

Interim Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Job Description

Responsible to:	The Headmaster
Hours of Work:	This is a full-time role throughout the year. Core office hours are Monday to Friday 8.00 - 17.00. This is a senior role with fluctuating demand, and the holder will be expected to work the hours needed to achieve their objectives.
Salary:	The starting salary will be between £50,000 - £60,000 per annum pro-rata.
Pension:	A contributory pension scheme is offered together with death in service benefit.

Introduction

Lewes Old Grammar School is an independent co-educational day school located in the historic county town of Lewes, educating children from 3 to 18 years old. The School encompasses traditional values combined with a forward approach to the education of young people, and it is proud of the family ethos and community it engenders. First established in 1512, Lewes Old Grammar School combines high educational standards and small classes in a caring, well-mannered environment together with economic fee levels. There is an extensive program of extra-curricular activities running on Friday afternoons for Yr 7-9 and many opportunities for students to take part in music and drama activities.

Morley House caters for children from three years old until the age of ten, and is located in an independent building in a pleasant residential area of Lewes. The Senior School occupies four architecturally historic buildings in the High Street of the ancient town of Lewes. Here we educate children from the age of 11, (Year 7), until 18 years of age, (Sixth Form), and always feature well in the Sussex GCSE and A Level league tables.

Purpose of Job

We are seeking a full-time, fixed-term DSL to join our thriving department from 5th January 2027 (or sooner) until the 26th March 2027.

To lead the operational aspects of safeguarding, including but not exclusive to providing advice and support to other staff on child welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters, taking part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and contributing to the assessment of children.

Principal Duties

- Refer cases of suspected abuse and neglect to East Sussex children's social care as required.
- Support staff who make referrals to East Sussex children's social care.
- Refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required.
- Support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme.
- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required.
- Refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required.
- Liaise with agencies providing early help services and coordinate referrals from the school to targeted early help services for children in need of support. Monitor any cases referred to early help and consider referral to children's services where the situation does not improve.
- Follow up on all referrals in a timely manner to ensure that they have been safely received and to obtain any relevant updates as necessary.
- Report any accidental injuries, which have occurred within an Early Years setting, to Ofsted and the relevant SLES consultant in the Early years Improvement Team

Working With Others

- Manage issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations.
- Liaise with the three safeguarding partners and work with other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children.
- NSPCC – When to call the police will be used to help the DSL understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do.
- As required, liaise with the “case manager” and the designated officer(s) at the local authority for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member.
- Manage the DSL and SGO team and meet regularly with the team to discuss issues and concerns.
- Liaise with staff (especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT Technicians, senior mental health leads and special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs) on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
- liaise with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the Mental Health Support Team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health;
- promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances;
- work with the head teacher and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement at school. This includes:
 - ❖ ensuring that the school knows who the cohort of children who have or have had a social worker are, understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; and,
 - ❖ support teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social worker reach their potential, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there is still a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff.
- Cooperate with Children's Social Care for enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989.
- Attend, or ensure other relevant staff members attend, child protection conferences, core group meetings and other multi-agency meetings, as required.
- Liaise with other agencies working with the child, share information as appropriate and contribute to assessments.
- Be responsible for online safety.

Training

The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) will undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training will be updated at least every two years. The DSL will undertake Prevent awareness training. This training will provide the DSLs with a good understanding of their own role, how to identify, understand and respond to specific needs that can increase the vulnerability of children, as well as specific harms that can put children at risk, and the processes, procedures and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly children's social care, so they:

- understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including the East Sussex continuum of need and the SPOA referral arrangements;
- have a working knowledge of how East Sussex conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so;
- understand the importance of the role the DSL has in providing information and support to children social care in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children;
- understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes;
- are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young carers;
- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners;

- understand and support the school with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;
- are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school;
- can recognise the additional risks that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support children with SEND to stay safe online;
- obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses; and,
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school may put in place to protect them.

Raise Awareness

The designated safeguarding lead will:

- organise whole school safeguarding and child protection training for all staff members annually and provide regular ongoing updates throughout the year;
- ensure each member of staff has access to, and understands, the school's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part-time staff;
- ensure the school's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with the governing body regarding this;
- ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this;
- link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements; and
- help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children who have or have had a social worker are experiencing with teachers and school leadership staff.
- This will include ensuring that the school, and staff, know who these children are, understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; supporting teaching staff to identify the challenges that children in this group might face and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to best support these children.
- Ensure that staff understand that children who have a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs may need this help due to abuse, neglect and complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning behaviour and positive mental health.
- Where children need a social worker, this will inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absences or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).
- Ensure that staff are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.
- Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.
- If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following the safeguarding and child protection policy and speaking to the DSL.

