

## **Safeguarding Peer Review**

**Wednesday, 31<sup>st</sup> January to Thursday, 1<sup>st</sup> February 2024**

### **The De Curci Trust Review Team**

Head of School, Solent Infant School  
Head of School, Springfield School  
DDSL, Solent Infant School  
Head of School, Solent Junior School  
CEO/Headteacher, DCT/Springfield School  
Chief Financial & Operating Officer, DCT  
Deputy Headteacher, Springfield School  
Deputy Headteacher, Springfield School  
Executive Headteacher, The Solent Schools

### **Inspire Learning Partnership Review Team**

Attendance and Family Support Officer, DDSL  
Director of Primary Education and Trust DSL (1<sup>st</sup> February only)  
SENDCo, Kanes Hill Primary School, DDSL  
Vice Principal, Hightown Primary School, DSL

## **Review Context**

The CEO (The De Curci Trust) and Trust DSL (Inspire Learning Partnership) met virtually several times to plan the peer review. Prior to this activity, the Trusts had not worked together before. It was agreed that a Provision – Impact – Evidence (PIE) process would be used to capitalise on both Trusts' experience of the Challenge Partners approach; this would underpin an agreed rationale of 'doing with' and not 'doing to'. We would not be making Ofsted style judgements or aligning commentary to the Ofsted handbook; instead, the focus would be on the culture and practice of safeguarding, agreeing 'what's going well' and 'even better if'.

Review activities were scheduled to take place at Solent Infant School and Solent Junior School on day one and Springfield School on day two, with cross-Trust activities taking place on both days. Joint review activities included: reviewing policies, procedures, websites and communications, analysis of pupil records/case studies, scrutiny of the Single Central Record and safer recruitment procedures, capturing stakeholder voice from pupils, staff and those involved in governance, reviewing approaches to online filtering and monitoring, wellbeing provision and safeguarding within the curriculum, and provision for specific/vulnerable groups, including the impact of pastoral support.

The agenda for the review days is recorded as [Appendix 1](#).

The PIE detail is recorded as [Appendix 2](#).

This report is primarily for the Trust's internal use to support their continuing improvement but may be shared in part or full with other stakeholders, as deemed appropriate.

## **Overall Summary**

There is a strong culture of safeguarding at the De Curci Trust. Safeguarding is an active priority at every level of the organisation and has a tangible and positive impact upon staff and students. Stakeholders are rightly proud of their schools and leaders are unwavering in their desire to improve matters further. A key next step is to look at how policy, practice and procedure can now be further aligned and 'scaled up' at Trust level. Agreed priority areas (drawn from the PIE statements in Appendix 2) are referenced below.

<b>Area: Culture</b>	
<b>WWW</b>	<b>EBI</b>
The relentless desire of staff to meet and exceed the needs of all pupils	To improve the knowledge, training and activity for all staff in key contextual safeguarding issues
That safeguarding is the forefront of the thinking of staff and those involved in governance	To formalise the supervision (reflective practice) policy and approach across the Trust
There is clear and frequent communication with parents – schools go beyond the statutory (e.g. additional PEP meetings focused on the child)	For office teams in all settings to provide a verbal safeguarding induction to all visitors
There is a detailed approach to the safeguarding curriculum – this builds upon prior knowledge with online safety woven throughout; this is further supplemented in Personal Development learning (PDL) lessons during tutor time, assemblies etc.	
Pupils are proud to attend their schools and speak positively about their settings – they feel listened to, supported and their behaviour is good	

<b>Area: Compliance</b>	
<b>WWW</b>	<b>EBI</b>
There are thorough safer recruitment and induction processes at each of the schools	Consider how you can leverage recruitment procedures and activities at a Trust level – e.g. My New Term, a shared MIS and a centralised and aligned approach to the SCR and all recruitment documentation
Policies at a school level are compliant	Improve information on safeguarding on the Trust website and seek a consistency in approach to information across all settings. Place clear re-direction on out of office emails to safeguarding information
Staff know how to raise concerns about children and staff	Put a written procedure in place to provide clarity as to who is picking up and acting upon filtering and monitoring issues
A system has been established for online filtering and monitoring and is under review to ensure continued improvements	Review the sensitivity of the online filtering and monitoring system
All staff record concerns about pupils and these are actively tracked by DSLs Staff use precise language when recording	Improve clarity over when staff need to immediately speak to a DSL and when they only log on the electronic system Create a procedural piece/flow chart to help explain this

