

Newham Community Learning - lead/link safeguarding trustee/governor: overview of role and school visit form

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Contents

1. The role of the Lead trustee/Link Governor	3
1.1. Overview of the role	3
1.1.1. Lead safeguarding trustee at Newham Community Learning	3
1.1.2. Link safeguarding governor at all Newham Community Learning schools	4
1.2. Additional duties and responsibilities of the lead trustee	4
1.3. School visits (this page and the following can be printed for use during the visit)	4
2. Annex A - Code of conduct for school visits	7
2.1. Overview	7
2.1.1. Safeguarding	8
2.1.2. Possible questions that trustees or governors may wish to ask during a visit	8
2.1.3. How and to whom trustees and governors report	9



1. The role of the Lead trustee/Link Governor

1.1. Overview of the role

1.1.1. Lead safeguarding trustee at Newham Community Learning

The lead trustee for safeguarding across Newham Community Learning will:

- Make sure that the Trust has suitable and up-to-date policies¹ for:
 - Safeguarding and Child Protection
 - Safer Recruitment
 - Staff code of conduct
 - Handling allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers
- Monitor the Trust's safeguarding systems and procedures;
- Make sure the Trust has an appropriate safeguarding response to children who go missing from education;
- Keep the Trust Board up to date with statutory guidance relating to safeguarding and child protection and any advice issued locally by the Trust's safeguarding partners;
- Inform the Trust Board of whether it needs to make any changes (e.g. in light of new regulations);
- Ensure that the Trust has mechanisms in place to support the sharing of best practice in safeguarding across all schools;
- Ensure that all schools have arrangements in place to so that the curriculum, monitoring arrangements and online safety are all addressed;
- Review the school's Single Central Record of Recruitment and Vetting Checks to check that it is complete and up to date and that the arrangements documented in the Trust's Safer Recruitment Policy (see footnote) is being followed;
- Update the board on how monitoring activities are going, ensuring that feedback is provided from link safeguarding governors;
- Attend specific training to support lead trustee role;
- Support the Chair of Trustees to ensure that all trustees have undertaken the safeguarding training mandated by the Trust;
- Support Chairs of Governors in the identification, appointment and training of a suitable link safeguarding governor (as requested);
- Encourage other members of the board to develop their understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities.

The lead trustee for safeguarding will not:

¹ The Trust Safeguarding Policy and the Trust Safer Recruitment Policy are available on the [Policies Page](#) of the Trust website; the remaining documents are available on the (password protected) [Staff Page](#).



- Produce a safeguarding report to the board, as this is done by the headteacher or DSL; or
- Deal with specific safeguarding incidents, but they will be notified by school leaders when they happen.

1.1.2. Link safeguarding governor at all Newham Community Learning schools

The lead safeguarding governor at all schools will:

- Attend specific training in order to be able to carry out the role effectively;
- Support the DSL in ensuring that all governors undertake the safeguarding training as requested;
- Make sure the school has an appointed a designated safeguarding lead (DSL)²;
- Make sure the DSL has sufficient time, resources and training to carry out their role effectively;
- Meet regularly with the DSL to monitor that the school's policies and procedures are effective and all staff and governors have had the appropriate level of training (as applicable);
- Make sure the school has appropriate online filters and monitoring systems in place;
- Make sure the school has appointed a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, and that this person has appropriate training;
- Make sure the curriculum covers safeguarding, including online safety;
- Make sure that the necessary recruitment and vetting checks are being carried out, and that they are completed and logged on the school's single central record (SCR).

1.2. Additional duties and responsibilities of the lead trustee

In addition to the responsibilities described above, the lead trustee for safeguarding will also:

- Undertake appropriate training (support to source this will be provided; and
- In partnership with the Chair and the CEO, work with the local authority to ensure a clear understanding of the local context, and to positively influence the provision of safeguarding support beyond the Trust.

1.3. School visits (this page and the following can be printed for use during the visit)

² The Trust's Safeguarding Policy contains school-specific appendices which list all safeguarding staff at every Trust school.



The protocol and arrangements for all trustee and governor school visits are available in Annex A.

The table below provides a format for the posing and answering of questions:

Date of visit:

School:

Lead trustee/link safeguarding governor name:

Name and roles of staff who were met with:

Item	In place?	Notes/follow up actions
School level policies as applicable (see lead trustee responsibilities for Trust level policies)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Online monitoring and filtering in place?	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Name of DSL	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Does DSL have sufficient time, resources and training to carry out the role?	<input type="checkbox"/>	
There is a designated teacher to promote the attainment of looked after children/previously looked after children, and that this person has been appropriately trained	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ensure the school's curriculum covers safeguarding, and includes online safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Review the school's Single Central Record of Recruitment and Vetting Checks to confirm that it is complete and up to date and that the arrangements documented in the Trust's Safer Recruitment Policy (see footnote) is being followed	<input type="checkbox"/>	



Item	In place?	Notes/follow up actions
Ensure that this report is fed back to the next local governing body meeting	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Any other notes/comments/actions to follow up:

Overview of safeguarding questions (inclusive of those in the table above):

- Is safeguarding practice effective in implementation?
- How often are the school’s specific safeguarding policies and related policies reviewed?
- Are school leaders aware of how to identify and respond to online safety concerns?
- Are school staff trained to identify when a pupil may be at risk of neglect, abuse or exploitation and do they know how to report concerns? Do they evidence those concerns?
- Are children safe from discrimination and bullying?
- Do children understand how to stay safe online?
- Do school leaders understand how to identify if children are at risk of County Lines?
- How does the school monitor for incidents of peer on peer abuse?
- How effectively does the school protect children from extremism and radicalisation?
- Does your DSL have enough time, training and resources to fulfil the demands required of the role?
- Looking at the child protection record, can you tell me how this incident of peer on peer abuse was dealt with in more detail? (The school will be expected to show a record of incidents, and evidence of how they were acted upon, which external agencies were involved etc.)
- How do school leaders identify children who may need early help or are at risk of neglect, abuse, grooming or exploitation? (Give examples).



