

Effective Governance & Safeguarding

26th January 2022

Introduction & purpose of this session ...

- This is not the statutory training and we will assume that level of understanding so won't repeat it here as it is done very well by OCC/NGA etc ...
- ... but this is the sharing of experiences across EPA, from in the sector & beyond
- Opportunity to explore best practice in governance of safeguarding
- Understand where, and why, things go 'wrong' in governance
- Awareness that 'failings' always have some connection to weak training, leadership & governance
- Developing a strong collective team at EPA around safeguarding

My background ...

- Executive Director of Children's Services
- Chair of a Local Safeguarding Children Board
- 'Accounting officer' (Head/EHT/CEO) for 5 schools and 4 Trusts
- Consultant for numerous organisations with challenges, author on Children's Services
- My partner has worked in family & children's law for over 30 years ...

What does KCSIE 2021 say ...

Understood ... Effective ... Forefront ... Underpin

Systems should be in place, and they should be well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children (and staff)

- Pro-active safeguarding culture
- Positive relationship with the local authority
- Senior and experienced DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead)

The fundamentals ...

Training

- Safeguarding training each year for the KCSIE update & Lead Governor
- Induction of new staff and governors
- Safer recruitment training

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Governor/Trustee responsible for safeguarding (Chair is default)

- No one 'best CV' for this role but examples from our Trust are ...
 - Ex OCC senior solicitor children's services
 - Senior officer with OCC for vulnerable children
 - Colleagues with considerable years of experience with vulnerable families
- Role to support, challenge & empower the Head and DSL
- Ensure with the Chair that the LGB keeps key focus on safeguarding
- Trust(CEO)-Governor-DSL/Head annual review in school
- Monitor (eg. internal reviews) and be kept informed by DSL of significant issues

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'System' monitoring & review

- Safeguarding on the LGB Agenda – significant issues/'nil' return reporting
- SCR (single central record)
- OCC Section 157/175 Audit comes for Governors (Annual Dec 31st deadline)
- External review of safeguarding

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Issues ...

1. Governors who don't generally offer challenge or monitor as the school is highly successful ... some statutory matters get missed
2. Governors who don't ask questions as the Head/DSL are working 'flat-out'
3. Governors who think the Lead Governor/Chair 'deals with it' or via a sub-committee
4. When safeguarding is dealt with under 'Policies' on the agenda and/or is the last item before AoB
5. Is the DSL senior enough in position and moral authority ... could they and would they challenge more senior people on behalf of a child ?
6. A DSL doesn't network with others in safeguarding or is given insufficient time to ...
7. Can we & do we challenge overly assertive parents if we have concerns and over concern about complaints arising from this
8. Does the school have a difficult relationship with the LA which then inhibits a good working relationship with LSCB/Social Care

Issues ...

9. CME, PAs & 'off-rolling', far less than 100% 9-1 at GCSE ... are not seen as safeguarding issues (*underpin*)
10. No joined up thinking between schools with non-threshold cases but families in different schools and concerns
11. Lead Governor/Governors occupied on 'significant cases' not the early prevention/detection
12. Pastoral system strong on discipline/behaviour but poor on listening/culture of caring for isolated children
13. Inappropriately detailed information distracts from key role or some Governors over involved with parents
14. GDPR etc Versus Safeguarding ... complications at policy level
15. Contractors and safeguarding approaches OSCB latest guidance/KCSIE 21
16. Mental health, neglect, bullying/LAC/vulnerable ... grooming awareness of the risks beyond allegations and referrals
17. LADO referrals and disciplinaries not discussed, with Chair and/or DSL side-lined
18. Are written references from and by the Head of Establishment during staff leaving & recruitment

Useful links and information

[NGA Safeguarding: The Governor's Role](#)



Guidance for governors regarding expectations of safeguarding training

- The OSCB recommends good practice guidance that all school governors should complete the OSCB's 'Introduction to Safeguarding' eLearning course.
- The content of this course is bespoke to Oxfordshire; it highlights local procedures for identifying and reporting abuse in the county and gives clear messages about the importance of escalation of concerns as highlighted in national and local case reviews.
- The Lead Governor for safeguarding in the school should attend the OSCB's Level 3 'Designated Safeguarding Lead' face to face course

Next steps

- Annual meet of CEO and Governors i/c Safeguarding
- CME Audit – starts at ECPS this term
- Distribute checklist of safeguarding training/certifications ‘essentials’
- Ensure complete and send to Chairs
- SCR online for all EPA schools: Project started – Jan to April 22
- Dates for 2022 SCR and Internal Reviews
- Dates for External Reviews post COVID