



SUPERVISION POLICY

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1. Introduction

Inspire Multi Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and all staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

Effective safeguarding requires practitioners to make sound professional judgements, work effectively with other agencies, maintain a child-centred approach and take timely action when concerns arise.

The Trust recognises that safeguarding work can be complex and, at times, emotionally demanding. Appropriate safeguarding supervision provides Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs) with protected opportunities to reflect upon safeguarding practice, review complex cases, consider the lived experience of children and ensure that appropriate action is being taken.

Safeguarding supervision complements, but does not replace, day-to-day safeguarding processes, professional advice, management oversight or immediate action to protect a child.

For the purposes of this policy, safeguarding supervision means professional reflective supervision relating to safeguarding responsibilities. It should not be confused with supervision for the purposes of regulated activity, safer recruitment or staff performance management.

2. Purpose

The purpose of safeguarding supervision is to:

- maintain a child-centred approach to safeguarding;
- provide structured opportunities for professional reflection and challenge;
- review safeguarding concerns and complex cases;
- consider the child's lived experience and the impact of concerns on their safety, wellbeing and development;
- ensure that agreed safeguarding actions are appropriate and completed within suitable timescales;
- identify and address drift or delay;
- consider whether concerns have escalated, de-escalated or remained the same;
- identify where further professional challenge, escalation or multi-agency involvement is required;
- support appropriate information sharing and effective multi-agency working;
- support DSLs and DDSLs in making professional safeguarding judgements;
- identify patterns, themes or emerging safeguarding risks;
- identify training, development or support needs; and
- recognise and support the wellbeing of staff undertaking demanding safeguarding work.

Safeguarding supervision must always focus on achieving positive outcomes for children.

3. Statutory and Guidance Framework

This policy has been developed with regard to current legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- Children Act 1989;
- Children Act 2004;
- Education Act 2002;
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026*;
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026*;
- current statutory guidance relating to information sharing to safeguard children and young people;
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR);
- Data Protection Act 2018;
- Data (Use and Access) Act 2025; and
- local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and procedures.

This policy should be read alongside the Trust's:

- Child Protection Policy;
- Staff Code of Conduct/Staff Behaviour Policy;
- Managing Safeguarding Concerns procedures;
- Child-on-Child Abuse Policy;
- Whistleblowing Policy;
- Data Protection Policy; and
- relevant local safeguarding partnership procedures.

4. Principles of Safeguarding Supervision

Safeguarding supervision across Inspire Multi Academy Trust will be:

Child-centred – the child's safety, welfare, wishes, feelings and lived experience will remain central to discussion and decision-making.

Reflective – supervision will provide opportunities to think critically about practice rather than simply provide a checklist of actions.

Supportive – practitioners will have an appropriate opportunity to discuss the professional and emotional impact of safeguarding work.

Challenging – assumptions and decisions may be professionally questioned and alternative interpretations considered.

Accountable – decisions, actions, responsibilities and timescales will be clearly identified and recorded.

Inclusive and anti-discriminatory – consideration will be given to how a child's individual circumstances, identity, culture, communication needs, SEND, family circumstances and other vulnerabilities may affect their lived experience, risk and ability to seek help.

Confidential – information will be shared only where necessary and appropriate for safeguarding purposes and handled securely in accordance with data protection and information-sharing requirements.

5. Who Receives Safeguarding Supervision

Formal safeguarding supervision will normally involve:

- the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads; and
- other members of staff with significant safeguarding responsibilities where the Headteacher/DSL considers this appropriate.

Academies may use individual, peer or group supervision depending upon their safeguarding structure and needs.

Where appropriate, supervision or professional safeguarding support may also be provided across Trust academies or through an appropriate external safeguarding professional.

The arrangements must provide appropriate professional challenge and avoid situations where an individual is effectively providing supervision solely to themselves.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees has strategic responsibility for ensuring that effective safeguarding arrangements operate across Inspire Multi Academy Trust.

Trustees will seek appropriate assurance that DSLs and other safeguarding staff have sufficient time, resources, training, supervision and support to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities effectively.

Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that appropriate safeguarding supervision arrangements operate within their academy.

The Headteacher will ensure that:

- safeguarding staff have sufficient time to participate in supervision;
- supervision is appropriately organised and recorded;
- significant concerns arising from supervision are addressed;
- appropriate support is available to staff undertaking safeguarding responsibilities; and
- relevant Trust leaders are informed where safeguarding themes or concerns require Trust-level consideration.

