

HIDELOW GRANGE SCHOOL

Safeguarding Policy Suite

A Guide to the Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Approved by:	Tom Clarke, Executive Headteacher & DSL
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Introduction

This policy is written in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2026 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023. It incorporates the statutory Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance 2024, recognising attendance as a core safeguarding duty.

This policy is also written for students over 18 years and is in line with the Care Act 2014, Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Education Act 2002.

This policy is supported by the following wider policies:

- Child Protection Policy
- Child on Child Abuse Policy
- Filtering and Monitoring Policy
- Missing from Education
- Absent from Education Policy
- Schools Safer Recruitment Policy
- Managing Contextual Risks to Children
- Safeguarding Over 18s Policy
- Remote Learning Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

- Behaviour Policy
- PREVENT Policy
- Physical Intervention Policy
- SEND Policy
- Staff Behaviour Policy / Code of Conduct

Aims of this policy

The aims of this policy are to inform staff of the role of the DSL, providing clear guidance particularly in relation to:

- Managing referrals
- Working with others
- Information sharing and managing the Child Protection File
- Raising awareness of safeguarding issues locally, nationally and globally
- Training, knowledge and skills
- Providing support to staff
- Understanding the views of children and students
- Holding and sharing information

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is an appointed senior member of staff from the school leadership team. Governing bodies and proprietors ensure the DSL has appropriate status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post. The DSL is not the proprietor and often carries out a dual role, such as being a senior member of teaching staff whilst also undertaking DSL responsibilities.

At Hidelow Grange School, the DSL is Tom Clarke (Executive Headteacher). The Deputy DSL is J. Smith (Deputy Headteacher).

The DSL takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place. The DSL also leads on ensuring compliance with the DfE's generative AI guidance, safeguarding children and students from harmful AI-generated content and training staff on safe AI use.

Deputy DSLs are trained to the same standard as the DSL. Whilst the activities of the DSL can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, ultimate lead responsibility for child protection and safeguarding remains with the DSL and is not delegated.

The DSL is responsible for the safeguarding and protection of those over 18 years and is provided with suitable training to ensure competence and confidence in safeguarding this age group.

The role of the DSL

The DSL (or a deputy) is always available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Individual schools define what 'available' means and whether, in exceptional circumstances, availability by telephone or other media is acceptable. Adequate and appropriate cover arrangements are in place for any out-of-hours or out-of-term activities.

Managing referrals

The DSL refers cases:

- Of suspected abuse and neglect to the relevant local authority social care department and LADO as required
- To the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern, whilst supporting staff who make referrals to the Prevent team
- Where a person is dismissed or leaves due to risk or harm caused to a child or student to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required
- Where a crime may have been committed to the police, in accordance with NPCC guidance on when to call the police
- For any child placed in Alternative Provision, the DSL ensures safeguarding needs continue to be met. The school retains responsibility for commissioning quality-assured AP providers

and monitoring safeguarding arrangements. The DSL maintains a register of children placed off-site and records termly contact with the AP

Working with others

The DSL:

- Acts as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff
- Acts as a point of contact with safeguarding partners
- Liaises with the Headteacher to inform them of issues, especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, police investigations or adult safeguarding investigations
- Liaises with the LADO for child or adult protection concerns involving a staff member
- Liaises with staff, especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT technicians, senior mental health leads, mental health support teams and the SENCO regarding safeguarding and welfare, including online and digital safety
- Promotes supportive engagement with parents and carers to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and students, including where families face challenging circumstances
- Works with the Headteacher and strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the safeguarding and welfare issues those in need are experiencing and identifying the impact on attendance, engagement and achievement
- Ensures the school knows its cohort of individuals who have or have had a social worker, understands their academic progress and attainment, and maintains a culture of high aspirations for this group
- Liaises with Virtual School Heads on any locally agreed care provision arrangements, including kinship care, to ensure inclusion and participation in planning

Information sharing and managing the child protection file

The DSL is responsible for ensuring that child protection and adult safeguarding files are kept up to date, held confidentially and stored securely.

