

## Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership



# The Roles and Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

## Pan Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership (Dorset Schools)

Last up-dated September 2020

### **Covid-19**

*It is essential that all schools/college refer to the latest Government guidance with specific safeguarding advice during the coronavirus pandemic crisis.*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers/coronavirus-covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers>

*Support and advice will also be available from the Local Authority including the Education Safeguarding Advisors. Forums, audit visits, newsletters, advice and guidance will all continue Online.*

### **Role and Responsibilities**

**Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) Annex B: Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead** – this provides guidance on the role and responsibilities. This should be referred to in addition to Part two: The management of safeguarding, section on the Designated Safeguarding Lead (67-73).

The overall responsibility of the DSL is to take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection; to support and advise the Headteacher, SLT, staff and Governing Body to ensure that Safeguarding is undertaken in line with all relevant legislation and guidance.

The DSL together with Deputy DSL's, other leaders, Governors and managers create a positive culture and ethos where safeguarding is an important part of everyday life in the

setting, backed up by training at every level. There is a culture of vigilance where children's welfare is promoted and timely and appropriate safeguarding action is taken for children who need Early Help, or who may be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Awareness is raised about the early help process and emerging problems are identified.

## **The DSL Role**

- The DSL should be an appropriate senior member of staff from the school leadership team with the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post, including committing resources and supporting and directing staff.
- Governors must ensure that sufficient time, funding, training, resources and support are available for the DSL to undertake the role and that it is part of their job description.
- It is essential to have sufficient 'deputies' who are safeguarding trained to the same standard as the DSL and can support the DSL and provide cover when the DSL is not available. Therefore, the DSL is advised to have at least two deputies to provide safeguarding cover at all times e.g. the DSL may be on planned time away from the school for training etc. and the deputy off sick which could lead to unacceptable delay in protecting a child. In the absence of the DSL, all staff should be aware of which deputy DSL is available. The role should be explicit in their job description.
- If a deputy DSL is not a member of the SLT they should have immediate access to the DSL or Head teacher e.g. if a safeguarding case arises which relates to an allegation against a member of staff.
- During term time the DSL or deputy should always be available during school hours and with adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities, for staff to discuss safeguarding issues. The Headteacher should ensure that adequate cover is available during school holiday periods for urgent child protection matters e.g. Child Protection Conferences, Risk Management meetings, court input, allegations against staff.
- Safeguarding activities can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies but the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the DSL.
- A Safeguarding Forum for DSLs is held every term and is the main link to the Safeguarding Children Partnership for the DSL, providing an overview of policy and practice as well as networking opportunities. Attendance of the DSL or another safeguarding representative from the school is strongly recommended and is monitored by the Local Authority.

## **Key Responsibilities**

- To act as a point of contact with the three safeguarding partners; liaising with other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- The DSL and deputies should have a 'complete safeguarding picture' and be the most appropriate people to advise staff on the response to safeguarding concerns (KCSIE 11)

- To make appropriate referrals and take part in and provide reports as requested for strategy discussions and other inter agency meetings or to support other staff to do so
- Contribute to the assessment of children
- To act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff
- To raise awareness of all safeguarding issues to the whole school
- To take the Prevent Lead, to raise awareness and make referrals as appropriate
- If the DSL is not also the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children, the two senior members of staff will need to liaise closely.
- To encourage a culture of listening to children
- Liaising with staff and outside agencies to ensure children's needs are considered holistically.
- To help to maintain a culture of high aspirations and promotion of educational outcomes for children who are vulnerable; supporting staff with reasonable adjustments to help these children to reach their full potential.