Where the Headteacher is also the DSL, appropriate arrangements will be made to provide professional challenge and support through another suitably experienced safeguarding professional, Trust colleague or external safeguarding professional where required.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL retains lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection within their academy.

The DSL will:

- participate in safeguarding supervision;
- ensure relevant cases and safeguarding themes are identified for discussion;
- ensure actions arising from supervision are completed or appropriately delegated;
- ensure safeguarding records are accurate and appropriately maintained;
- seek further advice or escalate concerns when required; and
- ensure supervision does not delay immediate safeguarding action.

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads

DDSLs will participate fully in supervision arrangements, provide appropriate professional challenge and complete actions assigned to them.

7. Frequency of Supervision

Formal safeguarding supervision will take place **at least once each half term**, as an agreed Trust standard.

The frequency may be increased according to:

- the complexity or volume of safeguarding concerns;
- significant or critical incidents;
- changes in safeguarding circumstances;
- the needs or experience of individual members of the safeguarding team; or
- concerns identified by the Headteacher, DSL or Trust.

Safeguarding professionals must not wait for a formal supervision meeting where advice, professional challenge or action is required sooner.

Informal professional discussion and support should take place between formal supervision sessions whenever required.

8. Safeguarding Concerns Requiring Immediate Action

Safeguarding supervision must **never delay action to protect a child**.

Where there is a concern that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, harm, staff must follow the Trust's Child Protection Policy and local safeguarding procedures immediately.

Where appropriate, this may include contacting children's social care, the police or other relevant agencies.

Cases must not be held for discussion at a future supervision meeting where immediate action, advice or escalation is required.

9. Structure of Supervision

Formal supervision should provide sufficient opportunity for meaningful reflection and discussion.

A typical agenda may include:

- review of actions from previous supervision;
- significant new safeguarding concerns;
- review of identified complex or vulnerable children;
- consideration of the child's lived experience;
- progress against existing safeguarding plans;
- whether concerns have escalated, de-escalated or remained unchanged;
- effectiveness of early help, family help or statutory intervention;
- attendance and other relevant indicators;
- the effectiveness of multi-agency working;
- professional challenge or escalation required;
- the child's wishes and feelings, where known;
- barriers to engagement or communication;
- consideration of SEND and other vulnerabilities;
- emerging safeguarding themes or patterns;
- actions, responsibilities and timescales;
- training or development needs; and
- practitioner wellbeing and support.

Not every case needs to be discussed at every meeting. Professional judgement should be used to prioritise cases requiring reflection, challenge or oversight.

10. Child-Centred Reflective Practice

Supervision should consider the child's experience rather than focusing solely on professional processes.

Discussion should consider questions such as:

- What is the child's lived experience?
- What has changed since the previous review?
- What is going well for the child?
- What are we worried about?
- What does the child say or communicate about their situation?
- What is the impact of the concern on the child's safety, wellbeing, development, education and relationships?
- Are the child's needs being understood in the context of SEND, communication differences or other vulnerabilities?
- Are interventions making a meaningful difference?
- Is there evidence of drift or delay?
- Are professionals working effectively together?
- Is professional challenge or escalation required?
- What needs to happen next to improve the child's circumstances?

Where a child is unable or unwilling to communicate their wishes and feelings directly, practitioners should consider other available evidence about their lived experience.

11. Professional Challenge and Escalation

Inspire Multi Academy Trust promotes a culture in which appropriate professional challenge is welcomed as part of effective safeguarding practice.

Where there is disagreement between professionals about the level of risk, action required or effectiveness of intervention, staff should seek to resolve this promptly.

Where concerns cannot be resolved, the relevant local safeguarding partnership's professional challenge or escalation procedures should be followed.

Concerns about drift, delay or insufficient action by another agency must be challenged appropriately and escalated where necessary.

The safety and welfare of the child must remain the overriding consideration.

12. Recording Safeguarding Supervision

Formal safeguarding supervision will be appropriately recorded.

Records should identify:

- the date of supervision;
- those participating;
- cases or safeguarding issues discussed;
- relevant information considered;
- professional analysis and challenge;
- decisions made;
- rationale for significant decisions;
- actions agreed;
- the person responsible for each action;
- timescales; and
- outcomes or review arrangements.

Where an individual child's case is discussed, relevant decisions and actions will be recorded appropriately within the child's safeguarding record on the academy's safeguarding recording system.

Supervision records must be factual, clear and sufficiently detailed to demonstrate professional reasoning and decision-making.

Recording should not result in unnecessary duplication of confidential information.

13. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Information discussed during safeguarding supervision is confidential but confidentiality is not absolute.

Information must be shared where it is necessary, proportionate and lawful to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child.

Data protection legislation does not prevent the sharing of information for safeguarding purposes where there is a lawful basis to do so.

Safeguarding information will:

- be accessed only by those with an appropriate reason to do so;
- be stored securely;
- be shared appropriately and proportionately;
- be accurate and relevant to the safeguarding purpose; and
- be handled in accordance with the Trust's Data Protection Policy and current information-sharing requirements.

Staff must never allow concerns about data protection to prevent appropriate safeguarding action.

14. Storage and Retention of Records

Safeguarding supervision records containing identifiable information about children will be stored securely within the academy's agreed safeguarding recording arrangements.

Access will be restricted to appropriately authorised staff.

Records will be retained and disposed of in accordance with the Trust's records management and data protection arrangements.

Where supervision records relate to individual children, relevant information must remain available as part of the child's safeguarding chronology and record.

15. Staff Wellbeing

The Trust recognises that safeguarding work may expose staff to distressing information and complex situations.

Supervision provides an opportunity for practitioners to reflect upon the impact of safeguarding work and identify where additional support may be required.

Where concerns about a member of staff's wellbeing are identified, appropriate support should be considered. Safeguarding supervision does not replace occupational health, employee assistance, performance management or other appropriate staff-support arrangements.

16. Training

DSLs and DDSLs will undertake training and updates appropriate to their safeguarding responsibilities in accordance with current statutory guidance.

Those undertaking a supervisory role should have sufficient safeguarding knowledge, experience and understanding to provide appropriate professional reflection, support and challenge.

Training and development needs identified through supervision should be addressed appropriately.

17. Quality Assurance and Trust Oversight

Headteachers and DSLs will keep the effectiveness of safeguarding supervision arrangements under review.

Trust-level safeguarding oversight may consider themes arising from supervision, including:

- recurring safeguarding risks;
- barriers to effective multi-agency working;
- patterns of drift or delay;
- training and development needs;
- workload and capacity of safeguarding teams; and
- areas where Trust-wide action or support would strengthen safeguarding practice.

Individual children's confidential information will only be shared at Trust level where there is an appropriate safeguarding or other lawful reason to do so.

The purpose of Trust oversight is to provide assurance and support continuous improvement, not to replace the professional safeguarding responsibilities of individual academies

18. Review of the Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually and sooner where there are:

- significant changes to legislation or statutory safeguarding guidance;
- changes to local safeguarding arrangements;
- significant safeguarding incidents;
- changes to Trust safeguarding structures; or
- learning from safeguarding reviews, audits or quality assurance.

Appendix 1 – Safeguarding Supervision Agreement

The purpose of safeguarding supervision is to provide a safe, professional and appropriately challenging environment in which safeguarding practice can be critically reflected upon.

Supervisor/facilitator

The supervisor or facilitator will:

- create an appropriate environment for reflective discussion;
- maintain a child-centred focus;
- provide professional challenge;
- ensure actions and decisions are clear;
- identify where escalation or further advice is required;
- ensure supervision is appropriately recorded; and
- recognise where additional professional or wellbeing support may be required.

Supervisee

The supervisee will:

- prepare appropriately for supervision;
- provide accurate and current information;
- identify cases or issues requiring reflection or challenge;
- engage openly with professional challenge;
- complete agreed actions within the required timescale;
- seek additional advice between supervision sessions where necessary; and
- take immediate safeguarding action whenever required.

Supervision will normally take place at least once each half term.

All participants agree to maintain appropriate professional confidentiality and comply with safeguarding and information-sharing requirements.

Appendix 2 – Safeguarding Supervision Record

Academy:

Date:

Supervisor/facilitator:

Supervisee(s):

Review of previous actions

Actions completed:

Actions outstanding:

Reasons/actions required:

Safeguarding cases/themes discussed

Child/case:

What has changed since the previous review?

What is the child's lived experience?

What are we worried about?

What is working well?

What are the child's wishes and feelings?

What is the impact on the child's safety, wellbeing and development?

Have concerns escalated, de-escalated or remained the same?

Are current interventions making a difference?

Is there any evidence of drift or delay?

Is further professional challenge or escalation required?

Actions required:

Person responsible:

Timescale/review date:

Wider safeguarding themes

Emerging patterns or concerns:

Multi-agency issues:

Training/development needs:

Staff wellbeing/support:

Agreed actions

Action Responsible Person

Timescale

Date of next supervision: