



SAFEGUARDING UPDATES

KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION

Statutory guidance for schools and colleges published

The guidance was released by the Department for Education on 12 April 2014 and came into force immediately. It is a replacement for Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2006). The main body of the document is 40 pages long so it is worth taking time to familiarise yourselves with the contents. Fundamentally, duties remain as previously and defined in the Education Act 2002. A few details to highlight:

- All staff are expected to read Part One of the document. It is only seven pages long. I recommend this is included as part of the Level 1 Child Protection Awareness (Induction) pack when staff sign to say they have read and understood the contents. An explicit message is that all staff should maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" where safeguarding is concerned.
- The role of Designated Senior should be explicit in the role-holder's job description (I have a sample JD if needed and Annex B of the guidance describes the broad areas of responsibility).
- Although it is still expected that the DS will continue to act as the focal point for concerns and make referrals to children's social care, there is an increased emphasis on the potential for any staff member to make a referral to children's social care directly, if they feel things are not being followed up sufficiently (or concerns involve the DS). That point is already highlighted in Level 2 training but needs to be made explicit in your child protection policy.
- All schools must now have a staff behaviour policy (code of conduct) as well as a child protection policy.
- The DS is still expected to update safeguarding training every two years and for all other staff as defined by the SCB which continues to be a minimum of every three years.
- A substantial chunk of the document relates to safer recruitment with a very useful flow chart on page 21 about DBS checks for new staff, volunteers, contractor's etc.
- In relation to allegations against staff, should a situation arise in your school, parents/carers should be made aware by you of the prohibition on reporting or publishing allegations about teachers. So e.g. if a parent posted something on a social networking site that enabled a teacher to be identified, they would be in breach of the reporting restrictions and there would be consequences for them.

Document available for download at www.gov.uk/government/publications. Ref DFE-00341-2014

RISK ASSESSMENTS FOR RESIDENTIAL TRIPS

A general question to all schools – do your risk assessments include elements on safeguarding and child protection? I am aware these are externally verified. However, from a small sample I have reviewed, I think there could be gaps. Checklist of things you may wish to consider attached.

DBS CLEARANCE FOR PUPIL AND FAMILY SERVICES STAFF

We often have enquiries from schools, particularly ahead of an Ofsted, concerning DBS clearances for P&FS staff that visit schools and work with children. There is a statement on the SCE website, under P&FS, who are we? confirming that appropriate clearances are in place for all staff. This meets the requirements of Ofsted, quote "It is sufficient, for schools and colleges to seek written confirmation that appropriate checks, including DBS checks, have been carried out (most commonly on appointment) and by whom (most commonly the relevant human resources department), and to confirm the identity of these visitors. Written confirmation may take the form of a public statement on the providing organisation's website, a practice adopted by Ofsted."