## **Training & Induction**

- The DSL and deputies receive updated level 3 multi-agency safeguarding training every two years. This should be multi-agency training endorsed by the Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- The DSL attends safeguarding forums and other training as required to undertake the role effectively and be able to cascade key messages to all staff. All DSLs are required (KCSIE) to refresh their knowledge and skills at least annually e.g. attend forums, e bulletins and other reading.
- The DSL ensures that staff directly involved in safeguarding e.g. deputies, SLT, pastoral workers, have attended and understood appropriate safeguarding training e.g. Early Help, CE/CSE, Prevent, FGM, Online Safety.
- The DSL must take note of communications and up-dates from the Safeguarding Children Partnership including those from the Education Safeguarding Advisors, accessing resources and taking action as appropriate. They should be given time to read and digest safeguarding materials.
- The DSL should undertake Prevent Awareness training and keep up to date with the Prevent Duty and issues relating to radicalisation.
- Together with the Head Teacher ensure that staff and other adults receive regular Supervision sessions offering support and guidance if they are working directly and regularly with children and learners whose safety and welfare are at risk. The Head Teacher should ensure that the DSL also receives appropriate Supervision. This should contribute to the development of a learning culture by promoting an approach that develops the confidence and competence of staff. (see the Model Supervision policy and guidance Sep 2019, local guidance)
- The DSL ensures that all staff, volunteers and Governors have read, understood and can easily access the school Child protection/safeguarding policy and Part 1 and other relevant sections of KCSIE and What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners and other appropriate school, national and local guidance. Records are kept of who and when they received and read this information.
- The DSL ensures new and supply staff and volunteers receive a safeguarding induction. Records are kept of when, what and who received the induction.

- The DSL ensures whole school training of all staff and volunteers is undertaken at least three yearly by a suitably qualified trainer which includes reference to local guidance and practice.
- The DSL ensures key updates are disseminated at staff briefings, via Email and E bulletins at least annually and a record is kept of this.
- The DSL disseminates lessons from Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (previously SCRs) and makes any necessary changes to the school safeguarding policy and practice accordingly.
- Maintains a child protection/safeguarding training database or written training record

### **Audit and Reporting**

- Undertakes an annual safeguarding audit using the PD-SCP Safeguarding Children in Education (S175/157) Self Evaluation Audit Tool for schools, involving the Head Teacher and Safeguarding Governor, which is presented to the governing board. Meets with the Education Safeguarding Advisor to gain further advice, where this is offered.
- Ensures that the audit and supporting evidence is kept up to date and available for Ofsted inspection, LA for section 157/175 reviews.
- Collates statistics e.g. number of children who are subject to CP plans, CLA, CIN, previously CLA, receiving Early Help provision in school or from other agencies, referrals to other agencies, attendance at Child Protection Conferences and Core Groups, Prevent referrals, CE risk tools completed, Children missing education. This will evidence the activity level in relation to safeguarding and keep track of the needs of individual children.
- Supports the Head Teacher with reporting to the Governing Body
- Meets regularly (once a term) with the Nominated Safeguarding Governor to share information and ensures identified actions are being progressed.
- Works with the Head teacher and SLT to ensure that actions identified in the audit and any relevant actions from the last Ofsted report in relation to safeguarding, are progressed.
- Engages in any relevant review or audit work led by the PD-SCP

### **Pupil Action – Managing Referrals and Working with Others**

- The DSL acts as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of child protection, safeguarding and child welfare issues, deciding whether to undertake or contribute to an assessment or make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
- Reviews Incident of Concern forms and ensures an appropriate response is made which may include undertaking an Early Help Assessment, providing school early help support such as pastoral care or making a referral to the Children's Services First Response Hub or external early help or specialist services. The DSL would refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required
- The DSL will keep up to date with and be able to advise staff on the local criteria for action including the process for assessment and referral for early help and statutory intervention. This will include using the Pan Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership Continuum of Need guidance August 2019 as a tool when

making decisions about appropriate support or referral for a child. Consideration will include reference to the 'Four Levels of Need' and the 'Three Domains'.

