



SAFEGUARDING AT THE SOUTHWARK DIOCESAN BOARD OF EDUCATION

Agreed July 2020
To be reviewed July 2021

Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High
will rest in the shade of the Almighty.
I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress,
my God, in whom I trust."

Psalm 91 v.1-2

I INTRODUCTION

The Church of England plays a key role in championing the needs and rights of the vulnerable and disadvantaged. This is based upon the central Christian theology that every single one of us is made in the image of God and is loved unconditionally by God.

'The ultimate worth of each person is founded in being created in the image of God and in God's love and compassion for each'. Church of England Vision for Education (Autumn 2016)

Within the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education (SDBE) there is a culture of safeguarding which permeates all elements of our work where all are treated with dignity and respect. This highlights the expectation that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

If we are to achieve our vision of 'Developing Church of England Education', we must ensure that all of our employees, school communities and those associated with us are safe from harm, abuse and neglect to create an environment in which all can flourish and reach their fullest potential. We encourage a 'culture of vigilance' where children and vulnerable adults are safe and secure. This is based upon the promise of Jesus that; *'I have come in order that you might have life—life in all its fullness.'* John 10:10

Key to this is effective working with other partner agencies and organisations.

2 KEY PARTNERS:

2.1 HM Government

'Working Together to Safeguard Children' is statutory guidance from HM Government. This guidance provides a framework for the three local safeguarding partners (the local authority; a clinical commissioning group; and the chief officer of police for a police area) to make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children including identifying and responding to their needs.

This guidance can be found at;

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779401/Working_Together_to_Safeguard-Children.pdf

2.2 The Department for Education

The Department for Education has published guidance in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2019 edition). This document sets out the legal duties schools must follow to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in education under the age of 18. This guidance is statutory and therefore all Governing Bodies, proprietors and management committees must ensure it is fully adhered to.

This guidance can be found at;

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/835733/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2019.pdf

2.3 OfSTED

Safeguarding is at the heart of the Education Inspection Framework. When schools are inspected inspectors have to answer the question 'Is safeguarding effective in this school?' The judgement can only be either 'effective' or 'ineffective'. An 'ineffective' judgement for safeguarding results in an 'inadequate' judgement for overall effectiveness.

The Ofsted guidance 'Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings' provides additional guidance for inspectors.

This guidance can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspecting-safeguarding-in-early-years-education-and-skills>

2.4 The Church of England

'The Diocese of Southwark is committed to the safeguarding of children young people and adults and for many years this commitment has been at the heart of our work across the parishes.' Bishop Christopher

The Diocese is guided by the Church of England document 'Promoting a Safer Church' which is the overarching House of Bishops Policy Statement from 2017. The SDBE works in partnership with the Southwark Diocese Safeguarding leads to ensure vulnerable adults, young people and children are kept free from harm. '**A Safe Church**' is the manual containing the Diocesan policies, procedures and guidelines for safeguarding children, safeguarding adults who may be vulnerable, and responding to domestic abuse. Significant amendments were made in 2018 in line with a number of new and revised policies from the House of Bishops and the National Safeguarding Team and to reflect changes in wider safeguarding procedure and legislation. This guidance specifically mentions Church schools on pages 3-13.

https://southwark.anglican.org/downloads/asafechurch/ASC_Section%203%20Responsibilities_F.pdf

For all of the latest national policy and practice guidance approved by the House of Bishops, please visit: www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/promoting-safer-church/policy-practice-guidance

Further information on safeguarding within the Southwark Diocese can be found at:

www.southwark.anglican.org/safeguarding/diocesan-policies-and-procedures

Where appropriate, for example where the issue is related to both school and parish, the SDBE works in close partnership with the Southwark Diocese Safeguarding Team.

