

Learning Community Trust (LCT) Safeguarding Strategy

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Safeguarding expectations

Safeguarding to be at the forefront of all practices.

The Trust places safeguarding at the heart of all academy practices. By embedding it as a golden thread throughout every aspect of academy life, we ensure the safety, well-being, and happiness of young people, staff, and the wider community. This unwavering commitment fosters a culture where children feel secure, supported, and able to thrive.

Statement

At LCT, safeguarding is at the heart of our commitment to developing compassionate, resilient, and inspirational young people who are equipped to thrive in an ever-changing global community. Our safeguarding strategy is rooted in our core values and mission, ensuring that every child is protected, supported, and empowered to succeed.

Our commitment

We are unwavering in our belief that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. We foster a culture of vigilance, care, and proactive intervention across all our academies. Every pupil, regardless of background or circumstance, deserves to feel safe, valued, and respected.

Strategic aims

1. Pupil-centred protection

- We place young people at the heart of all safeguarding decisions, ensuring their voices are heard and their needs are met with compassion and care.
- We nurture humility and empathy, helping young people to become caring individuals who respect themselves and others.

2. Equity and inclusion

- We ensure that no child is left behind. Our safeguarding practices are inclusive and responsive to the diverse needs of our communities.
- We celebrate individuality and promote equality, ensuring that all young people feel seen, heard, and safe.

3. Empowering through education

- We embed safeguarding into our curriculum and enrichment activities, equipping young people with the knowledge and resilience to navigate life's challenges.
- We promote digital safety, mental health awareness, and emotional literacy as essential components of a transformative education.

4. Safe and thriving communities

- We work in partnership with families, staff, and external agencies to build strong, supportive networks around every young person.
- We create environments where young people and staff thrive, underpinned by mutual respect, trust, and a shared commitment to well-being.

5. Continuous improvement and accountability

- We maintain rigorous safeguarding policies and procedures, regularly reviewed and updated to reflect best practice and statutory guidance.
- We invest in ongoing training and development for all staff to ensure they are confident, competent, and committed to safeguarding excellence.

Our vision in action

Through our safeguarding strategy, we uphold our vision of a trust with heart - where every young person is safe, every voice matters, and every individual is empowered to flourish. Together, we create a culture where safeguarding is not just a duty, but a shared value that defines who we are.

LCT strategy for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils

Strategic Alignment:

1. Focus on improving and evaluating pupil outcomes and pastoral well-being

Safeguarding is central to pupil success. We monitor and evaluate the impact of safeguarding interventions on both academic and pastoral outcomes.

We use data-driven approaches to identify vulnerable pupils early and provide timely, targeted support that enhances well-being and learning.

2. Evidence-based and expert-led approaches

Our safeguarding policies and practices are grounded in the latest research, statutory guidance, and sector expertise.

We engage with safeguarding specialists and external agencies to ensure our approaches are robust, current, and effective.

3. Collaborative strategies and expert challenge

Safeguarding is a shared responsibility. We foster a culture of collaboration across academies, enabling staff to challenge and support one another in safeguarding practice.

Regular safeguarding reviews and peer audits ensure continuous improvement and accountability.

4. Sharing knowledge and best practice

We actively identify and disseminate safeguarding best practices across the trust. Learning from safeguarding case reviews, audits, and external inspections is shared to inform and uplift practice across all academies.

5. Providing cutting-edge support

We invest in high-quality training, digital safeguarding tools, and mental health resources to support staff and young people.

Our safeguarding leads are equipped with the latest knowledge and tools to respond effectively to emerging risks.

6. Celebrating best practice

We recognise and celebrate excellence in safeguarding across our academies.

Success stories, innovative practices, and impactful interventions are highlighted to inspire and motivate continuous improvement.

