



Standard one: Child protection, safety and security

The role of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) in schools

What is a designated safeguarding lead?

The designated safeguarding lead is the person appointed to take lead responsibility for child protection issues in school. The person fulfilling this role must be a senior member of the school's leadership team, and the DSL role must be set out in the post holder's job description.

It is up to individual schools to decide whether to nominate a deputy to cover the role of the designated safeguarding lead when they are unavailable. In large schools it is good practice to have other senior staff who can also take on this role and work as part of a 'designated safeguarding team'. The lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the DSL.

Do schools have to have a designated safeguarding lead?

Both Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015) and Keeping Children Safe in Education (2016) require that all schools have a designated safeguarding lead in place to deal with child protection concerns.

The DSL or a deputy should always be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Individual schools should decide whether 'available' means the DSL must be on the school premises or whether they can be contacted via telephone or email. Schools should decide what arrangements are made for the availability of the DSL or deputy during out of school activities.

What training does a designated safeguarding lead need to have?

The designated safeguarding lead (and deputy/deputies) should have attended training to enable them to carry out their role. This should be updated every two years as a minimum

Training is available from the NSPCC - www.nspcc.org.uk/education



What are the responsibilities of the designated safeguarding lead?

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2016) describes the responsibilities of the designated safeguarding lead in Annex B.

Manage referrals

The DSL should:

- refer cases of suspected abuse to Children’s Social Care, and support staff who have raised concerns about a child or have made a referral to Children’s Social Care
- where there are concerns about radicalisation, to make referrals to the Channel programme and offer support to other staff who have concerns about radicalisation
- refer cases to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) where a member of staff has been dismissed or has left due to risk or harm to a child
- refer cases where a crime has been or may have been committed to the Police

Work with others

The DSL should:

- liaise with the headteacher or principal to inform him or her of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations;
- as required, liaise with the “case manager” and the designated officer(s) at the local authority for child protection concerns which concern a staff member
- liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies
- act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff.

Undertake Training





In addition to formal training the DSL should keep knowledge and skills up to date via online training, e-bulletins, opportunities to network with other DSLs, and attend locally arranged briefings. These opportunities should be taken up at least once a year but more regularly if possible so that the DSL:

- understands the referral and assessment process for early help and intervention
- knows about child protection case conferences and reviews and can contribute to these effectively when required
- ensures that all staff have access to and understand the school's safeguarding and child protection policy
- is aware of the needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers
- keeps detailed, accurate and secure records of concerns and referrals
- understands the role of the school in terms of the Prevent duty
- attends refresher and other relevant training
- encourages a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings in terms of what the school does to protect them

Raise Awareness

The designated safeguarding lead's role is to:

- work with the governing body to ensure the school's child protection policy is updated and renewed annually and that all members of staff have access to and understand it.
- provide regular briefings and updates at staff, departmental and governor meetings to help ensure that everyone is kept up to date on latest policy developments and reminded of their responsibilities.
- ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and that parents are aware of the policy and that schools may make referrals to Children's Social Care if there are concerns about abuse or neglect.



- link with the LSCB to keep up to date with training opportunities and the latest local policies

Record Keeping:

It is also the designated safeguarding lead's responsibility to keep detailed, accurate and secure written records of safeguarding concerns. These records are confidential and should be kept separately from pupil records. They should include a chronology of concerns, referrals, meetings, phone calls and emails.

Where children leave the school or college, ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

Training of other staff

It is the role of the designated safeguarding lead, working with the headteacher, to ensure all staff:

- have induction training covering child protection, an understanding of safeguarding issues including the causes of abuse and neglect.
- are able to identify the signs and indicators of abuse, respond to disclosures appropriately and respond effectively and in timely fashion when they have concerns.

It is good practice to invite all governors to this training (not just the nominated governor for child protection) so that they all have a basic awareness of child protection.

DfE (2016) Keeping Children Safe in Education

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/526153/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_guidance_from_5_September_2016.pdf

HM Government (2015) Working Together to Safeguard Children

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

NSPCC child protection training

www.nspcc.org.uk/education

