



# Safeguarding Children and Young People

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# 1. Overview and Purpose

**1.1.** Speakers Trust trains over 30,000 young people a year. Safeguarding the wellbeing of young people is our number one priority and this policy sets out Speakers Trust's approach to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. It applies to all aspects of our work and everyone working for Speakers Trust, including permanent and temporary employees, volunteers, freelance Speakers Trust trainers and event managers and contractors. It is the duty of everyone working for Speakers Trust to safeguard children and young people by creating an environment that protects them.

**1.2.** Due to the nature of our work, Speakers Trust works with young people in different settings. Our adult staff, freelancers and volunteers deliver training. This policy provides procedures and practical guidance on working safely with young people and how to respond to concerns to keep them safe.

**1.3.** All Speakers Trust staff, freelancers and volunteers are required to act in line with this safeguarding policy

**1.4.** Children and young people can occasionally disclose information about themselves that they might not have ordinarily done. This might happen at any point of a Speakers Trust training or event – to a member of the Speakers Trust team or to a wider audience in class or at an event. Speakers Trust trainers, event managers, volunteers and staff are often uniquely placed to pick up on safeguarding issues and as such must know how to respond, record and report.

**1.5.** This policy explains:

- How we protect under 18s from harm
- How we make sure people can raise safeguarding concerns
- How we handle allegations or incidents
- How we report to the relevant authorities

**1.6.** This policy will be reviewed annually by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Governance Committee.

**1.7.** This policy will be published on the ST website.

## 2. Legislation Framework

**2.1.** This policy has been created on the basis of law and guidance to protect children: the Children's Act of 1989 and 2004; [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) 2023; [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) 2024;

**2.2.** In addition to this our Safeguarding Children and Young People policy should be read in conjunction with the following Speakers Trust policies:

- POL 3 Photography Policy
- POL 4 Speakers Trust Complaints Policy
- POL 7 Equal Opportunities Employment Policy
- POL 8 Grievance Procedure
- POL 9 Data Protection Policy post GDPR
- POL 10 Health and Safety
- POL 16 Volunteering Policy
- Conduct and language policy (see Appendix 1)
- Respectful Speeches Policy

## 3. Safeguarding Policy Statement

**Speakers Trust believe children have a right to be protected from harm, and that we have a responsibility to keep them safe. We are committed to safeguarding and will fulfil this commitment by:**

- Recognising the vulnerabilities young people face and that *all* young people have a right to protection from abuse, regardless of background, circumstances or protected characteristics (these are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation as per [Equality Act 2010](#)).
- Listening to and respecting children
- Providing a code of conduct/behaviour
- Ensuring staff are recruited safely
- Providing an induction, supervision, and support
- Provide training on safeguarding
- Appointing a designated safeguarding lead etc.
- Ensuring safeguarding concerns are taken seriously and responded to in a timely way

- Reviewing the safeguarding policy/procedures on an annual basis (it is recommended to review the policy at least once a year even if there are not substantial changes to be made)

## 4. Terminology

**4.1.** Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

**4.2.** Terms used in this policy are as follows:

‘Child’ – anyone who has not reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday; ‘children’ therefore means children and young people throughout this policy

**4.3.** ‘Safeguarding’ is taken from the statutory guidance to mean the action taken to

- provide help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online

- prevent impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development
- ensure that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- take action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children’s Social Care National Framework.

**4.4.** ‘Activity’ - any activity or series of activities arranged for children in the name of the charity. Throughout this policy we have clearly defined the different types of activity as some are hosted by a client/partner and others are designed and delivered by Speakers Trust:

**4.4.1.** An ‘activity designed and delivered Speakers Trust’ is one scheduled for children not in

a school. For all activities designed and delivered by Speakers Trust we will follow this safeguarding policy.

**4.4.2.** A ‘partner or client hosted activity’ is one scheduled with or by the client, and is held on the client’s premises. For all partner or client hosted activities, their safeguarding policy will take precedence but does not replace this policy.

**4.4.3.** A ‘regulated’ activity means one or more of the below as a regular activity (at least once a week or 4 days within a 30-day period.):

- Unsupervised activities: teaching, training, instructing or supervising children

- Anyone with access to children's data (including video material)
- Working (including freelancers and contractors) at schools with opportunities for contact with children

**4.5.** In line with the NSPCC definitions and signs of child abuse 2018 child abuse is when a person – adult or child – harms a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can also involve a lack of love, care and attention. Children who suffer abuse may struggle to find the words to speak out, so it's vital that all members of staff, freelancers, volunteers and external contractors representing Speakers Trust (henceforward termed Speakers Trust workers) working with children are vigilant for the signs of abuse. Please see Appendix one for a complete list of the types of abuse

## 5. Roles and responsibilities

All staff at Speakers Trust have a responsibility to safeguard children. The following staff members have specific areas of responsibility:

- Lead Trustee of Safeguarding – Martin Thomas  
Board of Trustees have a strategic responsibility for safeguarding in line with government and Charity Commission guidance to ensure the organisation has a strong safeguarding culture
- Safeguarding Lead – Russell Findlay Chief Executive Officer  
This person is responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements for keeping children and young people safe are in place at Speakers Trust. To promote the safety and welfare of children and young people involved in Speakers Trust's activities at all times.

## 6. Safeguarding Procedures – what to do if you have a concern about a child

**6.1.** All Speakers Trust workers are required to act in line with this safeguarding policy. If a student makes a disclosure in a workshop or a trainer, event manager or volunteer makes an observation which raises concerns about their welfare, the adult must report it. Under no circumstances should they ignore their suspicions and assume that someone else will take action to protect that child.

**6.2.** A safeguarding concern may come to your attention in different ways. A child may tell you something directly or the information may come indirectly through another person; you

may observe something or notice a change in a child's behaviour that may suggest that they are being harmed or at risk of harm. You may also notice the behaviour or attitude of another person that causes you to worry or make you feel uncomfortable. All safeguarding concerns should be taken extremely seriously, even if vague or a suspicion, and reported to the Safeguarding Lead.

