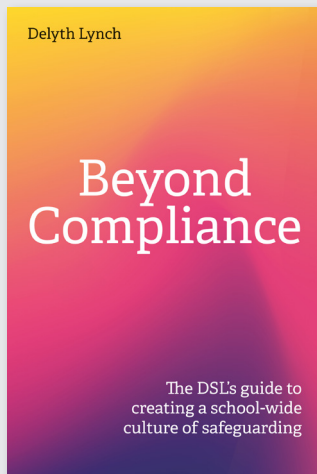


P R E S S R E L E A S E

“A book to return to, packed with wisdom that will make children securer, DSLs happier, schools safer, and the world better.”

Sir Anthony Seldon, educator, author and historian



Beyond Compliance The DSL's guide to creating a school-wide culture of safeguarding

By Delyth Lynch

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Scan to learn more:



A guide to creating a safeguarding culture that is coherent, sustainable and embedded into every aspect of school life.

Can schools foster a culture where safeguarding is everyone's responsibility?

Schools are now carrying more of society's safeguarding responsibilities than ever, and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) sits at the centre. According to a recent survey, 93% of teachers reported that, over the last year, the number of safeguarding referrals made within their school had increased.¹ Around 1,700 children are referred to social care every day in England – much of this is signposted by schools themselves.²

Meanwhile, the risks that young people face continue to evolve, from harmful content spreading online to the ongoing impact of child poverty and rising mental health challenges. Even pop culture has begun to reflect these concerns: earlier this year, the Netflix series *Adolescence* pushed school-age risk and responsibility into the mainstream conversation, reminding us what can be at stake when it comes to safeguarding young people.

At the same time, statutory guidance keeps evolving, with the Department of Education's updated *Keeping Children Safe in Education* report released this September – a lengthy document that time-pressed DSLs are expected to be familiar with.³ All this adds up to a simple truth that DSLs know all too well: responsibility for safeguarding is simply too much for one individual. To be truly effective and sustainable, it must be a shared, embedded culture.

In her upcoming book, *Beyond Compliance*, Delyth Lynch draws on over 15 years' experience as a DSL and expert in her field to set out a practical, sustainable approach to safeguarding that is embedded across all aspects of school life. It serves as both a mirror for schools to reflect on their culture and vulnerabilities, and a map outlining steps for lasting safeguarding improvement.

Combining clear theory with case studies and ready-to-use tools, the book shows readers how to continuously improve their practise using a cyclical strategy of assessment, review and action. Readers can dip into specific

1 'More than 90% of teachers say that safeguarding referrals have risen', NSPCC, 2023. Available at: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/about-us/news-opinion/2023/more-safeguarding-referrals-risen-childhood-day-2023/#pageref64584>.

2 Simon Guerrier, '1,700 referrals to children's social care each day in England', Social Care Today, April 2025. Available at: <https://socialcare.today/2025/04/17/1700-referrals-to-childrens-social-care-each-day-in-england/>.

3 'Keeping children safe in education 2025', Department of Education, September 2025. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68add931969253904d155860/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_from_1_September_2025.pdf.

P R E S S R E L E A S E

chapters for practical guidance, or read more deeply to engage with the research and theory underpinning safeguarding practice. Above all, it is a source of encouragement and reassurance, reminding DSLs that safeguarding is a shared responsibility, not a burden to carry alone.

Delyth writes:

“I have been a DSL for 16 years, and while the role is one of immense privilege, it can also be isolating and overwhelming. My inspiration to write came from two places: the countless children and young people I’ve worked with who have taught me more than I could ever teach them, and a deeply personal moment with my late father, who bravely shared his own childhood experience of abuse. That conversation lit a fire in me to ensure that no child feels unheard or unprotected. I guess it was written out of love – for young people, for colleagues navigating this challenging role, and for the possibility of schools being places where safeguarding is not just compliance, but culture.”

An essential tool for all current and aspiring DSLs, school leaders, governors and safeguarding training consultants, Beyond Compliance will also be useful for those with a responsibility for safeguarding in any organisations outside of education.

“For safeguarding professionals, school leaders, teachers, governors, students, parents or those simply looking to learn more safeguarding, Beyond Compliance is the book to have on your desk, not just a shelf.”

**Robin Fletcher, CEO Boarding Schools' Association and founder of SACPA
(Safeguarding and Child Protection Association)**

About the author

Delyth Lynch has over 25 years’ experience of teaching and senior leadership in education and is widely recognised as one of the UK’s leading experts in safeguarding, particularly in the independent sector. She speaks regularly about the issue of culture within schools and the work that she has pioneered at Wellington College around values, behaviours and attitudes. Her work has been cited by IICSA, and she has been recognised on the national stage by being awarded the Safeguarding and Child Protection Association’s ‘Outstanding initiative award’ for 2 consecutive years. She is co-author of the Farrer & Co guides, *Developing and implementing a low-level concerns policy: a guide for organisations which work with children* and *Addressing child-on-child abuse: a resource for schools and colleges*. Delyth is also an independent expert for Words Matter, an active member of the NADSL, Vice Chair of Governors at an independent school in Wokingham and is on the Executive Board of SACPA (Safeguarding and Child Protection Association). She is an NSPCC-accredited trainer and trained in supervision and in the delivery of Safer Recruitment Training.

Articles and interviews available

Delyth is available for interview, expert comment or by-lined articles on a range of topics, such as:

- Building a whole-school culture of safeguarding
- How can we make safeguarding sustainable?
- Longevity in the post for DSLs
- What are the signs that we need to look for in young people when it comes to safeguarding?
- What are the most pressing issues we must protect young people against today?