2.5 Local Authorities

Each Local Authority is required to have effective multi-agency safeguarding systems in place. These are often referred to as 'safeguarding children partnerships'. These partnerships are made up of three safeguarding partners; Local Authorities, chief officers of police and clinical commissioning groups. *These three partners will also make arrangements to work together with any other relevant agencies as they consider appropriate.* The partnership is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how the relevant agencies in each Local Authority will co-operate to

safeguard and protect children and young people from harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation and promote their welfare. Although the SDBE works closely with schools to develop a culture of safeguarding, the statutory responsibility remains with the Local Authority and ultimately is the responsibility of the individual school. Schools will initially contact their Local Authority in relation to safeguarding concerns.

Where appropriate, the SDBE works in close partnership with the safeguarding services within all 12 Local Authorities which form part of the Diocese.

2.6 Southwark Diocesan Board of Education Multi-Academy Trust

The SDBE works in partnership with the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education multi-academy trust. The MAT provides its own guidance to MAT schools in relation to safeguarding. This guidance is in the form of a toolkit and provides comprehensive guidance, supported by a range of proformas and tools. Each MAT school receives an annual external safeguarding review to ensure compliance and support best practice.

3 PRACTICAL APPROACHES TO SAFEGUARDING WITHIN THE SOUTHWARK DIOCESAN BOARD OF EDUCATION:

Below are examples of how the SDBE lives out its culture of safeguarding. *This list is not exhaustive.*

3.1 Our Place Within The Diocese:

- The Director of Education is also a member of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel.
- The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser occasionally attends SDBE Management Team Meetings.
- The SDBE Safeguarding named adviser regularly liaises with the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer.

3.2 Union Street:

Health and Safety:

- Health and Safety forms a cornerstone of the SDBE staff induction programme with colleagues having to complete specific on-line modules; for example, fire safety, trips and falls etc.
- Health and Safety is a standing agenda item at the monthly staff meeting.
- Clear policies relating to the health and safety; for example lone working and guidance on travelling safely around the Diocese are outlined within the staff handbook. This handbook is fully reviewed on an annual basis. The buildings manager carries out regular inspections of the building.
- Weekly fire alarm testing is carried out alongside regular evacuation drills.
- A lockdown procedure is in place for the building.
- Safeguarding is included within the SDBE 'risk register'.

Human Resources:

- All applicants complete an application form which is checked for any gaps in employment history and two references are obtained; qualifications are checked prior to commencement and where appropriate, DBS certificates are obtained.
- Wider DBS checks are carried out for SIAMS inspectors, MAT members and trustees.
- Advice is given to Governing Body panels for disciplinary and/or appeals which may focus on safeguarding issues.
- Safer recruitment guidance is included within the Governing Body and Headteacher training programmes.

3.3 Training and Support for Schools:

- Safeguarding is an area of responsibility for a named adviser within the SDBE. This includes providing practical advice and guidance to schools.
- Safeguarding is a regular item at the termly Headteacher conferences.
- Safeguarding training for school leaders and governors provides up to date guidance on effective safeguarding linked to the expectations of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.
- In partnership with Hertfordshire County Council the SDBE facilitates both initial and update training for designated safeguarding leads (DSL's). These courses are accredited and recognised.
- Brokered safeguarding reviews for schools. These provide a 360 degree view of safeguarding practice.

4 SDBE COLLEAGUES' RESPONSIBILITIES IN SCHOOLS:

- All SDBE staff are expected to familiarise themselves with the safeguarding procedures within schools.
- All SDBE employees have an authorised SDBE identity badge which includes the following information:
 - Name
 - A recognisable photographic image
 - Role within the SDBE
 - DBS Certificate number
 - Date of DBS clearance
 - Contact details for the SDBE offices to confirm identify.
- Schools are actively encouraged to telephone the SDBE if they wish to verify the identity of any staff.
- Typically all visits are pre-booked with schools.
- All official electronic communication to schools is through the use of SDBE technology, for example mobile telephones and official SDBE emails. There is never direct communication with children or young people.
- Colleagues are expected to be vigilant at all times and to follow the school referral process if required.