**6.3.** It takes courage for a young person to go through the journey of disclosing abuse. Sometimes they will make a partial disclosure for various reasons such as feeling afraid, embarrassed or they are worried about confidentiality. This means they give some information about what they've experienced, but not the whole picture. Waiting for a young person to speak about their whole experience could mean that the abuse carries on and they are put at further risk of harm. Always discuss your concerns with the Safeguarding Lead.

**6.4.** If a student makes a disclosure in an activity, workshop or at an event, or a member of staff, freelancer or a volunteer makes an observation which raises concerns about their welfare, the adult must report it. If the disclosure or observation happened at a partner or client hosted activity, concerns must be reported to the client's safeguarding lead (who will then follow their own procedures), and the Speakers Trust Central Team as below who will then follow up with the client's DCPO).

**6.5.** Responding to a disclosure from a child or anyone expressing concern or suspicion of abuse

Speakers Trust workers working with children need to be able to recognise the different types of abuse (Appendix 1) as well as the indicators and know how to respond appropriately.

**6.5.1. Do:**

- Remain calm, approachable and receptive
- Listen carefully, without interrupting
- Acknowledge you understand how difficult this may be
- Make it clear that you are taking what is said seriously
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling you
- Let them know that you'll do what you can to help them
- Make a written record of exactly what has been said (as soon as possible) – keep these notes safe and discuss with the Safeguarding Manager for confirmation on what to do

with these notes.

-explain what you will do with the information ie. Share with the Safeguarding Lead

**6.5.2. Don't:**

- Promise confidentiality
- Ask leading or probing questions
- Repeatedly question or ask the child to repeat the disclosure
- Discuss the disclosure with people who do not need to know
- Delay in reporting the disclosure.
- Contact the person about whom the allegation has been made

**6.6. Reporting procedures - What to do next:** If you have serious and urgent concerns about the safety of the child:

**6.6.1.** If you are in a school: Speak to the Head of Safeguarding before you leave the premises.

**6.6.2.** If you are not in a school environment call the Speakers Trust Office numbers who will in turn call the client or the NSPCC or police (depending on the level of concern).

**6.6.3.** If at all possible, call the Speakers Trust Central team as soon as you hear a disclosure or make an observation. In all cases call the Speakers Trust Central Team within 24 hours. When recording the safeguarding disclosure or observation they will ask you the following questions

(See Appendix 3 for the guide in which questions will be asked):

- Name of client/school (and lead member of staff if known);
- Name of child, including other identifying information e.g. class;
- When and where did the disclosure happen, and what was the context;
- Who else was present;
- Who else heard the disclosure;
- Exactly what was said by the child (try to record word for word);
- Anything you said/or did; and
- Any other observations.

If a member of school staff has also heard the disclosure, we recommend that you follow



their lead in the classroom in terms of an immediate response. However, nothing overrides the welfare and safety of the child and if necessary, you should use your own judgement. Even if a member of staff was present and appears to have acted on the concern you should record what has been said and report it to Speakers Trust. A school is responsible for the child's welfare and safety but Speakers Trust has a responsibility to ensure information is passed on. Doing nothing is not an option. It is your responsibility to act.

#### **6.7. Contact List for reporting an observation or a disclosure:**

Speakers Trust Office Main Line: 02081466231 If you have any issues with calling, please email [hello@speakerstrust.org](mailto:hello@speakerstrust.org) immediately and request a call back. Please do not share confidential safeguarding information by email.

You can find further advice and guidance at [help@NSPCC.org.uk](mailto:help@NSPCC.org.uk)

If you believe there is an immediate risk of harm/danger please call the Emergency services (999) and then contact the office as above.

#### **6.8. Recording, storing and sharing information**

What to do with your notes: You must record concerns, allegations, decisions and outcomes, making sure your notes are securely stored to protect personal information. Your notes should distinguish between fact, hearsay and opinion. Keep the notes you have made about the disclosure safe and separate them from the rest of your paperwork. This is confidential material. The team member taking the disclosure will agree with you what to do with them.

**6.8.1** Consent should be sought for the sharing of confidential information unless this would put the safety and welfare of a child at risk in which case information should be shared without consent as noted in the Department for Education's Seven golden rules for sharing information. The process should involve the safeguarding lead.

**6.9.** Once you have reported the disclosure or observation, the team member taking the disclosure will react, respond, report and refer. If non-emergency they will report to client/school's safeguarding lead and to follow up for a confirmation of receipt and that the school will be following their standard safeguarding procedures. At this stage, the team member will let you know if/when you can dispose of your notes, usually this will be once the school/client has acknowledged receipt of the disclosure and once it is clear that there will be no direct police investigation required.

NB: Speakers Trust will retain records for 7 years unless a risk assessment suggests that they should be kept for longer in line with national guidance.

## 7. Managing Allegations

**7.1.** An 'allegation' may relate to a person who works with children who has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

**7.2.** Where appropriate, an assessment of transferable risk to children with whom the person works should be undertaken. If in doubt advice will be sought from the local authority designated officer (LADO).

**7.3.** At all times the safety of the child(ren) is paramount but the individual who is the subject of the allegation will also be supported

**7.4.** Any 'allegation' should be reported to the Safeguarding Lead, who will review and decide on the necessary next steps, gathering facts of the case and keeping written records. If a young person needs immediate medical attention you should prioritise this but contact the Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible. Confidentiality will be maintained at all times whilst the allegation is being investigated

**7.5.** An 'allegation' may be determined to be a 'low-level' concern. This includes:

- inadvertent or thoughtless behaviour
- behaviour that might be considered inappropriate depending on the circumstances
- behaviour which is intended to enable abuse.

**7.5.1.** Examples of such behaviour could include:

- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- adults taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door

- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

**7.6.** Outcomes of an ‘allegation’ may result in police investigation, investigation by local authority or disciplinary by Speakers Trust, depending on the circumstances

**7.7.** Referral to the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS): If Speakers Trust removes someone from working with children (or would have, had the person not left first) because the person is believed to pose a risk of harm to children, the ST must make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service using the DBS referral form.

**7.8.** If your organisation doesn't have a clear safeguarding procedure or you're not comfortable with how your organisation has responded to your report, contact the Whistleblowing Advice Line to discuss your concerns.