Records include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome
- Flags for attendance-related risks, linking unexplained absences to potential exploitation or abuse, using weekly attendance risk data and escalations under the Attendance policy
- Generative AI incident reports where relevant, capturing any harmful AI-generated content or misuse

Files are only accessed by those who need to see them. Where a file or content within it is shared, this is done in line with information sharing advice set out in Parts One and Two of KCSiE 2026.

Where a child or student leaves the school, the DSL ensures their child protection / adult safeguarding file is transferred to the new school as soon as reasonably practicable (ideally within 5 working days), separately from the main pupil file, with confirmation of receipt obtained.

Raising awareness

The DSL:

- Ensures a whole-school approach to safeguarding and that staff maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'
- Promotes a culture of openness and transparency where staff feel able to share concerns
- Ensures each member of staff has access to and understands the school's child protection / adult safeguarding policy and procedures, especially new and part-time staff
- Ensures policies are reviewed annually as a minimum and updated regularly, working with the governing body or proprietor

- Ensures all child protection and safeguarding policies are kept up to date and publicly available
- Ensures parents and carers know referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made
- Links with safeguarding partner arrangements to ensure staff are aware of training opportunities and local safeguarding policies
- Promotes educational outcomes by sharing information about welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues with teachers and school leadership
- Incorporates the latest Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 requirements, including mental health education and trauma-informed training, into whole-staff awareness campaigns
- Actively counters misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories online as part of the expanded online-safety remit

Training, knowledge and skills

The DSL and any deputies undergo training to provide the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role, including safeguarding of those aged 18 and above. This training is updated at least every two years. The DSL and any deputies also undertake Prevent awareness training.

Training equips DSLs to:

- Understand the assessment process for early help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and local authority safeguarding arrangements
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and be able to contribute to these effectively
- Understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have on an individual's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing
- Be alert to the specific needs of those with SEND, relevant health conditions and young carers
- Understand the importance of information sharing within the school and with safeguarding partners
- Understand and support the school with Prevent duty requirements
- Understand the unique risks associated with online safety and have the knowledge and capability to keep children and students safe online
- Recognise the additional risks that children with SEND face online and support them to stay safe
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings
- Provide annual safeguarding training to all staff and ensure staff have read and understood Part One of KCSIE
- Provide on-going safeguarding information throughout the year, for example via a regular safeguarding email or newsletter

DSLs also complete group-based CSE and group grooming prevention modules, reflecting the latest National Audit Office findings.

The DSL has regular supervision meetings with their manager at least termly and after critical incidents, which provides support and opportunities to review cases and consider developments.

Providing support to staff

The DSL supports and advises staff and helps them feel confident on welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters. This includes:

- Ensuring staff are comfortable and confident to share concerns and act on them
- Providing feedback to staff once an outcome has been reached, so they are reassured they have been listened to
- Supporting staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked

Understanding the views of children and students

All children should feel heard and understood. DSLs are supported to develop knowledge and skills that:

- Encourage a culture that listens to children and students and takes account of their wishes and feelings
- Understand the difficulties children and students may have in approaching staff about their circumstances
- Promote the building of trusted relationships that facilitate communication
- Use termly student surveys on safety, digital wellbeing and AI experiences to inform policy reviews

Holding and sharing information

The DSL is equipped to:

- Understand the importance of information sharing within the school, with other schools and colleges on transfer, and with safeguarding partners and other agencies
- Understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR
- Keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals

Review history

A review will be undertaken annually as a minimum. Subject to a significant safeguarding concern, this policy and all attached policies will be reviewed and monitored as part of a lessons-learned review.

This policy was reviewed in August 2025 by Laura Dickie (Head of Policy), Jo Dunn (Director of Compliance, Quality and Regulation – Children), Lindsey Appleby-Flynn (Head of Learning and Development) and the DSL. It was adopted and adapted for Hidelow Grange School in June 2026 by B. Neasom (Headteacher and DSL).

Next review: September 2027.