



Application pack for:

Trust Safeguarding Lead Plymouth CAST

Closing date for applications: Thursday 12th November 2026



Job Title	Trust Safeguarding Lead
Contract Type	Permanent full time
Location	Home Based
Reporting to	Director of Education
Remuneration	£63,688 to £72,032
Relocation expenses	Up to £8,000 can be claimed for qualifying costs

Welcome from the Chief Executive Officer

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the position of Strategic Lead for Safeguarding at Plymouth CAST. Our Multi Academy Trust comprises 34 Catholic schools and one nursery spanning six Local Authorities across the South West, from Cornwall and Plymouth through Devon, Torbay, Dorset, and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. Central to our mission is the recognition of the sacred dignity of every child and young person entrusted to our care.

Safeguarding is not merely a statutory obligation for us; it is a fundamental expression of our Catholic ethos and values. We are committed to building an exceptional culture of vigilance, care, and continuous improvement, where every child flourishes in a safe, nurturing, and enriching environment.

This role amalgamates high-level strategic leadership, robust quality assurance, and governance with hands-on operational expertise and child protection casework guidance. We are looking for an outstanding practitioner with deep expertise, sound judgment, and the inspirational leadership needed to support our Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs), Headteachers, and central team, working closely with the Trust Safeguarding Officer and Director of Education.

If you share our unshakeable commitment to child welfare, human dignity, and educational excellence, we would be delighted to receive your application.

Yours sincerely,

Zoe Batten

Chief Executive Officer, Plymouth CAST

The deadline for applications is 11.59pm on Thursday 12th November 2026 and the interview process will take place on Monday 23rd November. We will contact shortlisted candidates with further details of the selection process soon after the deadline.



Job description

Job Title: Trust Safeguarding Lead

Salary Range: £63,688 to £72,032

Line Manager: Director of Education

Working Arrangements: Your base location is your home address, with frequent travel required to schools across the Trust. Attendance at the central office or other locations for meetings, training and related activities where required. The Trust recognises the importance of maintaining a reasonable work-life balance when planning travel commitments. Mileage and other eligible expenses will be reimbursed in accordance with the Plymouth CAST Expenses Policy, calculated from the employee's home base.

Purpose of Role

The Trust Safeguarding Lead provides Trust-wide strategic direction, expert professional leadership and robust operational assurance for safeguarding, child protection and pupil welfare across Plymouth CAST's 35 settings. Reporting to the Director of Education, the postholder will translate the Trust's safeguarding priorities into consistently effective practice, combining high-level strategy with appropriate operational oversight and a proactive culture of vigilance, professional curiosity and continuous learning.

The postholder will design, implement and evaluate the Trust safeguarding strategy, quality-assurance framework, audit programme, professional development arrangements and safeguarding improvement priorities. They will provide senior specialist advice and challenge to Headteachers, designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) and other leaders; oversee the professional safeguarding response to complex or sensitive cases and concerns about adults; and strengthen collaboration with LADOs, police, children's social care and other agencies.

The role will support the Director of Education's executive safeguarding oversight and assurance to SELT and the Board. It will not displace the statutory and operational safeguarding responsibilities of school leaders and DSLs, nor the formal decisions reserved to other authorised case managers or governance bodies. It will exercise professional authority through agreed escalation and delegation arrangements, working with School Improvement Officers (SIOs) and HR where appropriate.

Strategic leadership, vision and governance

- Formulate, implement, monitor and periodically review the Trust-wide Safeguarding and Child Protection Strategy, aligned to Trust priorities, Catholic ethos, relevant statutory guidance and local safeguarding arrangements.
- Promote consistent mandatory safeguarding expectations across primary, secondary, sixth-form and nursery provision, applying the Trust principle of "autonomy with coherence" while allowing proportionate local delivery.
- Provide expert advice and constructive challenge to the Director of Education, CEO, SELT, Headteachers, SIOs and governance representatives on safeguarding standards, systemic risks and priority actions.



