



Gloucestershire Initial Teacher Education Partnership

Safeguarding Policy



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Safeguarding Policy

Definition: GITEP staff refers to the Course Director, Course Administrator, Finance Manager, Lead Mentors and Subject Leads.

GITEP safeguarding commitment

Gloucestershire Initial Teacher Education Partnership (GITEP) is fully committed to supporting the safeguarding of GITEP staff, trainees, school staff and pupils within our partnership. This is reflected in the Pupil Progress and Outcomes and Wellbeing and Support sections of our Curriculum Intent. We recognise we all have a crucial part to play in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018). We also take our safeguarding and support responsibilities to our trainees seriously and work closely with our partners to ensure our trainees feel confident and secure throughout their time with us.

This policy covers:

- Pupils
- GITEP trainees
- GITEP staff
- School staff
- Guest speakers
- The Partnership Board

This policy is stored on the GITEP website and on the GITEP TEAMs sites to ensure all parties have access to the information.



GITEP safeguarding roles

GITEP Designated Safeguarding Lead

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The role of the DSL is to:

- Work with the course director to ensure high quality, timely safeguarding training is included in the curriculum
- Provide a focal point for reporting any safeguarding concerns
- Liaise with staff across the partnership, including DSLs in partnership schools as required
- Keep records of any concerns raised about trainees or GITEP staff or volunteers
- Ensure the records are kept separately from other trainee records
- Liaise with the LADO for Gloucestershire or the MASH as required
- Review and revise the Trainee Support Handbook annually
- Work with the course director and other Lead Mentor(s) to oversee any support plans, action plans or personal support plans

Course Director

The course director is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy
- Ensuring the policy is communicated to all stakeholders in the GITEP partnership
- Acting a 'case manager' in the event of an allegation against another member of GITEP staff.

The Partnership Board

The partnership board is responsible for:

- Evaluating and approving this policy at each review
- Acting as a 'case manager' in the event an allegation is made against the Course Director.



Preparing our trainees for their roles promoting the welfare of pupils

Safeguarding plays a key part in the GITEP curriculum, so our trainees are aware of the need to safeguard pupils in their schools and understand their responsibilities under Part Two of the Teachers' Standards. Before starting at their school placements all trainees are required to read Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education, complete online Prevent training and have training from a safeguarding expert. Trainees also complete a school induction visit before each placement where they are directed to read the school's safeguarding policy; identify the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL); and find out how to report concerns in that school.

Training provided for trainees:

Centre Professional Studies Sessions:

- Safeguarding
- The Code of Practice and role of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo)
- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education
- Pupil Premium (PP) and supporting disadvantaged students
- Supporting pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- Diversity and equality training
- Mental health training
- Bullying
- GDPR and the importance of protecting your online data

In addition, trainees complete Prevent training online and are required to read the latest version of Part One of KCSIE.

School-based Professional Studies:

- At the start of each placement specific training is provided in school covering the school policies and practices for safeguarding, GDPR, equal opportunities and diversity, and professional conduct.
- Induction tasks are set at the start of each placement to include finding out about safeguarding personnel and procedures in each school. These are completed and uploaded to TEAMS where they are checked by a GITEP Lead Mentor.
- Professional Leads in schools also lead sessions on safeguarding, SEND, disadvantage, diversity and inclusion, RSE and health education, and bullying.

Online safety and the use of mobile technology

Training is provided by GITEP on safer internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying and the risks of online radicalisation at the start of the year. Trainee must ensure they are aware of school IT policies during induction and adhere to those policies during their placements. Trainees are required to confirm they have read and understood these policies as part of their induction tasks.



Safeguarding Children

Reporting concerns

How trainees report concerns in school

If a GITEP trainee is concerned about the welfare of a child in their placement school, they should follow the procedures in that placement school and report their concerns to the school's DSL. Similarly, if the trainee is concerned about the conduct of a member of staff in the school, they should follow school procedures and report their concerns to the Headteacher or Governors as appropriate. The professional lead or subject mentor can support with this process if necessary. The trainee can also contact the GITEP DSL, but we recommend using school procedures to ensure information is shared as quickly as possible. In the event a trainee contacts the GITEP DSL, they will contact the placement school to forward the information. If a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm or in danger, anyone can make an immediate referral to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub or the Emergency Duty Team. Details are at the end of this document. If a trainee is not happy with the outcome of their referral, they can ask the school DSL or GITEP DSL to escalate the concern or seek advice from social care.

