

Job Description: Head of Safeguarding

Reports to: Regional Director and Network Pastoral Lead

Location: West London, with flexible working available. Also, with regular travel to schools.

Contract: Permanent

Pattern: Full Time

Salary: £90,000 - £95,000 depending on experience

About the role:

The Head of Safeguarding is of critical importance at Ark, providing both strategic and advisory leadership across the Network, to enable everyone at Ark Schools and Ark to keep children safe.

The role involves working closely with central team colleagues on their policies, procedures and training, as well as working closely with Principals and in-school safeguarding leads (Designated Safeguarding Leads – DSLs), who are accountable for implementing the correct procedures, processes, and safeguarding culture within their schools.

The Head of Safeguarding regularly engages with a broad range of stakeholders, including the Board of Trustees, school leaders, in-school staff, governors, central office staff, and visitors to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities, and that our safeguarding strategy and systems exists to enable the discharge of those responsibilities. The Head of Safeguarding drives strategic leadership across the network by staying abreast with latest policies, trends and innovations in safeguarding practice, and provides termly analysis reports based on data insights from our safeguarding management platforms. They will also work in a hands-on manner, taking triage calls on a day to day basis and providing immediate advice as needed.

Key Responsibilities:

Ensuring compliance across the following areas

- Ensuring that all principals satisfy their obligation to have an appropriate safeguarding management structure in their school
- Supporting the DSL network to ensure that all Ark schools are compliant with statutory and legal requirements, providing leadership so that the letter and spirit of regulations are understood and implemented and that Ark schools have proactive safeguarding cultures
- Reviewing and refreshing best practice guidelines, templates, and ensure all DSLs have appropriate access to these documents
- Collaborating with central team colleagues in their training and providing feedback on their policies to ensure they are up to date with the latest safeguarding legislation
- Collaborating with central team colleagues to audit the central SICR on a termly basis
- Reviewing, updating the Central and Ark Schools Safeguarding Policies to ensure they are aligned with the latest KCISE guidance
- Reviewing, updating the Safeguarding level one training for DSLs to deliver in schools, as well as Ark Central training and Ark Learning modules in line with annual KCSIE updates
- Overseeing annual updates of the Online Safety, Child Protection and Safeguarding, Intimate Care policies, so that all schools in the network have fully compliant policies
- Ensuring that schools are compliant with Prevent legislation
- Acting as the network's Designated Safeguarding Lead, advising on day to day matters

Overseeing Ark's reporting and auditing

- Strategic oversight and management of the annual in-school audits (undertaken by an external consultant) to ensure that safeguarding procedures are properly followed, schools are compliant with legal and Ofsted requirements and to assess the safeguarding culture across the network. Set up the visits, and ensure the consultant has the correct information on the schools latest CPOMS, SICR etc, then identifying themes and outcomes from these visits to feed into reports. Follow up with assurance checks and training where needed post safeguarding audits.
- Ensuring that reporting systems provide appropriate assurance to the Ark Schools Board, the Risk and Audit Committee, and the Ark Schools leadership team. This includes supporting through the writing of termly board reports.

Driving the overall strategy

- Ensuring that the network strategy for safeguarding is based on research, evidence and data
- Supporting schools in their own understanding and analysis of safeguarding strategy to inform strategy at individual school level
- Providing key data and insights on safeguarding across the network to drive network strategy. This includes being the lead staff member for our safeguarding partnership work, including our safeguarding management platform, CPOMS, as well as our monitoring and filtering platform, SENSO

Growing Ark's capability

- Reviewing and using the thematic content arising from the Assurance Checks to train, develop and support the Principals, DSL and wider Network
- Assuring the content of targeted training for stakeholders, and advise on suitable training delivery partners, so that staff, governors and other relevant groups have the knowledge required to ensure schools are safe, and are aware of the proper process for escalation
- Ensuring DSLs and Safeguarding Link governors are properly equipped to discharge their responsibilities and in particular that training content aligns with Local Authority Partnership priorities
- Leading the DSLs as a specialist peer group, ensuring that best practice is shared and that DSLs across the network are supported in their professional development and can access professional supervision with Healthy Minds (our specialist provider)
- Supporting schools to promote early intervention, leveraging school to school support to maximise learning and impact and maximising capability building across the network
- Providing wellbeing support to the network's DSLs and DDSLs

Provide specialist advice

- Providing consultancy advice and triaging calls/questions from school leaders and DSLs and senior colleagues on a day to day basis
- Managing complex cases, in line with the network's escalation procedures
- Work in partnership with HR to ensure expected guidance for safer recruitment is followed in schools. Encourage and promote best practice and share critical information back to HR

Person Specification: Head of Safeguarding

Qualifications

- Qualified at least to degree level, or above
- Relevant professional qualifications (e.g. Level 3 Safeguarding, Mental Health First Aid), with demonstrable commitment to ongoing professional development
- Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) is preferable

Knowledge & Skills

- Experience of strategic and operational senior leadership of safeguarding across a number of schools, ideally as part of a central Multi-Academy Trust team
- Knowledge of schools and a deep understanding of student needs
- Comprehensive knowledge of safeguarding legislation, guidance, best practice and services for vulnerable children and young people
- Substantial experience of using safeguarding management platforms to drive whole school safeguarding strategy
- Experience of developing safeguarding policies and, in particular, skill in collaborating with colleagues at all levels to build ownership of this policy
- Proven track record of successfully embedding safeguarding developments into policy and practice, supported by accurate and reliable advice
- Experience of advising on safeguarding matters within a school setting
- Experience of liaising with local and statutory authorities on safeguarding matters to ensure effective multi-disciplinary interventions
- Experience of developing, delivering and track impact of training
- Experience of developing an effective and positive safeguarding culture in a whole school setting

Personal Qualities

- Outstanding facilitation skills to enable a virtual network of specialist practitioners (DSLs) to operate effectively
- Effective coach and developer of others, capable of building and sustaining a community of practice
- Ability to support schools with the triangulation of pastoral (behaviour, SEND, Attendance, Safeguarding) data to drive strategic work
- Excellent communication (written and oral), presentation, and inter-personal skills
- Ability to interpret safeguarding requirements and responses in specific circumstances
- Ability to balance the strategic and the operational, ensuring that there are clear accountabilities between this post and the DSLs
- Evidence of sound and balanced judgement
- Effective time management and organisational skills, with demonstrable ability to prioritise
- Ability to work well under pressure, with strong problem solving and analytical skills
- Flexibility and adaptability to respond to changing needs
- Effective team worker who enjoys collaboration with colleagues across the network

Other

- Right to work in the UK
- Commitment to equality of opportunity and the safeguarding and welfare of all students
- Willingness to undertake training

- This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check

Ark is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in its academies. In order to meet this responsibility, its academies follow a rigorous selection process to discourage and screen out unsuitable applicants.

Ark requires all employees to undertake an enhanced DBS check. You are required, before appointment, to disclose any unspent conviction, cautions, reprimands or warnings under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975. Non-disclosure may lead to termination of employment. However, disclosure of a criminal background will not necessarily debar you from employment - this will depend upon the nature of the offence(s) and when they occurred. To read more about Ark's safer recruitment process, please click this [link](#).

We aim to build a diverse and inclusive organisation where everyone – staff and students – can do their best work and achieve their full potential. We want to reflect and represent diverse perspectives across our organisation because we know that doing so will make us stronger and more effective. To know more about Ark's diversity and inclusion commitments, please click on this [link](#).