## 8. Recruitment of employed staff and freelance and volunteer staff

**8.1.** Speakers Trust is committed to safeguarding and protecting children and we expect everyone working on our behalf to share this commitment. Safer recruitment is the first step to promote a safeguarding culture. It is therefore important that we take all the necessary steps to recruit individuals safely, ensuring they are suitable to work with young people.

As part of Speakers Trust employment, we carry out safe recruitment checks on everyone who represents us as a Speakers Trust worker. For any staff members or freelancers who have joined the team from December 2018 two professional references (from last/recent employers) will also be requested as well as positive proof of identification.

**8.1.1.** Individuals who are representing Speakers Trust (whether, employed, freelance, contractors or volunteers) involved in regular activity will have a different level of checking, training and oversight to an individual/organisation working for Speakers Trust in a role that is not regular e.g. ad hoc film crew or a visiting guest who is contributing their expertise at an event (see Appendix 3) – Section 9 outlines our approach to DBS checks and how that relates to employment.

**8.1.2.** A secure database will be kept listing different Speakers Trust workers or

independent workers with dates outlining when checks and training have been made and undertaken.

## 9. DBS Checks

**9.1.** Speakers Trust is registered with UCheck and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to

carry out Criminal Record Checks. Enhanced DBS Checks and barred list checks (where appropriate) enable the charity to undertake a more thorough and safer recruitment practise for anyone working with children.

**9.1.1.** Speakers Trust will accept an enhanced DBS authorised by a different agency, company

or charity provided:

- It was issued within an appropriate timescale for the risk level of the role, as determined by ST policy
- The applicant's identity matches the details on the certificate using Government guidelines on ID
- The certificate is the right level and type for the role applied for.

**9.1.2.** Speakers Trust accepts and encourages the DBS update service for all workers and requires an enhanced DBS check for anyone who will be working directly with young people in any capacity.

**9.2.** All Speakers Trust workers (paid or unpaid) delivering regulated activity and are eligible for an enhanced with barred DBS check will be required to get one. Individuals working for another organisation supporting Speakers Trust providing a different area of expertise will need a Basic Check.

**9.3.** Where it is impractical to get a Basic Check workers will be given a copy of the Safeguarding Children and Young People policy and be asked to sign a declaration confirming they have no convictions relating to children and that they will abide by the Speakers Trust policy. They will be briefed by a Speakers Trust worker with a DBS and Safeguarding Training and will be closely supervised by someone with an enhanced check

and safeguarding training.

**9.4.** Speakers Trust recognises that it is not possible for short notice workers (paid or unpaid)

to provide an enhanced DBS or a Basic Check. In these cases, workers will be required to sign a declaration stating they have no convictions making them unsuitable to work with children and that they will abide by the Speakers Trust policy. They will be briefed by a Speakers Trust worker with a DBS and Safeguarding Training and will be closely supervised by someone with an enhanced check and safeguarding training.

**9.4.1.** All observations, shadowing sessions, and unregulated work (not delivered by a Speakers Trust worker) must be organised by the central team and agreed by the school/client in advance.

**9.4.1.1.** Under no circumstances may an adult observing, shadowing, delivering unregulated work (not delivered by a Speakers Trust worker) be left unattended with children.

**9.5.** Speakers Trust will need to see the original DBS certificate for all Speakers Trust workers

before work commences and on a reoccurring annual basis.

**9.6.** When a Speakers Trust worker (and anyone delivering unregulated work) stops working with, or for, Speakers Trust, all their DBS data or copies of their DBS certificate will be promptly shredded and/or permanently deleted (within one month of termination of work).

**9.7.** DBS responsibilities: Every Speakers Trust worker is responsible for their own certificate.

This includes:

**9.7.1.** Producing DBS certificate when requested by Speakers Trust or our clients.

**9.7.1.1.** If a Speakers Trust worker would like Speakers Trust to hold a central copy of their DBS (to facilitate requests from clients to DBS certificates) they will need to consent to this annually – it is optional and is not a requirement of working with Speakers Trust.

**9.7.2.** The safekeeping of their own certificate.

**9.7.3.** Carrying the original DBS certificate with them to every Speakers Trust activity.

**9.7.4.** Informing Speakers Trust if the status of their criminal record changes or they are under a police investigation.

**9.7.5.** Ensuring their DBS is dated with the Speakers Trust DBS guidelines according to the role and access to children and their data (see Appendix 3).

**9.7.5.1.** If a Speakers Trust worker's (or anyone delivering regulated work for Speakers Trust) DBS is older than the renewal date (outlined in Appendix 3) – all work will be reallocated until their new DBS has been received.

**9.8.** DBS with positive disclosures: Should a DBS with content be received, a risk assessment will be carried out by Speakers Trust executive team in conjunction with the Board. Formal offer of employment may be put on hold to ensure proper consideration and procedure. Information will be passed to the relevant authorities such as the criminal records agency, professional bodies or police if needed,

**9.8.1.** This risk assessment will assess the information contained within the DBS.

**9.8.2.** The member of staff or freelancer will be asked to attend an interview prior to a recruitment decision being finalised.

**9.8.3.** The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 should be considered in all cases before a final decision is made.

**9.8.4.** Speakers Trust is committed to providing equal opportunities to staff and therefore a full DBS which has content, will not necessarily result in not being able to work with Speakers Trust.

**9.8.5.** People on the barred list will not be given a role that requires them to work or volunteer with children or young people in regulated activity or work.

## **10. Safeguarding: Induction, training, supervision and support**

**10.1.** Speakers Trust is committed to ensuring that everyone who works for us understands their safeguarding responsibilities and keeps their knowledge up to date. We will provide:

- Induction – to clarify job requirements, responsibilities and standards for practice/behaviour. Information on the safeguarding policy and procedures will be shared along with the code of conduct.
- Support and supervision – information on whom the new worker is accountable to and where they can access further support should they have a concern.

