



Safeguarding Statement of Intent for The White Horse Federation

The White Horse Federation (TWHF) are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Our schools are a safe place for children, where our responsibilities for safeguarding children are taken seriously.

Safeguarding determines the actions we take to keep children safe and protect them from harm in all aspects of their school life. The actions that we take to prevent harm, to promote well-being, to create safe environments, to respond to specific issues and vulnerabilities all form part of the safeguarding responsibilities of TWHF.

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility and make every effort to provide a safe environment underpinned by a culture of openness where both children and adults feel secure, able to talk, and believe that they are being listened to.

We maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' The full school policies, available on individual school websites, have been developed to ensure compliance with Section 157 The Education Act 2002, Section 11 of the Children's Act 2004, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024. All schools follow the Local Partners interagency policies and procedures.

Each school's local governing committee is responsible for the implementation of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for the school. Safeguarding is on the agenda and monitored at every local governing committee meeting. Each local governing committee has at least one designated Safeguarding champion who reports and provides feedback on a termly basis. The designated Safeguarding champion meets regularly with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to monitor compliance. This involves completing an annual Safeguarding audit as provided by the Local Authority.

The DSL for each school must complete the annual Safeguarding Training. This ensures that all staff are fully trained and up to date with policies and procedures.

Each school within TWHF has their own Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy written in line with the trust's policy– these can be found on the relevant section on the school sites.

Trust Board Responsibilities

The Trust Board is committed to ensuring full compliance with its safeguarding and child protection duties under statutory legislation. As delegated by the Trust Board, Jilly Norton is currently the Trustee Safeguarding Lead. She maintains oversight of the safeguarding activity and actions of the Teaching, Learning and Standards Committee which report to the Board on all child protection and safeguarding issues.

The Trust Board retain a monitoring focus on all aspects of safeguarding and it is a fixed agenda item at all meetings.

TWHF ensures that all their schools:

- have a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and at least one Deputy DSL who is able to cover in the absence of the DSL
- have in place safeguarding arrangements which adhere to the statutory guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 and which are designed to take account of all possible safeguarding issues
- adhere to safer recruitment practices (all staff and volunteers who work within TWHF central team and schools, who meet the 'regulated activity test' (Freedoms Act 2012) are required to undergo an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check prior to employment)
- maintain an up to date Single Central Record (SCR) which is spot-checked by the headteacher/principal regularly
- have arrangements for working together with other agencies and for sharing information with other professionals

- have in place effective Safeguarding, child protection and behaviour policies
- provide appropriate supervision and support for staff including undertaking safeguarding induction and training
- follow clear policies for dealing with allegations against people who work with children
- have clear procedures in place to handle allegations of abuse against children have clear whistleblowing procedures following the TWHF Whistleblowing Policy
- fulfil all of their statutory responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- promote safeguarding through the curriculum including how to stay safe online
- have appropriate filters in place to safely access the Internet.

Monitoring and Reporting

TWHF will:

- Monitor the quality of safeguarding practices and their impact on outcomes for children across the Trust and provide regular reports to the Board of Trustees. Regular reporting to the Board of Trustees will address key safeguarding concerns that have arisen, issues flagged following post incident reviews and audits, emerging safeguarding issues and training needs.
- Monitor compliance at each school within the MAT through an annual safeguarding quality assurance visit.
- Work with the headteachers of the schools to ensure that the performance of vulnerable children is effectively monitored and that appropriate support is made available to those children who are at risk of achieving poor outcomes
- Liaise with local authority lead professionals for safeguarding, Local partners, Ofsted, ESFA and other agencies as required
- Commission external challenge and support where appropriate to ensure schools meet their statutory responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- Provide opportunities to DSLs from each school across the Trust to meet to discuss practice, to share learning and to train together. This will include sharing post incident reviews and action points to improve practice.

Professional development and Training

A programme of regular professional development and training is provided to trustees and staff at every level. All staff will receive annual appropriate safeguarding children training. In addition all schools will ensure additional safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, TalentLMS and staff meetings), as required, but at least termly, to provide them with relevant skills and up-to-date knowledge to safeguard children effectively. Local governors are also offered access to regular safeguarding training appropriate to their role.

Culture of Safeguarding

The Trust believes that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is the responsibility of everyone. This is demonstrated through our shared culture of safeguarding. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play and all staff make sure their approach is wholly child-centred. This means that at all times, they consider what is in the best interests of the child.

Our culture of safeguarding demonstrates the Trust's:

- moral and statutory responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expectation that all staff and volunteers share this commitment.
- expectation that everyone working within Trust schools will contribute to the creation of an environment in which all children and adults have an equal right to protection regardless of gender, religion, ethnicity, sexual identity or culture.
- expectation that trustees and staff maintain an open mind and attitude of it could happen here where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members always act in the best interests of the child.

- expectation that all adults within the wider Trust community are aware that they have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm at home, in the community or in school. Everyone is aware that they can make a referral and reporting procedures are established in every Trust school to ensure information is shared with key safeguarding and child protection staff as soon as possible after any concern arises.

Safeguarding Strategic Priorities

- Safeguarding is a key strategic priority.
- Our Strategic leadership of Safeguarding ensures consistency and rigour in our approach to safeguarding.

