Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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VIEWING NOTE

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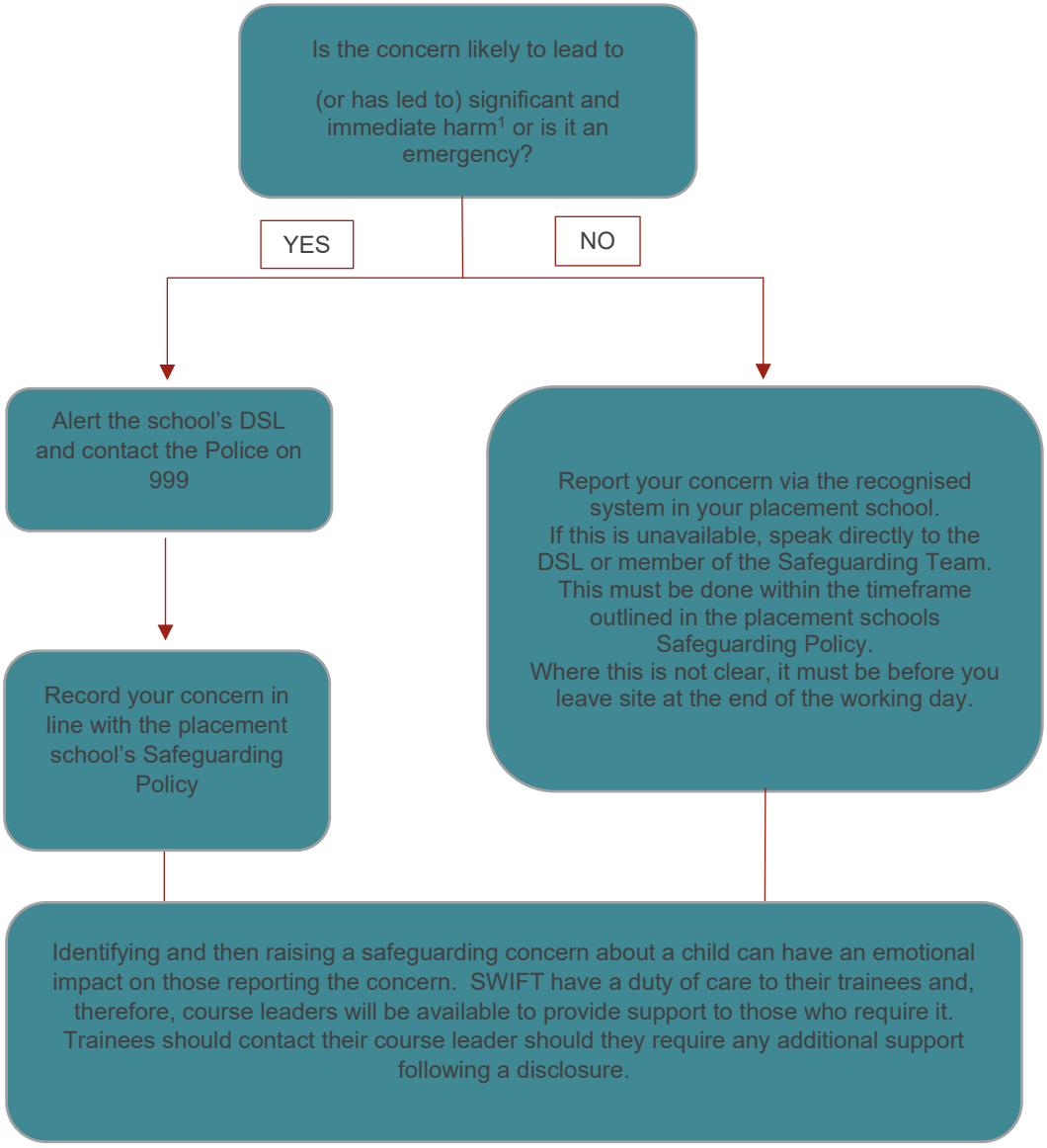
Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

1. Who is this policy for?

This policy applies to all SWIFT trainees.
Employees of SWIFT should refer to the ESW Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

2. What to do if you have a safeguarding concern about a child



3. SWIFT Teacher Training Vision, Mission and Aims

Mission: Every class led by a great teacher

Get education right, and the odds of children living healthy, happy and rewarding lives increases. Yet too many children do not have access to a great education, especially if they are from poorer backgrounds. Our mission is to ensure that new teachers entering the profession have the expertise to transform the lives of children and their communities.

Course and PGCE Aims

Our overall aim is to enable trainees to make the strongest possible start that leads to ever-deepening expertise across their career.

[1] "Harm" is the "ill treatment or the impairment of the health or development of the child" (Section 31, Children Act 1989; Article 2, Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995; Scottish Government, 2023). Harm can be determined "significant" by "comparing a child's health and development with what might be reasonably expected of a similar child".

Specifically, we want all trainees to:

- Develop a high level of expertise in phase and subject(s).
- Experience evidence-based training that brings together theory and practice.
- Engage in critical analysis of research through our PGCE.
- Belong to close-knit, supportive training communities.
- Prioritise approaches to teaching that are inclusive of pupils with SEND and EAL.
- Develop agency to bring about a fairer education for all pupils.
- Be effectively prepared for the next phase of their career, including how to lead a good work life balance.

