role and decisions made;
- that a senior member of staff is designated as the person in charge of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children and receives appropriate training;
- encourage pupils and parents to inform the academy of any concerns;

- work with the representative of the LAB to put mechanisms in place to   ensure that pupils requiring safeguarding measures are monitored in relation to their situation and progress with their learning;
- ensure all recruitment procedures follow safeguarding best practice;
- contribute to quality assurance processes; and
- ensure sufficient allocation of time given to DSLs to undertake the role.

3.5 **The academy Senior Leadership Team**

3.5.1 The academy Senior Leadership Team will support the Headteacher to discharge the duties to safeguard children and young people to:

- promote the importance of safeguarding throughout the Academy;
- oversee the effectiveness of safeguarding systems, especially procedures, and review and report any changes that are required;
- support the work of the DSL, to ensure an effective process for dealing with concerns;
- ensure that the academy fulfils its statutory duty to co-operate with other agencies and that the chain of accountability is clear, from front line to senior level.

3.6 **Diocese of Hereford Multi- Academy Trust (Trust) Safeguarding Director**

3.6.1 The Trust Safeguarding Director, provides strategic leadership within the Trust for all aspects of safeguarding children and young people. Operational matters should be addressed in accordance with arrangements in each respective local authority.

3.6.2 The Trust Safeguarding Director will:

- ensure that all policies and procedures are reviewed and updated, in line with national and local requirements, and that appropriate changes are disseminated to all academies;
- ensure that there are systems in place to support the effective management of safeguarding, especially the role of DSLs, training for all staff and supervision, as appropriate;

- ensure that there is available to academy Headteacher, someone who can offer appropriate external advice and support with safeguarding concerns, especially when they are complex and/or relate to allegations against staff;
- ensure that Quality Assurance processes are in place, and oversee the information they produce, to measure the progress and effectiveness of existing safeguarding frameworks; and
- produce information to the Trust Board, in relation to Safeguarding, to ensure that the Board can demonstrate that it is discharging its safeguarding obligations appropriately.

3.7 The Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

3.7.1 The CEO, as Accountable Officer, will:

- Provide appropriate challenge and support to Trust's Safeguarding Director, to ensure the Trust and the Academies it sponsors are taking all opportunities to safeguard and protect the children and young people that access their services.
- Support Academy Headteachers with the management of allegations made against adults, staff or volunteers within the School community.

4.0 Governance of Safeguarding

4.1 The Trust's board nominates a member, to take oversight of safeguarding arrangements. The role of the board member for Safeguarding, is to ensure appropriate challenge and support to the board, and to the Safeguarding Director, to ensure that the Trust is fulfilling its safeguarding duties identified in the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024.

4.2 The day-to-day leadership of safeguarding is delegated to The Trust Safeguarding Director, who works with Headteachers and DSLs to ensure that all statutory duties are fulfilled.

4.3 The Trust Safeguarding Director, provides regular reports to the board member with responsibility for safeguarding, along with other members of the Trust Board.

5.0 Trustee/Directors' Responsibilities

5.1 The Trust Board has a legal responsibility to make sure that the each academy has an effective safeguarding policy and procedures in place and monitors that the schools comply with these. The Trust Board will do this by:

a. Scrutinising information from safeguarding audits of schools

b. Academy Improvement Partners undertaking routine reviews of safeguarding in their schools

c. receiving regular reports from the Safeguarding Director

d. delegating operational responsibilities to LAB/STG, as defined below and set out in the Trust Scheme of Delegation

e. Board members are required to receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training should equip directors with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools and colleges are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole. This training must focus on their strategic role and not on operational procedures.

6.0 LAB/STG Members' Responsibilities

6.1 The LAB/STG of each school has appointed a named Safeguarding LAB member who has lead responsibility for overseeing and monitoring all safeguarding issues in each school.

6.2 The LAB/STG will ensure that the named member for Safeguarding & Child Protection attends the required training and that they refresh their training every two years.

6.3 LAB/STG members are required to receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training should equip Trustees with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools and colleges are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole. This training must focus on their strategic role and not on operational procedures.

7.0 Quality Assurance

7.1   Robust safeguarding practices and procedures are key to supporting and safeguarding the children and young people that access services from the Trust. Effective quality assurance measures are essential in ensuring the practices and procedures are fit for purpose. Trust processes are set out in appendix 2 of this policy.

7.2   Three assurance categories are in place to monitor safeguarding within the Trust, (Red, Amber and Green) and Academies are placed in the category based on the current rating of their practices.

It is important to note that the grading of each Academy is reviewed frequently and may be subject to change without prior notice.

