



DDAT

Safeguarding Strategy

2024 to 2026



Approved by the Trust Board on: 21st May 2025

To be reviewed on: 21st May 2026



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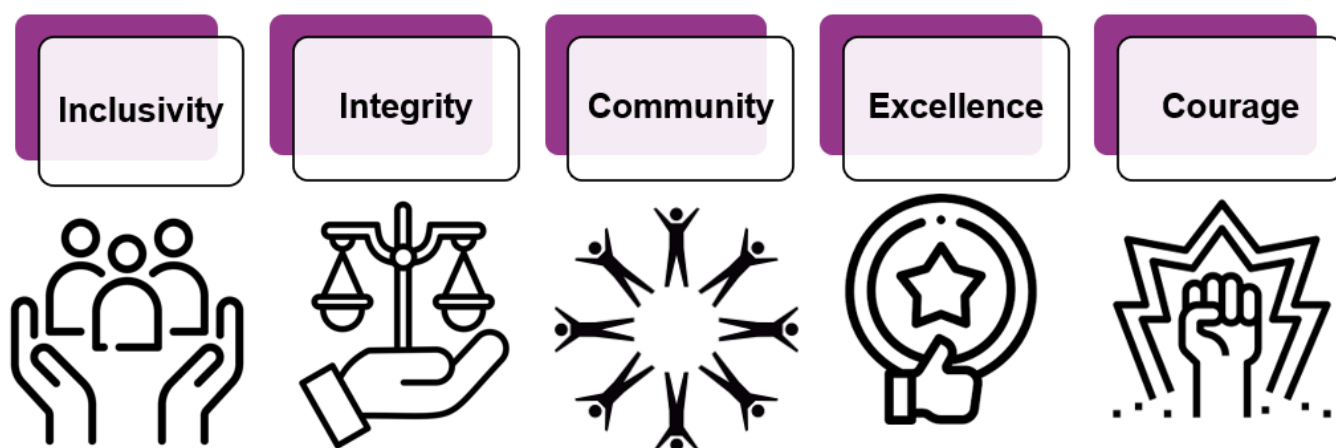
1. Our Trust Values:

DDAT is a multi-academy trust made up of 33 schools across Derby and Derbyshire providing education for children and young people from EYFS through to post-16.

The DDAT vision is to nurture and empower every child and young person to reach their fullest potential, supporting each other on this journey, we cultivate a vibrant learning community where children and young people flourish academically, emotionally, and spiritually.

Our mission and vision flow from the Church of England's vision for education, which emphasises the development of wisdom, knowledge, and skills; hope and aspiration; community and living well together; and dignity and respect. Together, as a community rooted in Christian faith and education, we embrace the abundant possibilities of **“Life in all its fullness”**.

Safeguarding is central to our trust; it underpins our five values: Inclusivity, Integrity, Community, Excellence and Courage.



DDAT understands that safeguarding children and young people is everyone's responsibility. Our commitment to safeguarding extends to more than compliance with the statutory requirements, we expect that all DDAT staff share this commitment enabling them to contribute to our whole trust culture of safeguarding.

The aim of this Safeguarding Strategy is to support the ongoing development a whole trust culture of safeguarding which is tangible in all our school settings. We want all stakeholders to have confidence in safeguarding practice across the trust, whilst recognising the need for us all to be always striving to reflect, learn and improve.

We consider it vital that our leaders in our schools are challenged and supported to continually improve and refine their practice, and by taking a trust wide approach we aim to ensure all children and young people in our schools receive the same consistent, high-quality care and support.

