

## UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

### SAFEGUARDING MONITORING COMMITTEE - TERMS OF REFERENCE

*This group was originally established to fulfil the following objectives:*

- *considering the outcomes of the safeguarding review in the third week of September 2021;*
- *reviewing the Trust's response to Ofsted's review of sexual abuse in schools;*
- *reviewing the action plan arising from the safeguarding review and the work with the external consultant;*
- *reviewing progress on the implementation of the action plan; and*
- *signing off and reporting to the Board in the Spring Term 2022*

*These objectives were met and as part of the trust's long-term strategy on safeguarding will continue under the following terms of reference.*

#### **1 Constitution**

- 1.1 The Board of Directors has established a Committee of the Board to be known as the Safeguarding Monitoring Committee (the Committee). The Committee is a non-executive committee of the Board of Directors and has no executive powers, other than those specifically delegated in these Terms of Reference.

#### **2 Aim**

- 2.1 The Committee will provide an independent and objective view of the Trust's safeguarding culture and practice.

#### **3 Scope**

- 3.1 The Committee has responsibility for monitoring the Trust's safeguarding culture and practice across its schools, ensuring compliance with law, guidance and advice.
- 3.2 The Committee will assist the Board to fulfil their strategic leadership responsibility for schools' safeguarding arrangements, ensuring that they comply with their duties under legislation. These include ensuring policies, procedures and training are effective and comply with the law at all times.

#### **4 Membership**

- 4.1 The Committee shall be appointed by the Board of Directors from amongst the Non-executive Directors of the Trust and shall consist of no fewer than three members, one of whom shall be the Named Trustee for Safeguarding. The Named Trustee for Safeguarding has been appointed Chair of The Committee by the Board of Directors.

- 4.2 A quorum will be two members.

#### **5 Attendance at Meetings**

- 5.1 The Trust Lead on Safeguarding and the CEO will normally attend all Committee meetings.
- 5.2 Any external consultant(s) supporting the review of safeguarding will attend as necessary.
- 5.3 Other members of the Board of Directors have the right of attendance at their own discretion.
- 5.4 All other attendances will be at the specific invitation of the Committee.
- 5.5 The Committee will have the over-riding authority to restrict attendance under specific circumstances.

5.6 Attendance at meetings will be recorded as part of the normal process of the meeting. A record of attendance will be reported as part of the Committee's reporting to the Board.

## **6 Frequency of Meetings**

6.1 Meetings will normally be held four times a year.

6.2 Special meetings may be convened by the Board of Directors or the Chair of the Committee.

## **7 Authority**

7.1 The Board of Directors authorises the Committee to investigate any activity within its duties (as detailed below) and grants to the Committee complete freedom of access to the Trust's records, documentation and employees. This authority does not extend, other than in exceptional circumstances, to personal information on either staff or pupils.

7.2 The Committee may seek any information (excluding personal information, other than in exceptional circumstances) or explanation it requires from the Trust's employees who are directed to co-operate with any request made by the Committee.

7.3 The Trust Board authorises the Committee to obtain external professional advice or expertise if the Committee considers this necessary.

## **8 Duties and Responsibilities**

The duties and responsibilities of the Committee are as follows:

8.1 The Committee shall independently monitor and review the Trust's safeguarding culture and practice, including:

8.1.1 considering the outcomes of safeguarding reviews;

8.1.2 reviewing the Trust's response to; Ofsted's safeguarding focused areas in schools; high profile cases; serious case reviews.

8.1.3 reviewing the action plans arising from safeguarding reviews and the work of external consultant(s) if applicable;

8.1.4 reviewing progress on the implementation of the action plans;

8.1.5 reporting to the Board termly;

8.1.6 provide scrutiny and challenge of arrangements where appropriate;

8.1.7 escalate any concerns to the Board;

8.1.8 provide updates to local governing bodies where appropriate;

8.1.9 oversee the development, implementation, review and monitoring of the trust's safeguarding strategic plan (2022-2025).

## **9 Reporting, Accountability, Monitoring and Review of Effectiveness**

9.1 Schools' work on safeguarding has five aspects of monitoring:

9.1.1 regular senior leadership team monitoring of safeguarding cases

- 9.1.2 half-termly monitoring of a child by the school's associated school improvement director – following agreed themes each half-term (Summer Term 2022: persistent absence and harmful sexual behaviour)
  - 9.1.3 termly review by safeguarding governor and DSL of safeguarding practices
  - 9.1.4 annual self-review following Suffolk self-review template
  - 9.1.5 annual external to school safeguarding review (see 9.2, below)
- 9.2 Annual external to school safeguarding reviews take place in the autumn term, using a focused approach. In the first half-term, members of the Executive Committee, plus the trust's lead on safeguarding, allocate the schools between them and spend half-a-day in each school considering the evidence to answer a standard set of questions, agreed beforehand. In the second half-term they make a follow-up visit to review progress. RAG-rated tables are kept for all schools, which are updated after the follow-up visit. These are shared with the Safeguarding Monitoring Committee in the first meeting of the spring term.
- 9.3 The Minutes of Safeguarding Monitoring Committee meetings shall be formally recorded. A report of its activities shall be made to the Board each term.
- 9.4 The Chair of the Committee shall draw to the attention of the Board any issues that require disclosure to the full Board or require executive action.
- 9.5 Follow-up agreed actions to ensure these are implemented in a timely and effective manner.

## **10 Review**

These terms of reference are subject to change and should be reviewed by the Committee on an annual basis.