**Guidance for Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Meetings**

1. **Introduction**

This guidance was devised to give DSLs advice on DSL meetings. DSL meetings should take place regularly to monitor and review safeguarding arrangements in place. This model will support schools to ensure that there is clear management oversight of the safeguarding function and will provide opportunity to review all cases of concern, whether current or emerging.

1. **Key points**

* Meetings should take place at a frequency agreed by the DSL Team.
* All DSLs should be present so everyone has knowledge of the cases of individual pupils.
* If the Attendance Lead is not a DSL this member of staff should be invited.
* If a DSL cannot attend, they should have access to a copy of the minutes.
* Minutes should be taken so a formal record of the meeting is made (see Appendix 1 template). The minutes should be stored securely.
* Minutes should be shared with senior leaders, if they are not already present, to ensure management oversight of cases.
* Actions should be clearly recorded, noting who is responsible for the action and by when. Previously agreed actions should be reviewed at the next meeting.
* Individual cases should be discussed, particularly if they are complex or ‘stuck’ using a signs of safety approach.
* Discussions, agreements, and actions relating to individual cases should be recorded on the child’s safeguarding record to reflect management oversight of safeguarding concerns.

1. **Content of meetings**

It is recommended that DSLs:

* Discuss next steps and actions for each case, ensuring the child’s voice is considered and allowing time for professional curiosity.
* A record of the discussion, actions agreed and who is responsible for the action should be added to the child protection file/s.
* DSLs can map cases using the [Signs of Safety](https://norfolklscp.org.uk/people-working-with-children/norfolk-signs-of-safety-family-network-approach-family-group-conference) format (see Appendix 2) and the [Norfolk Continuum of Need](https://norfolklscp.org.uk/people-working-with-children/norfolk-continuum-of-needs-guidance) and retain evidence of this on the individual child’s file. This will ensure all case discussions and agreed actions are reflective, demonstrate the impact on the child’s welfare and safety and clarify current strengths and areas of concern enabling clearer decision making on what the next steps should be.
* Consider utilising the [Joint Agency Group Supervision procedure](https://norfolklscp.org.uk/about/policies-procedures/managing-individual-cases-where-there-are-concerns-about-a-childs-safety-and-welfare/316-joint-agency-group-supervision-procedure) for cases with a multi-agency response that are very complex, feel ‘stuck’ or may be drifting. Record this carefully on the child’s file.
* Use the [NSCP Resolving Professional Disagreements Policy](https://norfolklscp.org.uk/about/policies-procedures/complaints-and-professional-disagreements/102-resolving-professional-disagreements) if there is a dispute with another agency and a challenge is required. Record this carefully on the child’s file.
* Where an audit of safeguarding record keeping has been undertaken, a record confirming this should be added to the individual child’s file along with any identified action that are specific to the child. Please refer to the document ‘[Guidance for schools and colleges – child protection record keeping and transfer](https://www.schools.norfolk.gov.uk/pupil-safety-and-behaviour/safeguarding/safeguarding-forms-and-templates).’

**Appendix 1: Designated Safeguarding Lead Meeting Record Template**

**Designated Safeguarding Lead Meeting**

**Date:**

**Present:**

Name, role

**Apologies:**

Name, role

**Minutes taken by:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Item |  | Actions |
| **1.** | **Actions arising from the meeting held on xxxx** |  |
|  |  |  |
| **2.** | **Individual pupils discussed** |  |
|  |  |  |
| **3.** | **Whole school safeguarding practice matters** |  |
|  |  |  |
| **4.** | **AOB** |  |
|  |  |  |
| **5.** | **Next meeting date and time** |  |
|  |  |  |

**Action Table**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Item number** | **Action** | **Actioned by** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**Appendix 2: Signs of Safety Assessment and Planning Form**

Family:

Date:

Present at meeting:

Purpose:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **What are we Worried About?**  (Harm and Future Danger) | **What’s Working Well?**  (Strengths & Demonstrated Safety) | **What Needs to Happen?**  (Safety goals and next steps in working toward safety) |
| **Past Harm** (What has happened, that worries us, to these children or other children in the care of these parents?)      **Future Danger** (What are we worried might happen to these children in  the care of these parents in the future?)      **Complicating Factors** (What makes building safety for the children and working with this family more complicated?) |  | **Agency Goals** (What does the agency need to see the parents doing in their ca of the children and over what time period to be confident there is enough safety to clo the case?)    **Family Goals** (What does the family think they need to be doing in their care of the children for the children to be safe or for child protection services to be willing to close the case?)      **Next Steps** (What are the agency’s & family’s ideas about what needs to happen next in working towards these goals?) |
|
|
|
| **Safety Scale:** On a scale of 0 – 10, where 10 means everyone is confident the children are safe enough for child protection services to close the case and 0 means there is not enough safety for the children to live at home, where do we rate the situation? (Place different people’s assessment on the continuum)    0 10 | | |

Adapted from Turnell A. & Edwards S. (1999). Signs of Safety: A solution and safety-oriented approach to child protection case work.