

Safeguarding Children Policy (including Child Protection)

Introduction

The Safeguarding Children Policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the *Children Acts (1989) and (2004)*, the *Education Act (2002)* and in line with Government publications the *Teachers' Standards (2012)*, '*Working Together to Safeguard Children*' (2013) and '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*' (Sept 2016).

The Severn Academies Educational Trust (SAET) fully recognises its moral and statutory responsibilities for safeguarding children and promoting the welfare of children.

Our Safeguarding Children Policy applies to all staff, Governors and volunteers working in the Severn Academies Educational Trust schools.

There are five main elements to our Safeguarding Children Policy:

- ensuring we practise safer recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children;
- raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe;
- developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse;
- supporting students who have been identified as in need of early help or at risk of harm in accordance with his/her agreed Child Protection, Child in Need or Early Help plan;
- establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

We recognise that because of the day to day contact with children, our school staff are well placed to identify concerns early and to observe the outward signs of abuse. The Severn Academies Educational Trust schools will therefore:

- establish and maintain an environment where children feel safe, secure, valued and respected and are encouraged to talk, believing they will be listened to;
- ensure children know that there are adults in their school whom they can approach if they are worried;
- include opportunities in the curriculum, specifically through SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural) education and ICT, for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse and to know who they should turn to for help.

We seek to ensure that the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide to protect children from harm.

To this end we will:

- ensure there are systems in place for children to express their views and give feedback e.g. through school/class councils, safety questionnaires, participation in anti-bullying and e-Safety events;
- ensure that the child's thoughts/wishes and feelings are recorded on all referrals.

Procedures

The Severn Academies Educational Trust will follow the procedures set out by the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) and take account of the guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE).

The SAET will:

- ensure its schools have a Senior Leader nominated as Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who has received appropriate training and support for this role;
- ensure its schools have at least one member of staff who will act in the absence of the DSL (Deputy DSL);
- ensure it has a nominated Governor responsible for safeguarding children;
- ensure every member of staff (including temporary, supply staff and volunteers) and the Governing Body knows the name of their school's DSL and any deputies and understands their role;
- ensure that the school's DSL and/or a deputy DSL is always available during school hours and has made adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term time activities;
- ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and neglect, who will maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here';
- ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibility for referring any concerns to the DSL or their school's Principal/Headteacher and are aware that they may raise concerns directly with Children's Social Care Services if they believe their concerns have not been listened to or acted upon;
- ensure that parents/carers have an understanding of the responsibility placed on their school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus and publishing its Safeguarding Children Policy on the school's website;
- operate a Lettings Protocol for School Facilities which ensures the suitability of adults working with children on the school site at any time;

- ensure that community users organising activities for children are aware of and understand the need for compliance with the school's child protection guidelines and procedures;
- ensure that the duty of care towards its students and staff is promoted by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe and unwise behaviour and assist staff to monitor their own standards and practice;
- ensure that all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and are aware of whistleblowing procedures and helplines;
- be aware of and follow procedures set out by the DfE and the WSCB where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, including making a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO);
- ensure that a referral is made to the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) and/or National College for Teaching and Leadership, if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns or would have been had they not resigned;
- operate safer recruitment practice; ensuring that at least one member on every recruitment panel has completed safer recruitment training.

Our procedures will be regularly reviewed and updated at least annually unless an incident, new legislation or guidance requires the need for an interim review. We recognise the expertise our staff builds by undertaking safeguarding training and managing safeguarding concerns on a daily basis. We therefore invite staff to contribute to and shape this Safeguarding Children Policy and associated safeguarding arrangements.

Training

When staff commence employment at a SAET school they will be informed of the safeguarding children arrangements in place. They will be given a copy of the Safeguarding Children Policy, the school's Code of Conduct, as well as Part 1 and Annex A of *'Keeping Children Safe in Education'*, advised who the DSL is and who acts in their absence and what this role includes.

All staff will receive induction training in safeguarding children. The induction programme will include basic child protection information relating to signs and symptoms of abuse, how to manage a disclosure from a child, when and how to record a concern about the welfare of a child and advice on safer working practice.

All volunteers, supply staff, cover managers and regular visitors to a SAET school will be told where the Safeguarding Children Policy is located, given the name of the DSL and who the deputies are and informed of the school's procedures with regard to reporting concerns.

All staff will receive training in child protection and safer working practice, updated every three years, in line with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) guidance. In addition, staff will receive safeguarding and child protection updates as required, at least annually.

Staff with specific responsibility for safeguarding children will undertake both single and inter-agency training at a level suitable to their role and responsibilities, updated every two years. In addition to formal training, the DSL and deputies will update their knowledge and skills via WSCB newsletters, briefings, meetings and seminars, at regular intervals, at least annually.

Responsibilities

The Local Governing Body will nominate a member to be responsible for safeguarding children who will liaise with the individual school's Principal/Headteacher in matters relating to safeguarding.

The **Governing Body** will ensure that:

- the DSL's takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection and does not delegate this responsibility;
- the DSL's role is explicit in the role holder's job description;
- safeguarding policies and procedures are in place, available to parents/carers on the schools' website or by other means and reviewed annually;
- mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in Part 1 of *'Keeping Children Safe in Education'*;
- an annual report on the effectiveness of the schools' safeguarding procedures is presented to the Governing Body and returned to the Local Authority;
- any weaknesses brought to its attention relating to safeguarding are remedied without delay.

The individual school's **Principal/Headteacher** will ensure that:

- the safeguarding policies and procedures are fully implemented and followed by all staff;
- sufficient resources are allocated to enable the DSL and other staff to discharge their responsibilities with regard to child protection;
- all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that these are handled sensitively and in accordance with the Whistleblowing Policy procedures;
- all allegations of abuse are reported to the LADO in a timely manner.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will co-ordinate action on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children within the school setting.

The individual school's **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** is responsible for:

- organising child protection induction training for all newly appointed staff and whole staff training, refreshed every three years with annual updates as required;
- providing a mechanism to ensure that all staff understand and are able to discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in Part 1 of '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*';
- undertaking, in conjunction with the school's Principal/Headteacher and Safeguarding Governor, an annual audit of safeguarding procedures using the County safeguarding checklist;
- making use of the '*Levels of Need Guidance*' when making a decision about whether or not the threshold for Early Help or Social Care intervention is met;
- referring a child to the Family Front Door, when there are concerns about possible abuse and neglect;
- keeping written records of concerns about children, including the use of body maps, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately;
- ensuring all child protection records are kept securely, separate from the main student file and in locked locations;
- ensuring that all child protection files are transferred in a safe and timely manner when a child moves settings, both between and across phases, within and outside of county;
- notifying the key worker if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a student who is subject to a Child Protection Plan;
- monitoring unauthorised absence, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions, reporting concerns in line with 'missing children' procedures;
- developing effective links with relevant agencies and other professionals, co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding safeguarding matters including co-operation with serious case reviews, attendance at strategy meetings, initial and review child protection conferences, core group and child in need review meetings;
- contributing to assessments and providing a report to initial and review conferences, which have been shared with parents/carers first whenever possible;

- co-ordinating a programme of safety, health and well-being through the curriculum, including issues of protective behaviours, healthy relationships, staying safe on-line and the promotion of fundamental British values.

Procedures for Managing a Disclosure

The SAET schools adhere to child protection procedures that have been agreed locally through the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB). Where we identify children and families in need of support, we will carry out our responsibilities in accordance with the West Mercia Consortium Inter-Agency Procedures and the WSCB Levels of Need Guidance.

Every member of staff, including volunteers working with children at our SAET schools, is advised to maintain an attitude of *'it could happen here'* where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child and have a responsibility to take action as outlined in this Safeguarding Children Policy.

All staff are encouraged to report any concerns that they have and not see these as insignificant. On occasions, a referral is justified by a single incident, such as an injury or disclosure of abuse. More often however, concerns accumulate over a period of time and are evidenced by building up a picture of harm over time; this is particularly true in cases of emotional abuse and neglect. In these circumstances, it is crucial that staff record and pass on concerns in accordance with this Safeguarding Children Policy to allow their Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to build up a picture and access support for the child at the earliest opportunity. A reliance on memory without accurate and contemporaneous records of concern could lead to a failure to protect.

It is *not* the responsibility of school staff to investigate welfare concerns or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation. All staff, however, have a duty to recognise concerns and pass the information on in accordance with the procedures outlined in this Safeguarding Children Policy.

The individual school's DSL should be used as a first point of contact for concerns and queries regarding any safeguarding concern in their school. Any member of staff or visitor to SAET schools who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that a child is at risk of harm must report it immediately to the school's DSL or, if unavailable, to the Deputy Designated Lead. In the absence of either of the above, the matter should be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff.

All concerns about a child or young person should be reported without delay and recorded in writing using the agreed template.

