

Child Safeguarding Policy

Date approved	Effective date	Date of next review	Policy owner	Policy lead
05/04/2018	05/04/2018	30/04/2019	Shelley Gonsalves, Child Safeguarding Officer	Keating Garth, HR

Key facts

- The aim of this policy is to ensure:
 - Excellent child safeguarding practice is promoted at Teach First;
 - All children who engage with Teach First are treated with dignity and respect;
 - All employees know what to do in the event of a child safeguarding incident and make informed and confident responses to specific child safeguarding issues;
 - All child safeguarding incidents are dealt with consistently and properly recorded.
- **For emergency situations please [click here](#)**
- This policy is written with our commitment to equality & diversity at its heart and should be interpreted in a way that provides fair treatment for all.

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Section 1. Introduction

Teach First's vision is that no child's educational success should be limited by their socioeconomic background. All children and young people have the right to grow up in a safe and caring environment. This includes the right to protection from all types of abuse. Those of us in a position of trust have to do everything possible to foster these rights. To do this, certain protections need to be in place to protect you as well as those we are working with. Teach First takes seriously its responsibility towards safeguarding all children (as defined below) who engage with the charity, with the focus being on their safety and welfare.

This policy outlines the specific responsibilities, requirements and expectations of and on Teach First as an organisation and as a collective of stakeholders who interact with children through our work.

For the avoidance of doubt, where Teach First are working with corporate supporters who are following a child safeguarding policy other than this document, any incidents or disclosures which Teach First employees become aware of should be escalated following the procedure in this document in addition to any escalation under the corporate supporter's child safeguarding procedure.

1.1 Definitions

Child Safeguarding is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and/or
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Stakeholders: The collective group of people bound by this policy which extends to anyone working with or on behalf of Teach First or involved in Teach First organised activities and events.

Including, but not limited to:

- Teach First Employees
- Contractors, and Contracted Service Providers
- Casual workers
- Consultants
- Interns/ Work experience Students
- Volunteers
- Supporters
- Partners
- Participants
- Ambassadors
- Futures mentors
- Parents
- Carers
- Guardians Any other individuals involved in Teach First organised activities and events.

Child: Anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

Please note: If a child turns 18 during your engagement with them on behalf of Teach First (e.g. Futures mentoring) the expectations outlined in this policy will continue to apply until the activity/ relationship is formally closed by Teach First.

Regulated Activity: This is a legal definition which covers work which involves close and unsupervised contact with children and vulnerable adults, and which cannot be undertaken by a person who is on the Disclosure and Barring Service's Barred List (see DBS policy for further information). No one should carry out regulated activity until they are cleared by Teach First to do so through the DBS checking process.

1.2 Who does this policy apply to?

All stakeholders as outlined in section 1.1 and any persons who are carrying out paid or unpaid work on behalf of Teach First.

While stakeholders are likely to have varied levels of contact with children, everyone should be aware of the potential indicators of abuse, neglect and other potential child safeguarding concerns and clear about what to do if they have concerns. All stakeholders must comply with Teach First's checks and training as required.

Teach First Participants and Teach First Ambassadors in teaching roles are covered by the safeguarding policies of their employment in schools. For the avoidance of doubt, while they are engaged in Teach First organised activities and events, both policies will apply and in the event of any inconsistency, the school policy will apply as they have ultimate responsibility as the employer.

If you have a child safeguarding concern which does not relate to a Teach First organised activity or event (e.g. about something you come across in a partner school), you should use the specific policy or process which applies to that setting to escalate the matter (e.g. the school's own safeguarding policy).

Teach First is committed to using safe recruitment processes. This policy applies to all stakeholders whether or not Teach First has requested and received a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service certificate (DBS certificate, formerly a CRB certificate). When relevant for their role, Teach First and eligible individuals will make a joint application for a DBS certificate **prior to commencing employment or volunteering at Teach First and will not be able to undertake any 'regulated activities' until they have been cleared to do so.** Having a previous conviction will not necessarily bar an individual from working with us and each

case will be looked at on its merits before confirming the individual in role or terminating the arrangement.

On occasion, where a corporate supporter works with multiple voluntary organisations as part of their corporate social responsibility programme, they will ask us to follow their safeguarding policy when organising events on their behalf or with them and their other partners (“Joint Events”).