4. Safeguarding Statement

All trainees and members of staff at SWIFT recognise their moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We recognise that all children, regardless of age, disability, SEND, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse.

We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures and those in placement schools to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice. We listen to children and take seriously what they tell us.
When there are concerns for a child's welfare, we may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies.

5. Aims of this Policy

The aims of this policy are to:

- Ensure that the safety, protection and well-being of all children with whom SWIFT employees and trainees work is paramount.
- Ensure that all SWIFT employees and trainees work safely and understand and act upon their responsibilities to keep children safe.
- Demonstrate publicly the organisations commitment to safeguarding of children and the promotion of safe working practices.

6. Safeguarding Information for Trainees and Partners

6.1 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
It is essential that everybody working in a school or college understands their safeguarding responsibilities (Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025).

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children[2] is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

SWIFT Teacher Training is part of Education South West (ESW)

At ESW:

"We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils and expect all staff, Governors and volunteers to share this commitment. We recognise that all children, regardless of age, disability, SEND, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice. We listen to our pupils and take seriously what they tell us, children are aware of the adults they can talk to if they have a concern. When there are concerns for a child's welfare, we may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies. We will ensure concerns are discussed with parents/carers first unless we have reason to believe that by doing so would be contrary to the child's welfare."

6.3 All SWIFT trainees and staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment where children can learn and this includes safeguarding and protecting children from:

- Harm.
- Neglect.
- Abuse or exploitation from within the family or from individuals outside of the family. Abuse can take a variety of forms, including sexual, physical and emotional. Exploitation can include from criminal and organised gangs/crime groups, trafficking, online abuse, sexual exploitation, and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation.

6.4 Training for Trainees
All SWIFT trainees will complete the following safeguarding training:

- Hays online safeguarding training (completion of which is required before commencement of the course).
- Level 2 safeguarding training as part of the training curriculum.

[2] "Children" includes everyone under the age of 18

Safeguarding induction in placement schools. This will be led by the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or nominated member of staff (where this does not take place, the trainee should notify their Course Tutor as soon as possible).

All SWIFT trainees will:

- Have read at least part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education (updated annually in September).
- Be aware of the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Have read the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Code of Conduct for Trainees the Behaviour Policy (including the Response to Bullying) and the Response to Children Missing in Education for their placement school prior to starting their placement.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Throughout their time with SWIFT Teacher Training, trainees should be aware of their responsibilities and those key members of staff who operate in the organisation and within placement schools who have responsibility for safeguarding.

7.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be a member of the school's Senior Leadership Team and have overall responsibility for co-ordinating the safeguarding and child arrangements across the school. A copy of the role of a DSL is contained within the Appendix at the end of this Policy (taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education).

7.2 Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

- All schools should also have at least one nominated Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) (although bigger schools will likely have more) whose role is to support the DSL in the execution of their duties.

7.3 Trainees and Staff

Trainees, like all staff, have a responsibility to protect children from harm and to create a safe learning environment for children. Specifically, this includes, but is not limited to:

- Having an awareness and understanding of this policy and that of their placement school's Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy.
- Reading Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 on an annual basis and be aware of the information presented in Annex A of the same document.
- Recognising and understanding the indicators of abuse.
- Knowing the procedures in their placement school in regards of what to do if they are concerned for the safety or wellbeing of a child.
- Undertaking appropriate safeguarding training as highlighted in this Policy.
- Being aware of the procedures for promoting good behaviour and managing behaviour in their placement schools.
- Being aware of the procedures for identifying and responding to children missing in education.

When trainees are undertaking centre-based training, they should contact the following people if they have a safeguarding concern:

- Their Deputy Director for their phase
- Their Campus Lead or Route Lead
- The SWIFT Teacher Training Director

8. Safer Recruitment and Selection

Please refer to the SWIFT Admissions Policy for further information regarding the recruitment process.
In regards of safeguarding, SWIFT carry out the following checks on all those who are successful in securing a place on a course:

- An identity check.
- An enhanced DBS check with barred list.
- A prohibition from teaching check.
- A check of the list of teachers sanctioned in other EEA member stats.
- A check on the right to work in the UK.
- Where the candidate has worked overseas, we will carry out a check on any restrictions or criminal convictions applied whilst abroad in regards of the suitability of the candidate to work with children.
- The candidate will be required to provide suitable references with whom the SWIFT Teacher Training team will seek information regarding the candidate's suitability to work with children.
- Disqualification under the childcare act 2018 (Primary)
- An online search.

9. Specific Safeguarding Issues in School: Contextual and Extra Familial Harm

9.1 SWIFT trainees must be aware the harm that children may suffer can come from many different sources and formats. Harm can be caused by family member, friends, peers and those outside of these relationships (contextual safeguarding).

9.2 Information and sources of knowledge/support can be found in Part A and Appendix B of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025). All trainees must read Part A of Keeping Children Safe in Education on an annual basis in September (or as soon as they join the programme).