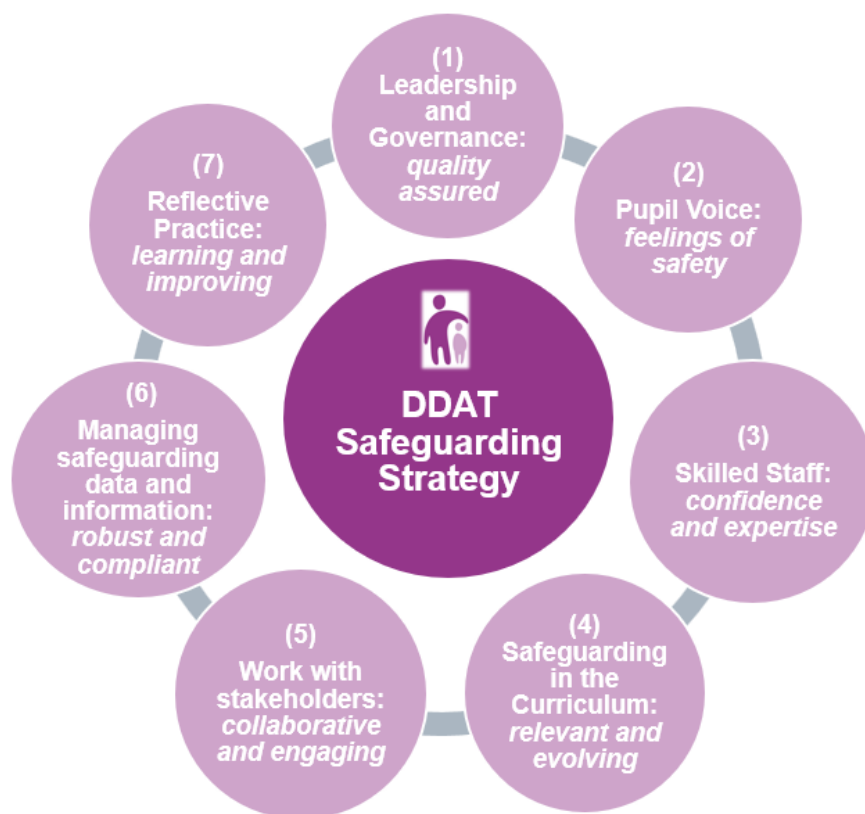


2. Our Trust Safeguarding Goals:

DDAT seeks to ensure all its schools develop a whole school culture of safeguarding which puts the safeguarding of children and young people at the forefront of all we do; we will achieve this by:

- 1) Ensuring the effective leadership of safeguarding at trust, governance and school level, and having robust quality assurance processes in operation which evidence this.
- 2) Ensuring all our pupils feel safe and valued and can speak with the adults who teach and support them, confident in the knowledge that their voice will be heard and any concerns they share will be taken seriously and acted upon.
- 3) Ensuring we have a skilled and well supported workforce through effective training, CPD and supervision, enabling all adults working in our schools to commit effectively to their obligations to safeguard children, protect them from harm and promote their welfare.
- 4) Ensuring the delivery of a robust safeguarding curriculum designed to enable children and young people to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to keep themselves safe in consideration of specific context, diversity and levels of need.
- 5) Ensuring we work effectively with all key stakeholders: parents, external agencies and other education settings in the best interests of all children and young people.
- 6) Ensuring we maintain the highest standards for the management of all safeguarding data and information
- 7) Ensuring our practice is reflective and that we are always willing to learn and improve what we do in the best interests of children and young people, their families and our staff.

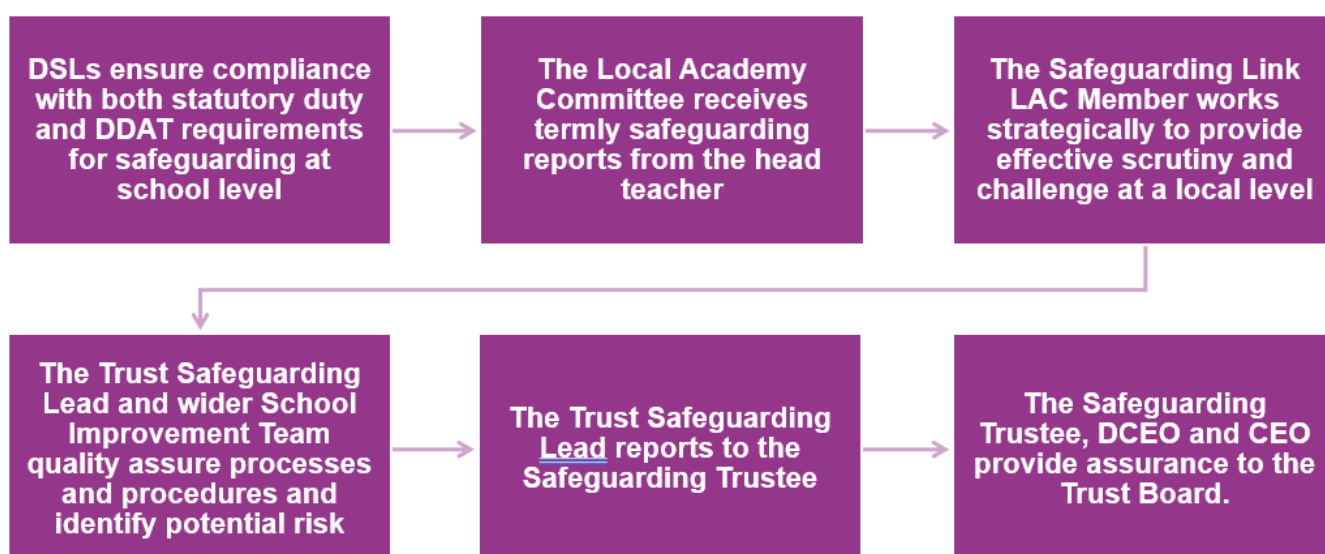




3. Trust Board Monitoring and Assurance:

Our Trust Board, having leadership responsibility for schools' safeguarding arrangements, actively seeks relevant information from the central team to allow them to provide an appropriate continuum of challenge and support. Trustees will seek adequate reassurance on all safeguarding matters through the provision of accurate and timely information and data from the Trust Safeguarding Lead.