8.0 Escalation

8.1   Internal

All staff should be confident to act when concerned that there appears to be a lack of progress or improvement. The following examples are not exhaustive but illustrate the nature of these concerns:

- difficulty in getting hold of a DSL;
- staff not being satisfied about the decision of the DSL or Headteacher;
- staff aware that a colleague has not passed on a concern;
- external agencies not accepting a referral from an Academy when it is felt one is needed;
- staff not aware of what has happened to their concern because of a lack of feedback.

8.2   Staff should not close down a concern because they feel "stuck" or "they can't do anymore". It is important to escalate concerns to the DSL, Headteacher, other senior staff or, if necessary, to the Director of Safeguarding.

8.3   If there are concerns about the work of an external agency, please refer to the escalation policy published by the Local Safeguarding Partnership.

8.4 The key principle is not to allow a concern to be "closed down" without it having received the necessary attention, assessment and resolution.

If the options above have been explored fully and the concern still isn't being handled effectively and therefore placing the child or young person at risk, it is important that you continue to escalate your concerns by contacting the Trust or by contacting the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line on 0800 028 0285.

9.0 Managing Allegations against Adults Working within the Trust

9.1 The Trust takes very seriously allegations against members of staff and acknowledges that if concerns are not addressed as early as possible they can create unsafe working environments and leave staff and children vulnerable.

9.2 The Trust has a Confidential Reporting/Whistleblowing Policy. This policy should be followed in all cases where concerns are identified in relation to an adult working within The Trust, the conduct of whom affects/could affect pupil(s) welfare or may result in a safeguarding issue. Also refer too Staff Code of Conduct and Low Level Concerns Policy.

9.3 Should you have any concerns about staff or colleagues in the context of pupil welfare and safeguarding, please refer to the above policies for the appropriate course of action.

10.0. Child-on-child abuse

10.1 Each of the 3 local safeguarding partnerships, within the geographical area of the Trust, has produced separate interagency protocols for child-on-child abuse. Trust Academies will use these local protocols and ensure that they are understood by all staff and LAB/STG members across the Trust.

Updates and amendments	Date
Names, roles and responsibilities added under policy title	August 2022
Trustee/Director of Safeguarding replaces Director to avoid confusion between roles	August 2022
Safeguarding Director replaces Safeguarding Manager to reflect organisational structure	August 2022
Child on Child Abuse replaces Peer on Peer Abuse throughout	August 2022
KCSiE 2021 changed to KCSiE 2022 throughout	August 2022
All associated Trust policies listed at 1.5	August 2022
Reference to the equality and human rights legislation updated at 2.0	August 2022
Reference to probable changes in local safeguarding partnerships 2.4	August 2022
Further detail added to DSL role at 3.1	August 2022
Ther role and function of Trustees and LAB members is expanded at 5.1E and 6.3	August 2022
The low level concern policy and staff code of conduct are linked to managing allegations at 9.2	August 2022
Reference to the required use local interagency protocols for child-on-child abuse at 10.0	August 2022
Appendix 2 QA cycle is updated to reflect requirements for e-safety, filtering and monitoring	August 2022
KCSE 2022 updated to KCSiE 2023 throughout	August 2023
Awaiting imminent publication of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 Anticiated changes to local safeguarding partnership arrangements did not materialise in draft guidance.	August 2023
Minor amendments to wording about Board representation 'board member for safeguarding' replaces trustee/director for safeguarding. Personnel change for this role - Craig Watson is no longer a board member. Replacement tbc.	August 2023
Redraft of appendix 2, to reflect changes to Trust audit arrangements and policies.	August 2023
Updated to Working Together To Safeguard Children 2023 (no material policy change)	July 2024
Updated to KCSiE 2024 (no material policy change)	July 2024
Addition of new academies below	July 2024

List of Trust Academies

Bishop's Castle Primary - https://www.bishopscastle-pri.shropshire.sch.uk/

Bitterley CE Primary School - http://www.bitterleyschool.co.uk/

St Michael's CE Primary School Bodenham - https://www.st-michaels.hereford.sch.uk/

Burford CE Primary School - https://www.burfordceprimary.co.uk/

Burley Gate CE Primary School - https://www.burleygate.hereford.sch.uk/

St George's CE Academy, Clun - https://www.clunprimaryschool.org.uk/

Condover CE Primary School - https://www.condoverschool.co.uk/

St Edward's CE Primary School, Dorrington - https://www.dorringtonschool.co.uk/

Eastnor Primary School - https://www.eastnorschool.co.uk/

Goodrich Primary School - https://www.goodrichprimarysch.co.uk/

Ludlow Primary School - https://www.ludlowprimaryschool.co.uk/

Ludlow CE School - https://www.ludlowschool.com/

Morville CE Primary School - http://www.morvilleschool.org.uk/

St Michael's Federation (Lydbury North and Onny) https://stmichaelsfed.shropshire.sch.uk/

St Thomas Cantilupe CE Academy - https://www.st-thomascantilupe.org/

Tenbury CE Primary Academy - https://www.tenburyceprimary.co.uk/

The Hereford Academy - https://www.theherefordacademy.org.uk/

Appendix 2

Annual cycle of safeguarding governance and quality assurance 2024/25

Regular monitoring is essential to ensure that effective policies and procedures are in place. This is to improve the quality of safeguarding practice and impact at all levels of the Trust. The **board member for safeguarding** and the **Safeguarding Director** ensure the oversight and quality assurance of safeguarding at each school through an annual cycle of monitoring activities. This assists the safeguarding team at each academy in supporting effective safeguarding practice by: evaluating measures currently in place; identifying developments that may be required to improve policy and practice.

