



Job Description: Designated Safeguarding Lead

Job Title:	Designated Safeguarding Lead
Salary:	£24,800 - £30,800
Location:	West Yorkshire
Hours of Work:	Monday - Friday 8:15-16:00 – Term Time Only
Line Manager:	Pastoral Manager
How to apply:	www.firststepseducation.uk/apply
Contact Details:	0330 118 0974

Job Purpose

At First Steps Together, we believe that relationships come first. The Safeguarding Lead plays a vital role in creating a safe, nurturing, and predictable environment where children and young people with SEND feel understood, protected, and supported to take positive steps forward. Through consistent relational practice, the postholder ensures pupils are met with empathy, structure, and high expectations that enable them to rebuild trust, confidence, and emotional regulation.

This role also carries responsibility as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), providing strategic oversight of safeguarding, attendance, and pastoral systems across the provision. Working closely with the SEND team and Senior Leadership Team, the postholder will embed safeguarding, wellbeing, and inclusive practice into every aspect of school life. They will act as a central point of support for pupils, families, and colleagues, ensuring children's safety, emotional needs, and access to learning are prioritised every day.

Safeguarding

Here at First Steps Together, we're committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and young people and promoting that commitment. We expect all our staff and volunteers to share in it, too, which is why, as part of the selection process, we will carry out all the necessary checks to ensure you don't pose any risk of harm in your role here.

Join us and you'll be expected to actively contribute to our safeguarding commitment and promote child welfare in line with the school's Child Protection Policy. If ever there's a concern or issue, you'll be ready to report it to your Designated Safeguarding Lead or, in their absence, any Deputy Safeguarding Lead.

Key Responsibilities

1. Safeguarding and Child Protection (DSL)

- Act as the Designated Safeguarding Lead, ensuring safeguarding is central to all aspects of school life.
- Maintain a strong safeguarding culture where pupils feel safe, listened to, and believed.
- Lead on managing safeguarding concerns, referrals, and child protection records with accuracy and confidentiality.
- Work proactively with families, external agencies, and multi-agency professionals to secure positive outcomes for pupils.
- Provide clear advice, guidance, and support to staff when managing safeguarding and wellbeing concerns.
- Ensure safeguarding policies, procedures, and practice reflect statutory guidance and First Steps Together's relational ethos.
- Lead high-quality safeguarding reporting and represent the school at multi-agency meetings, case conferences, and reviews.

2. Building a Safeguarding Culture

- Promote a proactive, whole-school safeguarding culture built on openness, trust, and shared

responsibility.

- Lead regular staff briefings, updates, and reflective discussions that strengthen safeguarding confidence and practice.
- Ensure all staff recognise early signs of risk, need, or vulnerability and respond promptly and appropriately.
- Embed safeguarding awareness into everyday systems, routines, and environments across the school.
- Foster a culture where pupils feel able to share worries, seek help, and know that adults will respond with care and consistency.
- Work with leaders to ensure safeguarding is fully integrated into curriculum, pastoral systems, and wider school policy.
- Model professional curiosity, high expectations, and a calm, relational approach when supporting safeguarding matters.

3. Attendance and Engagement

- Lead the monitoring of attendance, understanding the barriers faced by children with SEND and complex needs.
- Analyse attendance data to identify trends, patterns, and emerging risks, informing targeted intervention and support.
- Develop personalised attendance support plans that balance challenge with relational, solution-focused strategies.
- Work closely with pupils, families, and external partners to address practical, emotional, and contextual barriers to attendance.
- Provide regular updates to the Senior Leadership Team and contribute to strategic attendance improvement planning.

4. Pastoral Support and SEND Collaboration

- Provide consistent, relational pastoral support to pupils, responding to emotional, behavioural, and sensory needs.
- Support pupils through periods of dysregulation, transition, or change, using trauma-informed and calming strategies.
- Work closely with the SEND team to coordinate joined-up support for pupils with complex profiles or needs.
- Contribute to individual support plans, risk assessments, behaviour plans, and multi-agency documents.
- Build strong, trusting relationships with pupils as a significant adult who offers safety, structure, and encouragement.

5. Staff Training and Development

- Deliver and support high-quality staff training on safeguarding, attendance, wellbeing, and pastoral practice.
- Promote reflective practice and encourage staff to engage in discussion, learning, and professional curiosity.
- Ensure all staff feel confident, supported, and informed in identifying and responding to safeguarding or pastoral concerns.
- Provide coaching and modelling to help staff develop consistent relational and trauma-informed approaches.