- Prepare regular analytical, RAG-rated safeguarding governance reports for the Director of Education and relevant SELT, Education and Standards Committee and Board reporting routes; include compliance, audit outcomes, high-risk case themes, trends, actions and impact.
- Lead the safeguarding content of Trust policies and procedures, including child protection, allegations against adults, low-level concerns, whistleblowing, behaviour, anti-bullying and online safety, in partnership with the relevant policy owners and HR.
- Maintain knowledge of changing legislation, national guidance, Catholic education standards, research, safeguarding practice reviews and emerging risks; ensure learning informs policy and practice.
- Maintain a Trust safeguarding risk register or equivalent agreed assurance mechanism and an annual improvement plan, with accountable owners, timescales and documented follow-up.
- Ensure concerns indicating immediate danger, serious systemic weaknesses or sustained non-compliance are escalated promptly through the Trust's agreed routes; advise the Director of Education on the need for formal intervention.

Quality assurance, auditing and inspection readiness

- Design and lead a proportionate annual programme of safeguarding audits, desktop compliance reviews, on-site visits, case sampling, thematic reviews and targeted follow-ups across all settings.
- Evaluate both documentary compliance and the quality of decisions: identification of concerns, child-centred response, chronology, referrals, supervision, actions and outcomes.
- Produce clear school-level reports with evidence, graded risk, required improvement actions and deadlines; monitor closure and verify effectiveness rather than accepting completion statements alone.
- Provide assurance over Single Central Record (SCR) compliance, safer recruitment and staff induction across schools and central functions, working with HR and those who own and maintain the records.
- Ensure safeguarding practices and evidence support readiness for Ofsted, Catholic Schools Inspectorate (CSI) and other external scrutiny without treating inspection preparation as a substitute for everyday safe practice.
- Analyse CPOMS or other approved case-recording systems for quality, timeliness, escalation, patterns and lessons, ensuring proportionate access and secure handling of sensitive data.
- Use relevant pupil intelligence, including attendance, persistent absence, children missing education, suspension/exclusion, alternative provision and vulnerabilities including SEND, to identify safeguarding risks in collaboration with educational leads.
- Oversee school safeguarding improvement plans and recommend targeted central support, reviews or intervention to the Director of Education and SIOs when weaknesses persist.

Operational casework, LADO management and crisis escalation

- Act as the principal Trust-wide professional safeguarding escalation point for Headteachers and DSLs on complex, acute, multi-setting, non-recent or highly sensitive child protection matters.
- Provide expert advice on urgent protective action, child-centred risk assessment, referral pathways, professional curiosity, multi-agency strategy discussions and the recording of rationale and decisions.



- Lead the professional safeguarding coordination of allegations or concerns involving employees, supply staff, contractors, volunteers and senior leaders, including allegations meeting the harm threshold, low-level concerns and relevant whistleblowing disclosures.
- Act as a principal liaison with LADOs and, as appropriate, police, children's social care and other agencies; ensure consultation, referral, information sharing and follow-up reflect local thresholds and statutory expectations.
- Work closely with HR and the authorised case manager to distinguish safeguarding action from employment processes; advise on interim controls, transferable risk, disciplinary safeguarding issues and possible DBS/TRA or other referrals, while preserving independent decision-making.
- Ensure appropriate conflict-of-interest and alternative escalation routes where an allegation involves a Headteacher, central leadership, CEO or another individual within the usual decision-making chain.
- Maintain understanding of the referral and escalation arrangements in Cornwall, Plymouth, Devon, Torbay, Dorset and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole; support cross-boundary multi-agency casework.
- Coordinate safeguarding aspects of critical incidents, serious incidents and historical concerns; ensure records and relevant evidence are preserved and that lessons are reviewed and acted upon.
- Provide or coordinate emergency out-of-hours safeguarding escalation in accordance with a separately agreed rota, coverage standard and contractual arrangements, without displacing statutory emergency services or individual school duties.
- Challenge external agency decisions appropriately, using relevant local professional disagreement and escalation procedures when risks remain unresolved.