Measuring safeguarding improvement success indicators

1. Strong student outcomes across all academies
 - Safeguarding impact measures:
 - Reduction in safeguarding-related barriers to learning (e.g., absenteeism, mental health concerns).
 - Positive trends in academic progress for vulnerable groups (e.g., young people with safeguarding plans, SEND, disadvantaged).
 - Increased engagement in enrichment and extracurricular activities by at-risk young people.
2. Trust pedagogical techniques impacting learning
 - Safeguarding integration:
 - Evidence of safeguarding themes embedded in curriculum delivery (e.g., PSHE, online safety, resilience).
 - Staff using trauma-informed and inclusive teaching strategies to support vulnerable young people.
 - Classroom environments that promote emotional safety and positive behaviour.
3. Professionals motivated to engage in self-directed practice
 - Safeguarding development indicators:
 - High uptake of optional safeguarding CPD and reflective practice sessions.
 - Staff initiating safeguarding-related innovations or well-being initiatives.
 - Increased reporting and early intervention due to heightened staff awareness and confidence.
4. Above-average staff retention
 - Safeguarding culture indicators:
 - Staff surveys indicating high confidence in safeguarding leadership and support.
 - Positive feedback on workload, well-being, and psychological safety.
 - Low turnover in safeguarding-specific roles (e.g., DSLs, pastoral leads).
5. Visible culture of collaboration and support
 - Safeguarding collaboration measures:
 - Regular cross-academy safeguarding forums and shared learning events.
 - Joint safeguarding audits, peer reviews, and shared action plans.
 - Trust-wide safeguarding campaigns or initiatives with visible impact.

Auditing

We have a robust audit process for each academy to identify gaps and strengths in safeguarding practices. This includes:

- Trust reviews at least annually
- Annual external safeguarding reviews
- HR compliance checks at least annually

Annual Plan

The trust has an annual safeguarding action plan which sits beneath this strategy setting the trusts roadmap and providing clear activities to be achieved over the year.

Our annual safeguarding action plan is based on key pillars of trust safeguarding.

1. Foundations of trust safeguarding

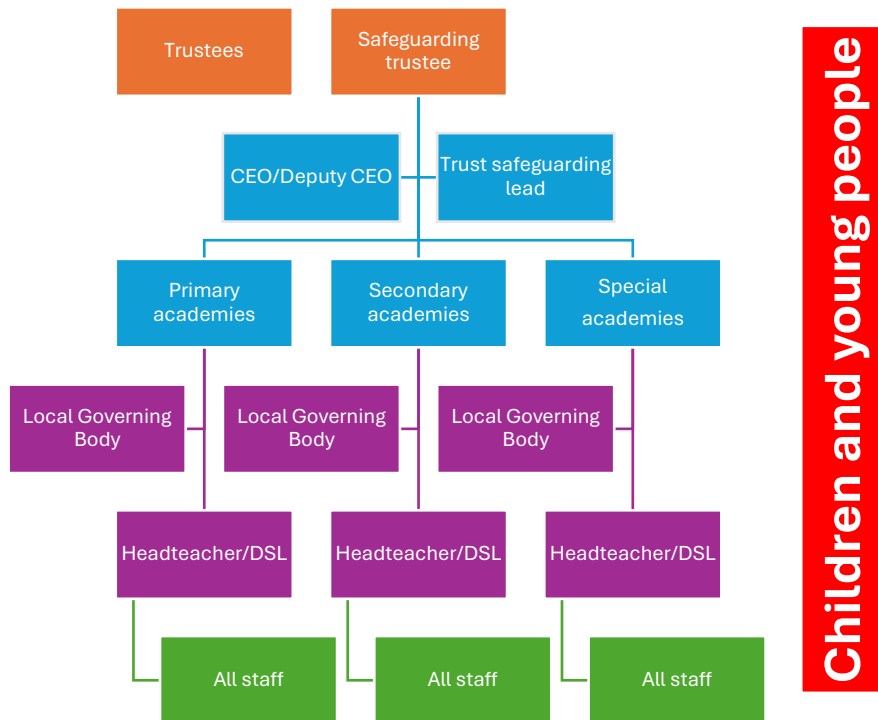
- Foundations of trust safeguarding: Establishing a unified, trust-wide safeguarding ethos.
 - Policy: Ensuring all policies are current, aligned, and consistently applied.
2. Trust safeguarding governance
 - Professional development: Ongoing training tailored to roles and responsibilities.
 - Governance: Strengthening oversight through informed and engaged governors.
 - Safeguarding trustee & governors: Clarifying roles in strategic safeguarding leadership.
 - Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs): Providing supervision, support, and development.
 3. Quality assurance
 - Quality assurance: Monitoring safeguarding effectiveness through audits and reviews.
 - Best practice: Sharing and embedding proven safeguarding approaches.
 - Evidencing culture: Demonstrating a strong safeguarding culture through practice and data.
 4. Subject deep dives
 - Establishing an annual thematic review programme to guide safeguarding priorities.
 - Using data analysis, national and local priorities, and audit outcomes to identify:
 - Areas requiring improvement.
 - Evidence of best practice to be shared and scaled.
 - Ensuring safeguarding efforts are targeted, responsive, and continuously evolving.
 5. Embedding a low-level concern and safe recruitment culture
 - Low-level concerns & safe recruitment: Embedding a culture of openness and vigilance.
 - Open reporting: Encouraging transparency and early intervention.
 - Safer recruitment: Ensuring robust recruitment practices.
 6. Safeguarding intelligence
 - Safeguarding intelligence: Using data to inform decisions and identify trends.
 - Engaging with agencies: Strengthening multi-agency collaboration.
 - Working with other trusts: Sharing learning and aligning practices.
 - Engaging communities: Building trust and safeguarding awareness in local communities.
 7. Developing the safeguarding strategy
 - Developing the strategy: Evolving safeguarding approaches to meet emerging needs.
 - Future-Proofing Teams: Building resilient, skilled safeguarding teams.
 - Annual Plan: Coordinating all themes into a structured, actionable yearly roadmap.

