

Initial Teacher Education Reflective - Responsive - Research-driven

Safeguarding Policy: 2024/25

This policy outlines the Safeguarding procedures related to student teachers in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) at the University of Sussex. This policy and practice work alongside and within the University of Sussex [Safeguarding policy](#).

The Safeguarding Officers for ITE are ESW Directors of Student Experience Jo Tregenza and Dr Rachel Burr.

The responsibilities of the Safeguarding Officers are:

- Day to day responsibility for Safeguarding issues
- Lead role in establishing and reviewing Safeguarding policies
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of the procedures that need to be followed in the event of a Safeguarding incident
- Providing training and advice for staff
- Receiving reports of Safeguarding incidents and logging incidents to inform ongoing and future Safeguarding procedure
- Ensuring that Safeguarding training is provided to student teachers across all ITE programmes.

Sussex ITE Safeguarding is committed to Safeguarding and promoting the welfare and safety of children and student teachers by:

- Adhering to University procedures to recruit staff and select student teachers
- Carrying out appropriate DBS checks as necessary
- Ensuring that staff and student teachers are aware of the University of Sussex Safeguarding Policy and related procedures, and that appropriate staff and students are provided with Child Protection Policy and Guidance and Prevent training on a regular basis
- Ensuring that staff, student teachers and school-based colleagues across our Partnership are aware of the ITE Safeguarding policy and procedures and of the Safeguarding and Prevent training we provide to our student teachers across all ITE programmes
- Providing information to teachers, group leaders, service providers and any other interested parties on the University of Sussex's expectations regarding Safeguarding responsibilities when visiting the University
- Having procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse

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Initial Teacher Education at the University of Sussex considers the issue of Safeguarding to be a fundamental component of all ITE programmes. Safeguarding is considered from the following perspectives:

- Ensuring children are protected
- Ensuring children are empowered to protect themselves
- Ensuring student teachers are protected
- Ensuring student teachers are empowered to protect themselves

Selection and Recruitment

The provider will:

1. Ensure that all entrants to the PGCE, School Direct, Primary and Early Years Education BA (with QTS), Early Years Education MA – Graduate route (with EYTS) courses are subject to enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosure, including a check of the children's barred list information.
2. Ensure that all entrants complete a UoS Declaration of Suitability for teaching pre-interview.
3. When determining an individual's suitability to train to teach, the provider or employing schools for salaried routes, should check, by asking the student teacher or using any other data or information they have access to, that a student teacher has not previously been removed from an ITE programme because they have behaved in a way that indicates that they may not be suitable to work with children, or if the previous ITE provider would have removed the student teacher had they not left.
4. Confirm to schools/settings that a student teacher's criminal record check - including a check of the children's barred list - has been completed and that the individual has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.
5. In the case of salaried routes, the responsibility lies with the employer to ensure that DBS checks and other pre-checks such as the children's barred list information. have been carried out. The employing school should inform the provider that a satisfactory check has been obtained. If a salaried trainee is, or becomes, disqualified from a childcare role, schools should inform the provider of this.
6. Obtain satisfactory overseas police checks for all periods of six or more months in any one non-UK country in the five years preceding the start of the course. This includes criminal records checks for overseas applicants using the Home Office's guidance on Criminal Record Checks for Overseas Applicants and DfE guidance on Recruit Teachers from Overseas.

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7. In the event of a delay in receiving DBS clearance, make checks against the DBS Children's Barred List and inform head teachers in writing prior to the start of a placement of the names of those student teachers for whom an enhanced disclosure has yet to be received. For Early Years Education MA – Graduate route (with EYTS) students, placements will not commence until disclosure information has been received. Maintain regular updates to schools/settings of the progress of applications for disclosures, informing them as soon as the disclosure is received.
8. Make decisions relating to suitability documents and DBS results. Convene a standing Safeguarding Panel to consider specific anonymised cases where a conviction, caution or reprimand or any other pertinent information has been disclosed to determine suitability. The Safeguarding Panel is convened by ESW Director of Recruitment and Admissions (DoRA) and comprises the following members: Chair - Head of Initial Teacher Education in the School of Education and Social Work (or their nominee); 3 representatives from Primary/Secondary partnership schools (as relevant) – Headteacher or Professional Tutor, who shall have had no previous involvement with the case being considered. (see Sussex ITE Admissions Safeguarding Panel Process policy).
9. Not admit candidates to any course carrying QTS or EYTS who are unsuited to work with children and maintain records showing that a disclosure has been obtained for every student teacher.
10. Conduct interviews with potential student teachers that include a two-person panel with a minimum of one NSPCC safer recruitment trained person.
11. Standardised interview schedule is used to obtain information for interviewee to consider attitudes and approaches to children/young people and Safeguarding.
12. Ensure that no reproductions of disclosures or their content are made, including photocopies or scanned images. Except for the purpose of making decisions on suitability, and in accordance with the Data Protection Act (2018).
13. Staff engage in training related to GDPR through the University and support student teachers to ensure they are aware of the need to treat sensitive data and information with due confidentiality and are careful about who has access to it.
14. Establish clear safeguarding procedures and protocols that are agreed by all lead partners and placement schools. This should include a common understanding of convictions, offences, cautions and warnings that would not pose a barrier to joining or continuing an ITE programme.
15. Ensure that the relevant aspects of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) requirements are in place when assessing student teachers' health and physical capacity to train to teach, so that children and young people are not at risk of harm.

