



The Skylark Partnership: Annual Safeguarding Statement of Assurance Academic Year 2021 – 2022

1. The Skylark Partnership Trust (TSP) provides high quality educational provision for children and young people dual registered or on roll at:

- Cherry Tree Learning Centre, Dudley;
- Hospital and Outreach Education AP Academy, Northamptonshire;

In 2021-22, no other schools joined the Trust.

2. The TSP Board of Trustees understands the safeguarding responsibilities placed upon the Trust as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 and considers them of vital importance. The trustees are also aware of the other statutory documents pertaining to safeguarding in education settings.
3. The responsibility for monitoring the day to day safeguarding arrangements has been delegated to the Local Advisory Boards in each academy. This is detailed in the Trust Scheme of Delegation and outlined on the summary diagram.
4. The Trust meets its statutory requirements in relation to the Disclosure and Barring Scheme. Trust policy ensures all employees and volunteers who work with children and young adults have had appropriate checks and that these are recorded – along with other relevant information – on the Single Central Record of each academy.
5. The Trust follows current Safer Recruitment practice and includes a review of current requirements as part of any recruitment process.
6. Audits of the Single Central Record are undertaken regularly by the safeguarding governor and chair of the Local Advisory Boards. An audit is also carried out as part of any external review, and by the school improvement partner and any areas for development reported to the local board. Safeguarding, developments, updates and reports are also submitted to the Trust Teaching and Learning Committee.

7. The academies within the Trust use My Concern for recording and monitoring any safeguarding issues. HOE has piloted the use of a new online Single Central Record (Sentry) the plan was to roll this out across the trust in 2022-23. to ensure consistency of recording practice and streamline the audit process. NHOE has introduced the use of Confide for staff to report low level concerns this year, Confide was also be rolled out across the trust in 2022-23. However following discussions with heads and DSL's across the trust we have decided to move to using CPOMS for safeguarding records and a single central record linked to edupay, this will ensure that the single central record will update staff personal details automatically, reducing staff workload and the risk of updating errors.
8. As the Trust operates across multiple local authority areas it does not have a universal child protection and safeguarding policy. Policies operate at the academy level and reflect the local context and arrangements made through Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships. Academy Safeguarding policies are up to date and are reviewed regularly by the Headteacher and Local Advisory Board (at least annually) and updated in response to national guidance and model documents issued by Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships. The policies also have an appendix of safeguarding procedures and processes that would be used in the case of school closure during emergencies such as an outbreak of Covid-19.
9. There is a Trust Board Trustee who is the named lead for safeguarding. The Board ordinarily review safeguarding across the organisation at least 3 times a year through the work of the Teaching and Learning Committee. The CEO reports on safeguarding to the whole trust board at meetings also.
10. Each academy has a named link governor for safeguarding. Local Advisory Boards also review safeguarding across their academy at least 3 times a year through the business meetings cycle for local governance. The reports submitted to LGBs are then amalgamated into a Trust-level report for the Teaching and Learning Committee (see above).
11. The Trust executive lead for safeguarding is the Chief Executive Officer. Safeguarding is an area of focus in supervision sessions between the CEO and all Headteachers.
12. Each academy has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads. The Trust and each academy displays the names of their Safeguarding lead and team on site and on their websites. Each Academy Designated Safeguarding Lead is offered half termly supervision from an external consultant, commissioned by the Trust. This is optional, though all DSLs engage in this process openly. External supervision is also provided to staff who work at the CAMHS Units due to the complexity of the pupils in these settings. Trust wide DSL meetings are held 6 times per year.
13. All staff have undertaken and are up to date with safeguarding training, both core and on specific subjects or themes (such as child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation etc). This is usually delivered by the DSL in each academy, who all attend

training delivered by their Local Safeguarding Children Partnership. In some cases, external experts may be brought in to schools to deliver specific workshops on specialist subject areas. There is a plan in place in each academy which provides clear expectations of training. This is delivered through online, face to face sessions in school INSET and/or twilight sessions, with updates shared at regular intervals through staff communications and meetings. Training in safer recruitment practice is also provided for staff involved in recruitment.

14. As part of the social education many of our students require, Children and young people are supported to self-safeguard through each academy's personalised approach to delivery of the PSHE curriculum. All academies have their revised Relationships & Sex Education policy and planning in place as this is now a statutory requirement.
15. Previously safeguarding audits were undertaken in each academy by an external provider e.g. NSPCC every 2 years. Reports are produced and submitted to local advisory board meetings and the Trust's Teaching and Learning Committee. HOE audit was undertaken in 2019-2020 and CTLIC in 2020-2021. From 2022-23 the Trust School Improvement Partner will undertake these on an annual basis. Academies will also take part in locally arranged audits as part of local safeguarding arrangements. These will be reported back at LAB meetings and shared with the trust DSL network.
16. The Trust has a named e-safety lead for each academy and plans are in place to facilitate half termly network meetings to share best practice and ensure peer support and development opportunities are in place.
17. We have conducted a thorough audit of cyber security across the academies and have submitted for our cyber essentials accreditation. In 2022/23 Staff and governors will have completed 'Cyber Security Training for School staff' from the National Cyber Security Centre.
18. While there was some continuing Covid infection in the first half of 2021-22 that affected both academies, the major and growing challenge faced by TSP academies in the year is the cost of living increase. We have been supporting students and families by encouraging increased attendance on sites where students can access food and a warm environment, supporting referrals to local authority and non government organisations. We have been supporting staff through effective line management.
19. Behaviour and wellbeing is reported separately to local governing bodies, to ensure a holistic view of safeguarding and welfare is presented. In both academies behaviour is consistently positive.
20. In 2021-2022, no academies in the Trust were inspected by Ofsted. Both academies had external reviews which indicated that practice was effective, any development areas highlighted in reviews have been included in academy development plans.

21. On the basis of this work, TSP Trust confirms it has considered its position in regard to safeguarding children and has assurance that it is meeting statutory requirements, is following good practice and is keeping children safe.

Name:	Nicci Marzec
Designated:	Named Trustee – Safeguarding
Date:	February 2023