Workforce development, DSL networks and governance support

- Design, deliver, commission and evaluate a Trust-wide safeguarding continuing professional development framework for DSLs, Deputy DSLs, Headteachers, central staff, Directors and local governors, calibrated to their responsibilities.
- Lead the Plymouth CAST DSL Network and safeguarding governor briefings, enabling updates, professional discussion, peer support, case-study learning and the sharing of effective practice.
- Provide professional advice, coaching and reflective support to school safeguarding leaders, identifying when additional specialist training or supervision is required.
- Work with HR and schools to monitor completion and renewal of mandatory safeguarding and safer recruitment training, and address gaps through risk-based follow-up.
- Deliver accredited or formal safer recruitment training where appropriately qualified and authorised, or arrange suitable delivery by an accredited provider.
- Advise Local CAST Boards (LCBs), safeguarding link governors and Directors on their monitoring and assurance roles, and support appropriate governance visits and challenge.
- Use audit outcomes, case reviews, statutory changes and workforce feedback to determine training priorities and assess whether development changes practice.

Safeguarding culture, prevention and vulnerable pupils

- Embed a culture in which children are heard, staff are confident to raise concerns and challenge unsafe practice, and adults understand professional boundaries and the importance of early intervention.
- Strengthen awareness of child-on-child abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, exploitation, online harm, domestic abuse, neglect, radicalisation and extra-familial risks, recognising that children can experience overlapping harms.



- Champion inclusive and anti-discriminatory safeguarding approaches for children with SEND, children in care, previously looked-after children and others who may face barriers to disclosure or support.
- Oversee Trust-level evaluation of patterns in low-level concerns, staff conduct, whistleblowing and safeguarding complaints to identify wider cultural or systemic lessons.
- Promote appropriate information sharing, secure record transfer, children's voice and engagement with families while respecting confidentiality and lawful boundaries.

Partnerships, data, assurance and organisational learning

- Maintain constructive relationships with safeguarding partners, LADOs, MASH/front-door services, police, health and relevant local/national safeguarding networks.
- Produce reliable, proportionate Trust-wide safeguarding intelligence and analysis, distinguishing activity volume from the quality and impact of safeguarding practice.
- Coordinate and monitor actions arising from serious incidents, internal learning reviews, external recommendations, complaints, inspection findings and safeguarding practice reviews.
- Recommend independent scrutiny where an internal review could lack credibility or impartiality; ensure scope, governance and access arrangements are agreed with the Director of Education.
- Maintain records of significant professional advice, risk decisions, escalations and actions in accordance with Trust information-governance arrangements.

Statutory Safeguarding Compliance, Legislative Developments and Implementation

- Maintain comprehensive and up-to-date knowledge of all relevant safeguarding legislation, statutory guidance, regulatory requirements and national safeguarding developments, ensuring that the Trust's safeguarding arrangements consistently reflect current expectations and best practice.
- Act as the Trust's principal professional adviser on the interpretation and practical application of statutory safeguarding requirements, including, but not limited to:
 - Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE);
 - Working Together to Safeguard Children;
 - The Children Acts 1989 and 2004;
 - The Education Act 2002 and other relevant education legislation;
 - The statutory Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework, including safeguarding and welfare requirements;
 - The Prevent duty and associated statutory guidance;
 - Relevant safeguarding requirements relating to safer recruitment, allegations management, information sharing, online safety and the protection of vulnerable children;
 - Local safeguarding partnership arrangements, procedures and thresholds applicable to the geographical areas served by the Trust.
- Establish and maintain a systematic process for monitoring forthcoming and implemented changes to safeguarding legislation, statutory guidance, regulatory frameworks and relevant case law, ensuring that the Trust is appropriately prepared for new requirements.
- Undertake a comprehensive review of each new edition of KCSIE and other significant safeguarding guidance, identifying key changes, their implications for the Trust and any necessary amendments to policies, procedures, training, systems, governance arrangements or operational practice.



