

## DSL: Updated Role Outline (KCSIE 2025 Compliant)

### Summary of the DSL Role (KCSiE 2025 Update)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) holds lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection across the school, including online safety and monitoring systems. They advise and support staff, liaise with agencies (local authority, police), and contribute to child assessments. While deputies may assist, the DSL retains ultimate accountability. Key aspects include:

- **Leadership & Authority:** Must be a senior staff member with sufficient status, time, and resources.
- **Availability:** Always accessible during term time for safeguarding concerns.
- **Core Responsibilities:**
  - Manage concerns and referrals (social care, Channel, DBS, police).
  - Act as a source of advice and expertise for staff.
  - Liaise with safeguarding partners, headteacher, and relevant agencies.
  - Promote educational outcomes for vulnerable children.
- **Information Management:** Maintain secure, up-to-date child protection files and ensure timely transfer when pupils move schools.
- **Training:** Update DSL and deputies' training every two years; refresh knowledge annually.
- **Awareness & Policy:** Ensure staff understand safeguarding policies; review policies annually.
- **Online Safety:** Understand filtering/monitoring systems and emerging risks (AI misuse, misinformation).
- **Support & Engagement:** Support staff, listen to children, and engage parents/carers.
- **Compliance:** Adhere to data protection laws and statutory guidance.

### KCSiE 2025 Annex C: Role of the designated safeguarding lead

Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure an appropriate senior member of staff, from the school or college leadership team, is appointed to the role of designated safeguarding lead. The designated safeguarding lead should take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place). This should be explicit in the role holder's job description. The designated safeguarding lead should have the appropriate status and authority within

the school or college to carry out the duties of the post. The role of the designated safeguarding lead carries a significant level of responsibility, and they should be given the additional time, funding, training, resources and support they need to carry out the role effectively. Their additional responsibilities include providing advice and support to other

staff on child welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters, taking part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and/or supporting other staff to do so, and contributing to the assessment of children.

### **Duties and responsibilities**

#### **Managing concerns about children**

##### **Manage referrals**

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to refer cases:

- of suspected abuse and neglect to the local authority children's social care as required and support staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care
- to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required and support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme
- where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required, and
- where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required. NPCC - When to call the police should help understand when to consider calling the police and what to expect when working with the police

### **Working with others**

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff
- act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners
- 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. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult. Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance - PACE Code C 2019.

- as required, liaise with the “case manager” (as per Part four) and the local authority designated officer(s) (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member
- liaise with staff (especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT technicians, senior mental health leads and special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs), or the named person with oversight for SEND in a college and senior mental health leads) on matters of safety and safeguarding and welfare (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies so that children’s needs are considered holistically
- liaise with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the mental health support team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health<sup>173</sup>
- promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and
- promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances
- work with the headteacher and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children’s attendance, engagement and achievement at school or college.

This includes:

- ensuring that the school or college knows who its cohort of children who have or have had a social worker are, understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort, and
- supporting teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social worker reach their potential, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there is still a lasting impact on children’s educational outcomes

### **Information sharing and managing the child protection file**

The designated safeguarding lead is responsible for ensuring that child protection files are kept up to date.

Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child.

Records should 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

They should ensure the file is only accessed by those who need to see it and where the file or content within is shared, this happens in line with information sharing advice set out in Parts one and two of KCSiE 2025.

Where children leave the school or college (including in year transfers) the designated safeguarding lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs) or the named person with oversight for SEND in colleges, are aware as required.

Lack of information about their circumstances can impact on the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. In addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any additional information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving to help them put in place the right support to safeguard this child and to help the child thrive in the school or college. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting children who have had a social worker and been victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

### **Managing individual pupil safeguarding files**

- Ensure safeguarding files are kept up to date.
- Keep information confidential and store it securely.
- Make sure records include:
  - A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
  - Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved.
  - A note of any initial action taken, all subsequent action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.
- Ensure files are only accessed by those who need to see them, and that where a file or content within it is shared, this happens in line with information sharing advice as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE).
- Where children leave the school (including in year transfers):
  - Ensure their child protection file is securely transferred to the new school within 5 working days, separately from the main pupil file, with a receipt of confirmation, and within the specified time set out in KCSiE.

- Consider whether it would be appropriate to share any additional information with the new school before the child leaves, to help them put appropriate support in place.
- Adhere to Derbyshire Council's document retention timescales.

### Raising awareness

- ensure each member of staff has access to, and understands, the school or college's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part-time staff
- ensure the school or college's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this
- ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents know that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school or college in this
- link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements
- help promote educational outcomes by sharing information about welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children who have or have had a social Worker are experiencing with teachers and school and college leadership staff

### Training

The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at least every two years. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should also undertake Prevent awareness training. Training should provide designated safeguarding leads with a good understanding of their own role, how to identify, understand and respond to specific needs that can increase the vulnerability of children, as well as specific harms that can put children at risk, and the processes, procedures and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly local authority children's social care, so they:

- understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and local authority children's social care referral arrangements

- have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so
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- understand the importance of the role the designated safeguarding lead has in providing information and support to local authority children social care in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes
- are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young carers
- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners
- understand and support the school or college with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation
- are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school or college
- can recognise the additional risks that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support children with SEND to stay safe online obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses,
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.

In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or

simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, and at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

### **Providing support to staff**

- Support and advise staff and help them feel confident on welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters.
- Support staff during the referrals process.
- Support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked, including informing the provision of academic and pastoral support.

### **Understanding the views of children**

- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school may put in place to protect them.
- Understand the difficulties that children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and consider how to build trusted relationships which facilitate communication.

### **Holding and sharing information**

- Understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school, with other schools and colleges on transfer, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations, and practitioners.
- Understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Take lead responsibility for the effectiveness of the school's Single Central Record (SCR).
- be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of all concerns, discussions and decisions made including the rationale for those decisions. This should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as LA children's social care or the Prevent program etc.

### **Other areas of responsibility**

- The DSL will be required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and follow school policies and the staff code of conduct.

- During term time, the DSL should always be available during school hours for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Ideally this will be in person but can also be via phone or video call in exceptional circumstances.
- *Please note that this list of duties is illustrative of the general nature and level of responsibility of the role. It is not a comprehensive list of all tasks that the DSL will carry out.*