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In-course process

1. Ensure student teachers receive taught sessions across provider-led and school-based training regarding Safeguarding, Prevent and Child Protection.
2. Ensure all student teachers know the name and contact details for their local Safeguarding officers at their schools/settings and at University.
3. Be vigilant and alert throughout student teachers' courses to the possibility of potential Safeguarding issues, taking measures as appropriate and informing Safeguarding officers to record (where appropriate).
4. Inform student teachers of their ongoing obligation to declare anything that might deem them unsuitable to work with children, including any conviction. Where a student teacher withholds such information, take appropriate action - which may include recommending the termination of their training.
5. If a student teacher is arrested, under investigation, charged with an offence or receives a conviction during the course of their studies, they will be referred to the Safeguarding Panel Committee and, as appropriate, to the University Fitness to Practice committee who will review the case and determine whether to allow the student teacher to continue their studies, or recommend suspension or termination. Wherever possible, and with the permission of the student teacher, ensure that the head teacher of the student teacher's placement schools/setting is informed.
6. Inform student teachers that they will need to be re-checked by the DBS before returning from any suspension of studies of 3 months or longer. Student teachers could be held responsible for the cost of the recheck.
7. Ensure all Lead Mentors conducting visits to schools have a clear DBS recorded with the Department of Education and is updated every three years as per University of Sussex policy guidance.

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School /settings will:

1. Provide confirmation that any School Direct Salaried or Early Years Education MA EYTS employment-based student teachers have completed satisfactory criminal records check and a satisfactory prohibition order check.
2. Provide confirmation that any:
 - a) School Direct Salaried student teachers and Early Years Education MA: Employment route student teachers are covered by this legislation.
 - b) Student teachers holding any form of direct managerial responsibility in a childcare or early years setting have been subject to appropriate checks with regard to the childcare disqualification requirements.
3. Record in their central record that declarations relating to the disqualification requirements have been obtained for Early Years Teacher Status graduate entry courses as confirmed by the University.
4. Recognise that satisfactory DBS checking of non-salaried student teachers is the responsibility of the University, not the school, setting or local authority.
5. Accept student teachers for placement in the school or setting for whom a DBS enhanced disclosure has been received and who have been deemed suitable to work with children.
6. Exercise the discretion provided to them by guidance to allow student teachers for whom an enhanced DBS disclosure has yet to be received to start working in a school/setting, maintaining closer supervision and restricting access to information including sensitive pupil data where appropriate.
7. Where a school or college allows an individual to start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available, they should ensure that the individual is appropriately supervised and that all other checks, including a separate barred list check, have been completed as per the Department for Education (DfE) ITT criteria and supporting advice (2024).
8. Provide guidance on local Safeguarding processes, procedures and contacts.
9. Treat information declared on Salaried student teacher's DBS declaration with due confidentiality exercising due care about who has access to it.
10. If required, obtain DBS document directly from the student teacher with recent DfE guidance stating "Schools and colleges are legally entitled to and can insist on seeing a student's DBS certificate if they wish to do so. In most cases this will mean that the individual will need to be prepared to present their certificate on request. If an individual is unwilling to do so, the school or college is legally permitted to turn them away (without further reason).

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Student teachers will:

- Maintain their DBS documents across the length of the course.
- Ensure they have an up-to-date awareness of Safeguarding matters and of the Safeguarding policy and practices in their placement school(s). Student teachers at the start of their training are given access to the child protection policy, the staff behaviour policy, information about the designated safeguarding lead and a copy of Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- Ensure they have an up-to-date awareness of other statutory Safeguarding guidance from the DfE:
 - [Working together to safeguard children 2018](#)
 - [PREVENT Duty - Counter-Terrorism and Security Act](#) (HMG, 2015)
- Understand that it is everyone's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and that they have a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.
- Ensure they report any Safeguarding concerns to the relevant person in their school and the University of Sussex Safeguarding Officer.
- Always consider what is in the best interests of the students they teach.
- Know how to respond to a student who discloses abuse through delivery of 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018) and Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024).
- Be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep anything confidential which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.

Further references:

For information and guidance about important legislation around safeguarding and ITE please see:

[Freedom of Information Act 2000](#)

[Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 statutory guidance \(2018\)](#)

[The Childcare \(Disqualification\) Regulations 2009](#)

[Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#)

[Data Protection Act 2018](#)

[Criminal Records Checks for Overseas Applicants 2024](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024](#)

[Recruit Teachers from Overseas 2024](#)