**10.2.** All employed staff, freelancers and long term volunteers (over 3 months) are required to attend an NSPCC's Introduction to Child Protection and Safeguarding or complete the NSPCC Child Protection in Schools online course (or equivalent courses) before working with any children and within three months of taking up employment/commitment to working with Speakers Trust. This training must be refreshed a minimum of once every three years. All training days for freelance trainers and event managers must – as standard – ensure safeguarding is covered (what is a safeguarding issue, how to respond, how to report).

## 11. Risk Assessments

**11.1.** Any activity undertaken by Speakers Trust must have a relevant risk assessment assigned to it, filled in by the relevant Programme Director or Manager and approved by the Safeguarding Leads. These assessments must be filed with the activity plans and be accessible at any time. An example of the risk assessment for workshops is included as appendix

**11.2.** Activities designed and delivered by Speakers Trust (see 3.4.1), which are different from

one another will require individual risk assessments tailored to individual activities

**11.3.** A partner or client hosted activity (see 3.4.2) will require a different risk assessment for each activity type.

## 12. Consent

**12.1.** Speakers Trust will obtain parent/guardian consent for all activities that designed and delivered by Speakers Trust (see 3.4.1). This consent form must outline any specific risks that must be considered as well as detail on what they are consenting to.

**12.2.** Speakers Trust will do everything it can to safeguard young people in its care but recognise, in some circumstances, due to the nature of the work carried out, obtaining parental consent for specific activities is not always possible (e.g. for school supplied hosts/volunteers/musicians or audience members at an event). In these circumstances the school will be informed and their safeguarding policy adhered to.

**12.3.** Speaking in public builds confidence and self-esteem but it can also bring challenges. This is especially true when someone is speaking on personally important or controversial topics. Speakers Trust has comprehensive guidelines in place to support children with their decision on what to speak about (see Parent/Guardian consent, Respectful Speeches Guidelines, teacher agreement, student notes, teacher notes and SOC workbook).

## 13. Use of Images and Videography

**13.1.** Speakers Trust publishes photographs and videos of speeches made by children, online and on digital channels. As such, we are a controller of children's digital media and have a responsibility to ensure it is used safely and in accordance with their welfare and dignity.

**13.2.** We have a photography and video policy for (see 2.2 reference to POL 3 and a policy on the storage and use of all digital media associated with young people (see 2.2 reference to POL 9). These policies must be adhered to by all Speakers Trust workers.

## 14. Staff Behaviour

**14.1.** The standards of behaviour expected of Speakers Trust workers are outlined in the conduct and language policy (see 2.2 reference and Appendix 1). All staff, volunteers and freelancers must abide by this at all times.

**14.2.** All staff will complete a probationary period, in which the staff members performance and behaviour is closely monitored.

**14.3** When an organisation becomes aware of an allegation or concern around a person's behaviour towards children the LADO must be contacted within one working day or the next working day. The LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) whose role is to oversee and



co-ordinate any investigation into an incident where an allegation of abuse or harm has been made against a professional or volunteer who has contact with children in any setting or activities

**14.3.1.** A decision to refer will be taken by the CEO in conjunction with the Safeguarding Trustee.

**14.3.2.** Speakers Trust will refer someone to the DBS (within three months) if they:

- Dismissed them because they harmed a child;
- Dismissed them or removed them from working in a regulated activity or because they might have harmed a child;
- Were planning to dismiss them for either of these reasons, but the person resigned first; or
- Information comes to light that, had it been known before, would have led to the person being removed from working in a regulated activity.

An individual who has been removed from regulated activity can include dismissal, redeployment, retirement, redundancy, or resignation.

## 15. Use of Social Media

**15.1.** All Speakers Trust workers must be respectful and responsible online as you are offline and use good judgment at all times when using social media.

**15.2.** Speakers Trust workers should have no contact with children on social media; this includes, but is not limited to, accepting friends on Facebook and engaging via any handles on any social media platform.

**15.3.** If Speakers Trust workers need to communicate with young people by text or social media they should do so wherever possible using Speakers Trust accounts and devices. This should only be used for information purposes and staff should not engage in general conversation with young people.

**15.4.** We ask that everyone should remember not to post anything online that they wouldn't want parents, teachers, beneficiaries, minors, employers or funders to see. Once something is online it can sometimes be shared and spread in ways you never intended.

**15.5.** Regardless of your privacy settings, assume that all of the information you have shared

on your social network is public information. Where possible Speakers Trust encourages separate personal and professional accounts.

**15.6.** Speaking in public builds confidence and self-esteem but it can also bring challenges.

This is particularly true when using social media. Speakers Trust has comprehensive guidelines in place to support children with their decision on what to speak about and understanding that messages can be shared online (see Parent/Guardian consent, Respectful Speech Guidelines, teacher agreement, student notes and teacher notes).

**15.7.** A child, parent/guardian or teacher can ask for any Speakers Trusted hosted (ST website, JPSOC website or ST and JPSOC social media channels) material to be taken down at any time. Speakers Trust staff must oblige with these requests promptly.

**15.8.** Under no circumstances should you publish, post or release information that is considered confidential. If it seems confidential, it probably is.

## 16. Learning and Improving

**16.1.** As a learning and development charity it is essential that we keep improving our knowledge and understanding of how best to protect children. We review our own practice annually to check we are placing the right emphasis on safeguarding in our work. Following a serious incident we will conduct an additional review and will promote a culture in which we can learn and improve our practice.

**16.2.** This safeguarding policy will be reviewed annually by the Safeguarding Leads and the Board. The date of the next review will be August 2026.

**16.3.** All freelance and employed staff will be briefed on the policies and procedures on an annual basis.

## Appendix 1: Types of Harm and Abuse

1.1. Children who suffer abuse may be afraid to tell anybody about the abuse. They may struggle with feelings of guilt, shame or confusion – particularly if the abuser is a parent, caregiver or other close family member or friend. Children and young people who have been abused may want to tell someone, but not have the exact words to do so. They may attempt to disclose abuse by giving adults clues, through their actions and by using indirect words

1.2. A disclosure is when a child tells you something that relates to their welfare. It may include information relating to abuse or to their mental health. Our workshops provide a safe space which may make it possible for them to open up in a way that has not been possible before. It may also leave them feeling vulnerable.

1.3. An observation is when you observe an indicator that something is wrong and there may be something impacting on their welfare.

