

Derby Education Providers Safeguarding/ Child Protection File Guidance

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Introduction

These guidelines are for all Derby education establishments, and in particular Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs). They have been developed to assist settings in establishing and maintaining record keeping systems (paper based or electronic) and transfer of records that support effective safeguarding practice. The guidance does not cover the pupil education records or transfer of these records to a new school, college or training provider.

All education providers have obligations under the [Data Protection Act](#) (2018) and [General Data Protection Regulation](#) (GDPR) to ensure that their organisation and individuals within it process personal information fairly, lawfully and to keep information they hold safe and secure. Relevant staff should be confident of the processing conditions which allow them to store and share information for safeguarding purposes.

Specific guidance for education providers can be found in the [DfE Data Protection: toolkit for schools](#) webpage. Each school must seek specific advice about their own data protection and information governance needs from their information governance team. For details about safeguarding information sharing in Derby and Derbyshire see the [multi-agency safeguarding children's procedures](#), this includes Information Sharing Guidance for Practitioners.

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (2019) highlights that that '*all concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the designated safeguarding lead.*' The guidance also states that a key task of the DSL is to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals.

In addition Ofsted will be looking for signs of effective safeguarding arrangements; this is outlined in [Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings](#) (2019). This includes evidence that '*written records are made in an appropriate and timely way and are held securely where adults working with children or learners are concerned about their safety or welfare. Those records are shared appropriately and, where necessary, with consent.*' This should include evidence of staff and other adults working in the setting being clear about procedures where they are concerned about the safety of a child while on the premises and be proactive about anticipating and managing risks that children face in the wider community. All concerns and the action taken in response should be clearly recorded.

They will also look to ensure that records of any referrals are retained and that there is '*evidence that any agreed action following the referral has been taken promptly to protect the child or learner from further harm.*' This includes having a written plan in place that has clear and agreed procedures to protect a child/young person. Comprehensive records about children/young people who go missing must also be kept and all vulnerable children/young people should have plans and help in place to reduce risks, which must be kept under regular review.

The importance of good, clear child welfare and child protection record keeping has also been repeatedly highlighted in many Serious Case Reviews. Well-kept records about work with a child/young person and their family provide an essential underpinning to good professional practice and accountability.

Good recording keeping also helps to focus work and it is essential to working effectively within an education setting as well as across agency and professional boundaries. There should be clear and accurate records for each child/young person where there concerns, to ensure that there is a documented account of a setting's safeguarding/child protection involvement with them and/or their family or caregiver.

The child/young person's safeguarding record is an essential source of evidence for any investigations and inquiries.

Promoting the welfare of and safeguarding children and young people is a whole setting task. Ensuring all members of staff know when and how to record concerns for a child/young person's

welfare, however small or apparently insignificant is an essential part of the DSL role. Good record keeping is an important part of the settings accountability to children and their families. It will also assist DSLs in meeting their key responsibility to respond appropriately to concerns for children/young people.

Records should be factually accurate, relevant, up to date and auditable. They should support monitoring, risk-assessment and planning for children/young people and enable informed and timely referrals to be made when necessary. A well maintained chronology is a fundamental part of good record keeping; see Chronologies on page 5. Education establishments should also ensure safeguarding records clearly document the decision making of the DSL and other staff, as well as any justifications for these decisions.

Standard recording process and approach

All settings should have a standard 'concern form' (this may be via paper or electronic systems) for use by all staff, volunteers and governors to record any concerns they may have about:

- The welfare of a child or young person; and
- The behaviour of a volunteer, member of staff, governor or person connected with the education provider.

An example concerns form can be found in the [education safeguarding/child protection template policy](#). See [DDSCP Derby schools and colleges webpage](#).

All staff should be aware of what constitutes a concern and be aware of their roles and responsibilities in ensuring that these are brought to the attention of the DSL and the agreed formal recording processes for this i.e. the prompt completion and submission of the concerns form. This process should be fully outlined in the settings safeguarding/child protection policy.