Following receipt of any information raising concern, the school's DSL will consider what action to take and seek advice from Children's Services as required. All information and actions taken, including the reasons for any decisions made, will be fully documented.

All referrals will be made in line with the local procedures as detailed on the Worcestershire website (www.worcestershire.gov.uk).

If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, a referral should be made to Children's Services immediately, anybody can make a referral. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration by raising concerns again with their DSL and/or the Principal/Headteacher. Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point.

Staff should always follow the reporting procedures outlined in this Safeguarding Children Policy in the first instance. However, staff may also share information directly with Children's Services, or the police if:

- the situation is an emergency and the DSL, their deputy and the Principal/Headteacher are all unavailable;
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the student's safety.

Any member of staff who does not feel that concerns about a child have been responded to appropriately and in accordance with the procedures outlined in this Safeguarding Children Policy should raise their concerns with their Principal/Headteacher or the Chair of Governors. If any member of staff does not feel the situation has been addressed appropriately at this point they should contact Children's Services directly with their concerns.

Peer on Peer Abuse

We recognise that children are also vulnerable to physical, sexual and emotional abuse by their peers or siblings. This is most likely to include, but not limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying)
- gender based violence/sexual assaults
- sexting.

Abuse perpetrated by children can be just as harmful as that perpetrated by an adult, therefore it is important to remember the impact on the victim of the abuse, as well as to focus on the support for the child or young person exhibiting the harmful behaviour. Such abuse will always be taken as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult and the same safeguarding children procedures will apply in respect of any child who is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm; staff must never tolerate or dismiss concerns relating to peer on peer abuse.

Where a child discloses safeguarding allegations against another student in the same setting, the school's DSL should refer to the local procedures on the WSCB website (*Section 2.12*) and seek advice from the Family Front Door or Community Social Worker before commencing its own investigation or contacting parents/carers.

Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND)

The SAET recognises that children with special educational needs and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges and these are discussed in staff training. These additional barriers can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- children with special educational needs and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

The SAET recognises that CSE is a form of child abuse involving criminal behaviours against children and young people which can have a long-lasting adverse impact on a child's physical and emotional health. Sexual exploitation involves an individual or group of adults taking advantage of the vulnerability of an individual or groups of children or young people. Victims can be boys or girls. Children and young people are often unwittingly drawn into sexual exploitation through the offer of friendship and care, drugs and alcohol, gifts and sometimes accommodation. CSE may also be linked to child trafficking.

Each school addresses the risks of sexual exploitation in Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), also in Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) curriculum. A common feature of sexual exploitation is that the child often does not recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and does not see themselves as a victim. The child may initially resent what they perceive as interference by staff, however staff must act on their concerns, as they would for any other type of abuse.

All staff are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation and all concerns are reported immediately to the DSL.

'Honour-Based' Violence

The SAET recognises that our staff are well placed to identify concerns and take action to prevent children from becoming victims of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and other forms of so-called 'Honour-Based' Violence (HBV) and provide guidance on these issues through our safeguarding training. If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBV they should inform their DSL who will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with the police and Children's Social Care.

Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015, there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers. *Section 5B* of the '*Female Genital Mutilation Act (2003)*' (as inserted by *Section 74* of the *Serious Crime Act (2015)*) places a statutory duty upon teachers in England and Wales, to personally report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18 years of age. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. We will provide guidance and support to our teachers on this requirement and further information on when and how to make a report can be found in the following Home Office guidance: '*Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation - Procedural Information*' (October 2015).

Radicalisation & Extremism

The SAET recognises that safeguarding against radicalisation and extremism is no different to safeguarding against any other vulnerability in today's society. The SAET will ensure that:

- through training, staff, volunteers and Governors have an understanding of what radicalisation and extremism is, why they need to be vigilant in school and how to respond when concerns arise;
- there are systems in place for keeping students safe from extremist material when accessing the Internet in their school by using effective filtering and usage policies;
- the appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team has received Prevent training and will act as the point of contact within their school for any concerns relating to radicalisation and extremism;
- the school's DSL will make referrals in accordance with WSCB procedures and will represent their school at Channel meetings as required;
- through the curriculum, each school will promote the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development of students. The schools will encourage students to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and the tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

The Trust will ensure that partisan political views are not promoted in the teaching of any subject in schools and where political issues are brought to the attention of the students; reasonably practicable steps have been taken to offer a balanced presentation of opposing views to students.

The SAET values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs/ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Both students and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and 'free speech' that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or which leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. 'Free speech' is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

The SAET seeks to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to Far Right/Neo Nazi/White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups and extremist Animal Rights movements.