We can follow a corporate supporter’s safeguarding policy only where:

1. The corporate supporter understands that Teach First will also escalate any disclosures made to Teach First staff at Joint Events under its own safeguarding policy;
2. The policy has been reviewed by GLC and includes:
 - a. Acceptable statements on safe recruitment of employees and volunteers, and clear procedures for DBS checking relevant employees and volunteers;
 - b. A clear procedure for dealing with disclosures and allegations, including guidance on how to respond to a young person who is making a disclosure, and a clear escalation pathway and relevant contact details;
 - c. Provisions for regular review of the safeguarding policy;
 - d. Board level oversight and ownership of the safeguarding policy;
 - e. Clear guidance on acceptable behaviour when interacting with children and young people; and
 - f. Clear guidance on planning events with children and young people.

Confirmation that a corporate supporter’s child safeguarding policy meets these requirements will be by email from the Senior Legal Advisor to Child Safeguarding Officer; Head of Supporter Engagement and the relevant Account Manager.

1.3 Where is this policy available?

This policy is available on the [Teach First intranet policy page](#), [Teach First website](#) and the [Community Website](#) for all stakeholders to access at any time.

This policy does not form part of any employee’s contract of employment and it may be amended by Teach First at any time.

Section 2. Principles, Requirements and Expectations

2.1 Child Safeguarding Principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount;
- We will ensure that robust steps will be taken to protect children from abuse and respect their rights, wishes and feelings when they engage with Teach First;
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and appropriate action taken to address these swiftly and fully;
- Anyone who is bound by this policy has the responsibility to highlight concerns;
- Anyone who is bound by this policy has the right to report concerns or suspicions about another individual in confidence and free from harassment;
- We will work in partnership with our schools and all relevant external stakeholders to adhere to their safeguarding policies.

2. 1 Requirements and Expectations

In line with good practice, Teach First will ensure that arrangements are in place to reflect the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including:

- A Trustee lead
- An Executive Director to take leadership responsibility for the organisation's safeguarding arrangements. This responsibility will be defined in a standalone job description* and will be allocated to a Teach First Executive Director.
- Maintaining a clear process for dealing with allegations against people who work with children.
- Developing a culture of listening to and promoting the welfare of children, where stakeholders feel supported to raise issues about safeguarding.
- Including child safeguarding training as part of the induction process (and ongoing for roles where relevant), including familiarisation with responsibilities and procedures to be followed if anyone has any concerns about a child's safety or welfare. Ensuring all existing and potential partner organisations have either a robust Child Safeguarding Policy in place, or agree to adhere to this policy, before agreeing contracts/ make agreements involving contact with children.
- Child Safeguarding Group in place, led by an Executive Director and comprising of key department heads, to regularly review Child Safeguarding practice and ensure learning from incidents and continuous improvement over time.
- Safe recruitment practices for individuals whom the organisation will permit to work regularly with children, including policies on when to obtain a DBS check.

In line with good practice, in situations where this Policy applies stakeholders must:

- Treat all children equally with dignity and respect.
- Where it has been identified that a role requires it; submit a joint application with Teach First for a basic or enhanced (Teach First will advise the level) Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) disclosure certificate and will submit the supporting evidence as required. For more information, please refer to the DBS policy.
- Inform Teach First of any relevant police record, disciplinary action or other factor, or any change in your circumstances, which may impact your suitability to work with children.
- Recognise that any role that interacts with children places you in a position of trust, and undertake to uphold that trust at all times.
- If required, only meet children in an appropriate public place, for example a library, a gallery, a university or a classroom, where other adults are regularly present. Depending on your role (for example as a mentor), it may be appropriate to have a meeting in a confidential space, however this still needs to be an appropriate public space such as a classroom with an open door, a coffee shop or a public area within your office.
- With regard to communication, comply with the following:
 - **All interactions:** Skype meetings may be used, but must follow the same parameters of a face to face meeting, with both parties using Skype in an open and public space.
 - **All interactions excluding Futures mentors:** Wherever possible, only communicate with children via a professional email address. Where further contact channels are required, parental consent must be gained.
 - **Futures mentors & volunteers:** Must keep communication via channels other than professional email to a minimum as per our guidance. Must only communicate by professional email or Skype as outlined above. There must be no contact via personal phone, personal email, any other messaging service or social media, including but not limited to WhatsApp, Snapchat, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. If you feel that an alternative method of communication is required, please speak to the programme organiser at Teach First in the first instance.
- Maintain the confidentiality of any information relating to other Teach First stakeholders made available to you in the course of any engagement with children, as long as this does not conflict with this policy or the whistleblowing policy.

