

Creating an effective culture of safeguarding

A safeguarding culture means that safeguarding is key to every aspect of a setting.

Considering the following can help you take steps towards creating and maintaining a culture of safeguarding in your school:

Vigilance

An effective safeguarding culture should be one of vigilance, and the cornerstone of vigilance is accepting that issues can occur in your setting.

Keep the following phrase in mind: 'It could happen here...and it probably is.'

Professional curiosity

Professional curiosity involves using your skills and knowledge to recognise when there may be a need to investigate a situation further.

Some tips on how to be professionally curious might include: know the signs to look out for, respectfully ask questions and investigate, understand the 'whole picture', raise concerns and challenge decisions.

Policies and procedures

In addition to your core safeguarding policy, there are a range of policies that will impact upon, and reflect, your culture of safeguarding.

Contextual safeguarding

Contextual safeguarding is an approach to safeguarding that recognises that young people may be at risk of significant harm not only within their home environment, but also outside it.

It is particularly important for adolescents, because as young people age, they spend more time socialising away from their families. Consequently, their social networks – and any harm associated with them – become more significant.

- Consider the culture of your school. Is it a safe and supportive environment? If not, how could you make it more so?
- Create a safe space for young people to talk to you about their experiences. What they tell you about their community and the context that they are growing up in could help you to spot concerns that you may not have been aware of otherwise.

Training

Revisiting your safeguarding knowledge is an important part of your continued professional development.