When using the concern form, staff must ensure:

- The form is dated in full (time, day, month and year), signed and all details are legible.
- The incident / event / observation of concern are described clearly and concisely.
- That this is written using straightforward language and fact and opinion are differentiated.
- If recording a disclosure, the child/young person's own words are recorded and any TED (Tell me, explain, describe) questions staff may have asked are included.
- That physical marks and injuries are recorded with sufficient detail on a body map (which should also be dated and signed) where appropriate. A body map can be found in the education safeguarding/child protection template policy.
- They do not:
 - Ask children or young people to remove or lift clothing. Instead they should record any visible injuries or ask the child to point to where else it is sore/hurts. Or;
 - Take photos of injuries. If photos of injuries are required for evidence purposes then this should be done by the Police.
- Any initial action taken is noted.
- The action to be taken/recommendations from the DSL are recorded.

All concerns about children and young people should be recorded and then kept centrally by the DSL, their deputy and other key safeguarding staff, such as pastoral staff and mentors within the education establishment.

There should be a clear system for ensuring that concerns are managed appropriately to prevent duplication and to ensure that they are effectively addressed. The lead DSL will need to ensure they maintain a clear oversight of all safeguarding/child protection concerns.

All staff should be encouraged to be mindful of the possibility that safeguarding/child protection records, including concern forms, may be shared with others at some stage, including another agency such as the police for criminal investigations, the child's parents/carers and in exceptional cases, the possibility that they may become evidence in court proceedings.

Decision making and actions

It is important that DSLs make a record of the action taken and decision making in response to every concern form. The level of detail of this record will clearly depend on the nature and seriousness of the concern but may include:

- Requests to staff for monitoring specific aspects of the child/young person's presentation, behaviour, attendance etc.
- Discussions and telephone calls (with colleagues, parents and children/young people and other agencies or services)
- Professional consultations
- Letters or emails etc. sent and received
- Referral forms (both for external and education-based services)
- Any escalation of professional concerns, including those relating to a child protection conference (see Multi-agency Dispute Resolution and Escalation Policy and Derby Child Protection Conference Professional Dissent Process, located in the safeguarding children procedures [document library](#))

The record should also specify a review date to ensure that progress is monitored and any additional actions to address the concerns taken.

Starting safeguarding / child protection records

Once a concern has been passed to the DSL and a record has been made of the action taken and/or decision making, then these documents will require storage in a separate child protection / safeguarding system. This is regardless of whether a referral to Children's Social Care has been made or not and should include the settings actions (universal provision), referral to other agencies and multi-agency assessment and action via early help processes (emerging needs or intensive).

Records will also need to be commenced if:

- The establishment is alerted to concerns about the child/young person via other agencies e.g. health, Social Care, voluntary/community based organisations and the Police. This would include a domestic abuse notification from the Police, also known as Stopping Domestic Abuse Together (SDAT). The alert may be a result of requests for information to support multi agency assessment via early help processes, child protection enquiries or single assessment.
- Safeguarding/child protection information is forwarded to the establishment by a previous education setting. This will include the transition of safeguarding/child protection files from early years settings when a child first starts school or when a young person transitions from school to another education provider such as a college or training provider.

Where concerns relate to more than one child/young person from the same family who attends the setting, a separate file for each child/young person should be created and cross referenced. Common documents and records as relevant e.g. child protection conference minutes, should be duplicated (and if necessary, redacted) for each file where appropriate.

The education establishment can have either an electronic system, paper filing system or both. The system must permit records to be kept securely and separately from a child/young person's main education or school file. The child/young person's main file should indicate that there is a separate safeguarding/child protection file.

Safe storage

It is the responsibility of the DSL to ensure that records are stored safely. Where there are paper files this would be in a locked cabinet in the DSL or other SLT member's office and/or within a secure password protected electronic system.

All education establishments safeguarding/child protection storage and transfer systems must always take place in accordance with the key principles of the Data Protection Act (2018).

What records should be included in a child's safeguarding/child protection file?