10. Safeguarding Allegations Against Staff Including Low Level Concerns

10.1 Actions to take where a SWIFT trainee identifies that a member of staff in a placement school has or is suspected of causing harm to a child.

10.1.1 SWIFT trainees should make themselves aware of the Whistleblowing Policy in place in their placement school. Where they have a concern, the trainee should immediately, and without delay, bring their concern to the attention of the Headteacher (or equivalent) in the placement school.
10.1.2 Where the concern relates to the Headteacher, then the trainee should consult the Whistleblowing Policy for the placement school. They should also notify the Director of SWIFT Teacher Training for further guidance as soon as possible.

10.2 Where a concern is raised about possible harm being caused by a SWIFT trainee:

10.2.1 The placement school will follow their low-level concerns/Child Protection policy. They will also notify the SWIFT Teacher Training Director of the concern and actions taken.
10.2.2 The trainee can expect to be notified of the concern and actions to be taken (in line with the low-level concerns/Child Protection Policy).

10.3 Where concerns regarding a trainee causing or potentially causing harm to a child are identified by SWIFT staff members, they will follow the procedures outlined in the ESW Child Protection Policy.

11. Confidentiality

We recognise that in order to effectively meet a child or young person's needs, safeguard their welfare and protect them from harm, we must contribute to inter-agency working in line with Working to Safeguard Children (2023) and share information between professionals and agencies where there are concerns.

11.1 All trainees working with children must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and that the Data Protection Act (2018) is not a barrier to sharing information where a failure to do so would place a child at risk of harm.
11.2 All trainees working with children must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise theirs or another child's safety/welfare.

12. Safe Working Practices

All SWIFT trainees must meet and maintain their responsibilities towards children and includes:

- treating all children with respect.
- setting a good example by conducting themselves appropriately.
- involving children in decisions that affect them.
- encouraging positive, respectful and safe behaviour among children.
- being a good listener.
- being alert to changes in children's behaviour and to signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse.
- reading and understanding the placement school's Child Protection Policy, Staff Behaviour Policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, behaviour, physical contact, sexual exploitation, extremism, online safety and information-sharing.
- asking the child's permission before initiating physical contact, such as assisting with dressing, physical support during P.E. or administering first aid.
- maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between children and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language.
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some children can lead to an increased risk of abuse.
- applying the use of reasonable force only as a last resort and in compliance with placement school procedures.
- referring all concerns about a child's safety and welfare to the DSL, or, if necessary, directly to police or MASH.
- ensuring that trainees do not engage in a relationship with a child/children that is an abuse of trust[3] and that they do not engage in any communication with a child (including online) that would breach that position of trust.
- SWIFT staff and trainees must not accept, follow or engage with children via any form of social media or online communication unless under the direct guidance of the placement school's Headteacher and only through formal school channels (such as school email accounts).

[3] Abuse of Position of Trust – Trainees and staff must be aware and understand that under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the SWIFT staff or trainee and a pupil under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that pupil is over the age of consent.

Appendix A - Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The Role

Whilst the role of the DSL in each school may vary slightly, the following are the generic requirements of the role as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025. All SWIFT trainees should be aware of the role of the DSL in their placement school. The following is adapted from Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025.

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).

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should have the appropriate status and authority within the school or college to carry out the duties of the post. 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.

Availability

During term time the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a Deputy) should always be available (during school or college hours) for staff in the school or college to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally speaking the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a Deputy) would be expected to be available in person, it is a matter for individual schools and colleges, working with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, to define what "available" means and whether in exceptional circumstances availability via phone and or Skype or other such media is acceptable. It is a matter for individual schools and colleges and the Designated Safeguarding Lead to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.

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.
- 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 Co-Ordinators (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.
- 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.

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.

Raising Awareness

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should:

- 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, and
- 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, Knowledge and Skills

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.
- 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, and
- 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.

Providing Support to Staff

Training should support the Designated Safeguarding Lead in developing expertise, so they can support and advise staff and help them feel confident on welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters and includes specifically to:

- ensure that staff are supported during the referrals processes, and
- support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked, including to inform the provision of academic and pastoral support.

Understanding the Views of Children

It is important that all children feel heard and understood. Therefore, Designated Safeguarding Leads (and Deputies) should be supported in developing knowledge and skills to:

- 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, and,
- 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 and college, and with other schools and colleges on transfer including in-year and between primary and secondary education, 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), and
- 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 Local Authority children's social care or the Prevent Programme etc.

Version History

Date	Detail changed (list the section/point/page)	Amends by:
2/4/26	**Page 6 | Section: 6. Safeguarding Information for Trainees and Partners | paragraph 6.1** Change the date of Keeping Children Safe in Education to 2025	Andy Goodwin
2/4/26	**Page 8 | 9. Specific Safeguarding Issues in School: Contextual and Extra Familial Harm | paragraph 9.2** Change the date of Keeping Children Safe in Education to 2025	Andy Goodwin
2/4/26	**Page 9 | Appendix A - Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) | first paragraph** Change the date of Keeping Children Safe in Education to 2025 (twice)	Andy Goodwin