DSL Child Protection Representatives

DSL Roles and Responsibilities

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Date: 02 September 2020
Review Date: 10 April 2026

Control Sheet

Version Number: 4

Table of Contents

"No Child Left Behind"

Children and vulnerable adults have the right to live free from harm regardless of age, disability, race, religion or belief, gender, or sexual orientation and have a right to equal protection from all types of abuse and harm.

Purposes of This Document

This document is to explain the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL), and subsequent other workers' roles and duties around child protection and safeguarding.

Please note: safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility, regardless of whether you have a DSL or not.

Aims of This Document

To inform readers of the Company's commitment to child safety by appointing Child Protection Representatives, under the titles of DSL and DDSL. The Company DSL and DDSL are:

- DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead): Samuel Thomas
- DDSL (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead): Aaron Scott
- DDSL (Sherborne): Simon Keys
- DDSL (Wimborne): Vanessa Phillips

Any worker who has any child safety concerns should discuss them with the DSL/DDSL as the first point of call.

The Role and Responsibilities of a Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL will take on the following responsibilities:

1. Ensure this Policy is put into practice.
2. Insist on being the first point of contact via the phone for child protection issues.
3. Keep clear and concise records of any concerns expressed about child protection issues. They will bring any child protection concerns to the notice of the correct Local Authority, i.e. Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), or Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), if deemed appropriate.
4. Ensuring that all staff are given proper supervision.
5. Ensuring that everyone involved with the Company is aware of the identity of the Child Protection Representatives.

The Company's DSL is responsible for ensuring the **Safeguarding Policy** is adhered to. The role is essential to the operation of the Company, to ensure that safeguarding efforts are as efficient and effective as possible.

Comments and feedback will be reviewed regularly as part of ongoing Policy evaluation and professional development.

All feedback and comments should be directed to the DSL or DDSL, who will record, consider, and where appropriate, act upon the suggestions made. This includes reviewing and updating policies, addressing concerns raised by staff, and incorporating learning from safeguarding cases.

The DSL is responsible for creating an open and supportive environment where staff feel confident to raise concerns. Staff members are encouraged to provide feedback on safeguarding procedures and suggest improvements. Constructive comments help ensure that safeguarding practices remain robust, relevant, and responsive to the needs of children and YP.

The Role

The DSL is the first point of contact for all staff to go to for advice if they are concerned about a child.

The DSL and DDSL have completed the appropriate training and update as required to act within this role. All staff also carry out Level 3 Safeguarding training.

- They ensure that they comply with safer recruitment procedures for new staff members and their induction.
- They support staff to assist in information regarding concerns and support decision-making about whether staff concerns are sufficient enough to notify Children's Social Work Services or whether other courses of action are more appropriate.
- They make formal referrals to Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) Mutli-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and Dorset Children Advice and Duty service (CHAD).
- They ensure that concerns are logged and stored securely.
- They have joint responsibility with the management to ensure that the Company's **Safeguarding Policy** and related policies and procedures are followed and regularly updated.
- They are responsible for promoting a safe environment for children and YP.
- They know the contact details of relevant statutory agencies e.g. Children's Social Work Services (CSWS), Police, Local Safeguarding Children Board, and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for allegations against staff.
- It is not the responsibility of the DSL to decide whether a child has been abused or not. This is the responsibility of investigative statutory agencies such as Children's Social Work Services or the Police. However, keeping children safe is everybody's business and all staff should know who to go to and how to report any concerns they may have about a child being harmed or at risk of being harmed.

Additional Responsibilities and Clarifications for a DSL in Dorset

Contextual Safeguarding and Local Knowledge

- Maintain an up-to-date knowledge of contextual safeguarding issues that may be particularly relevant to children and YP in Dorset, such as county lines, exploitation, rural isolation, or access to mental health services.
- Develop and maintain strong working relationships with local agencies including Dorset Police, CHAD, the Virtual School, local early help teams, and local voluntary services.

