

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Reviewed: September 2024

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This policy is written in conjunction with the Denbigh Alliance Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and the Tommy Flowers SCITT Trainee Code of Conduct. This policy is referenced in the Course Handbook, is distributed to schools via the Steering Committees and is available in full on the Tommy Flowers SCITT website to trainees, mentors and professional tutors. This policy is regularly updated to respond to changing agendas and legislation.

1. Definitions

'Safeguarding' is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) as;

- protecting children from maltreatment, including online, within or outside the home
- preventing impairment of children's health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in safe and effective care and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

2. Aims and Values

The Tommy Flowers SCITT is committed to the safeguarding and welfare of children. Staff, trainees and partners (including trainers, mentors and professional tutors) are expected to share this commitment. All children have a fundamental right to be protected from harm and to have access to an educational environment in which they feel safe and secure. Safeguarding concerns are expected to be handled sensitively and professionally, and at all times with the health and safety and the needs of the child as the focus. The aim of this SCITT policy is to ensure that staff, trainees and partners are aware of the responsibilities towards safeguarding and can act with clear direction and with knowledge of good practice and procedures.

3. Core principles

The core principles of this policy are:

- the welfare of children is paramount
- to provide a learning environment for children which is safe and secure
- to teach children how to keep themselves safe and provide structures for them to raise concerns if they are worried or at risk of harm
- children and young people have a right to be treated with respect and dignity, as do the adults who work with them
- it is the responsibility of all adults to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people
- to recognise that all children may be vulnerable to abuse, but be aware that some children have increased vulnerabilities due to special educational needs or disabilities
- to maintain a robust recording system for any safeguarding or child protection information
- all children and young people must have the opportunity to express their views about decisions taken about their lives
- to create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which the SCITT's values and expected behaviours, set out in the code of conduct are lived, monitored and reinforced constantly by all partners.

4. Recruitment of Trainees

The Tommy Flowers SCITT will undertake DBS Enhanced Disclosures and Prohibition for Teaching for all trainees to ensure compliance with DfE requirements. For salaried trainees, apprentices and assessment only candidates, these checks are completed by the employing school.

A record of all checks on trainees will be held on the Single Central Record. A satisfactory check is defined as having no criminal convictions (including cautions, reprimands and final warnings) that might impact on undertaking the role of a trainee teacher. Overseas police checks will be carried out for those who have lived outside the UK for six months or more within the last five years, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) and the ITT Criteria and Supporting Guidance (Sep 2024).

All registered trainees must report any subsequent criminal convictions to the SCITT Partnership Manager for their course. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action being taken. It is the responsibility of the trainee to complete the DBS application correctly. Where a DBS certificate shows a conviction, caution, reprimand or final warning, SCITT Partnership Managers will liaise with the placement school Head teacher and refer to the SCITT's Accounting Officer. The Accounting Officer will have the final decision on satisfactory DBS checks.

Our staff recruitment policies and practices are rigorous and comply with safe recruitment and selection requirements. We always pursue identity checks and qualification checks and we take up and scrutinise written references.

- Identity checks must be carried out on all conditional offers made before the commencement of training
- The SCITT completes online searches as part of their due diligence checks on applications.
- All successful applicants will have an enhanced DBS check before starting the programme.
- All trainees should wear their SCITT identification badges when at core training (whether at St. Paul's Catholic School or other school sites) and the placement school's ID badge where they are on placement.
- The trainee should bring in their original DBS certificate for the SCITT to note the DBS number and issue number for the single central record.
- All trainees will receive Child Protection, Safeguarding and Prevent training during their training.
- All trainees sign a contract confirming adherence to the SCITT Code of Conduct.
- All placement schools must make their Safeguarding, Child Protection policies and Code of Conduct available to the trainee and induct them on the policies and procedures. These must be adhered to by the trainee.
- Trainees need to follow the placement school's policy on taking photographs of children. Personal cameras, personal mobile phones or other personal devices should not be used to take photographs of pupils.
- All trainees are to sign a register when attending core training.
- Trainees are advised to follow their placement school's policy on the use of children's full names in supporting material on One Drive.

5. Training and Development

In order for SCITT staff and trainees to be able to understand and discharge their safeguarding and child protection duties, the Tommy Flowers SCITT will ensure all trainees carry out safeguarding training in their placement school as well as in their centre-based training.

We will also ensure all SCITT staff and trainees are up to date with safeguarding procedures and national initiatives and all trainees have read, understood and signed the SCITT code of conduct and contract.

