Safeguarding Question bank for Governors

Here are some ideas of questions that you may want to ask to find out more about safeguarding within your school. With all of these, the importance will be on ensuring there is **EVIDENCE** to support the responses. Please have a look at governorsafe.lgfl.net for more information and support.

SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

- What are the current safeguarding trends?
- How have these changed in the last term/year?
- Are any groups of children overrepresented within the safeguarding reporting (consider gender/age/pupil premium/SEND/Looked After)? What do we understand about this? How are we responding to reduce risk?
- What gaps are there in reporting? What does this tell us? i.e. do some teachers report less or fewer concerns in particular groups/classes.
- How does the school learn from safeguarding concerns?
- What are the areas of safeguarding that the school or staff find most difficult? What additional support/resource is needed to help?
- How do we ensure that staff are not complacent in their safeguarding approach? i.e. "we are a primary school so don't need to be worried about County Lines"
- How do policies, practice, staff training and the curriculum respond to safeguarding trends?
- How many children are on a Child Protection Plan (CP Plan)? Has there been a change? If so, is this telling us anything?
- How many children are on a Child in Need Plan (CIN plan)? Has there been a change? If so, is this telling us anything?
- How many families are being supported by Early Help? Has there been a change? If so, is this telling us anything?
- How do staff identify children who may benefit from Early Help?
- How does the school identify children who may be more vulnerable to abuse/neglect?
- How does the school protect pupils who are identified as more vulnerable? E.g. pupils with SEND
- What evidence is there that we have an effective 'culture of safeguarding' and a 'whole-school approach' to safeguarding?
- How does Contextual Safeguarding influence our practice?
- How do we work with other partners to reduce contextual harm outside of school?
- Is everyone (all staff) clear about what safeguarding is? How do we evidence this?
- What are the relationships like with the 3 statutory safeguarding partners?
- Is there timely action taken by staff/DSL re: safeguarding matters?
- Have you had any experience of using the local authority's escalation procedure for a safeguarding concern?
- Can you provide an example of where a child protection concern has been identified, acted on and resolved?
- Is there a strong, robust and proactive response, which helps to reduce the risk of harm?
- How are safeguarding concerns recorded in the school? What measures are in place to assure the quality of these?
- How do we balance data protection legislation and safeguarding pupils?
- Are plans in place to reduce the risk of harm to children by known risk factors?
- How do we support children at school who have experienced abuse/neglect?

- How do we ensure that our support of children who have experienced harm is trauma and shame reducing rather than inducing?
- How does the school support positive mental wellbeing for all pupils?
- How does the school create a sense of belonging for all pupils?
- Where there is use of physical intervention (known as restraint or positive handling) is this always recorded and monitored?
- Is there a proactive response to managing child absence?
- How does the absence procedure relate to the safeguarding procedure in practice?
- Are all staff aware of the safeguarding processes and procedures?
- What is the school's approach to child-on-child abuse? Can you provide an example?
- Do you have a zero-tolerance approach to discriminatory or sexual behaviour?
- How well is discriminatory behaviour or language responded to?
- How do you record discriminatory behaviour?
- How is the school's safeguarding response culturally sensitive?
- In what ways does the school have an anti-discriminatory approach?

PREVENT
- Does the school have a Prevent risk assessment that highlights the particular local risks and how the school will protect children and prevent harm?
- Are appropriate safeguards in place to limit exposure to radicalising narratives and extremist and terrorist content online?
- How are children taught about British Values?
- Have all staff completed training on Prevent? How is this evaluated?
- Has the DSL/Prevent lead received more in-depth Prevent training which is refreshed every 2 years?
- Has the school made any referrals to the Prevent programme?
- Does the school have effective emergency response strategies in place such as evacuation/lockdown/invacuation?