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (2019) identifies that '*All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing*'. Therefore records included within a child's safeguarding/child protection file could include the following:

- A front sheet with child and parents/carers details
- All school/college concern forms
- Key contacts details of those involved with child and their family i.e. name of organisation/agency, team and named individual and their role. Where a child/young person is Looked After by a Local Authority, information such as parental responsibility, arrangements for contact with birth parents, levels of authority delegated to the carers, name of the Virtual School Head, the Local Authority responsible for the child and the name of the Social Worker should be included
- Records of discussions, telephone calls and meetings with colleagues, other agencies or services, parents and children/young people
- Records of education setting decision making, as well as actions taken and appropriate justifications
- Education based assessments and action plans/reviews
- Professional consultations
- Letters sent and received, including relevant medical letters
- Copies of emails or other electronic communications sent and received
- Referral forms (both for external and education-based services)
- Minutes of multi-agency meetings i.e. Team around the Family, Child in Need, Child Protection and core groups
- Assessments e.g. Early Help Assessment, Single Assessment and assessment tools i.e. Domestic Violence Risk Identification Matrix (DVRIM), Graded Care Profile for Neglect or Child at Risk of Exploitation (CRE) risk assessment
- Multi-agency action plans linked to the child e.g. Early Help Assessment Action Plan, Child in Need plan or Child Protection Plan
- Chronology

It is helpful to organise this on a 'modular' basis for ease of reference i.e. sections titled:

- Front sheet with child and parents/carers details
- Key contacts
- Chronology
- School/college assessments, records and action plans
- School/college running records/notes
- Letters
- Multi-agency records i.e. minutes, assessments, action plans
- Health

The system must be clear as to who input the information, with signatures (if paper copy) and their role, signed and dated.

Chronologies

The importance of understanding concerns for a child/young person in the context of history, time-lines and other known information cannot be underestimated. Chronologies are central to this process and it is strongly recommended that these are completed on an ongoing basis as the case progresses. In addition to aiding assessment, a chronology will serve as an important record of school/college actions and when attached to a referral form to another agency they can provide evidence for the reason for the referral.

A chronology should list specific and significant incidents, events and actions taken in relation to the child/young person and where appropriate their family, with a brief explanation of subsequent actions and outcomes. See appendix 1.

A chronology is most helpfully stored at the front of a child/young person's safeguarding/child protection file alongside the front sheet where it can be quickly accessed and viewed. It should be kept up to date and reviewed on a regular basis.

Review

All children/young people with a safeguarding/child protection file should be kept under constant review to ensure that the situation is improving. Where this is not the case the DSL must consider what appropriate steps need to be taken to help improve a child/young person's situation. The Derby and Derbyshire [Dispute Resolution and Escalation policy](#) must be used where there are fears that difference of opinion may be getting in the way of keeping a child or young person safe.

Transfer of safeguarding / child protection files

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (KCSIE) states that the role of the DSL includes '*Where children leave the school or college the designated safeguarding lead ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and SENCOs or the named person with oversight for SEN, are aware as required.*'

In addition to the above KCSIE recommends that '*the DSL should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.*'

To support Derby schools, colleges and other education providers a standard [child protection records transfer form](#) has been developed. This will aid effective, secure and timely transfer of child protection/safeguarding records to the new setting; see appendix 2. It is also essential to enable receiving education providers to make appropriate safeguarding, risk management and resource decisions.

The child protection records transfer form also enables education providers to ensure that confirmation of receipt of the child protection file by the receiving establishment is obtained by the transferring setting.

Prior to transfer of child protection/safeguarding records, all settings should ensure that files are 'tidied up' and only include relevant information before they are sent onto the new provider. It is also important that the summary section of the Child Protection Records Transfer Form is completed. These actions will enable the new setting to be able to quickly understand the child's history as well as their current support and protection needs.

Safeguarding/child protection records should be transferred within 7 days of transfer. If the child or young person is subject of a child protection plan or there are other on-going concerns at the time of transfer, then it is strongly recommended that the transferring DSL arrange to meet with the receiving DSL in person. This will ensure there is effective transition and handover of information. At a minimum there should be a telephone discussion.

While it is the responsibility of the transferring education provider to ensure that child protection files are sent to the receiving setting, DSLs in receiving establishments should always seek to proactively ensure that positive communications are in place with any feeder settings at transition to check that files have been sent. If there are any on-going safeguarding concerns about a new pupil/student and the receiving establishment has not been sent any safeguarding files, then the DSL must be proactive in making contact with the DSL at the previous setting.

If a child/young person arrives at the new establishment before records arrive and you are aware of a previous safeguarding history from the outset or concerns have been raised since arrival, contact the DSL of the previous setting to discuss the case immediately.

