



Safeguarding Roles & Responsibilities

How adults work together to keep children and young people safe

Why roles and responsibilities matter

Safeguarding works best when adults understand their role, their responsibilities, and how these connect with others. Confusion about who should do what can delay action, increase anxiety, or lead to concerns being held rather than shared.

This resource is designed to:

- clarify safeguarding roles in simple terms
- support confident, timely sharing of concerns
- reinforce partnership between families, schools and professionals

It is intended to support awareness and reassurance, not to replace safeguarding procedures or professional judgement.

Safeguarding is a shared responsibility

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, but not everyone has the same role.
- Different adults contribute in different ways, and safeguarding is most effective when these roles work together.

At a basic level:

- **Parents and carers** are often the first to notice changes
- **Staff and professionals** observe patterns across settings
- **Safeguarding leads** coordinate information and next steps

Each role is important. No one is expected to manage concerns alone.

The role of parents and carers

Parents and carers play a vital role in safeguarding by:

- noticing changes in behaviour, mood or routine
- maintaining open communication with their child
- trusting their instincts when something feels wrong
- sharing concerns with the school or college

Parents and carers are not expected to investigate concerns. Their role is to notice, support and share information so that appropriate help can be offered.

Prevention and protection begin with adult awareness



The role of schools and colleges

Schools and colleges have a statutory responsibility to safeguard children and young people.

This includes:

- having clear safeguarding policies and procedures
- appointing a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- training staff to recognise and respond to concerns
- recording and sharing information appropriately
- working with other services where needed

Schools aim to respond proportionately and supportively, with the child's wellbeing at the centre of decision-making.

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL has specific responsibility for:

- receiving and reviewing safeguarding concerns
- assessing risk and deciding next steps
- liaising with external safeguarding agencies
- ensuring concerns are recorded and followed up
- supporting staff and families

The DSL helps ensure that concerns are handled consistently and in line with safeguarding guidance.

The role of external organisations and trainers

External organisations, such as training providers, support safeguarding by:

- increasing awareness and understanding
- helping adults recognise early indicators
- reinforcing good safeguarding practice

They do not replace statutory safeguarding roles and do not manage or investigate safeguarding concerns.

Safeguarding responsibility always remains with the relevant organisation.

Why early sharing matters

A common concern for adults is whether something is "serious enough" to report.

Safeguarding works best when:

- low-level concerns are shared early
- patterns can be identified over time
- support can be offered before issues escalate

Sharing concerns does not automatically lead to formal intervention. In many cases, it allows early help and reassurance.



Reassurance and key messages

- You do not need certainty to share a concern
- Safeguarding is about noticing patterns, not isolated incidents
- Early sharing supports better outcomes
- Clear roles reduce anxiety and delay

Returning to these basics can be helpful, even for experienced professionals and confident parents.

Important information and boundaries

This resource:

- supports awareness and understanding
- does not provide case management or investigation guidance
- does not replace organisational safeguarding procedures

If you are concerned about a child or young person:

- follow local safeguarding procedures
- contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- seek advice rather than managing concerns alone

If a child is at immediate risk, contact emergency services.

This resource supports statutory safeguarding guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education, by reinforcing shared responsibility, early identification and clear safeguarding roles.

About North Star Training

North Star Training supports organisations, professionals, parents and carers to strengthen safeguarding practice through adult awareness, early identification and confident response.

Our approach is calm, trauma-informed and focused on prevention through understanding.

Prevention and protection begin with adult awareness

www.northstartraining.co.uk

Free resources support awareness. Training supports understanding and confidence.