Racist Incidents

The SAET policy on racist incidents is set out in the individual schools' Behaviour Policy and acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. Each school maintains a log of racist incidents in their school.

Anti-Bullying

Individual schools' Anti-Bullying Policy, is incorporated into their Behaviour Policy, acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. All incidences of bullying, including cyberbullying, racist, homophobic and gender related bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the individual schools' Behaviour Policy. The SAET recognises that children with special needs and/or disabilities are more susceptible to being bullied. Each school maintains a log of bullying incidents in their school.

The SAET recognises that there will be occasions when bullying incidents will fall within child protection procedures or may be deemed a criminal activity and that it may be necessary to report the concerns to the Family Front Door or to the Police.

Information Sharing & Confidentiality

- The SAET recognises that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.

- The individual school's Principal/Headteacher or their DSL will only disclose relevant information about a student to other members of staff on a need to know basis.
- All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or well-being.

Communication with Parents/Carers

- The SAET recognises that good communication with parents/carers is crucial in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children effectively.
- The SAET will always undertake appropriate discussions with parents/carers prior to the involvement of another agency **unless to do so would place the child or an adult at further risk of harm or would impede a criminal investigation;**
- The SAET will ensure that parents/carers have an understanding of the responsibilities placed on the school and staff to safeguard children and their duty to co-operate with other agencies in this respect.

Record Keeping

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse from a child or young person, or noticing signs or symptoms of possible abuse, will make notes as soon as convenient (within the hour if possible) writing down exactly what was said, using the child's own words as far as possible. All notes should be timed, dated and signed, with the name printed alongside the signature. Concerns will be recorded using the individual schools' safeguarding children recording systems.

All records of a child protection nature will be passed to the school's DSL including case conference or core group minutes and written records of any concerns. Child protection records are kept securely and transferred, in a safe and timely manner, when a child moves school.

The school's DSL will maintain and regularly audit their school's child protection records and ensure that each stand-alone file includes a chronology of significant events.

Supporting Children

The SAET recognises that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth; the child may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame.

The SAET acknowledges that the individual school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.

SAET schools are aware that research shows that whilst at school a child's behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.

SAET school's will endeavour to support all children by:

- encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness through the curriculum, as well as promoting respectful relationships, challenging bullying and humiliating behaviour;
- promoting a positive, supportive and secure environment giving students a sense of being valued;
- a consistently applied Behaviour Policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable students. Each school will ensure that their students know that some behaviour is unacceptable, however that they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred;
- liaising with other agencies that support each student, such as Children's Social Care Services, Child & Adult Mental Health Service (CAMHS), Educational Psychology Service and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children;
- the use of Early Help Services, through the Family Front Door, when appropriate;
- notifying Children's Social Care Services immediately if there is a significant concern;
- providing continuing support to a child about whom there have been concerns, who leaves the school, by ensuring that appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to the child's new setting.

Supporting & Supervision of Staff

The SAET recognises that staff working in Trust schools, who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm, may find the situation stressful and upsetting.

SAET schools will support such staff by providing the opportunity to talk through their anxieties with their DSL and to seek further support, such as counselling or regular supervision, as appropriate.

The SAET will enable supervision of the individual schools' DSL through network meetings, direct consultation with the senior advisor or advanced social work practitioners in order to promote best practice and challenge unsatisfactory or poor practice.

In order to reduce the risk of allegations being made against staff and ensure that staff are competent, confident and safe to work with children, all staff will be made aware of safer working practice guidance and will be given opportunities in training to develop their understanding of what constitutes safe and unsafe behaviour.

Safer Recruitment & Selection of Staff

Each SAET school has a written Safer Recruitment Policy and procedures in place linking explicitly to the Safeguarding Children Policy. The Safer Recruitment Policy statement is included in all job advertisements, publicity material, recruitment websites and candidate information packs.

The recruitment process is robust in seeking to establish the commitment of candidates to support each school's measures to safeguard children and to identify, deter or reject people who might pose a risk of harm to children or who are otherwise unsuited to work with them.

All staff working within our schools, who have substantial access to children, have been checked as to their suitability, including:

- verification of their identity;
- verification of their qualifications;
- a satisfactory barred list check;
- an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check;
- the right to work in the UK.

All teachers working within the SAET schools have been checked, using the Teacher Services website, to ensure they have been awarded Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). That they have completed their teacher induction and that there are no prohibitions, sanctions or restrictions in place that might prevent them from taking part in certain activities or working in specific positions.