2. Annex A - Code of conduct for school visits

2.1. Overview

Trustees and governors do not have a statutory right of access to the school. However the DfE *recommends* and Head teachers often encourage trustees and governors to visit the school during the day to observe it in operation. Trustees and governors should remember that visits can create quite a lot of extra work for staff and that some teachers might be apprehensive when governors sit in on lessons. *Trustees and governors should always remember that they are visiting the school as a critical friend and a source of support to staff.*

Whilst not a statutory requirement, the DfE *recommends* that the Trust Board draws up a policy/code of conduct for trustee and governor visits to the Trust's schools.

Newham Community Learning has a *trustee and a governor code of conduct in place* (available on the [Governance Page](#) of the Trust website) that applies to all trustees and governors, and covers all their activities. In addition, the following guidance applies when arranging and undertaking visits to any of the Trust's schools:

1. Visits should be undertaken as part of a strategic programme to:
 - improve trustee knowledge of the schools, their staff, needs, priorities, strengths and weaknesses;
 - monitor and assess the priorities as outlined in the Trust's/school improvement/development plan;
 - assist the Trust Board and the local governing bodies to fulfil their statutory duties.
2. Before visiting any Trust school, trustee or governor should:
 - inform the school of the visit and seek approval of the arrangements (including any requests to meet with individual members of staff and classroom observations);
 - share with the relevant staff any questions or issues that they would like to raise;
 - ensure that they are familiar with health and safety procedures including what to do in the event of a fire.
3. After visiting any Trust school, the lead trustee or governor should:
 - complete the School Visit Form outlining the objectives and results of the visit (available as a Google Form on the [Governance Page of the website](#));
 - report back to the committee or Trust Board or to the local governing body as appropriate;
 - provide constructive feedback to school staff as appropriate.



Trustees and governors are always conscious of the strategic nature of their roles, and do not become involved in operational matters as a result of the visits.

2.1.1. Safeguarding

Trustees and governors must be familiar with, and adhere to, the Trust's safeguarding and child protection policy - including any local arrangements in place at the school where the visit is taking place. Where applicable to the role that the governor will be undertaking, specific safeguarding training will be provided.

All trustees have a record on the Trust's Single Central Record (SCR) of recruitment and vetting checks, and this is available to the Headteacher and to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at all Trust schools. Governors all have a record on the school SCR.

If any trustee or governor, visiting any school, has concerns about the welfare of a child, or if a child makes a disclosure, they should speak directly to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy DSL. The details of all DSLs at all Trust schools are available in the Safeguarding Policy, as referenced above, and published on the [Policies Page](#) of the website.

Whenever they are undertaking a visit to a school, trustees and governors are advised that they should refrain from physical contact with pupils. Although very unlikely in a school visit situation, governors and trustees must ensure that they never form personal relationships with pupils, either inside or outside of school, with whom they do not already have a personal relationship. This includes:

- Exchanging contact information;
- Making contact with pupils outside of school, including on social media;
- Arranging to meet pupils outside of school; and
- Not taking or sharing photographs of pupils.

2.1.2. Possible questions that trustees or governors may wish to ask during a visit

Trustees and governors should have a clear focus or objective for the visit. Within this context, they should prepare for the visit and think about whom it might be appropriate to meet, what questions might be asked and what activities to request, for example observing a lesson, talking to a group of pupils or attending a school council meeting. At this point it may be useful to do one or more of the following:

- talk to the CEO/Head teacher at the school/schools to which the visit is planned;
- look at past reports/papers relevant to the area;
- look at guidance on the internet



General questions might include:

- Are there any statutory requirements for this area of work/responsibility?
- What are the main improvements/objectives/targets of the school for this area?
- What actions are you taking to meet these improvements/objectives/targets?
- How are you monitoring the school's progress in this area?
- How will you know when you have met the improvements/objectives/targets for this area?
- Are there any barriers to meeting the improvements/objectives/targets?

Trustees and governors should also ask about Trust/school policies in place in their area. Questions around this might include:

- Who should be aware/implement this procedure/policy?
- Who in the school is accountable for/monitors whether the procedure/policy is effective **or** how do you know the procedure/policy is working?
- What issues are there for staff/ senior managers in this area of work?

2.1.3. How and to whom trustees and governors report

Based on the nature of the visits, the trustee or governor will report back to the relevant Board committee, full Trust Board or to the local governing body.

All reports are held within Google Forms in the Trust's admin account - ncl.admin@newhamcommunitylearning.org and are available to all members of the Central Team, who are advised whenever a form is completed, and who will send to the relevant Headteacher (and PA) who will review before adding to the next meeting papers for reporting back.