[Check prevent.lgfl.net for in-depth training and resources to support your whole school approach]

[Use - https://www.educateagainsthate.com/resources/prevent-duty-self-assessment-for-schools/ and https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-risk-assessment-templates for support]

ONLINE SAFEGUARDING
- Is our Online Safety policy up to date and does it reflect local and national risks?
- Do we have up to date AUPs for pupils, staff and volunteers? How do we know these are understood?
- How do you ensure that staff have regular time for relevant and regular learning about Online Safety?
- How does the DSL stay up to date with fast moving themes relating to online safety? For example, what is the school's approach to making use of gen-AI? How does the school support pupils to understand the opportunities and risks of gen-AI?
- Are staff aware of and understand the prevalent risks of the internet and social media?
- Are staff confident in supporting pupils with online safety?
- Is there parity between online and offline safeguarding?
- How do we support parents to support their children with online safety at home?
- How do we know that our teaching of online safety is appropriate and effective, provide pupils with skills and knowledge to use devices safely?

- How are pupils educated about Online Safety as part of a broad, balanced and progressive curriculum?
- How are pupils views and concerns about Online Safety reflected in curriculum planning?
- What reporting mechanisms are in place for Online Safety concerns? How do we know these are robust, effective and well understood by staff and pupils?

See Filtering and Monitoring section below for more ideas.

[Use - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1105569/Online_safety_in_schools_and_colleges.Questions_from_the_Governing_Board__2022_.pdf]
[Check saferesources.lgfl.net for support]
[Take a look at safeskillsinfo.lgfl.net for access to free online safety quizzes for pupils]
[Explore our resources about generative AI – genai.lgfl.net]

FILTERING & MONITORING
- What regular checks take place to ensure that the filtering systems work across devices and user groups? How are these evidenced?
- Have we done an annual review of filtering and monitoring? Where is this recorded?
- What do we block/allow and why?
- What is our filtering approach / provider / system?
- What is our monitoring approach / provider / system(s)?
- Have we set up regular meetings between tech & safeguarding teams?
- Are we 'overblocking'?
- Have we reserved enough budget for our responsibilities regarding keeping children safe online?
- How is the DSL team coping with the new demands? / What help do they need?
- How have filtering and monitoring impacted on teaching and learning? i.e. have there been any incidents highlighted by these systems which have led to a change in the curriculum/teaching?
- Do all staff have a basic understanding about the filtering and monitoring systems in place?

[Check safefiltering.lgfl.net for support and training]
[Take a look at monitoring.lgfl.net for info about our monitoring systems]

CONCERNS ABOUT STAFF (INCL. VOLUNTEERS AND SUPPLY STAFF)
- Do staff understand the difference between low-level concerns and allegations? How do you know? Have examples been given?
- How would you describe the culture within the school in relation to raising low level concerns or allegations?
- Is responding to low level concerns included in your policies?
- How are you assured that staff report low level concerns?
- What is the impact of the management of low level concerns?
- Are all allegations about staff reported in a timely manner to the headteacher and consequently to the LADO?
- What is the DSL's relationship like with the LADO?

[see lado.lgfl.net for more info about the LADO and their role)

CURRICULUM
- How is safeguarding incorporated into the curriculum in your school (i.e. in which subject areas)? How regularly is it taught? What is the impact?
- How is the school's RSHE curriculum developed and delivered? What is the impact of this?
- Is your RSHE Policy up to date?
- Do ALL children access RSHE curriculum e.g. those with SEND or those on part time timetables?
- How are children taught about British Values?
- What is the impact of your RSHE policy/curriculum?
- How confident are staff in teaching RSHE/Online Safety?
- How do you keep the curriculum up to date in a world that is ever changing e.g. in light of concerns about violence against women and girls, 'sextortion' and issues relating to how children are using technology?

SAFER RECRUITMENT
- What is your school's safeguarding statement when recruiting new staff?
- Have Governors who are part of the recruitment process completed safer recruitment training?
- How does safer recruitment sit under the wider safeguarding policy?
- Are all staff carefully selected and vetted through a thorough and robust recruitment process?
- Do you complete online searches of candidates? Where is this procedure described? Are candidates explicitly informed about this?
- Single central record (SCR):
  - ➢ Where is it stored?
  - ➢ How often is it updated? By whom? What is their experience/training?
  - ➢ What information does it hold?
  - ➢ Is it secure? Backed up in case of cyber-attack?
  - ➢ Are there any gaps? Why and what has been done to mitigate risk?