6. Leadership and Whole-School Practice

- Work collaboratively with the Senior Leadership Team to support inclusive, safe, and consistent daily practice.
- Contribute to policy development and review, ensuring policies reflect statutory guidance and First Steps Together ethos.
- Act as a trusted point of contact for pupils, families, and staff, offering support that is calm, clear, and professional.
- Model positive behaviours, relational approaches, and the values of the school in all interactions.
- Contribute to strategic planning around safeguarding, attendance, wellbeing, and wider pastoral priorities.

Person Specification

Qualifications & Experience

Essential

- Degree or equivalent experience relevant to education, safeguarding, youth work, social care, or a related field.
- Substantial experience working with children and young people, ideally including those with SEND, SEMH, or complex needs.
- Proven experience leading on safeguarding casework, including referrals, multi-agency meetings, and accurate record-keeping.
- Demonstrable experience of attendance monitoring and intervention, including action planning and working with families to remove barriers.
- Experience working collaboratively within a multidisciplinary team, including SEND, pastoral, therapeutic, or external professionals.

Desirable

- Previous experience as a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL.
- Experience within an alternative provision, specialist SEND setting, or trauma-informed environment.
- Experience delivering staff training or leading whole-school development.

Knowledge & Skills

Essential

- Strong knowledge of safeguarding legislation, thresholds, and child protection processes, including professional curiosity.
- Understanding of trauma-informed, attachment-aware, and neuro-affirming practice.
- Ability to analyse attendance data, identify trends and patterns, and use this information to plan targeted interventions.
- Excellent interpersonal skills: builds trust, maintains calm under pressure, and communicates with clarity and empathy.
- Highly effective organisation and time-management skills in a fast-paced, needs-led environment.
- Confident use of digital systems for data management, record-keeping, and reporting.

Desirable

- Knowledge of the SEND Code of Practice, reasonable adjustments, and inclusive approaches.
- Familiarity with Early Help, Team Around the Family (TAF), and multi-agency support pathways.
- Ability to present safeguarding or attendance insights clearly using simple reports or dashboards.

Safeguarding Leadership & Compliance (DSL)

Essential

- Ability to build and sustain a strong safeguarding culture where pupils feel safe, supported, and able to speak openly.
- Experience managing concerns, referrals, risk assessments, and safety plans, ensuring high-quality, confidential records.
- Up-to-date understanding of statutory guidance such as Keeping Children Safe in Education and local safeguarding procedures.
- Confidence to advise staff, challenge practice when necessary, and escalate concerns appropriately.
- Commitment to ongoing safeguarding training, supervision, and personal professional development.

Desirable

- Experience coordinating complex, multi-agency responses and attending case conferences or strategy meetings.
- Experience auditing and improving safeguarding systems, policies, or routines.

Attendance, Engagement & Family Partnership

Essential

- Proven track record of monitoring attendance, identifying patterns, and responding proactively to emerging concerns.
- Ability to produce individual attendance plans that balance expectations with empathy and relational support.
- Experience developing strong, trusting relationships with families and enabling them to overcome barriers to engagement.
- Ability to connect attendance work with wider pastoral and SEND support to improve participation and outcomes.

Desirable

- Experience liaising with Local Authority attendance services or external partners.
- Knowledge of reintegration planning, part-time timetable oversight, or attendance risk assessment.

Coaching, Team Development & Culture

Essential

- Ability to coach and guide colleagues to recognise need, respond effectively, and use trauma-informed approaches.
- Ability to deliver staff training, briefings, or induction sessions on safeguarding, attendance, and pastoral systems.
- Models a calm, reflective, and consistent approach that supports a positive and safe school culture.

Desirable

- Experience contributing to the development of toolkits, guidance materials, or consistent pastoral routines.
- Experience supporting whole-school or team development.

Values, Behaviours & Professionalism

Essential

- Deep commitment to child-centred, relational, and inclusive practice—consistent with First Steps Together's ethos.
- High personal integrity, confidentiality, and professionalism, with excellent boundaries.
- Reflective and solution-focused mindset, with resilience and emotional stability.
- Commitment to equity, dignity, and belonging for all pupils and families.

Desirable

- Engagement with research-informed practice and a willingness to champion evidence-based approaches.
- Contribution to building a positive, values-driven culture based on respect, consistency, and high expectations.

What We Offer

- Competitive salary and holiday pay
- Term-time working pattern with potential for additional hours supporting school trips
- Comprehensive induction and ongoing training in SEN awareness, first aid, and safeguarding
- A supportive team culture driven by shared purpose and continuous improvement
- Opportunities for career progression within our expanding SEN transport and care network

Review

The nature of this role means that this job description will be subject to an annual review with the potential for amendment or modification at any time after consultation directly with you. It by no means acts as a comprehensive statement of procedures and is just a way of setting out all the main expectations we'll have of you, here in the role as you deliver an impassioned and truly caring experience to our young people.