<b>Area: Leadership and Governance</b>	
<b>WWW</b>	<b>EBI</b>
The Trust has passionate and visible Governors and Trustees – safeguarding is at the forefront of their thinking	Clarify to those involved in the governance of safeguarding, that their role is to seek assurance, eradicating any operational activity
The Safeguarding Forum is a successful mechanism for bringing together the operational and governance elements of safeguarding and subsequently directing resources	
There are clearly defined roles, structures and systems in place to support vulnerable pupils	
Clear consideration has been given to staff wellbeing and workload	
Appropriate resources are allocated to safeguarding, which are consistently reviewed to take account of the changing context and related issues	
Staff at all levels understand what their role is and know where to seek support	

<b>Area: Pupils</b>	
<b>WWW</b>	<b>EBI</b>
Pupils have a good awareness of the filtering/monitoring deployed by schools, as well as what is considered as appropriate content and what to do if they have any concerns	Improve the consistency of the youngest pupils' ability to articulate how to stay safe online, particularly their articulation of this to unknown adults
Pupils across the Trust feel safe and speak positively about attending school	To refine the Trust's approach to the commissioning of Alternative Provision and subsequent monitoring e.g. transportation and visits
Pupils have confidence that staff will deal with any issues that concern them. Pupils say that there is no bullying but if it were to occur, they are confident that it would be dealt with robustly	Ensure that all staff feel confident to escalate where they may have concerns that social care are not advancing the needs of pupils and also be confident to say when it is not appropriate to be the lead professional
The Twilight school for children requiring additional support is having a good impact on pupils – many success stories	To continue to seek and refine ways to improve pupil attendance further
There is a personalised approach to meet a diverse range of pupils' needs – pupils are encouraged to aspire and know staff want to support them	
The schools have good relationships with outside agencies	
The pupil wellbeing survey is used proactively to ensure that any concerns raised by pupils are addressed e.g. through the curriculum	
There is clear provision in place for service children and they academically outperform their non-service counterparts	

### **Key 'Takeaways'/Reflections - The De Curci Trust Team**

- Feedback from staff has been that there have been good professional conversations over the last two days and that the process has felt constructive and supportive
- The PIE approach has enabled a sharp focus and has provided good continuous professional development for all involved
- The need to standardise the cross-Trust approach and offer of supervision (reflective practice)
- To improve pupil access to safeguarding information on the school website, e.g. to include a reporting button for those pupils who may not feel comfortable to approach staff in school or who require support outside of school hours
- To create a robust Trust-wide commissioning tool for Alternative Provision
- That the websites need to be aligned and clear in terms of communication and providing instant information to parents
- To review how policy, practice and procedure can be scaled up to leverage Trust expertise and capacity now; and in the future to consider aspirations for training, widening needs of learners, succession planning and diversification of skills
- To ensure that those involved in governance receive targeted training to fulfil their governance function and are guided to remain strategic

### **Key 'Takeaways'/Reflections - The Inspire Learning Partnership Team**

- That the Safeguarding Forum could be an effective mechanism for ensuring liaison beyond the Trust DSL between operational and governance levels
- That regular pupil conferencing is essential so that pupils know we are listening and that their views are being acted upon
- That an effective pastoral support structure can have a significantly positive impact on staff and pupils
- The strong offer for LAC and PLAC pupils, beyond the statutory provision

### **Miss Amanda Johnston BA (Ed) Hons, FCCT, NPQH**

Director of Primary Education and Trust Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)  
Inspire Learning Partnership on behalf of the reviewing team