Policy

The child protection and safeguarding policy guides the systems and procedures in academies to ensure that all staff are committed to the welfare of every young person. It aims to establish robust and consistent approaches to fulfil duty of care requirements. The policy adheres to statutory and good practice guidance and aligns with recommendations from the Local Safeguarding Partnerships for our academies.

Safeguarding delegated responsibilities

The structure ensures strong management and oversight to create an effective safeguarding culture tailored to each academy's specific needs, while also aligning with broader local and national strategies.



LCT strives to motivate bold leaders to integrate safeguarding deeply within each academy's culture. These leaders employ evidence-based methods to enhance and perfect practices that balance individual rights and choices with the academy's and Trust's responsibilities to act in the best interests of every young person, ensuring their protection from harm and promotion of their welfare.

The trust safeguarding lead has a clear directive to ensure that young people's needs are at the centre of safeguarding policy and procedures. This includes:

- Policy and compliance: Ensure alignment with safeguarding standards and conduct audits.
- Targeted support: Provide expert guidance and manage complex cases.
- Professional development: Deliver CPD and build staff safeguarding capacity.
- Continuous improvement: Use data and reviews to drive quality and sustainable change.
- Collaboration and knowledge sharing: Promote partnerships and share best practice.

All academies will have the opportunity to engage in discussions and examine their safeguarding plans and priorities on a half-termly basis with the trust safeguarding lead. This process ensures the effectiveness of safeguarding measures and provides school leaders with the appropriate support to facilitate continuous improvement.

Safeguarding Quality Assurance and Evaluation

Safeguarding across the Learning Community Trust is subject to a rigorous annual Quality Assurance (QA) cycle to ensure consistency, compliance, and continual improvement across all academies. This cycle includes scheduled reviews, audits, and evidence-gathering activities that assess the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements, policies, and practice.

The Trust's evaluation model is closely aligned with the Ofsted safeguarding evaluation framework and the School Inspection Handbook, ensuring that our approach mirrors external inspection standards and expectations.

The safeguarding evaluation includes:

- Review of statutory compliance, including safer recruitment, training, and record keeping.
- Evaluation of safeguarding culture, staff understanding, and young people awareness.
- Checks on the effectiveness of early help, multi-agency working, and intervention pathways.
- Checks into specific areas such as curriculum, online safety, attendance, peer-on-peer abuse, and SEND vulnerability.
- Sampling of case records on CPOMS and checks on the effectiveness of follow-up actions.

Findings from safeguarding evaluations feed directly into each academy's Safeguarding Action Plan and the Trust's annual Safeguarding Report to Trustees, ensuring accountability and strategic oversight.

In addition, the School Inspection Toolkit is used by senior leaders and reviewers to provide an objective, evidence-based assessment of safeguarding practice. This toolkit supports leaders in identifying strengths and areas for development in line with Ofsted expectations and Trust standards. When new schools join the Trust, a clear induction process ensures safeguarding alignment from the outset. This includes:

- Immediate integration into Trust safeguarding networks, including DSL forums and annual training.
- Review and alignment of policies, procedures, and systems (including CPOMS configuration) to Trust standards.
- Support from the Trust Safeguarding Lead to embed the culture, expectations, and reporting protocols required across all LCT academies

Through this structured QA cycle and consistent evaluation framework, the Trust ensures that safeguarding remains robust, responsive, and at the heart of every academy's work.