ITE Safeguarding Policy: 2020

Department of Education

This policy outlines the Department’s procedure with regards to Sussex Initial Teacher Education (ITE), Early Years Teacher Status (EYTS) students (referred to as trainees below) and DBS.

The Safeguarding Officers for ITE are Jo Tregenza (Director of ITE) and Greg Harris (Senior ITE Course Coordinator)

The responsibilities of the Safeguarding Officers are:

- Day to day responsibility for safeguarding issues plus a leading role in establishing and reviewing safeguarding policies
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of the procedures that need to be followed in the event of a safeguarding incident
- Providing training and advice for staff
- Receiving reports of safeguarding incidents and logging incidents to inform ongoing and future safeguarding procedure
- Ensuring that safeguarding training is provided to trainees.

The University will:

1. Ensure that all entrants to the PGCE, School Direct, Primary and Early Years Education BA (with QTS), Early Years Education MA – Graduate route (with EYTS) courses are subject to enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosure.
2. Ensure that all entrants (and existing trainees who entered their course prior to September 2015) undergo a prohibition order check to ensure that they are not prohibited from undertaking teaching activities in schools.
3. Secure certificates of good conduct and other references in respect of time trainees have spent outside of the UK (6 months or longer).
4. Normally obtain an enhanced DBS disclosure for every trainee prior to the commencement of placements in a school or other setting; for Early Years Education MA – Graduate route (with EYTS) students this will be completed prior to commencement of course.
5. In the event of a delay in receiving disclosures, make checks against the DBS Children’s Barred List and inform head teachers in writing prior to the start of a placement of the names of those trainees for whom an enhanced disclosure has yet to be received. For Early Years Education MA – Graduate route (with EYTS) students, placements will not commence until disclosure information has been received.
6. Keep head teachers and early years setting managers fully informed of the progress of applications for disclosures, informing them as soon as the disclosure is received.
7. Make decisions on suitability based on the disclosure results. Convene a standing Safeguarding Panel to consider specific anonymised cases where a conviction, caution or reprimand or any other pertinent information has been disclosed to determine suitability. The Safeguarding Panel will be convened by the Director of ITE and chaired by the Head of the Department of Education. It will also include: the School of Education and Social Work’s Director of Teaching and Learning (DTL), two Partnership head teachers or designated senior leaders, and one university Course Leader. An individual meeting will be arranged with the Director of ITE and the trainee(s) concerned to discuss the issues contained in the DBS.

8. Not admit candidates to any course carrying QTS or EYTS who are unsuited to work with children.

9. Keep records showing that a disclosure has been obtained for every relevant trainee.

10. Confirm to schools/settings that a non-salaried trainee’s criminal record check - including a check of the children’s barred list - has been completed and that the individual has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

11. Confirm to schools/settings that declarations relating to the disqualification requirements have been obtained for entrants to the Primary PGCE or Early Years Education MA course.

12. Ensure that no reproductions of disclosures or their content are made, including photocopies or scanned images. Except for the purpose of making decisions on suitability, and in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

13. Ensure that trainees are aware of the need to treat sensitive data and information with due confidentiality and are careful about who has access to it.

14. Be vigilant and alert throughout trainees’ courses to the possibility of potential safeguarding issues, taking measures as appropriate.

15. Inform trainees of their ongoing obligation to declare anything that might deem them unsuitable to work with children, including any conviction. Where a trainee withholds such information, take appropriate action - which may include recommending the termination of their training.

16. If a trainee is arrested, under investigation, charged with an offence or receives a conviction during the course of their studies, they will be referred to the Safeguarding Committee and, as appropriate, to the University Fitness to Practice committee who will review the case and determine whether to allow the trainee to continue their studies, or recommend suspension or termination. Wherever possible, and with the permission of the trainee, ensure that the head teacher of the trainee’s placement schools/setting is informed.

17. Inform trainees that they will need to be re-checked by the DBS before returning from any suspension of studies of 3 months or longer. Trainees are responsible for the cost of the recheck.

18. Ensure all requirements regarding procedures related Covid-19 are followed at the University.

School /settings will:

1. Provide confirmation that any School Direct: Salaried or Early Years Education MA EYTS employment-based trainees have completed a satisfactory criminal records check and a satisfactory prohibition order check.
2. Provide confirmation that any:
   a) School Direct: Salaried Primary trainees and Early Years Education MA: Employment route trainees are covered by this legislation
   b) Trainees holding any form of direct managerial responsibility in a childcare or early years setting have been subject to appropriate checks with regard to the childcare disqualification requirements
3. Record in their central record that declarations relating to the disqualification requirements have been obtained for Early Years Teacher Status graduate entry courses as confirmed by the University.
4. Recognise that satisfactory DBS checking of non-salaried trainees is the responsibility of the University, not the school, setting or local authority.
5. Accept trainees for placement in the school or setting for whom a DBS enhanced disclosure has been received and who have been deemed suitable to work with children.
6. Exercise the discretion provided to them by the Department for Education (DfE) guidance to allow trainees for whom an enhanced DBS disclosure has yet to be received to start working in a school/setting, maintaining closer supervision and restricting access to information including sensitive pupil data where appropriate.
7. Treat information declared on salaried trainee’s DBS declaration with due confidentiality exercising due care about who has access to it.
8. Not expect to have access to completed DBS returns.
9. Not attempt to obtain copies of disclosures directly from trainees.
10. Ensure all policies and procedures relating to Covid-19 are followed.

Trainees will:

- Ensure they have an up to date awareness of safeguarding matters and of the safeguarding policy and practices in their placement school(s).
- Ensure they have an up to date awareness of the statutory safeguarding guidance from the DfE:
  - Working together to safeguard children 2018
  - Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018
  - PREVENT Duty - Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (HMG, 2015)
    All available on the VLE
- Understand that it is everyone’s responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and that they have a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.
- Ensure they report any safeguarding concerns to the relevant person in their school and the University of Sussex Safeguarding Officer.
- Consider at all times what is in the best interests of the students they teach.
- Know how to respond to a student who discloses abuse through delivery of ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ (2018).
- Be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep anything confidential which might compromise the child’s safety or wellbeing.
- Follow all guidance regarding Covid-19 as required.