- Refers all cases of suspected abuse or neglect to the Children's Services First Response Hub and ensures that the referral is progressed, but where concerns remain that these are escalated in accordance with the Pan Dorset multi agency Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- Liaises with the Head Teacher to inform him or her of issues especially ongoing enquiries under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations.
- Acts as the school link worker for MARAC and Domestic Abuse, considers the information in a DA alert and makes contact with the Children's Services First Response Hub if there are other concerns.
- The DSL takes the lead in identifying any extra familial (contextual) risks associated with children and learners' offending, misusing drugs or alcohol, self-harming, going missing, being vulnerable to radicalisation, being sexually or criminally exploited or at risk from or involved with serious violent crime; ensuring that these risks are known by the adults who care for them and shared with the Children's Services First Response Hub or other relevant agencies. To ensure that there are plans and help in place that are reducing the risk of harm or actual harm and there is evidence that the impact of these risks are being minimised. These risks are kept under regular review and there is regular and effective liaison with other agencies where appropriate.
- Maintaining a culture of high aspirations and promoting the educational outcomes of children who are experiencing safeguarding or child protection issues by supporting staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments
- Ensures with the Head teacher that teachers understand their mandatory duty to report to police any case where an act of female genital mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18<sup>1</sup> and to raise any concerns about the risk of potential so-called honour based violence.  
Including FGM or forced marriage
- To ensure together with the Head Teacher, the SLT and Governing Body that the school is fulfilling the Prevent Duty. To refer any concerns about extremism to appropriate agencies e.g. The Children's Services First Response Hub or for immediate response call the Anti-Terror hotline on 0800 789321
- With the Head Teacher review all use of reasonable force or restraint, use of safe space, isolation and potential deprivation of liberty ensuring that de-escalation and other creative techniques are used wherever possible. All incidents of restraint are recorded and monitored, and the views of the child and parent sought.
- Undertakes and participates in Risk Management assessments and meetings about children and young people who pose a physical risk or risk from harmful sexual behaviour or there is risk of self-harm and ensures any school action arising from the plan is undertaken. The DSL will ensure that a Risk management plan (RAMP) is in place and regularly reviewed if appropriate.
- Raises awareness and is mindful of the particular needs and additional risks faced by of some groups of children in relation to safeguarding e.g. those looked after or previously looked after (KCSIE 98-102), children with special educational needs and disabilities (KCSIE 126).
- Ensuring that appropriate safeguarding measures have been agreed where children are on part-time time- tables and/or are attending an alternative provision

## Information Sharing

- To maintain detailed, accurate and secure child protection/safeguarding records, relating to concerns, referrals, work with the child, contact with parents and other agencies.
- To keep the child protection/safeguarding records securely in accordance with data protection guidance.
- To ensure safe and separate transfer of records when a child moves school, in line with national and Safeguarding Children Partnership guidance.
- To share information with the three safeguarding partners and other agencies as appropriate in accordance with [Information Sharing Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers 2018](#), and be able to advise other staff in this matter.
- To share safeguarding information with the Head Teacher and other staff on a need to know basis in order to promote the welfare of the child
- Attend Section 47 strategy discussions, Child Protection Conferences, Children in Need, Early Help meetings and other meetings relating to children's welfare and supporting other members of staff to do so when appropriate
- Contribute to assessments and provides written reports when required to do so
- Ensure that plans are in place which have clear actions, outcomes, identify the help that the child should receive and the action to be taken if a professional working with the child has further concerns or information to report.
- If after a referral the child's situation does not appear to be improving or where there is a difference of opinion with another agency or the DSL considers that his/her professional judgment about a child's needs or safety is being overlooked, and this cannot be resolved the Escalation policy should be used.  
[https://pandorsets.cb.proceduresonline.com/p\\_escalation.html](https://pandorsets.cb.proceduresonline.com/p_escalation.html)
- To work in partnership with parents/carers unless doing so would potentially put a child at risk. Wherever in doubt, a discussion should be held with Children's Services First Response Hub for advice.
- Supports, protects and informs children about the action which is being taken in relation to a safeguarding concern or child protection referral, or assists other members of staff to do so.
- Encourages and promotes a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings in relation to safeguarding concerns both relating to themselves or to other children and to act on these concerns.
- If there is a disclosure, to keep appropriate records that follow the TED principles. (Tell, Explain, Describe).