1.3.1. Physical abuse is defined as Physical abuse happens when a child is deliberately hurt, causing physical harm. It can involve hitting, kicking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or suffocating. It's also physical abuse if a parent or carer makes up or causes the symptoms of illness in children. For example, they may give them medicine they don't need, making them unwell. This is known as fabricated or induced illness (FII).

1.3.2. Neglect is not meeting a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs. This can result in serious damage to their health and development. Neglect may involve a parent or carer not:

- providing adequate food, clothing or shelter
- supervising a child or keeping them safe from harm or danger(including leaving them with unsuitable carers)
- making sure the child receives appropriate health and/or dental care
- making sure the child receives a suitable education
- meeting the child's basic emotional needs – this is known as emotional neglect. Neglect is the most common type of child abuse. It often happens at the same time as other types of abuse.

1.3.3. Emotional abuse involves:

- humiliating, putting down or regularly criticising a child
- shouting at or threatening a child or calling them names
- mocking a child or making them perform degrading acts
- constantly blaming or scapegoating a child for things which are not their fault
- trying to control a child's life and not recognising their individuality
- not allowing a child to have friends or develop socially
- pushing a child too hard or not recognising their limitations

- manipulating a child
- exposing a child to distressing events or interactions
- persistently ignoring a child
- being cold and emotionally unavailable during interactions with a child
- not being positive or encouraging to a child or praising their achievements and successes.

1.3.4 Sexual abuse is Sexual abuse is forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. It doesn't necessarily involve violence and the child may not be aware that what is happening is abuse. Child sexual abuse can involve contact abuse and non-contact abuse. Contact abuse happens when the abuser makes physical contact with the child. It includes:

- sexual touching of any part of the body whether the child is wearing clothes or not
- rape or penetration by putting an object or body part inside a child's mouth, vagina or anus
- forcing or encouraging a child to take part in sexual activity
- making a child take their clothes off or touch someone else's genitals.

Non-contact abuse involves non-touching activities. It can happen online or in person and includes:

- encouraging or forcing a child to watch or hear sexual acts
- making a child masturbate while others watch

1.3.5. Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. Young people may be coerced or groomed into exploitative situations and relationships. They may be given things such as gifts, money, drugs, alcohol, status or affection in exchange for taking part in sexual activities.

1.3.6. Harmful sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour which is displayed by children and young people. It may also be referred to as sexually harmful behaviour or sexualised behaviour. It can be displayed towards younger children, peers, older children or adults, and is harmful to the children and young people who display it, as well as the people it is directed towards.

1.3.6. Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between people who are, or who have been in a relationship, regardless of gender or sexuality. It can include physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse.

1.3.8. Bullying is when individuals or groups seek to harm, intimidate or coerce someone who is perceived to be vulnerable. It can involve people of any age, and can happen anywhere – at home, school or using digital technologies (cyberbullying). This means it can happen at any time.

1.3.9. Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the internet, facilitated through technology like computers, tablets, mobile phones and other electronic devices

1.3.10. Child trafficking is defined as recruiting, moving, receiving and harbouring children for the purpose of exploitation Child trafficking is a form of modern slavery. Many children are trafficked into the UK from overseas, but children can also be trafficked from one part of the UK to another.

1.3.11. Female genital mutilation is the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It's also known as female circumcision or cutting.

1.3.12 Child on child abuse is when children abuse other children. The different forms child-on-child abuse can take include bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying); abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (also known as teenage relationship abuse); physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm or sexual violence and sexual harassment.

## Appendix 2: Conduct and language policy

2.1. This document should be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding Children & Young People Policy. Its aim is to set out best practice when training children and young people and to help all trainers and volunteers safeguard against any allegation of impropriety from a child, young person or teacher.

2.2. At all times, you should take care not to place yourself in a vulnerable position with a child.

### 3. Conduct

3.1. Training should always be undertaken in a neutral venue and never take place in a trainer's home or otherwise in a residential property except with the knowledge and written consent of Speakers Trust, the parents or guardian and contact staff/ organiser.

3.2. Direct contact with children and young people should, where training is being delivered through a school or organisation, only be made through a representative of the relevant school or organisation. In all other cases it should be through a parent or legal guardian. When a Speakers Trust worker needs to contact a student – communication should be clear and transparent and always cc in their parent/guardian or teacher.

3.3. Unless absolutely necessary, young people should not be taken alone on car journeys. Where it is unavoidable the full knowledge and consent of the parents or guardian and a senior member at the organisation/ school should be sought. In seeking consent, you should state the proposed purpose of the journey and the anticipated length. You should also check and confirm insurance liability.

3.4. It is best practice never to touch a student. An arm around the shoulder or a pat on the back could be misconstrued. In addition, if you are trying to illustrate a point about posture or body language, you should use your own body to demonstrate your recommendations.

3.5. There may be occasions, however, when physical contact is unavoidable e.g. to provide support to a sick or disabled child. Physical contact should only take place with the consent of the child and the purpose of the contact should be clear.

3.6. If you are in the unfortunate position of having to use physical intervention as a last resort with a child or young person (i.e. where a child or young person is endangering him/herself or others) please be aware that any action that causes injury or distress may be considered under the child protection or disciplinary procedures.

3.7. Before taking photographs of children at training or competition events, Speakers Trust

trainers and volunteers need to request permission from the school or organisation through which the training is being delivered to obtain any necessary parental or legal guardian permissions. No photographs will be taken of children and young people at any Speakers Trust event without such permissions.

#### 4. Ratios and supervision of children:

4.1. Where possible, trainers and volunteers should avoid being alone with a group of children or young people. Best practice is to have a teacher or another responsible adult with you at all times.

4.2. Any activity undertaken by Speakers Trust will always give full consideration to the appropriate number of staff members available depending on the age of children involved; the degree of risk the activity involved.

Activity	Venue	Student Numbers	Student age	ST staff	Teacher/mentor
School workshop or workshop based in a community organisation	School/community organisation	25-30	13-17	1	1 requested
Teacher co-delivered workshop	External	40-75	16-17	1	1/12 students
Regional Final	School	20	14-15	2	8-22 requested
Other non-school based workshops e.g. Grand Final	External	15	14-15	2	0
Alumni activity	External	20-30	15-16	2-3	0

4.3. In line with NSPCC guidance, children under 12 years must be accompanied in any Speakers Trust activity at all times.