Child Protection Files

The DSL will ensure that child protection files are kept up to date and that information will be kept confidential and stored securely.

Records will include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern;
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome

The DSL will ensure that files are only accessed by those who need to see them and where files or content are shared, this will happen in line with information sharing advice and guidance.

Where children leave the school to join another (including in year transfers), the DSL will ensure their safeguarding and child protection file is transferred to the school as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. This will be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

Receiving schools should ensure key staff such as DSLs and SENCO or the named person with oversight for SEN in colleges, are aware as required.

Because a lack of information about their circumstances can impact on a child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes, in addition to the safeguarding and child protection file, the DSL will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school in advance of a child leaving to help them put in place the right support to safeguard this child and to help the child thrive in the new school or college. For example, information that would allow the new educational establishment to continue supporting victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

Where a parent/carers has expressed their intention to remove a child from the school with a view to educating at home, the DSL will liaise with East Sussex Elective Home Education (EHE) Team to ensure that any safeguarding concerns (should there be any) are shared adequately with them, so as to inform next steps.

Availability

During term time the DSL or a deputy will always be available (during school hours) for Staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

Where any activities take place outside of regular school hours, the school will ensure that the DSL or a DDSL is available to be contacted during this time.

Providing Support to Staff

Training will support the DSL in developing expertise, so they can support and advise staff and help them feel confident on welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters. This includes specifically to:

- ensure that staff are supported during the referrals processes; and
- support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked, including to inform the provision of academic and pastoral support.

Understanding the Views of Children

It is important that children feel heard and understood at our school. Therefore, the DSL will be supported in developing knowledge and skills to:

- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school may put in place to protect them; and
- understand the difficulties that children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and consider how to build trusted relationships which facilitate communication.

Holding and Sharing Information

Due to the critical importance of recording, holding, using and sharing information effectively the DSL will be equipped to:

- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school, and with other schools and colleges on transfer including in-year and between primary and secondary education, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners;
- understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR); and
- be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals and understand the purpose of this record-keeping.

Quality Assurance

- Monitor the implementation of and compliance with policy and procedures, including periodic audits of child protection and welfare concerns files (at a minimum twice a year) and lessons learnt.
- Complete an audit of the schools safeguarding arrangements at frequencies specified by local Safeguarding Partners.
- Provide regular reports, to the governing body detailing changes and reviews to policy, training undertaken by staff members and the number of children with child protection plans and other relevant data.
- Take lead responsibility for remedying any deficiencies and weaknesses identified in safeguarding and child protection arrangements.

Other

- To line manage the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and promote their development.
- Other tasks and responsibilities as required by the Headmaster and Trustees including but not limited those required by Keeping Children Safe In Education (KCSIE)

Person Specification

	Essential Criteria	Desirable Criteria
Qualifications & Training	Evidence of continuing and relevant professional development in the field of safeguarding	
Experience	Experience of working in a safeguarding environment Experience of providing training to colleagues	Experience of working in schools Experience of working in the independent sector Experience of working as a Social Worker in Child Services or Family Services
Knowledge & Understanding	Knowledge and commitment to child protection, health and safety, equal opportunities and SEN/ inclusion Knowledge of health and safety procedures	An understanding of the independent school sector

Skills & Abilities	Ability to effectively deal with a range of people: internal and external colleagues, agencies and stakeholders Ability to form appropriate relationships with young people Emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviours Caring, friendly, approachable, open, welcoming and personable Outstanding communication skills Proactive and positive team player, able to work constructively as part of a team Ability to work under direction but use own initiative Ability to maintain confidentiality Reflective approach and commitment to personal development	Ability to observe and assess children's development Record keeping and reporting Adaptable and flexible and the ability to cope with changing needs
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Further Details

Applications must be made using the school's Application Form, Equal Opportunities Form along with a covering letter of application, including full contact details of two referees. CVs will not be accepted without a completed application form.

Lewes Old Grammar School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Applicants must be willing to undergo Child Protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers, the Disclosure and Barring Service and sign a self-disclosure form.