GDST
GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST

GDST Safeguarding Policy Statement

Overview

The GDST is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All pupils across the Trust have the right to be protected from all types of harm and abuse, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. All our systems, processes and policies operate with the best interests of the child at their heart, and we recognise that extra safeguards may be needed to keep children who are additionally vulnerable safe from abuse.

As the proprietor of each of the GDST's schools, the Council of the Trust determines the organisation's safeguarding policy and oversees compliance. A member of Council is the nominated 'Safeguarding Lead' and takes leadership responsibility for safeguarding at organisational level, delegating where appropriate to members of the Executive Leadership Team. The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the management of safeguarding across the GDST.

The Safeguarding Committee monitors the effectiveness and implementation of the organisation's safeguarding policy and procedures and monitors external legislation and guidance with the aim of minimising the risk of harm to pupils, protecting pupils and staff, and ensuring best practice in safeguarding in GDST schools and academies.

This policy, and any related safeguarding policies and procedures (as set out below) apply to anyone working on behalf of the GDST, including senior managers, Trustees, School Governing Board members, members of staff, agency staff, self-employed individuals, and volunteers.

Legal framework

The GDST's safeguarding policies and procedures have been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance which seeks to protect children in England and Wales, principally:

- The Education Acts
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- The Children Act 2004
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children* December 2023
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education* September 2025
- *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)* September 2025
- *Prevent Duty Guidance* December 2023*, Channel Guidance* December 2023*,* and *Prevent duty guidance for those with safeguarding responsibilities* September 2023
- *Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees* (Charity Commission, June 2022)
- DBS Referrals Guidance (as may be amended from time to time)
- *Teacher misconduct: regulating the teaching profession* March 2014 (and related guidance)
- *Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006* September 2018
- The corresponding Welsh legislation and statutory guidance for schools in Wales

The GDST recognises and acts upon the legal duties set out in the above statutes, regulations and guidance, to protect its pupils and staff from harm.

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Supporting documents

This policy statement is underpinned by a framework of more detailed policies and procedures. This framework comprises:

- The Schools' Model Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (with variations for independent schools, academies, boarding schools and schools in Wales). Schools must insert local details where indicated but may not otherwise alter the policy.
- GDST School Staff Code of Conduct
- Guidance for School Staff and Staff Parents of GDST Pupils
- GDST Online Safety Policy
- Trust Office Staff Safeguarding Guidance

Detailed guidance is also provided covering the following broad areas:

- Safeguarding roles and responsibilities within schools and across the organisation
- Governance and oversight
- Record keeping, data protection and information sharing
- Thematic areas of safeguarding (including *Prevent*, radicalisation and violent extremism)
- Safer recruitment

All members of staff, agency staff, self-employed individuals and volunteers sign an agreement to work in accordance with those policies and procedures which are relevant to their position. Adherence to such policies and guidance is mandatory.

Safeguarding covers much more than child protection, and so the policy framework operates in conjunction with other related policies and guidance documents, including those covering health and safety, school security, online safety, attendance and mental health.

Concerns and complaints

Individuals with concerns or complaints about safeguarding in a GDST school should follow the individual school's policy in the first instance. Concerns or complaints about safeguarding at an organisational level should be reported to the Director of Legal and Risk Assurance or the GDST Council Safeguarding Lead (see contact details below). Concerns about wrongdoing in the workplace not related to safeguarding should follow the GDST Whistleblowing Policy.

Contact details

Director of Legal and Risk Assurance: David Boyd	d.boyd@wes.gdst.net	020 7393 6649
GDST Council Safeguarding Lead: Poppy Scott Plummer	Via: l.colegate@wes.gest.net	020 7393 6694