

IRIS Safeguarding Policy

January 2024

Policy Purpose and Scope

The Institute for Research in Schools (IRIS) works with children and their teachers as part of its activities. These include the following:

- We hold children's data for their research project submissions.
- We employ staff who assess children's research projects using our secure online storage and CMS platform.
- Children and teachers attending events organised by IRIS.

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- to protect children and young people who we work with.
- to provide teachers, staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

This policy statement applies to anyone working on behalf of IRIS, including senior managers and the board of trustees, all paid staff and contractors and volunteers.

In addition to protecting children and young people in our own activities, as a collaborative organisation IRIS works with partners that also work with children, young people and adults at risk. This policy outlines IRIS's commitment to appropriately consider the safeguarding practice of organisations as part of the grant making process.

Legal framework

IRIS works closely with children and young people.

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children¹ and adults at risk² in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. In addition, we expect staff, teachers and partners in schools to adhere to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education³' (KCSIE). All IRIS staff and Trustees will be required to read s.1 of KCSIE each year and confirm by email to the DSL / DCPO that they have done so.

This policy acts as IRIS's Child Protection Policy. In this policy, 'child' / 'children' means people aged up to 18 years old.

IRIS is committed to safeguarding children. While safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, the Trustees of The Institute for Research in Schools have a specific duty to take reasonable steps to protect from harm people who come into contact with the charity. They will ensure that the charity has appropriate policies,

procedures and appropriate risk management strategies are in place, and delegate to the Director the day-to-day responsibility to ensure these are adhered to.

IRIS's staff, contractors, trustees, and volunteers uphold the position that the welfare of children and adults at risk is paramount and that all vulnerable persons without exception have the right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, or religion/beliefs. Any concerns and allegations of abuse will be responded to swiftly and with sensitivity (this may require a referral to children's services, safeguarding bodies, or in an emergency, the Police).

Related policies and procedures

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies and procedures, including our:

- Code of Conduct
- Social Media, Digital Communication & E-Safety Policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Data protection policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Specific project due diligence framework/ grant terms and conditions

Recruitment, selection and vetting

We are committed to the safe recruitment, selection and vetting of paid and volunteer staff or consultants, where appropriate. Each new role created will be reviewed against DBS guidance to ascertain whether the role delivers regulated activities.

Any staff member or volunteer in a role delivering regulated activities to young people will undergo an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. All disclosures will be reported to the Director or Director of Finance & Operations. IRIS will undertake regular DBS checks for all staff and Trustees every three years. Staff will receive safeguarding training during their induction, alongside annual safeguarding training as part of IRIS's core staff training provision.

Contractors are also informed of our Safeguarding Policy.

Training

All staff are required to undertake safeguarding training on an annual basis. Charity trustee safeguarding training is also available to Trustees.

Reporting concerns

Any concerns over child protection or safeguarding an adult at risk should be reported immediately to Martin Keat, Director of Finance & Operations (Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO)). Their

role follows standards set by the NSPCC⁴. If he is not appropriate or available, the concern should be reported to the Director, Dr Jo Foster. If neither are contactable they should be reported to the Trustee Safeguarding Lead, Tim Edwards.

Concerns should be kept confidential and only shared with the DSL / DCPO, and concerns about a child should always be reported even if they ask you not to. A template for recording safeguarding concerns is available in Appendix A. The safeguarding reporting process is set out in Appendix B.

The safeguarding lead will consider immediately whether a referral to statutory services or the police is required to ensure the safety of the child or adult at risk. Guidance will be sought from statutory services or legal if required. Guidance on what may be considered as child abuse is available from the NSPCC website.

Where appropriate an investigation will be undertaken under IRIS's Whistleblowing procedure. Written, dated notes should be kept of any incident(s), including actions and decisions by the DSL / DCPO.

Where a school partner has concerns about a child, young person or adult accessing their services, these should be dealt with in line with their own internal policies and procedures. School partners will be required to report any safeguarding incidents which relate to our collaborations to IRIS. IRIS may make onward referrals to external bodies where necessary.

This policy is approved by and endorsed by the Trustees. It applies to all staff, contractors, trustees and volunteers. This policy is published on our website and children, young people, teachers, and parents/guardians can ask to see a copy of this policy at any time.

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed every year. It was last reviewed and updated in September 2023.

Contact details

Designated Safeguarding Lead / Designated Child Protection Officer

Name: Martin Keat

Position: Director of Finance & Operations

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Director

Name: Dr Jo Foster

Email: jofoster@researchinschools.org

Trustee Safeguarding Lead

Name: Tim Edwards

Email timedwards@researchinschool.org

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

¹ A summary of key legislation can be found at <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system/>

² This includes the [Care Act 2014](#), [Health and Social Care Act 2012](#) and [Mental Capacity Act 2005](#)

³ [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#)

⁴ [NSPCC: Nominated Child Protection Lead](#)