4.4 For any activity that is offered by Speakers Trust (and is not a communication skills workshop) a minimum of 2 members of staff or freelancers, with appropriate DBS checks will always be available to supervise any activity, event or trip. This ensures basic cover in the event of something impacting on the availability of one of the responsible adults during the trip.

#### 5. Language

5.1. Speakers Trust trainers and volunteers are strongly advised not to make any comments

relating to gender or physical appearance.

5.2. Speakers Trust trainers and volunteers will strongly discourage the use of offensive or oppressive language by children or young people in relation to race, culture, age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality or political persuasion.

5.3. Although we encourage pupils to call trainers and volunteers by your first name, please wear your name badge at all times as this makes the practice more professional. In turn, it is strongly advised that trainers and volunteers call the children and young people by their first names only and do not use colloquial, non-specific endearments such as “Hun”, “Sweetie”, etc, which could later be misconstrued.



## Appendix 3: Template for Safeguarding disclosures/ concerns

Speakers Trust office staff member recording disclosure/concern	
Date and time	
Person reporting and their role	
Their contact details	

Name of school	
Lead teacher	
Lead teacher contact details	

Name of child, including other identifying information eg class	
When and where did the disclosure/observation happen	
Who else was present	
Exactly what was said by the child and/or exactly what did you observe	
What did you say and/or do	
Who else heard the disclosure /saw the incident/ made the observation	
What action did they take/say they would take (if any)	
Any other observations or relevant information – is there anything in your notes you have not yet shared?	

Any actions agreed for the trainer	To report to Speakers Trust Central Team for reporting to the school
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What should the trainer do with their notes	Let them know that you will contact them to destroy their notes once the school has confirmed receipt of the report
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## Appendix 4: Calculating how often a DBS check needs to be done

Everyone working on behalf of Speakers Trust (employed, freelance, contractor or volunteer) as a Speakers Trust worker and undertaking a regulated activity, or managing anyone undertaking a

regulated activity, must have an enhanced DBS check.

Any individual or company representing themselves will be subject to a different check.

All central office staff and freelance trainers will be required to have an enhanced DBS check and join the update service. All other associates including trustees will be required to have an enhanced DBS check every 3 years.

## Appendix 5: Speak Out Challenge Workshop Risk Assessment: September 2025

Risk assessment for:	Speak Out Challenge workshop
Details of where event will take place:	A workshop will take place in school (one classroom for the full day)
Outline of event:	Flexible depending on school time table: 08:15 Speakers Trust Trainer arrives, checks in at school reception and presents DBS certificate. Met by school lead and escorted to classroom for day 08:30-3:30 SOC workshop (fits into school break/lunch times) 3:30/end of school day Speakers Trust Trainer leaves
Who is responsible for safety at this event?	This is a school-run event with Speakers Trust activities.  The School is responsible for the safety and wellbeing of their pupils at all times.  Speakers Trust is responsible for - the safety of its staff - running safe and appropriate activities with suitably qualified staff - the safety of any equipment they provide
Assessment undertaken by:	Relevant SOC Programme Director
Date:	September 2025
Signed by:	Russell Findlay (CEO Speakers Trust)
Date:	September 2025

### Risk Assessment for Workshop delivery

Key:

Green – low

Amber – medium

Red – high

Risk	Likelihood of Risk	Impact of Risk	Mitigation
Student uses workshop as a platform for a speech that places them (or fellow pupils) in a vulnerable position – impacting student's future welfare	Green	Red	Trainer manual makes clear that student welfare is more important than anything else. Trainers reiterate importance of positive message in training. Trainer to set workshop space as a safe space and for students to be considerate of other viewpoints, perspectives and faiths. Trainer to ensure that the pupils consider the implications of making their specific speeches at a public event (since they may have to if they progress to the next stage) and advise pupils of the implications of their specific speeches appearing on social media, bearing in mind their safety and welfare. Safeguarding – all Speakers Trust staff are required to act in line with the safeguarding policy. If a student makes a disclosure in a workshop or a trainer makes an observation, the trainer is briefed to follow disclosure/observation reporting systems.

			Speakers Trust Central Team to react, respond, report and refer – if non-emergency to report to host school's safeguarding lead and to follow up for a confirmation of receipt and that the school will be following their standard safeguarding procedures.
Safeguarding Issues. Risk of abuse or false allegations	Green	Red	As part of Speakers Trust's recruitment and selection process, offers of work for positions which involve working with children are subject to a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) at the level deemed suitable for the position offered and subject to appropriate references. All Speakers Trust staff and trainers are inducted according to Speakers Trust's Safeguarding Policy and are required to follow safeguarding procedures. Teacher agreement ensures a member of the student's school staff is present in loco parentis throughout Speak Out Challenge workshop.
Needs of specific pupils aren't met in a workshop	Green	Amber	Teacher Agreement outlines responsibility for lead teacher and they agree to advise Speakers Trust in good time of any pupil's special needs or additional requirements so the team can make reasonable adjustments with a view to ensuring they are able to participate fully.
Pre-existing medical conditions worsened by a particular activity e.g. health	Green	Amber	Teacher Agreement outlines responsibility for lead teacher and they agree to advise Speakers Trust in good time of any pupil's special needs or additional requirements. Appropriate school staff to remain with pupils. Trainers to follow the direction of Teacher in relation to pupils at all times. Trainer to ensure teacher understands the activities to be undertaken.
General building safety	Green	Amber	Speakers Trust team to follow Health & Safety Procedural Guidance of host school. Lead Teacher has responsibility for briefing the Speakers Trust trainer on any specific health and safety issues, including but not limited to Fire Escapes, Fire Alarms / Practices. Trainers briefed to ensure they have this understanding and to follow school's usual registration/check-in procedure. Teacher asked to remain in training room throughout the event. Trainers to be aware of hazards and amend workshop activities accordingly
Manual Handling - Moving/using equipment, tables, boxes, etc. Loading/unloading vehicles - Injury due to poor lifting techniques.	Green	Red	Speakers Trust trainer to maintain good posture when lifting or lowering equipment and avoid twisting or bending to reduce the chance of back injury.
Slip / Trip / Falls Poor lighting, trailing cables, discarded litter, obstructions in walkways, poor housekeeping	Green	Red	General 'good housekeeping' procedures to be observed by Speakers Trust trainer when running activities or introducing equipment. Walkways to be kept clear. Potential trip hazards relating to school environment (furniture/equipment etc in situ) identified by Speakers Trust trainer to be reported to teacher. If not corrected and Trainer has serious concerns, activity to be halted. Speakers Trust trainer to follow school first aid/accident reporting procedures. Host school Lead Teacher responsible for health and safety of students, with trained first aider from school on site.
Food Safety - provision by third party caterers. Food hygiene incidents, food contamination, allergies	Green	Red	Schools often provide lunch for our trainers in the school canteen. Trainers may bring their own lunch if they prefer and Speakers Trust will strongly recommend this.