- Remember at all times that interactions between you and children must be such that no reasonable person observing that interaction could construe its nature as abusive.
- Report any suspected infatuations.
- Behave as role models and be suitable examples for children.
- Use appropriate language when conversing with children.
- Inappropriate behaviour can sometimes be an indicator of abuse or neglect. Where a child is displaying inappropriate behaviour, end the interaction and make a record of the behaviour before notifying the Child Safeguarding Officer at Teach First (see Appendix 3 for contact details).
- Use the Events Checklist in Appendix 2 when organising Teach First events involving children.
- Use Teach First's whistleblowing procedures where an allegation or complaint arises about the behaviour of another volunteer or member of staff or where you believe that your concern has not been taken seriously.
- Seek parental consent for any photography, except in relation to Futures mentees where no photography of any kind is permitted.

Stakeholders must not:

- Invite children to their home or visit children in their own homes.
- Allow their personal beliefs to exploit a child's vulnerability or incite them to break the law.
- Offer a child a lift in a car.
- Behave in any way, physically or verbally, that could be offensive to a child.
- Make any kind of physical contact with a child that would not be considered appropriate within a school or business environment, and report any inadvertent contact that could be misconstrued.
- Request or receive monetary (or other high value) gifts from young people; and ensure they are not open to (or perceived to be open to) improper influence or conduct through the acceptance of such gifts. The acceptance of low value gifts such given in appreciation of support provided is not problematic.

- Smoke or drink alcohol in the presence of children, or supply them with these substances.
- If you are a Futures Mentor: Introduce (virtually or otherwise) the mentee to a colleague/friend for advice and guidance due to DBS requirements. You may however invite mentees to attend a supervised meeting in a public place at which you (the mentor) are present for the duration.

Section 3. Child Safeguarding Concern Process

All stakeholders have a responsibility to be mindful and aware of child safeguarding issues. It is not the stakeholder's responsibility to decide whether or not the potential child safeguarding incident requires investigation or further action, but each stakeholder has a responsibility to act on any concerns by escalating the matter as set out in the Serious Incident Management Plan.

Stage 1: Potential incident identified

The following is a non-exhaustive list of Child Safeguarding issues or incidents which require escalation in accordance with this policy:

- Failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger;
- Failure to ensure adequate supervision of a child;
- Failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment;
- Failure to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing;
- Sudden changes in a child's behaviour or performance;
- Any physical, emotional or sexual abuse; and
- Any other breach of the expectations outlined in section 2

This is not a complete list of potential child safeguarding issues, and is intended to be illustrative only.

If you are in doubt whether your concern is relevant, err on the side of caution and report it as outlined in stage 2.

Stage 2: Escalation

Child Safeguarding concerns are considered to be a trigger incident as per the SIM plan, and so the Core Serious Incident Management team and relevant organisational sponsor (Child Safeguarding Officer in this instance) must be notified.

The Child Safeguarding concerns form (appendix 1) must be completed and sent to the SIM core team and Child Safeguarding Officer as per the contact details outlined in appendix 3.

In all circumstances: steps should be taken to ensure the needs of the child take priority, and the disclosure of information is dealt with appropriately:

- Ask if the child would like someone else to be present - another adult or a friend. If they decline, proceed with the interview, taking extra care with your behaviour and body language and ensuring you are in a public place/ office with open door as outlined in section 2;

- Allow them to speak without interruption and accept what they say;
- Be understanding and reassuring but do not give your opinion;
- Assure that you will offer support but that you must pass any information to another party who may take appropriate action;
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling you;
- Keep calm and listen - do not have physical contact at any time;
- Focusing on the facts disclosed and using the actual words said by the child wherever possible, take a detailed record of the conversation using the 'Safeguarding Concerns Form' found in Appendix 1.
- Do not attempt to investigate the allegation, ask questions only for clarification of the facts.

Disclosures from children:

- Before a child goes into any detail, explain the consequences of you knowing and the action you will take. Assure them that you will offer support, but must pass any information to another professional who may take appropriate action if you believe that their safety, welfare or wellbeing might be at risk.

Disclosures from Mentees aged 18 or over: Despite Teach First's decision for this policy to cover Mentee relationships past a mentee's 18th birthday as explained in section 1, the below applies to anyone over the age of 18, by law.

