

# Annual Safeguarding Statement of Assurance

## Academic Year 2022 – 2023

1. Nexus Multi Academy Trust provides high quality educational provision for children and young people on roll at:
  - Abbey Special Academy, Rotherham;
  - Bader Special Academy, Doncaster
  - Becton Hospital Academy, Sheffield;
  - Beech Special Academy, Mansfield
  - Craggs Primary Academy, Rotherham;
  - Coppice Special Academy, Doncaster
  - Discovery Special Academy, Doncaster
  - Fountaindale Special Academy, Mansfield
  - Heatherwood Special Academy, Doncaster
  - Hilltop Special Academy, Rotherham;
  - Kelford Special Academy, Rotherham;
  - Kenwood Special Academy, Sheffield
  - North Ridge Special Academy, Doncaster;
  - Pennine View Special Academy, Doncaster.
2. The Nexus MAT Board of Directors understands the safeguarding responsibilities placed upon the Trust as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 and considers them of vital importance.
3. The organisation continues to meet its statutory requirements in relation to the Disclosure and Barring Scheme. Trust policy ensures all employees and volunteers (which includes governors) who work with children and young adults have had appropriate checks and that these are recorded – along with other relevant information – on the Single Central Record of each academy.
4. Audits of the Single Central Record are undertaken twice a year by the Trust's HR Consultant. All 14 academies received an audit report with areas for action.
5. The Trust commissioned an external consultant to review schools' S.175 self-assessments, and this commission was managed by one of the Executive Regional Directors. In addition, half termly safeguarding bulletins were issued throughout the year.

6. Safeguarding policies are up to date. Policies are reviewed regularly by Headteachers and the Academies Policy Review Board, updated in response to national guidance and model documents issued by Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships.
7. There is a Board Director who is the named lead for safeguarding. The Board receives reports on safeguarding across the organisation at least 3 times a year through the work of the Standards Committee, which is underpinned by the challenge and support provided by Trust governance and the more detailed reports received at the Schools' Performance Scrutiny Board, the minutes of which are reported to the Standards Committee.
8. The named executive responsible for safeguarding across the Trust is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Safeguarding is an area of focus in monthly supervision sessions between the CEO, Executive Regional Directors and all Headteachers, and case discussions take place routinely on a demands-led basis.
9. Each academy has a named Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. Each Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is offered half termly supervision from an external social work consultant, commissioned by the Trust. This is optional, though all DSLs engage in this process openly.
10. DSLs report that high threshold for accessing social care assessment and support continues to be the biggest issue they encounter operationally, and there is varied practice across local authority areas.
11. All staff have undertaken and are up to date with safeguarding training, both core and on specific subjects or themes (such as child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation etc). This is delivered by the DSL in each school, and all DSLs attend training delivered by their Local Safeguarding Children Partnership. In some cases, external experts are brought in to schools to deliver specific workshops on specialist subject areas.
12. There is a school improvement plan in place for each academy, which provides clear expectations of training, linked to the section 175 audit. This is delivered through face-to-face sessions on school INSET and/or twilight sessions, with updates shared at regular whole-school workforce briefing sessions.
13. Behaviour and wellbeing is reporting on separately to the Trust, to ensure a holistic view of safeguarding and welfare is presented.

14. All referrals to a Local Authority Designated Officer have been dealt with promptly and transparently, with the number of referrals reported to Directors on a term by term basis.
15. All reports and records are scrutinised in detail by Directors, and this is recorded in the minutes of meetings. Where there are complex safeguarding cases, the Named Director for Safeguarding is briefed on the details to maintain openness and transparency.
16. Throughout 2022-23, there were two complainants who submitted letters of complaint to Ofsted in relation to two academies, which led to the Trust executive leadership team working closely with the responsible local authorities and the respective school Headteachers to review matters and provide statements of assurance. Both the Named Director for Safeguarding and the Chair of the Board were briefed on these matters and copied into the associated correspondence with local authority officers.
17. On the basis of this work, Nexus Multi Academy Trust confirms it has considered its position in regard to safeguarding children and has assurance that it is meeting requirements and is following good practice.

Name:	Peter Castleton
Designated:	Named Director – Safeguarding
Date:	17 July 2023