All SAET Governors are subject to an enhanced DBS check, without barred list check, in line with Worcestershire County Council's recommendation.

Each school maintains a single 'Central Record of Recruitment Checks' for audit purposes.

Any member of staff working in regulated activities prior to receipt of a satisfactory DBS check will not be left unsupervised and will be subject to a Risk Assessment.

Volunteers, who are not working in regulated activity, will be supervised at all times.

Allegations Against Staff

The SAET acknowledges that a student may make an allegation against a member of staff. If such an allegation is made, which meets the criteria identified in Part 4 of *'Keeping Children Safe in Education'*, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform their Principal/Headteacher, unless the allegation concerns the Principal/Headteacher, in which case their Chair of Governors will be informed immediately.

The Principal/Headteacher (or Chair of Governors) on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Local Authority's (LA's) Senior Advisor for Safeguarding Children in Education or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), prior to undertaking any investigation.

The individual school will follow the SAET procedures for managing allegations against staff, a copy of which is readily available in their school.

The case manager will be guided by the Senior Advisor and/or LADO in all matters relating to the case, including suspension, sharing of information and any follow up investigation.

Whistleblowing

The SAET recognises that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues using their school's confidential reporting, Whistleblowing Policy.

Whistleblowing concerns about the Principal/Headteacher should be raised with the school's Chair of Governors.

Staff will be made aware that if they feel unable to raise a child protection failure internally, they can contact the NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline.

Complaints or Concerns Expressed by Students, Parents/Carers, Staff or Volunteers

SAET schools and staff recognise that listening to children is an important and essential part of safeguarding them against abuse and neglect. To this end, any expression of

dissatisfaction or disquiet in relation to an individual child will be listened to and acted upon to safeguard his/her welfare.

SAET schools will also seek to ensure that the child or adult who makes a complaint is informed, not only about the action their school will take, but also the length of time that will be required to resolve the complaint. The individual school will also endeavour to keep the child or adult regularly informed as to the progress of his/her complaint. The Severn Academies Educational Trust (SAET) Complaints Procedure & Policy is readily available.

Positive Physical Intervention

The SAET recognises and acknowledges that staff in Trust schools must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury or damage to property.

The SAET understands that physical intervention of a nature that causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under management of allegations or disciplinary procedures.

Staff who are likely to need to use physical intervention will be appropriately trained in the Team Teach technique, or equivalent. All incidences of physical intervention will be recorded in accordance with the Team Teach recommended procedures.

The SAET recognises that touch is appropriate in the context of working with children and all staff in Trust schools have been given 'safer working practice' guidance to ensure they are clear about their professional boundaries.

Abuse of Position of Trust

The SAET recognises that its staff, as adults working in a school, are in a relationship of trust with the students in their care and acknowledge that it could be considered a criminal offence to abuse that trust.

The SAET acknowledges that the principle of equality, embedded in the legislation of the *Sexual Offences Act (2003)*, applies irrespective of sexual orientation; neither homosexual nor heterosexual relationships are acceptable within a position of trust.

The SAET recognises that the legislation is intended to protect young people in education who are over the age of consent and yet under 18 years of age.

Looked After Children

The most common reason for children becoming 'looked after' is as a result of abuse or neglect. SAET schools ensure that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to

keep looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after legal status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child. The designated teacher for looked after children and the DSL within SAET schools have details of social workers, as well as the name and contact details of the Local Authority's Virtual Children's Head for children in care (Gwen Fennell).

Children Missing Education (CME)

The SAET recognises that a child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. The procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education are based on the Local Authority and WSCB procedures.

The SAET will ensure that Trust schools follow these procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect including sexual exploitation and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

The SAET schools will ensure that they report children missing education to the LA CME Officer in line with statutory requirements.

e-Safety

All members of staff are trained and receive regular updates in e-Safety, recognising and reporting concerns.

SAET schools' 'Acceptable Use Policy' recognises that Internet safety is a whole school responsibility (Governors, staff, parents/carers and students).

Children and young people may expose themselves to danger, whether knowingly or unknowingly, when using the Internet and other technologies. Additionally, some young people may find themselves involved in activities which are inappropriate or possibly illegal.

Trust schools therefore recognise their responsibility to educate their students, teaching them the appropriate behaviours and critical thinking skills to enable them to remain both safe and legal when using the Internet and related technologies.