- Always encourage the individual to disclose the issue themselves, but if they would prefer not to, explain that you will only be able to pass on the information to Teach First with their written consent.
- If they do not agree to you passing on their information, you must not do so, unless there is an overriding public interest or public duty of care i.e. if a criminal matter has been alleged, including domestic abuse.
- If they give written consent to allow you to pass on information, or the matter is one of public duty as outlined above, make a detailed record of the conversation as per the below.

Once the Child Safeguarding concern has been raised:

- If there is an immediate risk of significant harm, the stakeholder should contact the police and notify Teach First as set out in Appendix 3 as soon as possible.
- In non-emergency situations, email the completed safeguarding concerns form (including written consent if mentee is over 18) directly to the Child Safeguarding inbox as per appendix 3, with 'Possible SIM issue' in the subject line.
- If the stakeholder is not able to complete and email the Safeguarding Concerns Form for any reason, the stakeholder should call the Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Officer.

- The SIM team (including Child Safeguarding Officer or Deputy) will decide on any immediate steps to be taken, including whether an investigation is required and whether social services and/or the police should be informed.

Please Note:

- If the Child Safeguarding concern relates to an employee of Teach First, the incident may be investigated in line with Teach First's Disciplinary Policy or any other applicable Teach First policy, at the discretion of the Child Safeguarding Officer (or Deputy).
- Anyone receiving an action or communication relating to an actual or potential Child Safeguarding incident must treat the situation with absolute confidentiality and as a priority. Individuals sending communications via email may copy the Child Safeguarding Inbox if they feel the need to further emphasise the importance of the correspondence to the recipient.

Stage 3: Updates

When the stakeholder has passed on the completed Safeguarding Concerns Form, the stakeholder's involvement ceases unless told otherwise.

The stakeholder's responsibilities are now to:

- Keep the matter strictly confidential - it must not be discussed with any other person (apart from the Child Safeguarding Officer or Deputy) to ensure all individuals involved (including the child) are protected.
It is not the stakeholder's responsibility to seek out any further information regarding the reported incident. However, should the stakeholder become aware of any updates, they must notify the Child Safeguarding Officer (or Deputy).
- Continue to comply with any other applicable Teach First policies.

Section 4. Further Information

4.1 Useful Links

For more information on Child Safeguarding, types of abuse and the responsibility of institutions and organisations, you can refer directly to the following pieces of statutory guidance.

Please note: Teach First is not one of the organisations bound by this guidance, but has implemented much of the content in adherence with good practice.

[Working together to safeguard children](#)

[Keeping children safe in education](#)

The NSPCC website also provides extensive information and resources on their [Safeguarding Children](#) page.

For more information on the Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) checks, please refer to the Teach First DBS Policy on the [Teach First intranet policy page](#) and the [Gov.uk website](#).

4.2 Non Teach First related concerns

If a stakeholder has non-immediate concerns which are **unrelated** to a Teach First event or activity, they should contact the NSPCC National 24 Hour Help Line on 0808 800 5000 for advice about safeguarding children.

4.3 Review of Child Safeguarding Policy

This policy will be reviewed by the Child Safeguarding Officer on an ongoing basis, but at least once a year, and suitable amendments will be made as required.

Section 5. Appendices

Appendix 1: Safeguarding Concerns Form

Any concerns a stakeholder may have for any child's welfare and safety in relation to a Teach First activity or event should be recorded immediately on this form, in accordance with the Teach First Child Safeguarding Policy.

Please note that parents must be informed before child protection services are notified of any Child Safeguarding matters, except where doing so may put the child at risk of harm.

Once this form has been completed, it should immediately be sent by [email](#) to the Child Safeguarding SIM Team.

The contents of this form are highly confidential and if allegations are serious, criminal proceedings may result. Please be aware of that in anything you add to the form, particularly in relation to names of children and possible abusers.

Child Safeguarding Concerns Form: STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Name of stakeholder raising the safeguarding concern	
Contact details for stakeholder raising safeguarding concern	
Date and time of safeguarding concern	
Details of Teach First event (if relevant)	

Details of child safeguarding concern:

Child's full name and age (if known)	
Child's school (if known)	
Nature of the safeguarding concern	
Factual record of safeguarding concern (<i>Expand box if necessary</i>)	

Details shared with parents (if any):

***NB.** It is not your responsibility to share any details with the parents of the child concerned, nor is it required to share any information with parents if doing so may put the child in further danger. However, please outline if any details have already been shared with the parents, in order for the Child Safeguarding officer to be properly briefed.*

Signature:	Date:
For Mentees over 18: Please sign below to give written consent for this information to be shared on your behalf.	
Signature:	Date:

Appendix 2: Events Checklist

Child safeguarding for Teach First events checklist

Please use this check-list during the event planning process for any Teach First events involving children.