PUPIL VOICE
- How safe do pupils feel safe at school/at home/in the community?
- Are there any times of day/places in school that make them feel unsafe?
- Do they feel the school takes their views seriously?
- Are they supported to protect themselves from a range of risks / how?
- Do they know what to do if they are being bullied/someone they know is being bullied?
- Can they identify a trusted adult to listen to their concerns?
- Do they have the knowledge and confidence to approach a trusted adult?
- Do they know that sometimes trusted adults can be bad people and so they can go to another trusted adults?
- Do they know what safeguarding means in their school (in an age-appropriate way)?
- What mechanisms are in place to give pupils opportunity to raise concerns, other than speaking to adults?
- How well is discriminatory behaviour tackled in the school (racist/homophobic/transphobic/Islamophobic/anti-semetic/misogynistic etc)?
- Do you think the RSHE/PSHE curriculum in school is up to date and appropriate for you? What would make it better?

[Take a look at our separate question bank for asking pupils about safeguarding – governorsafe.lgfl.net]

POLICIES

- Are all the key policies related to safeguarding up to date?
  - Safeguarding and Child Protection
  - RSHE
  - Pupil Behaviour Policy
  - Staff Code of Conduct/Behaviour Policy
  - Acceptable Use Policies – for all those using school technology
  - Managing allegations about staff (doesn't need to be standalone)
  - Online Safety (doesn't need to be standalone)
  - Managing low level concerns (doesn't need to be standalone)
  - Child on child abuse (doesn't need to be standalone)
  - Whistleblowing (doesn't need to be standalone)

[Check safepolicies.lgfl.net for some template policies]

- Have the following been published on your school's website?
  - Safeguarding and Child Protection
  - Online Safety (doesn't need to be standalone)
  - Pupil Behaviour Policy

[Check websiterag.lgfl.net for more info about what needs to be on your website]

- How are staff made aware of these policies?
- How do we know that staff understand the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy?
- What is the impact of our safeguarding policies?
- How have safeguarding policies been recently updated to reflect practice or issues within the school i.e. are they reflexive and continually considered?
- Is it clear that practice reflects policies? Are there any mismatches?

TRAINING

- Do all staff complete safeguarding training during induction and annually thereafter (including online safety and information about web filtering and monitoring)?
- How do staff receive regular safeguarding updates throughout the year?
- Have all staff completed PREVENT training?
- Have all staff had training on cybersecurity?
- How do you ensure the training is relevant to the local community/pupil cohort?
- Have all staff read Part 1 KCSIE? How do you know that they have UNDERSTOOD this?
- What support is available to staff, to discuss and reflect on concerns?
- How are staff supported to develop professional curiosity?

[Check safetraining.lgfl.net to access our free training]

DSL

- What support/supervision does the DSL receive to perform this role?
- Has the DSL been given sufficient time and resources to perform this role?
- Has the DSL received specific DSL training in the last 2 years?
- Who deputises for the DSL when they are unavailable?
- How does the DSL stay up to date with guidance/legislation/good practice related to safeguarding?

OTHER

- How do we really know that safeguarding is effective?
- How does the school safeguard and promote the educational outcomes of children who are looked after by the local authority? Who is the Designated Teacher?
- If the school is hired out by others, how do you ensure that they have robust safeguarding procedures in place as per the DfE guidance?
- How does the school work with other partners to safeguard pupils? E.g. Police, Health services, mental health services, voluntary sector, community groups etc.
- What is the school's approach to working with and developing positive relationships with parents?
- How secure is the school site?
- How is our school an anti-racist school? In what ways have we made changes to the curriculum, policies, engagement with families etc. in response to this?
- What does the school do to support families experiencing poverty, acknowledging the significant impact this can have on pupils? How are we a poverty aware school?
- Consider exploring the queries from the NCSC about cyber security.