- Develop and coordinate a Trust-wide implementation plan for significant statutory or regulatory changes, identifying required actions, responsible individuals, timescales, communication arrangements and mechanisms for monitoring completion.
- Work collaboratively with the Director of Education, Safeguarding and Staff Development Officer, Headteachers, Designated Safeguarding Leads, HR, Governance and other relevant colleagues to ensure that statutory requirements are translated into clear and consistent expectations across all Trust schools, the nursery and central services.
- Ensure that relevant safeguarding policies, procedures, guidance documents, training materials and operational processes are reviewed and updated in response to statutory changes, with appropriate consultation and approval obtained in accordance with the Trust's governance arrangements.
- Lead the communication and dissemination of safeguarding developments across the Trust, ensuring that Headteachers, DSLs, governors, directors, central staff and other relevant employees understand changes affecting their responsibilities.
- Ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for employees and governance representatives to receive, read and understand relevant safeguarding guidance, including updated editions of KCSIE, with completion and acknowledgement monitored through the Trust's agreed systems.
- Establish appropriate mechanisms to provide assurance that statutory changes have been effectively implemented and embedded in practice, including targeted safeguarding audits, case sampling, reviews of records, training evaluations, discussions with school leaders and follow-up monitoring.
- Identify and address inconsistencies, gaps or areas of non-compliance arising from changes in statutory expectations, ensuring that corrective actions are agreed, monitored and escalated where necessary.
- Provide regular updates and assurance reports to the Director of Education and relevant Trust governance bodies regarding legislative developments, changes in statutory requirements, implementation progress, compliance risks and areas requiring further improvement.
- Maintain an appropriate central record of significant safeguarding guidance changes, associated implementation actions, communications, training requirements and evidence of compliance.
- Promote a culture of continuous professional learning in which safeguarding practice is regularly reviewed and strengthened in response to legislative changes, research, serious safeguarding incidents, national reviews and emerging risks.
- Ensure that the Trust's safeguarding arrangements remain responsive to future developments, proactively identifying potential implications and recommending improvements before new statutory requirements take effect wherever practicable.

General duties and professional standards

- Uphold the Catholic mission and values of Plymouth CAST and demonstrate high standards of conduct, integrity, confidentiality, equality and professional judgment.
- Work cooperatively with Headteachers, SIOs, HR, governance, diocesan colleagues and central teams; maintain appropriate professional independence and clear records.
- Participate in professional development and exercise insight into the limits of personal competence, seeking legal, statutory or specialist advice when appropriate.
- Travel between settings as reasonably required and undertake other duties commensurate with the seniority and scope of the post.



Expected outcomes / success measures

- A current Trust-wide safeguarding strategy and risk-based assurance plan, with demonstrable progress against priorities.
- Every setting receives proportionate safeguarding assurance, with evidence-based findings and timely verification of high-priority actions.
- Trust governance receives timely, clear and appropriately confidential analysis of risks, compliance, trends, interventions and impact.
- Complex safeguarding allegations and incidents receive coordinated, documented and procedurally sound professional oversight.
- DSLs, leaders and governance representatives benefit from targeted professional development and effective safeguarding networks.

This document outlines the duties for the time being to indicate the level of responsibility. It is not a comprehensive or exclusive list and the duties may be varied from time to time which do not change the general character of the job or the level of responsibility entailed.

Changes can be made to this job description under consultation to reflect the changing needs of the role at any time.

Data Protection

All employees handling personal data must do so responsibly, securely and in line with the Trust's policies, guidance and training.