Training and Supervision

- Ensure all staff receive regular safeguarding training updates (at least annually), and that refresher training is booked and attended.
- Offer reflective supervision and debriefs for staff involved in safeguarding concerns, to support their emotional wellbeing and professional judgment.
- Be aware of and implement the *Working Together to Safeguard Children* and *Keeping Children Safe in Education* guidance updates.

Prevent Duty and Online Safety

- Act as the single point of contact for Prevent-related concerns and be trained in Channel procedures.
- Promote online safety awareness and contribute to any digital safeguarding policies or procedures.

Multi-Agency Working and Escalation

- Attend and contribute to multi-agency meetings (e.g. Core Group, Child Protection Conferences, Strategy Meetings) and represent the Company in a professional, informed manner.
- Escalate concerns where necessary using the Dorset or BCP professional disagreement procedures, ensuring that the child's needs remain paramount.

Record Keeping and Auditing

- Conduct regular audits of safeguarding records to ensure clarity, consistency, and that actions are being followed through in a timely manner.
- Ensure safeguarding logs include rationale for decisions made and clear chronology of actions.

Learning from Incidents

- Lead on internal safeguarding reviews following any serious incident or near miss, to identify learning and improve future safeguarding practice.

Safeguarding Culture and Voice of the Child

- Promote a safeguarding-first culture across the Company where children feel safe, are listened to, and know who they can talk to.
- Ensure that the voice of the child is central to all safeguarding decisions and that children and YP are meaningfully involved in safeguarding policy reviews where appropriate.

Responsibilities

- Drawing up and enforcing the Company's **Safeguarding Policy**.
- Being alert to and recognising welfare issues, being sure to challenge poor practice.
- Sharing appropriate information with relevant people.
- Gathering any other relevant information and evidence.
- Consulting local safeguarding children board procedures for additional information and guidance if needed.
- Making referrals to social services when appropriate.
- Continue working with the family, sharing information, and contributing to plans if the concern is investigated.

- Ensuring that all staff having contact with children, vulnerable adults, and/or their families have received appropriate training on safeguarding issues.
- Being the first point-of-call for all staff who have safeguarding concerns.

Additional Responsibilities

- *Maintaining Accurate and Confidential Records*: ensuring all concerns, discussions, and decisions made are clearly recorded, dated, and stored securely in line with GDPR and safeguarding legislation.
- *Ensuring Safer Recruitment Practices*: overseeing recruitment procedures to ensure all staff and volunteers have appropriate checks (e.g. DBS) and safeguarding awareness.
- *Monitoring and Auditing Safeguarding Procedures*: regularly reviewing and evaluating safeguarding processes to ensure effectiveness and compliance with current legislation and best practice.
- *Promoting a Safeguarding Culture*: embedding a culture of vigilance and openness where all staff, students, and stakeholders feel confident to speak up about concerns.
- *Acting as a Liaison with External Agencies*: building and maintaining relationships with local safeguarding partners (e.g. health, Police, education welfare) and attending strategy meetings, case conferences, and core groups as needed.
- *Keeping Up to Date with Policy and Legislative Changes*: staying informed of updates in national and local safeguarding policies and ensuring these are reflected in practice.
- *Providing Support and Supervision to Staff*: offering guidance, supervision, and emotional support to staff dealing with safeguarding concerns, disclosures, or distressing situations.
- *Delivering In-House Training and Updates*: ensuring safeguarding training is not just a one-off, but part of an ongoing CPD programme, including regular refreshers and scenario-based learning.
- *Managing Allegations against Staff*: ensuring clear protocols are in place for handling allegations against staff members, including liaison with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- *Ensuring Safeguarding Is Reflected in All Policies*: reviewing other key school/organisation/Company policies (e.g. behaviour, online safety, attendance) to ensure safeguarding threads through all aspects.

Approved by: Kevin Tatchell
Date of Approval: Thursday, 10 April 2025
Next Review Date: Friday, 10 April 2026
Status of policy: Approved

Signature: 

Kevin Tatchell – Company Director
Signed on behalf of the Company.