



Education & Young People Directorate

Policy Statement

Safeguarding Children in Education

This policy statement provides information and outlines expectations for practice to help inform staff of their professional responsibilities for safeguarding. All staff within the Directorate should also make themselves familiar with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2016) as advocated by the DFE. This statement has been subject to an initial equality impact assessment and will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Updated: July 2016

1. The Local Authority (LA) aims to promote the welfare and safeguard all children and young people who use its schools, academies, services or other educational provision. The LA works to the principles embodied within the Children Act 1989, Guidance published by Central Government – *Keeping Children Safe in Education*(2016) and the *Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families* (2000). In addition *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2015) and the KSCB Safeguarding Procedures help to inform inter-agency arrangements for the protection of children. Sections 175 and 176 of the Education Act 2002 also place statutory responsibilities on schools and service units within the Education Division to have policies and procedures that safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils and to ensure that they have a voice. The LA also has a monitoring function to ensure that all schools understand and implement such procedures and robust systems for intervention are in place if concerns become evident.
2. The Corporate Director of Education & Young People Directorate is the Senior Officer with responsibility for ensuring that the LA meets its statutory obligations relating to the protection of children within Education Services. Delegated lead responsibility for developing policy and procedures across the County lies with the Principal Officer (Safeguarding in Education) who manages a team of Area Safeguarding Advisers that provide support, guidance and challenge to schools, Early Years Settings and LA Education Services on issues relating to safeguarding children. This includes contributing to the development of inter-agency policy, procedures and training in support of the LA's Child Protection training strategy. The Corporate Director is the Senior Officer representing Education on the Kent Safeguarding Children Board and the Principal Officer provides operational lead responsibility. Area Safeguarding Advisers contribute to the partnership work involved in the respective KSCB sub groups that support inter-agency safeguarding arrangements including serious case reviews. There is also an Education Sub Group of KSCB that is chaired by the Corporate Director.
3. The role of Kent Schools, Education Services, Children's Centres and Early Years settings in child protection is to provide a safe environment in which children can learn and ensure that safeguarding risk assessments are undertaken when considering community use of the schools facilities. Activity should be based on three paramount principles
 - To protect from harm
 - To prevent abuse
 - To promote welfare
4. Schools, Settings and LA Services also have a duty to assist Specialist Children's Services, acting on behalf of children in need or at risk of abuse, by referring concerns, providing information for assessments of need or child protection enquiries and contributing to child in need or child protection plans with children and their families. The LA's Education Services will contribute to a co-ordinated approach to child protection and will work in close collaboration with schools and other agencies including Social Services, Health and Kent Police. In addition the role of schools and education services is recognised in terms of implementing the

revised Eligibility Criteria and the Early Help Preventative Services process for lower level concerns.

5. Child abuse and neglect can take many forms. The four categories of abuse described in '*Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015*' and adopted for use in Kent are: **Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Emotional Abuse and Neglect**

These categories are clearly defined in Kent Safeguarding Children Board procedures which can be accessed via the website www.kscb.org.uk.

6. All staff in Kent County Council's educational establishments and services
 - Have a professional duty of care for the welfare and safety of children with whom they work (Safeguarding is everyone's business).
 - Have a responsibility to 'whistle blow' if they become aware of an abusive situation within the work setting;
 - Must be aware of, and alert to, signs of child abuse and must respond in accordance with the Child Protection Guidelines for Education Staff;
 - Be alert to the potential of young abusers and challenge bullying in any form.
 - Record, report and address all incidents of a racial nature in line with legislative requirements and challenge discriminatory behaviours in any form.
 - Know how to respond to a child's disclosure of abuse and know what to do with the information;
 - Are required to follow the procedures of the Kent Safeguarding Children Board and must therefore familiarise themselves with this document and the referral process.
 - Be familiar with Guidance issued by the DfE(2015) 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'.
 - Understand and implement Safer Recruitment practices (accredited training for schools mandatory since January 2010)
 - Understand and implement LA Procedures for Managing Allegations Against Staff in line with Local Authority Designated Officer function.
 - Cooperate fully with section 47 investigations and support the Child Protection Case Conference process - including the sharing of information prior to conference via the secure e-mail initiative.
 - All professionals within the Directorate need to familiarise themselves with supplementary guidance as referenced in *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016*, which includes key safeguarding responsibilities for recognising and referring concerns on issues such as *Radicalisation and Female Genital Mutilation*, both of which now have mandatory reporting requirements. In addition, supplementary guidance on other key safeguarding priorities such as *Child Sexual Exploitation, Children Missing Education, Disqualification Regulations and Private Fostering* can be accessed via the DfE website.
7. In accordance with DfE Guidance every school, Early Years Setting and Education Service must nominate a senior member of staff as Designated Safeguarding Lead (which includes responsibility for child protection and on-line