6. Reporting concerns

If a member of Tommy Flowers SCITT staff is visiting a school and receives a disclosure from a member of the school community or notices anything of concern, they will follow the school's safeguarding procedures for reporting and referring.

7. Allegations against Tommy Flowers SCITT trainees or staff

The Tommy Flowers SCITT recognises there are situations where it is possible for trainees or staff to conduct themselves in a manner that may be deemed to be causing harm to children and takes any allegation seriously. The Tommy Flowers SCITT is guided by local procedures for managing allegations against staff or trainees, which are set out in paragraph 2.6 of Milton Keynes Safeguarding Children Board procedures.

If a concern is raised about a member of Tommy Flowers SCITT staff, this should be referred to the Head teacher of St. Paul's Catholic School (for staff employed by St. Paul's Catholic School), Jo-Anne Hoarty (jo-anne.hoarty@st-pauls.org.uk) or the CEO of Denbigh Alliance (for staff employed by Denbigh Alliance), Sue Collings (ceo@thedenbighalliance.org.uk). Allegations against staff will follow the employing school's safeguarding and child protection policies and disciplinary procedures.

If a concern is raised about a trainee on the Tommy Flowers SCITT course, the Partnership Manager for that course must be informed immediately.

7.1 Low-level concerns

'Low-level' concerns are those that are deemed not to have met the harm threshold as set out in KCSIE 2024. 'Low-level' does not mean that it is insignificant. Low-level concerns could include a trainee who is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, has favourites within the classroom or takes photos of children on their mobile phone, contrary to the school policy. This is not an exhaustive list and low-level concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources.

All low-level concerns should be referred to the Director of SCITT. The school's Professional Tutor and the Director of SCITT or Partnership Manager will have a formal, recorded conversation with the trainee about the concern and clearly explain the correct procedures that should be followed. If it is appropriate, they may be placed on a Cause for Concern that relates to Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards. The Cause for Concern procedures are documented in the Course Handbook. All low-level concerns are reported to the Executive Board of the Tommy Flowers SCITT.

All low-level concerns should be recorded in writing, including the details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose and the action taken. The record will be saved in the trainee's electronic, password protected folder. As per the GDPR policy, trainees' files are saved for seven years following their completion, withdrawal or suspension from the course. Low-level concerns will only be used in references if they relate to issues which would normally be included in a reference, for example, misconduct or poor performance.

7.2 Concerns or allegations that meet the harm threshold

Allegations that meet the harm threshold are defined in KCSIE 2043 as being where any person who works in a school or college that provides education for children under 18 years of age, has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

In the event of an allegation against a TFSCITT staff member, the employing school's safeguarding policy will be followed.

In the event of an allegation against a trainee that meets the threshold, the placement school must follow their school's safeguarding policy, including looking after the welfare of the child and investigating and supporting the person subject to the allegation. The placement school must also inform the SCITT Director immediately. Either the placement school, the SCITT Director or the Partnership Manager may ask the trainee to leave the school premises immediately, temporarily pausing the placement, while investigations are conducted. The Accounting Officer, Sue Collings, (ceo@thedenbighalliance.org.uk) must be made aware of the investigation by the SCITT Director.

The Accounting Officer would inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and the partnership school should also inform the LADO in line with their own safeguarding policy. When dealing with allegations, the placement school and SCITT should:

- apply common sense and judgement
- deal with allegations quickly, fairly and consistently,
- provide effective protection for the child and support the person subject to the allegation.

Following investigation by the LADO that leads to no further action, the Accounting Officer and LADO should record the decision and justification for it, and agree on what information should be put in writing to the individual concerns and by whom.

Where further enquiries are required, the trainee may be suspended¹ from the course, following advice from the LADO. The Accounting Officer will record the rationale and justification for such a course of action, writing to the trainee to inform them of the decision within one working day. DfE *Register* will be updated by the TFSCITT administrators. The process for allegations that meet the harm threshold, as set out in KCSIE 2024 will be followed.

Records of the allegation which are found to be malicious or false will be removed from the trainee's records unless they give consent for retention of the information. For all other allegations (substantiated, unfounded and unsubstantiated), a record will be kept securely in a password protected folder until the trainee has reached normal pension age or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation. The record will include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
- details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome i.e. substantiated, unfounded or unsubstantiated
- a copy provided to the person concerned, where agreed by local authority children's social care or the police, and
- a declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference.

See Appendix 1 for a flowchart of the processes.

¹ Suspension may include a withdrawal from or failure of the course.

Appendix 1: reporting concerns about a TFSCITT trainee