Reporting concerns about trainees

If a member of staff at the placement school has a concern about a trainee, they should inform the school DSL following usual school procedures. The school DSL should then contact GITEP DSL who will record the concern and liaise the school DSL and/or LADO as appropriate. GITEP will always support the school DSL decision following the outcomes of their investigations. It is the responsibility of the GITEP DSL to assess whether the trainee can continue to access other aspects of their training whilst waiting for the outcome of any investigation; to liaise with the school DSL and/or LADO as appropriate; and make the final decision about whether and how training could continue along with the Course Director and Partnership Board.

Concerns can also be reported by school staff, GITEP staff, visiting experts or other members of the partnership directly to the GITEP DSL who will record the concern. If the trainee is on a school placement, the GITEP DSL will contact the school DSL immediately by telephone followed by a written report and liaise with them and the LADO as appropriate. If the trainee is not on a placement, the GITEP DSL will manage the case directly.



Reporting concerns about GITEP staff

If a trainee, member of GITEP staff, member of school staff, visiting expert or other member of the partnership is concerned about the conduct of a member of GITEP staff, they should report this to the Course Director, or to the Partnership Board if there is a concern with GITEP leadership.

Allegations against trainees or GITEP staff

Allegations that may meet the harms threshold and require referral to the LADO

This applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current trainee or member of GITEP staff, including a visiting expert or other member of the partnership has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place both inside and outside of school

Allegations of abuse will be dealt with quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation. A 'case manager' will be identified at the earliest opportunity and lead any investigation. This will be the Course Director, or the Partnership Board where the Course Director is the subject of the allegation. Procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

Procedures for dealing with allegations

When dealing with allegations against trainees, GITEP will also liaise with the placement school to conduct enquiries. The case manager will:

- Conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation before carrying on with the steps below
- Discuss the allegation with the LADO to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children's social care services.
- Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or children's social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children's social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies



- Where appropriate, following a risk assessment, and advice from the LADO consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at school is justified or whether alternative arrangements can be put in place.
- If immediate suspension is considered necessary, agree and record the rationale for this with the LADO. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at GITEP and their contact details.
- If it is decided that no further action is to be taken in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the LADO what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation
- If it is decided that further action is needed, take steps as agreed with the LADO to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or children's social care services as appropriate
- Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and considering what other support is appropriate.
- Inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children's social care services and/or the police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice
- Keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case (only in relation to their child – no information will be shared regarding the staff member)
- Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child



Suspension of trainees

Where a trainee is at a school placement, GITEP will support the school's decision regarding suspension from the school unless GITEP believes the trainee poses a greater risk than that assessed by the school.

Where a concern has been raised, GITEP DSL will liaise with the school to complete a risk assessment. Trainees should not be working unsupervised with children during their training year, but the school may consider it appropriate to allow them to continue training, or to continue but without direct contact with the child or children concerned. If in doubt, the school and/or GITEP DSL can contact the LADO for advice.

Following the risk assessment, GITEP may allow the trainee:

- Continue their school placement as agreed by the school and under conditions set out by their DSL.
- Continue their subject pathway training under the condition they are supervised at all times as training takes part in school settings. This would be with the permission of the host school.
- Continue their professional studies training under the condition they are supervised at all times as training takes part in school settings. This would be with the permission of the host school.
- Continue online training and those aspects of the PGCE assignments that can be completed without being in school.

If in doubt, the GITEP DSL can contact the LADO for advice.

Suspension of GITEP staff

Suspension is not the default position and will only be considered where there is reason to suspect a child or children are at harm or the case is so serious it could be grounds for dismissal. In such cases, we will only suspend an individual if we have considered all other options available and there is no reasonable alternative.

Following an allegation, the case manager must complete a risk assessment and determine whether an alternative to suspension is appropriate. This could include:

- Redeployment so the member of staff has no contact with children
- Only allowing the member of staff to be in school if they are supervised
- Allowing the member of staff in school, but not to have contact with any child or children concerned.

If in doubt, the GITEP DSL can contact the LADO for advice.



Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations

- Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive, or to cause harm to the subject of the allegation
- False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- Unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence)
- Unfounded: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made

Timescales and duty of care

A case manager will be appointed as soon as possible and a named representative appointed to keep the individual informed of the progress of the case. The individual will be advised to contact their trade union representative and signposted to counselling or medical support as appropriate.

We will deal with all allegations as quickly and effectively as possible and will endeavour to comply with the following timescales, where reasonably practicable:

- Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious should be resolved within 1 week
- If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, appropriate action should be taken within 3 working days
- If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, this should be held within 15 working days

However, these are objectives only and where they are not met, we will endeavour to take the required action as soon as possible thereafter.

Specific Actions

Where an allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or resigns from employment or is dismissed from or leaves the course, GITEP will make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.

Where an individual returns to work or to the course following an investigation, the case manager will consider how to facilitate this with thought given to whether the accused and the child or person making the allegation are likely to come into contact and how both parties should be supported.

Where the allegation is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the GITEP DSL, liaising with the placement school as appropriate may wish to consider whether the child or person making the allegation requires support or whether disciplinary action may be needed.



When providing employer references, we will:

- Not refer to any allegation that has been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any repeated allegations which have all been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious
- Include substantiated allegations, provided that the information is factual and does not include opinions

Appeals

Where a trainee or member of GITEP staff wish to appeal against a decision to suspend or the outcome of the investigation and subsequent specific action, they should put their appeal in writing to the Chair of the Partnership Board. The appeal will then be investigated by two members of the Partnership Board not previously involved in the case.

Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

Concerns that do not meet the threshold including low level concerns that an adult has acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and
- Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the designated officer at the local authority

GITEP staff and trainees should feel empowered to share concerns including self-referral, so concerns can be dealt with in a sensitive and proportionate way, supporting individuals to correct unprofessional behaviours at an early stage.

Low level concerns should be recorded and reported to GITEP DSL where records will be kept separately and confidentially. Low level concerns would not be included in references unless the concern(s) met the threshold for referral to the LADO and were substantiated or related to another issue relating to misconduct.



Confidentiality

GITEP will take every possible measure to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. The case manager will take advice from the LADO, police and children's social care services, as appropriate, to agree:

- Who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared
- How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip, including how to make parents or carers of a child/children involved aware of their obligations with respect to confidentiality
- What, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation
- How to manage press interest if, and when, it arises

Safeguarding trainees, GITEP staff, school staff and partnership members

Trainee Support

It is the responsibility of the partnership to ensure trainees have a safe, secure environment in which they feel valued, respected and confident they know who to approach if they experience difficulties, and that they will be listened to and supported. The structure of the course provides trainees with a Subject Mentor with whom they have daily contact; a Professional Lead who is a senior member of staff who delivers content each week; and a Subject Lead who provides subject specific training each week as well as the GITEP leadership team. This ensures trainees have support available throughout the course.

Wellbeing and Support is one of the pillars of the GITEP curriculum intent and sessions are run throughout the year in Central Professional Studies sessions, including preparing for becoming an Early Career Teacher (ECT). GITEP have processes in place to provide support as required for trainees during their time on the course. This is set out in the Trainee Support Handbook. This can include:

- Difficulties meeting the standards required in any of the five curriculum strands
- Issues related to personal circumstances (for example, finances, caring responsibilities)
- Issues relating to physical or mental health
- Issues related to protected characteristics
- Support for any educational needs
- Support for any safeguarding needs

Where required, support plans, action plans or personal support plans, including those required to safeguard trainees can be put in place, and these are monitored by the GITEP leadership team, Professional Leads or Subject Leads as appropriate.

Support is also available from:



- University of Bristol Support Services which includes counselling, disability services, support for reporting bullying or discrimination and a multi-faith chaplaincy. <https://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/support/wellbeing/>
- Education Support <https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/>
- LGBTEd <https://lgbted.uk/>
- BAMEed <https://www.bameednetwork.com/>
- #WomenEd <https://womened.org/>
- DisabilityEd UK <https://disabilityeduk.org/>
- Now Teach <https://nowteach.org.uk/>
- MixEd <https://mix-ed.org/>
- Black Teachers Connect <https://blackteachersconnect.co.uk/>
- Flexible Teacher Talent <https://flexibleteachertalent.co.uk/>

Full details of how trainees are supported are found in our Trainee Support Policy.

Reporting concerns

Should any trainees, GITEP staff, school staff or partnership members have concerns about their safety carrying out their duties, this should be reported to the GITEP DSL who will liaise with the relevant staff in schools, the Course Director or LADO as appropriate.

Should anyone have concerns about the conduct of any GITEP staff, school staff or partnership members, they should report this to the GITEP DSL, Course Director or Partnership Board. They will consider whether the concern is a safeguarding issue or one better covered by one of the linked policies listed below and follow procedures as required by the appropriate policy.

Risk assessing partnership schools

By signing the Partnership Agreement schools accept responsibility for the trainee teacher under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. Schools should:

- Provide a health and safety induction for all trainees with specific induction in higher risk areas e.g. using machinery
- Confirm the school has in place Employers' and/or Public Liability insurances and that the trainee teacher and/or supervising teacher is deemed to be an employee for the purposes of these policies

The Partnership Board approve the selection of Partnership Schools and where serious weaknesses are identified can also suspend a school's membership of the scheme.



Record Keeping

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing. Records will include a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern; details of how the concern was followed up and resolved; and a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

Concerns or referrals will be kept in separate files for each child, trainee, or member of staff.

The case manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual's confidential personnel file for the duration of the case.

The records of any allegation that, following an investigation, is found to be malicious or false will be deleted from the individual's personnel file (unless the individual consents for the records to be retained on the file). For all other allegations (which are not found to be malicious or false), the following information will be kept on the file of the individual concerned:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
- Notes of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome
- A declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference

In these cases, GITEP will provide a copy to the individual, in agreement with children's social care or the police as appropriate. Where records contain information about allegations of sexual abuse, we will preserve these for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry. We will retain all other records at least until the individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.



Safer recruitment

The GITEP Leadership team GITEP Administrator are all Safer Recruitment trained and ensure that at least one member of any recruitment or interviewing team are Safer Recruitment trained.

Recruitment of trainees takes place through the DfE application site and safer recruitment checks are completed prior to interview, including checking for unexplained gaps in their application and online checks.

If a candidate is successful at interview, they are offered a place on the course providing they meet the following conditions:

- Confirmation of identity
- Confirmation of qualifications
- A clear DBS check
- Residency check/police check if appropriate
- Satisfactory references
- A clear social media check

In line with guidelines, GITEP ensures that safeguarding is highlighted in recruitment materials, on our website and at interview. Full details of the recruitment process and how it complies with Safer Recruitment requirements can be found in the Recruitment Policy.

Use of external staff

The majority of external speakers and training providers are employed within the partnership. Where necessary, GITEP staff check photo ID, school ID and DBS numbers or certificates as appropriate to ensure they are using appropriate external providers. As training takes place in partnership schools, all GITEP staff and visiting experts are required to follow the safeguarding practices of each school when visiting.

Trainees visiting partnership schools

GITEP leadership and/or trainees must ensure they know the requirements of each individual school when visiting. They should expect to have to show photo ID and be prepared to show their DBS certificate if required. GITEP are able to confirm to schools that trainees have DBS certificates and provide the DBS certificate number if required.

Links to other policies

Absence Policy

Complains and Grievance Policy

Data Protection Policy

Harassment and bullying policy

Recruitment Policy



Trainee Support Policy
 Wellbeing Policy
 Whistleblowing Policy

Useful Contacts and Documents

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) 01452 426 565
 Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) 01452 426 994
 The Emergency Duty Team (EDT) are available for out of hours support on 01452 614194

Gloucestershire children’s social care escalation advice can be found here: <https://www.gscb.org.uk/media/2088611/escalation-of-professional-concerns-guidance-feb-2019-amended.pdf>

NSPCC helpline 0808 800 5000

The following link can be used to explore how to best report child abuse to our local children’s social care team: <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/children-youngpeople-and-families/report-a-child-at-risk/>

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2022 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1101454/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2022.pdf

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942454/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_inter_agency_guidance.pdf

Early Help Guidance Practice 2020
https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2103931/early-help-practice-guide_digital_dev6-v2-070420.pdf

Document history

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