safety) within the provision. Nominated representatives in each sector will be members of the KSCB Education Sub Group which meets three times per year.

8. Designated staff in Schools, Early Years Settings and Education Service staff will receive bespoke child protection training delivered by the Education Safeguarding Team in line with the LA Training Strategy and current legislation and guidance. KSCB inter-agency procedure for referral of children in need or at risk of significant harm to the statutory agencies will also help to inform such training. The benefits of effective working together arrangements will be reflected in multi-agency training wherever possible. KSCB training is provided by a multi-agency college of trainers and this is delivered to participants from education, health, police and social services together, where appropriate.
9. The LA also recognises the importance of developing relationships with parents and carers that promote partnership working in all aspects of a child's education and placement in school. Parent's and carers views will be sought and taken into account in all situations where there are concerns for a child's welfare unless it is believed that this might compromise the safety of the child, another person or a criminal investigation. In line with guidance and the Kent Safeguarding Children Board Procedure, parental consent to pass information to Social Services will be sought in all but the most urgent or grave situations.
10. Children's wishes and feelings will also be taken into account according to their age and understanding. Children's right to confidentiality will be respected and information will only be shared in the interest of the child.
11. Maintained Schools, Academies, Early Years Settings Children's Centres and Pupil Referral Units must have a child protection policy based on these principles, which is consistent with their policies on race equality, sex and health education, managing behaviour and anti-bullying. This will also include their procedures for safeguarding the children in their care for which the LA has produced an exemplar policy. The use of the curriculum to prevent child abuse will be promoted, with the aim of enhancing each child's self-confidence and esteem to enable them to better protect themselves, develop self-awareness and resilience, which takes into account their age, ethnicity, ability and disability as appropriate. A contractual arrangement with Action for Children continues to provide an independent advocate for vulnerable children who find themselves the subject of the SEN Tribunal.
12. The LA recognises also that there is potential for professionals in education settings to harm children. Procedures for protecting children from harm including the safer recruitment of staff and handling allegations of abuse made against staff can be found in Kent & Medway Safeguarding Children Board Procedures and the LA's Safeguarding Procedures for Managing Allegations Against Staff (Education Settings). In addition KSCB has produced Operational Guidelines for managing allegations against staff within the wider children's workforce.
13. As part of the LA's recruitment and vetting process Disclosure and Barring Service barred list and enhanced criminal record checks will be sought on all staff in regulated activity who have unsupervised access to children. This will include

professional, auxiliary staff and taxi drivers/escorts who transport some of Kent's most vulnerable children. LA professionals who visit schools will have been vetted appropriately and only need to show ID and sign in when visiting schools and settings (as referenced in *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education 2007 and is still valid in 2016*).

14. The LA will also develop supplementary guidance in response to schools and services identifying areas of concern relating to safeguarding issues or recommendation that emanate from Serious Case Reviews. Such guidance will be developed in consultation with schools, services and other agencies where appropriate. The LA's Safeguarding Newsletter, Governor Briefings and the Schools e-bulletin will be the process for cascading such information out to schools and services and copies of all documentation is available on the Education Safeguarding Team page of website (KELSI). Training will also support the implementation of such guidance and Designated Safeguarding Leads will be provided with resources to enable their respective school groups to be kept informed.

KA (July 2016)