Declaration

Date.....

I .....(PRINT NAME) confirm that I have read,  
understood

and will comply with this policy.

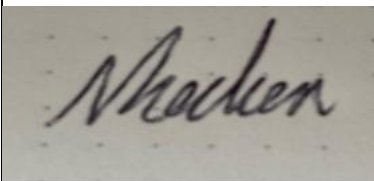
Signature.....

Last edited 2nd August 2025

## **Speak Out Challenge Regional Finals**

### **Risk Assessment: November 2025 – May 2026**

Risk assessment for:	Speak Out Challenge Regional Final
Details of where event will take place:	Event takes place in a venue provided by a school (referred to as the “Host School”). Event will use school hall plus 2 x rooms (one for a workshop and one for judges at the event) as well as welcome area (e.g. foyer) and school bathrooms for guests
Outline of event:	14:00 Speakers Trust team, ESS and photographer set up  16:00 Regional Finalists arrive for pre-Regional Final workshop  17:00 Regional Finalist stage and mic briefing and run through  17:00 Host school helpers briefed (ambassadors, way finders time keepers, mic runners, refreshment helpers)  18:00 Doors open to the public  18:00 Judges briefing  18:30 Event starts  19:15 Musical interlude  20:30 Ends  Shut down
Who is responsible for safety at the event?	This is a Speakers Trust event run at a host school with the active participation of Lead Teachers from other schools.  The Speakers Trust is responsible for the overall event (i.e. activities taking place as per Outline of event above) and takes responsibility for overall co-ordination.

	<p>The Host School Lead Teacher (or other nominated representative of the school) is responsible for the venue.</p> <p>Each Finalist's Lead Teacher or appointed responsible adult is responsible for the participants and any supporters the Lead Teacher chooses to bring on site in line with the school's Safeguarding Policy.</p>
Overall assessment undertaken by:	Relevant SOC Programme Director
Date:	1 November 2025
Signed by:	<p>Alanna Beeken (Speakers Trust Programmes Director)</p> 
Date:	27/10/2023
Distribution:	All Event Organisers

### Risk Assessment:

Key:

Green – low

Amber – medium

Red – high

Risk	Likelihood of Risk	Impact of Risk	Mitigation
Unclear responsibilities between host school, lead teachers and Speakers Trust	Green	Amber	<p>Responsibilities set out at initial stages.</p> <p>This includes a duty on the school (as set out in the Teacher agreement) to agree a safe travel plan for pupils before and after the event.</p> <p>Event organiser to restate responsibilities with the host school in writing and maintain up to date contact list. Trainers have shared the Teacher</p>

			Agreement with lead teachers and teacher pack contains expectations for students and schools at a Regional Final.
Speakers / student MCs use Regional Final for a speech that places them in a vulnerable position – impacting students' future welfare	Green	Red	<p>Teacher Agreement outlines responsibility for the lead teacher and they agree to work with the pupils participating in the Regional Final to develop their speeches, including guiding them on the inclusion of personal information, bearing in mind their safety and welfare; Ensure that the pupils consider the implications of making their specific speeches at a public event; and advise pupils of the implications of their specific speeches appearing on social media, bearing in mind their safety and welfare; and promptly alert the Speakers Trust team to any welfare reasons that a video of a speech should not go online or should be taken off line. Teachers are sent the Respectful Speeches guidelines ahead of event day and asked to go through these with students.</p> <p>Trainers reiterate importance of positive message in training and again in pre-Regional Final workshop.</p> <p>Assessor briefs judges clearly and consistently on offensive speech content and a positive message.</p> <p>Safeguarding – all Speakers Trust staff have signed the safeguarding policy. Speakers are encouraged to speak about the same topic as in their workshop as this speech showed winning content. If the topic at a workshop was a disclosure or a potential safeguarding issue then trainer has agreed to follow Speakers Trust disclosure/observation reporting systems.</p> <p>Event Organiser is able to take immediate advice from Speakers Trust more senior staff (Programme Manager, Programme Director, CEO).</p>
Safeguarding Issues. Risk of abuse or false allegations	Green	Red	<p>As part of Speakers Trust's recruitment and selection process, offers of work for positions which involve working with children are subject to a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) at the level deemed suitable for the position offered and subject to appropriate references. All Speakers Trust staff and trainers are inducted according to Speakers Trust's Safeguarding Policy and are required to follow safeguarding procedures. Any third-party contractors brought on site by Speakers Trust (ESS, photographer), as well as volunteer</p>