Quality Assurance Calendar

What	Who	When
1. Single Central Record compliance check: 1.1 SCR up to date and maintained on Sentry. 1.2 Trust monitoring template and completed actions signed and retained. 1.3 DSL keeps signed copy on file.	Overall responsibility for the maintenance, accuracy and scrutiny of the SCR lies with the DSL and Headteacher. Local governance to seek assurances about the correct use of policies and processes The Safeguarding Director to check SCR in advance of scheduled in depth visits.	termly
2. Website and policy compliance check: • Local academy safeguarding and child protection policy Trust central policy • Child on Child abuse policy Online safety policy and filtering and monitoring processes (site specific arrangements across Trust). • Related policies and protocols	Headteacher Safeguarding Director (remote check)	autumn term

3. Whole staff safeguarding CPD and annual updates, including KCSiE 2024	DSL or Head teacher leads CPD	autumn term INSET before pupils return
3.1 Staff sign to acknowledge reading and understanding their responsibilities KCSiE 2024. Resonse stored on MyConcern	**All staff** to complete training and sign-off	autumn term INSET before pupils return
3.2 Staff assessment to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of KCSiE 2024	All staff complete knowledge test and revisit key learning points and areas for development.	autumn half term 2

4. Safeguarding briefings to all staff. It is recommended that you should adapt the broad CPD cycle provided by The Key. Supplement this with local contextual themes, issues identified in school, and materials from trusted providers e.g. NSPCC bulletins, Andrew Hall Safeguarding in Schools briefings.	Weekly safeguarding briefings or bulletins to continuously update staff knowledge and understanding.	weekly
5. LAB/STG members familiarity with their role in the management of safeguarding. All LAB/STG members to read parts 1&2 of KCSiE 2024	LAB/STG	autumn half term 1
6. Annual online Safety Audit and action plan (SWGfL 360 recommended)	DSL	autumn term
7. Termly monitoring of the effectiveness of filtering for harmful content. Completed template retained and reported to local governance.	DSL to liaise and complete checklist of assurance processes.	termly

8. Staff safeguarding committee meeting to: 8.1 identify and address issues arising, including child-on-child abuse; 8.2 monitor the progress of the safeguarding action plan; 8.3 identify and address risks and issues (including bullying and child-on-child abuse) arising from capture of pupil voice and from reports and concerns; 8.4 update termly report to LAB/STG (See Trust report template) to identify actions and record progress.	DSL, Headteacher, staff member with responsibility for online security. Optional/desirable – DDSL, safeguarding LAB/STG members, PSHE/RSE lead	termly before LAB/STG meeting
9 Termly Safeguarding report to LAB/STG. See Trust report profroma for agreed contents. This document offers local governance the structure and evidence to facilitate support and challenge. 9.1 Termly reports uploaded to governor hub in advance of meetings.	DSL	termly LAB/STG meeting
10 Annual DHMAT safeguarding audit. All Trust academies to complete the new DHMAT safeguarding audit and development planning tool on the online platform. 10.1 This replaces LA partnership safeguarding audits. A copy of the completed audit should be supplied to Local Safeguarding Partnerships upon request. 10.2 There is a termly subset of headline data for collection. This information will be shared with local governance. 10.3 Key themes from aggregation of audit data to be reported to the Board of Directors.		Autumn half term 2 Termly data submission

11 In depth quality assurance visit encompassing: accuracy and evidence base for self -assessment; conversations with staff and pupils, scrutiny of files and folders. List not exhaustive. Priority 1. new school to Trust; impending Ofsted inspection; high support needs identified; serious complaints or incidents related to safeguarding. Priority 2. New DSL Priority 3. Established schools	Ben Straker	Throughout the school year, as necessary Termly meeting In depth visit every 2 years
12 Case file audit – analysis of the quality and impact of record keeping on MyConcern	DSL and Ben Straker	
13 External moderation of QA processes and visit to 2 Trust schools (in lieu of Trust school visit)	Ben Straker and Safeguarding Director from partner MAT	TBA
14 Staff, pupil and parent safeguarding surveys	DSL	At least annually