Event name: _____

Event date: _____

Event organiser: _____

Please circulate this, together with our child safeguarding policy, to all team members who organise events, and include them as part of the induction for all new event organisers recruited.

Checklist for all events involving children

- ✓ Consider the safety of the child's travel to/from an event and, where appropriate (e.g. late finishing events), ensure they are accompanied by a qualified teacher/parent/legal guardian.
- ✓ Ensure that children are accompanied by their teacher/parent/legal guardian or Teach First Staff whilst on-site at an event.
- ✓ Provide child and/or the accompanying teacher/parent/legal guardian with the event organiser's mobile number for use on the day. Note, this is only to be used for 'on the day' logistics and is not to be used for any other communication purposes.
- ✓ Ask Participants/Ambassadors to follow their school's policy in securing authority for children to attend the event. This includes undertaking any relevant school risk assessment and ensuring adult: child ratios are appropriate. If participants are in their first year, they should check with their school whether they need to have a fully qualified teacher accompany them.
- ✓ Ensure that you have received signed consent forms for any photographs or videos to be taken at the event or if you plan to interview and use quotes from the children present. These can be downloaded from the Teach First Brand Toolkit. Note: No photography of Futures Pupils is permitted.
- ✓ Where appropriate, provide food/refreshments, taking account of any dietary requirements.
- ✓ Endeavour to give the opportunity to leave evening events at an appropriate time for their age, having consulted with their teacher/parent/legal guardian.
- ✓ Include our child safeguarding policy as part of the pre-event briefing process.
- ✓ Take account of children's needs in planning the event e.g. access and disability.

Additional checklist for outdoor/sporting events

- ✓ Where appropriate, include a designated meeting point for lost children and ensure this is included in the briefing for all employees and volunteers.
- ✓ Ensure the meeting point is manned by at least two employees or volunteers at all times, with one having been DBS checked.
- ✓ Communicate the child meeting point in the event joining instructions.
- ✓ Provide wrist bands to all participating children, with space for parents/guardians to add their mobile number.
- ✓ Include the child safeguarding policy in the volunteer briefing materials and refer to it in any oral briefing.
- ✓ Ensure that any individual with responsibility for any child does not consume alcohol at the event.

If you have any general questions about child safeguarding at Teach First events, please contact the child safeguarding inbox: childsafeguarding@teachfirst.org.uk

Should you need to raise a child safeguarding concern, please refer back to Appendix 3 of the Child Safeguarding Policy.

Appendix 3: Contact Details

In an emergency situation: If there is an immediate risk of harm, contact the police and notify the Teach First Lead Child Safeguarding Officer (or Deputy) on the numbers below.

Shelley Gonsalves, Lead Child Safeguarding Officer

020 3862 8449

(Please leave a voicemail if unanswered).

Carol Gormley, Deputy Child Safeguarding Officer

020 3862 8456

07808 141 042

(Please leave a voicemail if unanswered).

Or email childsafeguarding@teachfirst.org.uk and **write “SIM” in the subject line.** Your email will then be forwarded to all members of the Child Safeguarding SIM team.

In non-emergency situations: Email the completed safeguarding concerns form (including written consent if it relates to a mentee who is over 18) directly to the Child Safeguarding inbox (childsafeguarding@teachfirst.org.uk), with **‘Non-emergency issue’ in the subject line.**

If you are unable to complete the form for any reason, then you should call the Child Safeguarding Officer (or Deputy if unavailable).

If a stakeholder has non-immediate concerns which are **unrelated** to a Teach First event or activity, they should contact the NSPCC National 24 Hour Help Line on 0808 800 5000 for advice about safeguarding children.

The Child Safeguarding SIM team are:

Department	Lead	Deputy
Child Safeguarding	Shelley Gonsalves	Carol Gormley
Governance, Legal and Compliance	Gillian Budd	Eleanor Trunkfield
Communications	Director of Communications	Kelly Loftus

Please note

- If you are alerting the team to a serious incident then please put “SIM” in the subject line and it will be forwarded to the SIM team members immediately.
- Voicemails left on both the Lead and Deputy Child Safeguarding Officer’s landlines will be captured and sent to them via email.
- Emails sent to the Child Safeguarding inbox will be automatically forwarded to both the Child Safeguarding Officer and Deputy.