Photography & Use of Images (including Hand Held Devices)

The welfare and protection of children is paramount and consideration should always be given to whether the use of photography will place the child at risk. Images may be used

to harm children, for example as a preliminary to 'grooming' or by displaying them inappropriately on the Internet, particularly social networking sites.

For this reason, consent is always sought when photographing children, using any means and including iPads, smart phones or cameras and additional consideration given to photographing vulnerable children, particularly Looked After Children (LAC) or those known to be fleeing domestic violence. Consent must be sought from those with parental responsibility (this may include the Local Authority in the case of Looked After Children).

Many students own or have access to hand held devices and parents/carers are encouraged to consider measures to keep their children safe when using the Internet and social media at home and in the community.

Staff/Student Relationships

The SAET provides advice to staff regarding their personal online activity and has strict rules regarding online contact and electronic communication with students. Staff found to be in breach of these rules may be subject to disciplinary action or a child protection investigation.

Health & Safety

Individual schools within the SAET have their own Health & Safety Policy, set out in a separate document, which reflects the consideration given to the safeguarding of children both within the school environment and when away from school, for example when undertaking school trips and visits (e.g. Risk Assessments).

Safer Environment

SAET schools undertake appropriate Risk Assessments and checks in respect of all equipment and of the buildings and grounds in line with local and national guidance, as well as regulations concerning health and safety.

Trust schools have adequate security arrangements in place in respect of the use of its grounds and buildings by visitors both inside and outside of school hours.

Visitors to an SAET school, for example visiting speakers, theatre groups or curriculum specialists, will be appropriately checked and vetted, to ensure they are not linked to extremist groups or promoting extremist or other harmful material.

Challenge & Escalation

The SAET recognises that professional disagreements may arise between agencies and resolving problems is an integral part of co-operation and joint working to safeguard children.

As part of our responsibility for safeguarding children, SAET schools acknowledge that they must be prepared to challenge each other if they feel that responses to concerns, assessments or the way in which plans are implemented are not safeguarding the child and promoting their welfare.

Trust schools are aware of the WSCB escalation procedures for raising concerns in respect of poor practice and recognise their responsibility to utilise these as and when necessary, in the interests of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Monitoring & Evaluation

The SAET's Safeguarding Children Policy and procedures will be monitored and evaluated by:

- completion of the annual safeguarding audit with input from the Safeguarding Consultant;
- completion and return to the LA/WSCB of the annual Safeguarding Report to the Governing Body;
- student surveys and questionnaires;
- discussions with children and staff;
- scrutiny of data and Risk Assessments;
- scrutiny of each school's single 'Central Record of Recruitment Checks';
- scrutiny of Governing Body Minutes;
- the monitoring of logs regarding bullying/racist/behaviour incidents and Positive Physical Intervention (PPI) records;
- supervision of staff involved in child protection;
- case file audits undertaken by each school's DSL and the WSCB.

Other Relevant Policies

The Governing Body's statutory responsibility for safeguarding the welfare of children goes beyond basic child protection procedures.

The duty is now to ensure that safeguarding permeates all activity and functions. The Safeguarding Children Policy therefore complements and supports a range of other policies for instance:

- Professional Standards (staff behaviour/staff Code of Conduct);
- Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers & Other Staff (see Whistleblowing Policy);

- Severn Academies Educational Trust (SAET) Complaints Procedure & Policy;
- Behaviour Policy including Anti-Bullying & Home-School Agreement;
- Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Policy;
- Trips & Visits Planning Procedure;
- First Aid Booklet & the Supporting Students with Medical Conditions;
- Health & Safety Policy;
- Sex & Relationship Education Policy;
- Permission for Photographs & Videos in School;
- Equal Opportunities Policy;
- Acceptable Use Policy (e-Safety & Acceptable Internet Use);
- Whistleblowing Policy (Confidential Reporting).

The above list is not exhaustive, however when undertaking development or planning of any kind the SAET will need to consider safeguarding matters.

Contacts

Internal		Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Child Protection
		Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
		Governor Responsible for Safeguarding Children
		Chair of Governors

External	Children's Services Family Front Door	01905 822666 By email: childrensteam@worcestershire.gov.uk
	Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team	01905 768020
	Police	24 Hours Non-Emergency: 101 Emergency: 999
	NSPCC Helpline	0808 800 5000
	Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	01905 843311 07809 586225

Channel & Prevent Contacts	Local Authority:	
	Paul Kinsella	By email: pkinsella@worcestershire.gov.uk
	West Mercia Police:	
	DS Neil Rawlins	Office: 01386 591840 By email: neil.rawlins@westmercia.pnn.police.uk