			<p>judges, are also required to work in line with this policy.</p> <p>Parental consent has been sought for filming and photography and parents/guardians have been made aware of issues to consider relating to sensitive content.</p> <p>Teacher agreement ensures a member of the student's school staff is present in loco parentis throughout Speak Out Challenge activities.</p> <p>Two Speakers Trust trainers are present throughout the pre-Regional Final workshop.</p> <p>Judges are not DBS checked. Some checking is done of online profiles to check suitability. Judges have been briefed on safeguarding including social media guidance. At no time during the event are judges left unaccompanied with participants.</p>
Unsafe travel for students to venue	Green	Amber	<p>Teacher Agreement reminds Lead Teachers that it is their responsibility to accompany speakers to event and to agree a safe travel plan from the event with parent/guardian. On arrival, each speaker and their Lead Teacher must check in with Speakers Trust Trainer leading pre-event workshop.</p>
General Public Safety - Injury due to overcrowding, lack of information provision, stewarding, security, etc.	Green	Red	<p>Speakers Trust team to follow Health &amp; Safety Procedural Guidance of host school.</p> <p>Staff, students and visitors to remain alert and report any suspicions person or activity to school security / Police as appropriate.</p> <p>Host school informed of venue requirements before confirming they are able to host a Speak Out Challenge Regional Final. School room capacities to be adhered to by Speakers Trust team.</p> <p>Speakers Trust Event Manager to confirm who attending from the host school is responsible in the case of emergency</p>
Risk of terrorism, fire or natural disaster	Green	Red	<p>Host school confirmed as a reputable organisation. Events held in main halls – used regularly for school and external events. Briefing for schools includes information regarding requirements.</p> <p>Guests at the Regional Final follow school's usual registration/check-in procedure.</p> <p>Speakers Trust Trainer leading pre-event workshop identifies venue fire exits and emergency</p>



			<p>procedures and briefs students at start of workshop.</p> <p>Welcome speakers from Host School announces emergency evacuation procedure to audience.</p> <p>Speakers Trust Event Manager to confirm who attending from the host school is responsible in the case of emergency</p>
Manual Handling - Moving/using equipment, tables, boxes, etc. Loading/unloading vehicles - Injury due to poor lifting techniques.	Green	Red	<p>Room set up to be managed by Speakers Trust Event Manager. Speakers Trust events team to maintain good posture when lifting or lowering equipment and avoid twisting or bending to reduce the chance of back injury.</p>
Slip / Trip / Falls  Poor lighting, trailing cables, discarded litter, obstructions in walkways, poor housekeeping	Amber	Red	<p>General 'good housekeeping' procedures to be observed by Speakers Trust team. Walkways to be kept clear. ESS to tape down/cover any cables. Floor socket covers kept closed.</p> <p>Potential trip hazards to be monitored by Speakers Trust events team.</p> <p>Event Manager to identify school first aider. Speakers Trust team to follow host school first aid/accident reporting procedures. If someone is taken ill at the final, Event Manager to ask if someone is medically trained in the audience.</p>
Food Safety - provision by third party caterers.  Food hygiene incidents, food contamination, allergies;	Green	Red	<p>Food is provided by agreement with the school using their accredited caterers.</p>
Needs of specific pupils aren't met at Regional Final.	Green	Amber	<p>Teacher Agreement outlines responsibility for lead teacher and they agree to advise Speakers Trust in good time of any pupil's special needs or additional requirements so the student's school, the host school and Speakers Trust can make reasonable adjustments with a view to their being able to participate fully.</p> <p>Experienced events team managing set up and able to change set-up of stage / performance area if required.</p>

Personal medication needs - Pre-existing medical conditions worsened by a particular activity eg stress or anxiety	Green	Amber	<p>Teacher Agreement outlines responsibility for lead teacher and they agree to advise Speakers Trust in good time of any pupil's special needs or additional requirements.</p> <p>Teacher to support pupils and involve SMT if needed.</p>
Student speakers inadequately prepared – reputational risk to programme.	Amber	Amber	<p>Following Speak Out workshop students are given tips before their assembly final to help refine their speeches. All Regional Finallists are offered an additional digital workshop. Student packs and digital resources will be available online so that a student can download tips and practise.</p> <p>Schools are encouraged to hold an Assembly Final so that their speaker has an opportunity to practise with a large audience.</p> <p>Students attend the pre-Regional Final preparatory workshop to recap on the top tips and to practise their first and last lines.</p> <p>Audience are very supportive and understanding when a speaker struggles on stage. Regional Manager to manage order of speaking so that they start and finish on strong speakers (helps encourage the less confident speakers).</p>
Wrong speaker being announced in prize giving ceremony – distress caused to student	Green	Amber	<p>Chief judge and Assessor tot up the scores together so that two adults are checking the maths. Chief judge often someone who has attended a Regional Final before so understands procedures.</p> <p>Assessor to write out top three, three times: 1 – for Regional Manager to read out, 2 – for ESS to add to the PowerPoint presentation, 3 – for Assessor to hold.</p> <p>Should a name be read out incorrectly it will be correct on the slide behind them and the assessor will be standing within three steps to ensure they can quickly step in to correct the error.</p>
Videos / photographs uploaded of speakers used inappropriately by	Green	Red	<p>Parent/guardians consent form sought prior to the Regional Final. Form raises four issues for a child to consider before taking part: Identification; the size of your audience and how the child will not know most</p>

members of the public. E.g. online heckling			<p>of them; online heckling; and publicity. This information is also contained in Student workbook.</p> <p>Teacher Agreement outlines responsibility for the lead teacher and they agree to work with the pupils participating in the Regional Final to develop their speeches, including guiding them on the inclusion of personal information, bearing in mind their safety and welfare; Ensure that the pupils consider the implications of making their specific speeches at a public event; and advise pupils on the implications of their specific speeches appearing on social media, bearing in mind their safety and welfare; and promptly alert the Speakers Trust team to any welfare reasons that a video of a speech should not go online or should be taken off line.</p> <p>All publicly accessible data (videos and photos) are reviewed by Programme Director next morning. Social media channels are all monitored daily and Google Alerts are set up. Comments are disabled on YouTube.</p>
Specific risks related to the event venue / building.	Green	Amber	<p>Speakers Trust Event Manager to identify existing control measures already in place to ensure identified hazards do not harm anyone and any additional control measures to ensure the hazards do not harm anyone. Overall responsibility for this sits with Host Teacher of Lead School, who will be best placed to manage relevant risks.</p>
Students leave events without an appropriate level of supervision	Green	Red	<p>School remains in loco parentis throughout event; specifically Lead Teacher is asked to arrive with the student and to ensure their safe onwards travel. Parent/guardian consent form makes clear that Speakers Trust is not responsible for travel to or from the event.</p>