Person Specification

Assessment methods: A = application; I = interview; S = safeguarding scenario/presentation; R = references

Qualifications and professional development		
Criterion	Status	Assessed
Degree-level qualification or equivalent demonstrable senior professional experience	Essential	A
Advanced safeguarding/child-protection learning (Level 4/5) and sustained relevant CPD	Essential	A/I
Relevant professional qualification in education, social work, safeguarding, child protection or related field	Desirable	A
Recognised leadership/management, professional supervision or safer recruitment trainer qualification	Desirable	A

Senior safeguarding experience		
Criterion	Status	Assessed
Substantial safeguarding and child-protection experience, including personally handling complex, sensitive and high-risk work	Essential	A/I/S
Track record of leading safeguarding improvement, audit or assurance across an organisation or multiple settings	Essential	A/I

Experience advising and constructively challenging Headteachers or comparably senior leaders	Essential	A/I/S
Effective multi-agency working with LADOs, children's social care, police and relevant safeguarding partners	Essential	A/I
Experience of managing or supervising colleagues and setting priorities and standards	Essential	A/I/R
Direct experience of the educational context, including school safeguarding systems and DSL responsibilities	Essential	A/I
Experience across primary, secondary and/or early years phases or a multi-academy trust	Desirable	A/I
Experience advising on allegations against adults, low-level concerns, whistleblowing and related employment interfaces	Essential	A/I/S
Experience presenting safeguarding risk and assurance reports to executives or governance boards	Essential	A/I

Knowledge and specialist judgement		
Criterion	Status	Assessed
Thorough current knowledge of Keeping Children Safe in Education, Working Together to Safeguard Children and relevant early years and information-sharing duties	Essential	A/I/S
Understanding of school safeguarding accountability, local authority arrangements, LADO thresholds, safer recruitment and SCR assurance	Essential	I/S
Ability to distinguish safeguarding risk management from investigations, disciplinary decisions and other formal responsibilities	Essential	I/S
Knowledge of abuse, exploitation, domestic abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, online safety, SEND-related vulnerabilities and barriers to disclosure	Essential	I/S
Knowledge of Catholic education governance and Ofsted expectations	Desirable	A/I

Leadership, assurance and delivery		
Criterion	Status	Assessed
Ability to shape strategy, translate it into measurable plans and verify that interventions improve practice	Essential	I/S
Strong audit, analytical and risk-assessment skills, including scrutiny of sensitive safeguarding records	Essential	A/I/S
Confident, appropriately independent professional challenge, including when senior colleagues disagree	Essential	I/S
Excellent report writing, communication and training/facilitation skills	Essential	A/I/S
Ability to manage competing urgent and strategic priorities across dispersed settings	Essential	I/S



Ability to line-manage safeguarding duties within a combined role, in coordination with another manager	Essential	I
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Personal attributes and practical requirements		
Criterion	Status	Assessed
Unwavering child-centred approach, integrity, sound judgment, discretion and professional curiosity	Essential	I/S/R
Emotional resilience, reflection, cultural humility and commitment to inclusion and anti-discriminatory practice	Essential	I/R
Commitment to uphold and support the Catholic mission and ethos of the Trust	Essential	A/I
Ability to travel across Trust settings and meet reasonable requirements of the post, with adjustments where appropriate	Essential	A
A willingness to work, think, act and prioritise in a flexible and responsive manner	Essential	A/I

Why Join Us?

We value our leaders and are committed to creating an environment in which you can thrive both professionally and personally.

As Trust Safeguarding Lead, you will benefit from:

- Relocation expenses of up to £8,000, which can be claimed for qualifying costs.
- Essential car user allowance.
- Membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme with employer contributions.
- A generous holiday entitlement – 28 days across the year (plus bank holidays), which can be taken flexibly across the academic year.
- Access to a high-quality employee assistance programme with a strong focus on wellbeing.
- A generous benefits package including retail and lifestyle discounts and salary sacrifice schemes, including cycle to work and home tech.
- Access to a generous professional development offer, with dedicated time and investment to support continued executive growth.
- The opportunity to shape educational strategy across a growing family of Catholic schools.
- Working as part of a collaborative, supportive, and creative Senior Executive Leadership Team.
- Officer-level influence within a Trust with clear ambition and strong moral purpose.
- A collaborative and driven community focused on excellence, integrity, and shared mission.
- The opportunity to grow professionally within a nurturing Trust rooted in values-led leadership.

