

# **Safeguarding Policy**

**December 2025**

## **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 safeguarding practice.

## **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 children<sup>1</sup> and adults at risk<sup>2</sup> in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. In addition, we expect staff, teachers and partners in schools to adhere to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education<sup>3</sup>' (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. It is essential that everybody working for the organisation understands their safeguarding responsibilities. Further, the Trustees consider it important that those staff who work directly with children read at least Part one of the KCSIE guidance. In addition, the Designated Safeguarding Lead takes the lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place), which has been made explicit in the role holder's job description.

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 NSPCC<sup>4</sup>. 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 December 2025.

### **Contact details**

#### **Designated Safeguarding Lead / Designated Child Protection Officer**

Name: Martin Keat

Position: Director of Finance & Operations

Email: [martinkeat@researchinschools.org](mailto:martinkeat@researchinschools.org)

Phone: 07786 626989

#### **Director**

Name: Dr Jo Foster

Email: [jofoster@researchinschools.org](mailto:jofoster@researchinschools.org)

#### **Trustee Safeguarding Lead**

Name: Tim Edwards

Email [timedwards@researchinschools.org](mailto:timedwards@researchinschools.org)

#### **NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000**

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

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

<sup>3</sup> [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#)

<sup>4</sup> [NSPCC: Nominated Child Protection Lead](#)

## Annex A – Safeguarding Report Template

SAFEGUARDING INCIDENT REPORT	
Name of person completing the report	
Date	Time
INCIDENT DETAILS	
Details of the incident (This may include details of disclosure, incident witnessed, location of incident, individuals involved or named)	
Details of the person the safeguarding concern is about	
Name	
Other details (date of birth, address, school if known)	
INCIDENT RESPONSE BY SAFEGUARDING LEAD	
Details of action taken (may include advice sought, referrals made)	
Outcome (if known)	

## Appendix B – Safeguarding Reporting Process