We have developed a protocol for working to ensure robust practice and scrutiny at all levels:



4. Our Safeguarding Priorities for 2024-25

Our safeguarding priorities for the period 2024-25 have been developed in consultation with internal and external stakeholders including head teachers and DSLs, executive leaders, trustees, colleagues from other academy trusts and representatives from the Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership; they are:



(1) Staff safeguarding training and CPD:

Linked to goal three, we will develop and implement the DDAT Staff Safeguarding Training Professional Development Framework for aligned use by all DDAT Schools, which sets out DDAT's requirements for safeguarding training for all staff who are working in schools, including members of local academy committees, and particularly for those who have named responsibility for safeguarding, our DSLs and Deputy DSLs.

We recognise that having a skilled workforce is essential, and by undertaking regular safeguarding training staff are more able to contribute to a whole school culture of safeguarding which keeps children and young people safe and reduces the risk of serious oversight. We actively encourage continued professional development so that all our staff can contribute to and shape the culture of safeguarding in their school setting.

We want all DDAT DSLs (and their Deputies) to be confident experts in their field and will therefore aim to ensure our staff safeguarding training is not just compliant, but that it represents a robust model of ongoing professional development that has specific relevance to individual staff roles and responsibilities, and to the contextualised safeguarding in the school where they work.

Success Criteria:



- ❖ An audit of all staff safeguarding training, by role, will indicate compliance with the DDAT Framework requirements.
- ❖ Safeguarding practice in key areas identified will be led by skilled practitioners in each school setting.
- ❖ The Trust will provide access to high-quality targeted CPD in accordance with assessed need and context.

(2) Safeguarding quality assurance:

Linked to goal one, we will move to a more discerned and evidence-based protocol for the quality assurance of safeguarding practice at school level. We recognise the value of trust wide oversight based on a model of scrutiny and challenge by the School Improvement Team when working with our school leaders. We will develop and embed a well-understood model for quality assurance and focussed safeguarding reviews which is informed by a range of contributory factors to ensure the support we offer to our schools is both proportionate and provided in consideration of their explicit needs.

Our key criteria for focussed safeguarding reviews are:

- *A significant/serious safeguarding incident in the school*
- *A significant safeguarding concern identified by DDAT Executive/SSIO during a school visits*
- *A downgrading in the rag-rating for the safeguarding element of the school health check*
- *A significant change in school safeguarding data*
- *A complaint which is relevant to safeguarding practice*
- *Changes to staff who have named responsibility for safeguarding*
- *Concerns identified when reviewing the annual DDAT safeguarding audit*
- *Ofsted inspection timescales*

We will encourage the ongoing development of a culture of openness and honesty, creating open dialogue between schools and the central team to encourage staff to request support and guidance when they need it and to readily identify and share potential risk with the Trust Safeguarding Lead in order that effective and rapid collaborative solutions can be sought.

Success Criteria:



- ❖ A robust programme of full safeguarding reviews will be part of the trust offer to all schools.
- ❖ Focussed safeguarding reviews will take place in schools in accordance with the key criteria.
- ❖ We will implement a trust wide Critical Incident Policy to outline practice in urgent situations and ensure we effectively support our schools when they are managing challenging issues.

(3) Management of the single central record:

Linked to goal six and in accordance with our commitment to safer recruitment practices, we will ensure that each school maintains, manages and monitors their Single Central Record (SCR) in accordance with both statutory guidance and DDAT requirements.

Through the production of a regularly reviewed and updated trust guidance document, we will ensure that all schools implement aligned protocols for decision making, recording and monitoring their SCR. Furthermore, we will ensure that monitoring processes are routinely quality assured by the School Improvement Team and embed procedures which will ensure appropriate scrutiny by Local Academy Committees at school level.



Success Criteria:



- ❖ Reviews and checking processes will indicate that all schools are managing and monitoring their SCR in accordance with both statutory and additional DDAT requirements including the new PHEW system.
- ❖ Inspection processes will evidence effective and robust practice at school level.
- ❖ LAC minutes will evidence appropriate reassurance has been provided by school leaders.

(4) Alignment of safeguarding categories:

Linked to goal six; whilst continuing to recognise the unique character of each of our schools and the varying context of safeguarding concerns they manage, we will ensure the use of standardised safeguarding categories, via each school's safeguarding MIS, to enable accurate and aligned reporting at trust level.

Through collaborative work with DSLs at Hub level, we will agree and implement a bank of mandatory categories to ensure accurate reporting to each Local Academy Committee and the timely collation of trust wide data which can be analysed to inform staff training and support needs and ensure all schools can produce inspection ready safeguarding data as required.

In addition, we will introduce standardised practice for the recording and reporting of incidents pertaining to child-on-child abuse, specifically bullying, incidents which are perceived to be racially motivated and incidents identified as potentially harmful sexual behaviour, this will ensure data collected across the trust is meaningful and accurate and support us to further develop best practice with regards to these sensitive issues.

Success Criteria:



- ❖ All schools will be utilising aligned mandatory safeguarding categories on their SG-MIS. By 2026.
- ❖ Processes for managing and recording key incidents will be aligned across all schools.
- ❖ Safeguarding data across the trust will be meaningful and accurate and therefore better able to inform planning and decision making at trust level.

(5) Design and implementation of a trust safeguarding audit

Linked to goal one; using appropriate software, we will develop a bespoke safeguarding audit which will be mandatory for completion by all schools, and which will enable us to collate information and data to support the identification and management of risk at trust level.

Our in-house audit will replace the requirement for schools to complete the DDSCP annual S175 Audit, and we will seek to reassure the partnership that our audit protocol will more than meet need in terms of their local requirements, whilst enabling us to develop trust wide oversight of policy and practice at both school and hub level.

Success Criteria:



- ❖ All schools will complete their safeguarding audit within the agreed timeframe.
- ❖ We will be able to identify areas of potential risk and respond accordingly.
- ❖ There will be detailed and accurate safeguarding reporting and data analysis to the trust board.
- ❖ Decision making at trust level will be data and evidence informed.

(6) Alignment of all policies pertaining to safeguarding:

Linked to goal five and in accordance with our current approach to have a trust wide Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy which is personalised and adopted by each school, we will develop a bank of policies pertaining to safeguarding which will be reviewed and managed centrally.

Working collaboratively with DSLs to identify policies which will support best practice at school level we will ensure consistent practice and approaches across all schools for all matters pertaining to safeguarding and ensure that all policies will contain relevant appendices which will support consistent safeguarding practice at school level.

Success Criteria:



- ❖ Policy and practice in all matters pertaining to safeguarding will be consistent across all DDAT schools.
- ❖ All stakeholders will have consistent understanding of the policies supporting our work.
- ❖ Schools will benefit from economies of scale relating to policy updates.
- ❖ Best practice will be identified and cascaded trust wide.

(7) Strengthening safeguarding governance:

Linked to goal five and in accordance with our updated Scheme of Delegation and Link LAC Member role descriptions, we will carry out effective direct work with Safeguarding Link LAC Members to implement processes that will ensure we have a robust and consistent approach to safeguarding governance in place across all schools.

We will publish a framework which will be supported by training and a resource bank available to all key stakeholders outlining minimum expectations for those in the role of Safeguarding Link LAC Member, to include a programme of regular meetings and guidance for ensuring there is appropriate and effective scrutiny and challenge pertaining to safeguarding at school level.

Success Criteria:



- ❖ All Safeguarding Link LAC Members will have the skills and confidence required to uphold their statutory duty.
- ❖ There will be evidence of a programme of regular meetings which includes appropriate questioning and scrutiny of data.
- ❖ LAC minutes will provide evidence of the Safeguarding Link LAC Member offering assurances around safeguarding to the full local academy committee.

(8) DSL Toolkits:

Linked to goal three, to further develop best practice in response to safeguarding data and requests for support from our DSLs we will develop DSL Toolkits to enable confidence in practice when dealing with complex and delicate safeguarding matters, for example: assessing incidents of harmful sexual behaviour, or managing risk for pupils who self-harm.

The toolkits will contain guidance, assessments tools and templates for use by our DSLs to ensure our responses to complex incidents are robust and aligned.

Success Criteria:



- ❖ All DSLs will have access to a regularly reviewed and updated resources to support their day-to-day safeguarding practice
- ❖ Safeguarding record keeping and reporting will evidence aligned use of assessment tools and proformas to support triage processes and decision making at school level.
- ❖ DSLs will feel they are effectively supported when dealing with complex issues.

5. Our Safeguarding Priorities for 2025-26

Our safeguarding priorities for 2025-26 have been developed in consultation with internal and external stakeholders, including head teachers and DSLs, executive leaders, and in consideration of the priorities of the Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.

We have considered safeguarding data across our schools and emerging needs identified through both quality assurance processes and supervision hub meetings; they are:

