

## How is safeguarding assessed during inspection?

During an inspection, schools are assessed based on the efficiency of their safeguarding measures and must show they are fulfilling their statutory duties. However, safeguarding is not given its own individual grade, instead it is considered in the context of the school as a whole.

For example, pupil attendance and wellbeing are both measured as part of a school's personal development, behaviour and welfare. Furthermore, leadership and management is evaluated based on the extent to which leaders uphold a culture that effectively promotes the welfare of children and protects from harm.

Ensuring the safety of children holds the utmost significance. As a result, a school's overall grade may be deemed inadequate if safeguarding arrangements are found to be lacking, regardless of how well they have performed in other areas.

In recent weeks, there has been a lot of debate surrounding Ofsted and its approach to inspecting safeguarding in schools. In response, Chief Inspector, Amanda Spielman, has said that Ofsted will look for possible ways to improve. However, she maintains that safeguarding is ['one of the most critical areas we look at.'](#)

## Beyond box-ticking, towards a culture of safeguarding

Safeguarding begins with policies, procedures, record-keeping and training – but that's not where it ends. To be truly successful, safeguarding must be a golden thread that weaves throughout every aspect of school life, from creating a safe learning environment and promoting good behaviour, to developing positive teacher-pupil relationships.

Senior leaders have an important role to play in establishing the ethos and values of the school, but ultimately safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. It is essential that every member of staff participates in building a culture of vigilance, professional curiosity, and continuous learning. Equally, pupils must be engaged and empowered to participate in a strong safeguarding culture, where they are given opportunities to raise concerns and feel part of the solution.

## Staying safe and inspection-ready

With emerging risks and trends, there is always more to be done to improve safeguarding in schools. No matter how many preventative steps we take to keep children protected from harm, it is still important to recognise that "it can happen here" – whether that's in the community, or on the school grounds.

Our Education Welfare & Safeguarding team has a proven track record of supporting schools and improving outcomes. With wide-ranging experience and expertise, our consultants can work with school leaders to ensure their safeguarding arrangements are nothing less than outstanding.

## Safeguarding Assessment

Discover your strengths and identify areas for improvement with our Safeguarding Assessment. This is a one day session that takes place on-site. Our experts will work with you to consider various elements of safeguarding practice, giving you the reassurance that all your arrangements are in line with statutory guidance and Ofsted requirements.

With our holistic, child-centred approach, our experts will take a detailed look at every aspect of your safeguarding arrangements. This includes staff training, records, policies, multi-agency working, safeguarding and the curriculum, governance and accountability, pupil welfare and communication with parents/carers, as well as many other elements of practice.

Discussions will be held throughout the day, drawing insights from staff members, senior leaders and pupils. We will capture the voices of the whole school, considering how safeguarding is reflected throughout the community. There will also be an opportunity to share any supporting documents as part of the assessment process.

Initial feedback will be given at the end of the day and then a thorough, RAG-rated report is collated and provided to the school for consideration. After making any necessary amendments, the final report will then be provided to the school for you to share and implement as you see fit.

“We found the assessment useful and the final report has helped us structure safeguarding training for the current year. It was a supportive process and we have been able to use the report meaningfully and share it with stakeholders. It’s always useful to have that external appraisal which serves as a critique rather than a criticism.”

*Stuart Harris, Deputy Headteacher at Grange School, Prospere Learning Trust*

## Register your interest

Effective safeguarding children is at the heart of every strong school and academy trust. If you are interested in arranging a Safeguarding Assessment, please [get in touch](#).

**Blog written by Jess Lane**

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