## **Raising Awareness and Promoting Safeguarding Practice**

### **The DSL**

- takes a lead role in ensuring that children are taught about all aspects of safeguarding including on-line safety. This will be part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum so that children are taught about how to keep themselves safe e.g. radicalisation, CE/CSE. The Head teacher together with the DSL and other members of the SLT will be ensuring that the school meets the regulations relating to Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education.
- raises awareness of safeguarding issues via creative means to staff, pupils parents using the website, online platforms, staff notice boards, student notice boards, E bulletins to staff, pupils and parents, special events etc. Making sure that the school web site has user friendly news on a range of safeguarding issues and signposts to further advice and support.
- works with the SLT and Governing Body to ensure that children are protected and helped to keep themselves safe from bullying, homophobic behaviour, racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination. That there is policy and practice in place so that discriminatory behaviours are challenged and help and support are given to children about how to treat others with respect and where positive behaviour is promoted consistently. To work closely with the Anti Bullying Champion and young people where they have lead roles in supporting good practice.
- Works with the SLT and Governing body to ensure that an E/Online Safety Champion is appointed and that there are appropriate internet safety policies in place and in operation and that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to protect learners from potentially harmful online material. The E/On-line Safety Champion with the DSL should make sure that all staff, pupils and parents are kept up to date on online Safety issues, that they receive regular training updates, and that on-line Safety is embedded in the curriculum.

## **Safeguarding in relation to Employees and Volunteers**

### **The DSL will Support the Head Teacher/Principal and Governing Body to ensure that:**

- Safer recruitment practices are being adhered to in line with part 3 of KCSIE and sufficient senior staff and Governors have received up to date safer recruitment training to meet the requirement (for maintained schools and recommended good practice for others) for every panel to have at least one trained person
- The Single Central Record is complete and up to date. It is monitored regularly by the Headteacher/ Nominated Governor.
- Any allegations or safeguarding concerns relating to a member of staff are discussed with the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) and that any disciplinary action is followed through as appropriate in line with part 4 of KCSIE
- Transferable risk is considered and referred to the LADO if it meets the criteria in Part 4. Alternatively, a risk assessment and support is put in place in the school where it is safe for the member of staff to continue in their current employment.
- If a member of staff is dismissed or resigns from their post for a safeguarding incident it is a legal requirement to refer this matter to the DBS

- Ensures the school operates an effective whistle blowing policy and that appropriate records are kept of any reported concerns and of the follow up actions.

## **School Policy and Procedures**

- Ensures the safeguarding/child protection policy and other relevant policies e.g. Anti Bullying, Online Safety, SEND, Prevent action plan, staff and pupil behaviour policies are reviewed and up-dated annually, disseminated to all staff and are on the school website. Ensures that the wide range of safeguarding issues are included in the policy with new themes being added and up-dated as they emerge and evolve e.g. Child Sexual Exploitation, Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation, Female Genital Mutilation, Criminal Exploitation (County Lines), Extra familial (Contextual Safeguarding), peer on peer abuse, risk from serious violence, up skirting.
- Where appropriate policies will need to consider Government guidance regarding Covid-19. This currently includes having an annex to the school safeguarding policy relating to specific additions or changes to practice and procedure .
- Ensures that all staff, volunteers and Governors have a copy of the School Safeguarding Policy and part one of KCSIE and access to all parts especially part 4 and that these are both understood and practised by staff, volunteers and Governors.
- All staff are made aware of safer working practice guidance, the staff behaviour code, Online Safety and all others that impact on safeguarding pupils.
- Support the Head Teacher to comply with safer recruitment practice
- Advises the Head Teacher and Safeguarding Governor of changes to guidance and policy during the year and agree how these will be incorporated into the school policies and disseminated to staff
- Ensures the school complies with Children Missing from Education requirements and notifies the Local Authority of any child/young person withdrawn from the school, or added to the school roll within statutory time frames and immediately notifies other relevant professionals as necessary e.g. Social Worker.



## Key Documents

- Section 175 Education Act 2002  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/section/175>
- Keeping Children Safe in Education  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>
- 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2>
- Pan Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership multi agency procedures  
<http://pandorsetscb.proceduresonline.com/>
- Pan Dorset Continuum of need  
[Pan-Dorset Continuum of Need](#)
- Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills Sep 2019  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/education-inspection-framework?#guidance-for-education-providers>
- Children Missing Education – September 2016  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>
- GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted>

### Support and advice can be offered by:

#### East District Children's Social Care Team

Tel: [01202868224](tel:01202868224)

Email: [eastdistrictchildcare@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:eastdistrictchildcare@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)

#### BCP Children's Services First Response Hub

01202 735046

[childrensfirstresponse@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:childrensfirstresponse@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

#### Education Safeguarding Advisors

Sue Wickings – [sue.wickings@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:sue.wickings@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

Julie Murphy – [juliemurphy@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:juliemurphy@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

#### Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

01202 456744

[lado@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:lado@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)