In situations where the safeguarding/child protection file has not been received in a timely way, the DSL should pursue and attempt to resolve the issue. Where needed, you should escalate the matter via your senior management e.g. Headteacher/Principal or Governing Body/Trustees and follow the [DDSCP Dispute Resolution and Escalation policy](#). A full record should be kept of any discussions, actions agreed and taken and outcomes.

Child protection files should always be kept by the current education establishment which the child attends. Transferring settings do not need to keep copies of child protection files, however in some limited circumstances they may wish to consider keeping copies e.g. if the education provider is actively involved in a court case such as care proceedings at the time of transfer. In these circumstances the setting must seek advice from their Data Protection and Information Governance Service.

Where details of the receiving establishment are not known, settings should follow the [Derby City Council Children Missing Children Policy](#). Where there are child protection concerns the DSL must refer to Children's Social Care, Initial Contact Team as outlined in the [DDSCP' multi-agency safeguarding children procedures](#);

- For urgent concerns via phone number 01332 641172 and follow this up in writing via the Derby Children's Social Care Online Referral System within 48 hours
- Non-urgent referrals should be made via the Derby Children's Social Care Online Referral System

For advice and discussion with a Social Worker about concerns and whether thresholds for Social Care or Intensive Early Help have been met contact the Derby Children's Services Professional Consultation Line via telephone 07812 300329.

The Children Missing Education Officer can be contacted on 01332 641448 or via email on cme@derby.gov.uk.

If a pupil becomes looked after or if a looked after pupil is having a change of school the Virtual School Headteacher should be informed.

- Virtual School Headteacher, graeme.ferguson@derby.gov.uk, 07812 301044
- Project Support Administrator, elizabeth.williams@derby.gov.uk, 01332 640342

Auditing Safeguarding/Child Protection Records

To ensure that robust safeguarding records are being kept in an appropriate manner and in line with national and local guidance, it is essential that record keeping processes are reviewed and audited. This should be completed by the lead DSL on an annual basis as a minimum and the outcome and actions to be taken reported to the Headteacher/principal and governing body/trustees.

Appendix 1

Chronology of significant events/incidents

Child/young person's name:

Date of birth:

School/college attended:

Date	Incident/event/report	Source/evidence	Action/s taken	Outcome	Recorded by (name, signature and date)

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(Add name of current education setting) **Child Protection Records Transfer Form (part 1)**

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019), Annex B: Role of the designated safeguarding lead “Child protection file

Where children leave the school or college the designated safeguarding lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and SENCOs or the named person with oversight for SEN in colleges, are aware as required”

Child/Young Person’s Name:

Date of Birth:

(Name of current education setting) **Designated Safeguarding Lead:**

Contact Details for Designated Safeguarding Lead:

New Education Setting for Transfer:

Date of Transfer:

Safeguarding/Child Protection Issues

Currently open to Derby City Council Children’s Services? Yes No Unknown

- Early Help Assessment/Team Around the Family (emerging needs)
- Early Help Assessment/Team Around the Family (intensive support)
- Referred, pending confirmation of outcome
- Child in Need (CiN)
- Single Assessment
- Child Protection Plan
- Other, please state:

Brief summary of safeguarding issues:

Name of Early Help Assessment Lead Professional or Social Worker:

Contact details i.e. address/phone number/email address:

Other issues of note, please also include any relevant information about siblings and if family names and/or care arrangements are different:

All child protection file/s relating to the above child/young person and held by *(name of current education setting)* were securely transferred in a sealed envelope via the green bag/registered post/hand delivered/other, please state: _____ to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at *(name of new education setting)*.

Name (please print):

Signature:

Role:

Date:

Please confirm receipt of child protection files within 48 hours using the attached form

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Child Protection Records Transfer Form – Confirmation of Receipt (part 2)

Please forward confirmation of receipt of child protection files within 48 hours of receipt to *(add name of person)* via **green bag/post/email/other**:

Address: *(add details)*

Secure email: *(add details)*

Child/Young Person's Name:

Date of Birth:

Name of New Education Setting:

Date of Transfer:

Designated Safeguarding Lead:

Contact details for Designated Safeguarding Lead:

Comments

I can confirm the child protection file/s relating to the above child/young person and previously held by *(name of previous education setting)* were received by *(name of new education setting)* on *(add date)*.

Name (please print):

Signature:

Role:

Date:

Thank you for completing and returning this form