Our people are central to our success. We are committed to developing leadership capacity, encouraging innovation, and supporting our senior leaders to think strategically and act decisively.

Safeguarding & Safer Recruitment

This post is subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and leaders to share this commitment. As a senior leader, the postholder will model and uphold the highest standards of safeguarding practice.



Board structure

The Board and its committees are structured as follows. The Board of Directors links to schools' local governing boards (Local CAST Boards) through its Link Director structure.

Plymouth CAST Members

Bishop Nicholas Hudson Canon Mark O'Keeffe Canon Paul Cummins
 Canon Kristian Paver Abbot David Charlesworth

Plymouth CAST Board

Foundation Directors

Ruth O'Donovan (Chair)
 Deacon Nick Johnson
 John Andrews
 John Cosgrove
 Nick Baldwin
 Alison McDonald

Co-opted Directors

Graham Briscoe
 Alison Nettleship
 Emma Gritten

Plymouth CAST Board Sub-Committees

Remuneration

John Andrews (Chair)
 Ruth O'Donovan
 Alison Nettleship
 John Cosgrove

Finance

John Andrews (Chair)
 Ruth O'Donovan
 Nick Baldwin

Audit & Risk

Graham Briscoe (Chair)
 Deacon Nick Johnson
 Emma Gritten

Education & Standards

Alison Nettleship (Chair)
 John Cosgrove
 Alison McDonald



Organisational chart



Plymouth CAST map



Plymouth CAST - Our Schools



WEST	
1	St John's Catholic Primary School (Camborne)
2	St Mary's Catholic Primary School (Penzance)
3	St Mary's Catholic Primary School (Bodmin)
4	St Mary's Catholic Primary School (Falmouth)

PLYMOUTH SECONDARY	
5	Notre Dame
6	St Boniface's RC College

PLYMOUTH PRIMARY	
7	Cathedral School of St Mary
8	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
9	Holy Cross Catholic Primary School
10	St Paul's Roman Catholic Primary School
11	Keyham Barton Catholic Primary School
12	St Peter's Roman Catholic Primary School

TORBAY	
13	Our Lady of the Angels Catholic Primary School (Torquay)
14	St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School (Brixham)
15	Priory Catholic Primary School (Torquay)
16	Sacred Heart RC Nursery and Primary School (Paignton)

DEVON NORTH	
17	Our Lady's Catholic Primary School (Barnstaple)
18	St Mary's Catholic Primary School (Axminster)
19	St John's Catholic Primary School (Tiverton)
20	St Nicholas Catholic Primary School (Buxton)
21	Our Lady & St Patrick's Roman Catholic Primary School (Taigvmouth)

DEVON SOUTH	
22	St John the Baptist Catholic Primary School (Buckfast)
23	St Mary's Catholic Primary School (Buckfast)
24	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (Newton Abbot)
25	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (Exmouth)

DORSET WEST	
26	St Augustine's Catholic Primary School (Weymouth)
27	St Mary's Catholic First School (Dorchester)
28	St Catherine's Catholic Primary School (Bridport)
29	St Mary's Catholic Primary School (Harnhill)
30	St Mary and St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (Wool)
31	St Mary's Catholic Primary School (Swanage)

DORSET EAST	
32	Christ the King Catholic Primary School (Bournemouth)
33	St Mary's Catholic Primary School (Poole)
34	The Orchard Nursery (Bournemouth)
35	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (Poole)