SAFEGUARDING: GUIDANCE FOR COMMITTEE SCRUTINY

WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING?

Safeguarding is:
- Protecting children and young people from maltreatment
- Ensuring that children and young people are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best possible outcomes

Child Protection is:
- A part of safeguarding and promoting welfare
- The activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm

WHAT IS YOUR ROLE?

One of the five core accountabilities of the local committee is to work with the central team to ensure that high standards of safeguarding are maintained. All local committee members have duty to ensure that the academy meets its statutory responsibilities and to promote the safeguarding and welfare of all children.

The committee should ensure that the safeguarding agenda and culture is embedded in the ethos of the academy and that safeguarding is consistently discussed at committee meetings, with particular attention to the relevant section of the Principal's Report.

All committee members must undertake annual statutory safeguarding training and a link member for safeguarding should be appointed from the committee. The link member should liaise and support the school and central team's safeguarding officers in any audit activity or matters of concern.

The committee must receive and review the annual Trust Safeguarding Audit Report for the academy.

FACT-FINDING: WHAT SHOULD YOU KNOW?
- Have all staff and TMB/LGC members completed appropriate safeguarding training and read, as a minimum, KCSIE Part 1 and Annex B?

- What training have staff accessed to ensure safeguarding compliance, e.g. Level 1/3, Prevent, online safety, regular updates on key safeguarding issues related to context? What programme of training/updates/briefings are planned across the academic year to ensure staff are suitably updated?

- Who is the DSL? Do I understand their role and responsibilities? Do they have the appropriate time/capacity/support/funding to fulfil the role effectively?

- Do I understand my responsibilities around safeguarding? How can I monitor compliance in safeguarding?

- How does the school ensure that the Safeguarding Policy is fit for purpose?

- Are safeguarding referrals up or down? Are there any causes for concern? What is being done to monitor or address this? Do they relate to any particular groups?

- What is my understanding of the Prevent duty? How does the school ensure compliance with it? Are any external agencies involved?

- What are the contextual safeguarding issues and how is the school responding to these? Is the response effective? How is this measured?

- How is the curriculum created to include all aspects of safeguarding and wellbeing? Are children taught about safeguarding as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum?

- Are there robust procedures in place for online safety? Is there a whole school approach with a clear policy on the use of mobile technology? How does the school educate pupils on this?

- When was the SCR last reviewed by the school and/or Trust and where is this recorded? Can school leaders demonstrate that the SCR is compliant?

DIGGING DEEPER: GUIDANCE FOR STRONGER SCRUTINY
- Deeper scrutiny might include exploring recent incidents, case studies and safeguarding data returns and/or reviewing internal audits, action plans and risk assessments. What issues does this raise? Is the plan to address them adequate? How will this be measured?
  (NB all case studies/incidents/data should remain anonymous)

- School leaders might be challenged on their understanding of the contextual safeguarding issues and the school's priorities. How effectively do they work with the LA, other external agencies and the Trust in this area?

- Are there any key areas of concern? For example, an increase in a certain type of incidents, or have there been any examples of pupils reported under anti-radicalisation procedures? How has the school responded? School leaders might be challenged on how they would evaluate their response.

- Have there been any recent complaints or serious incidents? How were these dealt with? What were the learning points?

- How do school leaders ensure Educational Plans for Looked After Children/Children in Care are effective? How is this measured?

- How does the school use the curriculum and/or make use of Pupil Voice to address safeguarding issues?

- Additional challenge could be rendered around the school's online safety strategy. For example, how was safety around online learning addressed? What are the positive developments to come from this? What are the lessons learned? Is there a need to incorporate online safety into standing discussions on safeguarding at committee meetings? How has the school engaged with the wider community on this?

- Is the school's online safety coordinator also the named DSL or deputy DSL? If not, the interaction and communication between these roles could be explored. How does the school ensure that the DSL's clear over-arching responsibility for online safety is not compromised?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance