

Policy Document

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION

1 STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Academy is committed to the vital contribution all Governors, teaching and non teaching staff make to safeguarding children. We aim to ensure that child protection concerns and referrals are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that support the specific needs of the individual child. Through providing a caring, safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and moral development of all our students, we aim to foster an atmosphere of trust, respect and security.

2 AIM AND PURPOSE

- The aims of this Policy are **Prevention, Protection and Support:**
 - To support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
 - To raise the awareness of both teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
 - To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm.
 - To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
 - To develop a structured procedure within the Academy which will be followed by all members of the Academy community, in cases of suspected abuse.
 - To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police and Social Services.
 - To ensure that all adults within our Academy who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability.

3 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- The policy is applicable during all on and off-site activities undertaken by students whilst they are the responsibility of the Academy. All adults working in the Academy (including visiting staff, volunteers and students on placement) are **required to report instances of actual or suspected child abuse or neglect to the Designated Person with responsibility for child protection.**

- All employees of the Academy are required to read and follow the Staff Code of Conduct policy.

3.1 The Designated Person

The Designated Person is: Vice Principal - Edward Evans
The Deputy Designated Person: SENCO

The role of the Designated person (DSP) is to: -

- Ensure child protection procedures are in place and updated as appropriate.
 - Ensure all staff are aware of the Federation's, the LA's and the Academy's policy and procedures.
 - Be available to provide advice/support to staff and for confidential discussion about concerns.
 - Be available to provide support to students.
 - Liaise with the Principal to keep him/her informed regarding child protection procedures.
 - Liaise with Social Services and other relevant agencies.
 - Ensure records are kept of any concerns/suspected cases of abuse/referrals.
 - Act as the first point of contact for external agencies that are pursuing Child Protection investigations.
 - Coordinate arrangements for monitoring of students on roll who have been identified as being in need of protection.
 - Co-ordinate the Academy's representation at CP conferences and other meetings and the submission of written reports for conferences.
 - Act as the first point of contact for any liaison with outside agencies under the Common Assessment Framework (CAF)
 - To keep an up to date list of students on the child protection register.
 - To keep an up to date list of looked after children.
 - Ensure that any student currently on the Child Protection plan who is absent without explanation for two days, is referred to Social Services.
 - Ensure that the Student Information Centre have up to date contact names, addresses and telephone numbers for the five named members of the local Social Services departments (Bexley, Greenwich, Bromley etc), together with similar details for Police Child Protection Teams.
- When the Designated Person has been informed of a case of suspected abuse, or of a young person who may be at risk of abuse, he/she will straight away refer the matter to Social Services. Social Services will then advise the Designated Person regarding any contact with the family, as it is the responsibility of the Social Services Department to inform the parents if the allegation involves a member of the child's family.
 - If the allegation involves someone other than a member of the child's family the matter should still be reported to Social Services but as the child may not be at immediate risk the Social Services Department may not need to respond

so urgently. The child's parents/ carers must be informed and the procedure for doing this should be agreed with Social Services.

- If the allegation of child abuse is made against a member of staff the Principal should be informed immediately and the procedures outlined in policy "allegations against staff (including Governors)" must be followed.
- Where it is suspected that a student might be at risk of significant harm, nothing will be said to the student's parent/carer without the approval of the Designated Person and, as appropriate, the Social Services Department. Where a student sustains physical injury or is distressed as a result of reported chastisement or alleges that they have been chastised by the use of an implement or substance, this will immediately be reported to Social Services/ police for investigation. Referrals to Social Services will be confirmed in writing, using the appropriate form and copied to the LA's Lead Officer.
- In circumstances where a student has an unexplained or suspicious injury that requires urgent medical attention, the Child Protection referral process should not delay the administration of First Aid or emergency medical assistance. **If a student is thought to be at immediate risk because of parental violence, drunkenness or other incapacity or, for example, from threats to remove the student during the Academy day, then urgent police intervention will be requested.**

3.2 Staff Responsibilities in Handling Disclosures

- Under common law, information given in confidence should only be passed to a third party with the agreement of the person disclosing it. This applies to the student/staff relationship.
- Staff must not, however, offer absolute confidentiality. Where there are child protection issues, the member of staff should refer the matter to the designated child protection lead within the Academy and follow the Academy's confidentiality procedures. Teachers should make clear the level of confidentiality that can be given, before the disclosure is made.
- If a student begins to confide **any matter involving alleged abuse**, whether physical, emotional or sexual, to **a member of staff, they should follow the following guidelines:**
 - Don't make any promises to the student.
 - Stay calm and re-assuring.
 - Explain that you cannot promise to keep what they tell you as a secret, in their own interest. You may have to inform the Designated Person.
 - Listen to the student rather than directly question them.
 - Do not press them for details or ask leading questions.
 - Ask the student if they have told anyone else.
 - Write a detailed account, in the student's own words, dated, timed and signed.

- Inform the Designated Person and hand them the detailed account as this may be needed as evidence in court
 - Assure the student that they have done the right thing and you know how difficult it is to talk about such experiences.
- The key task at this moment is to listen to the student and not interrupt if he or she is freely recalling significant events, and to make a note of all that is said to be passed to the designated member of staff. Staff should also be aware that noted recordings of the discussion may need to be used in any subsequent court proceedings and may be made available to the student's parents at the Child Protection conference.
 - The welfare of the student is paramount; therefore all situations must be treated with sensitivity. The teacher should not reveal his/her own feelings to the student.

Confidentiality

- If a student requests confidentiality they must be told that this cannot be promised and it should be explained that staff have a responsibility to share information with those adults who will be able to help protect them from harm. They should be reassured that only staff who need to know about it will be told. This could result in the student not continuing the conversation, in which case do not pursue the matter and report concerns to the Designated Person.
- Staff have a professional duty to share confidential information about the protection of children with Social Services via the Designated Person.
- Staff should take care not to discuss information given in confidence outside the appropriate professional contexts. The Principal and Designated Person will disclose any information about a student to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

Recording information

- All concerns about, or disclosures regarding, any form of abuse or risk of being abused must be recorded on a **Safeguarding Record Sheet**. These are help by the DSP and Deputy. The record includes stating the time, date, circumstances and who else was present as well as giving exact details of what the student said quoting the exact words used. Signs of physical injury should also be recorded. Reports should be objective and based on evidence; they should distinguish between fact, observation, allegation and opinion. The note should record the time, date, place and people who were present as well as what was said.
- Decisions regarding photographic recording of evidence and full medical examinations should be left to the experts.

- All records should be given to the Designated Person and may be passed to Social Services when a referral is made. In cases which are taken to court, the Academy may be required to provide these records. Completed Safeguarding Record Sheets are kept in student files. These files are kept in lockable filing cabinets in the Student Information Centre. All Child Protection records are kept in a separate file by the DSP. A note is placed on the relevant student file to indicate that a Child Protection file exists for this student. No details of Child Protection issues are kept in the main student files themselves.

4 SUPPORTING STAFF

- We recognise that staff working in the Academy who have become involved with a student who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm, may find the situation stressful and upsetting. We will support such member of staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the Designated Person and to seek further support as appropriate.

5 PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

- All parents applying for places at this Academy are informed of our safeguarding responsibilities and the existence of this policy. In situations where students sustain injury or are otherwise affected by an accident or incident whilst they are the responsibility of the Academy, parents will be notified of this as soon as contact can be made with them.

6 MULTI-AGENCY PARTNERSHIP

- In accordance with Local Authority procedures we are required to liaise with Social Services in all cases of abuse or suspected abuse. This multi-agency approach enhances the effectiveness of identifying and dealing with child abuse issues that may arise.

7 SUPPORTING STUDENTS

- We recognise that a student who is abused or witnesses violence may find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth.
- We recognise that a student in these circumstances may feel helpless and humiliated.
- We recognise that a student may feel self-blame.
- We recognise that the Academy may provide the only stability in the lives of students who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.
- We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a student in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn

Our Academy will support all students by:

- Encouraging high self-esteem and self-assertiveness whilst not condoning aggression or bullying.
- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the Academy.
- Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
- Notifying Social Services via the designated member of staff if there is a significant concern.
- Providing continuing support to a student, about whom there have been concerns, who leaves the Academy, by ensuring the appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to the student's new school.

8 ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF (INCLUDING GOVERNORS)

- We understand that a student may make an allegation against a member of staff (including Governors). If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Principal. The Academy will follow the procedure outlined in the Academy Policy for Managing Allegations Against Staff (including Governors), a copy of which will be readily available to all staff.

9 WHISTLEBLOWING

- We recognise that students cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues.

10 PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

- Our Policy of Physical Intervention by Staff is set out in a separate policy document and acknowledges that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times, it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.
- We understand that physical intervention of a nature, which causes injury or distress to a student, may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures

11 BULLYING

- Our Anti-bullying Policy is set out in a separate document and acknowledges that to bully any student or allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under Child Protection procedures.

12 RACIST INCIDENTS

- Our Policy on racist incidents is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under Child Protection procedures.

13 PREVENTION

- We recognise that the Academy plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our students by providing students with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection. The Academy community will therefore:
 - Establish and maintain an ethos where students feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
 - Establish a pastoral system which will encourage students to seek help when they are worried or have concerns.
 - Ensure all computer equipment and Internet access within the Academy will be subject to appropriate 'parental controls' and Internet safety rules.
- The Academy acknowledges the important role that the curriculum can play in the prevention of abuse and in the preparation of our students for the responsibilities of adult life and citizenship. It is expected that all subject leaders will consider the areas that exist in their area of responsibility for addressing personal safety issues. The PSHEE and Citizenship curriculum will be used, in line with the Every Child Matters agenda, to inform students how to keep safe and to know how to ask for help if their safety is being threatened. As part of developing a healthy, safer life-style, students will be taught, for example:
 - To recognise and manage risks in different situations and then decide how to behave responsibly.
 - To judge what kinds of physical contact are acceptable and unacceptable.
 - To recognise when pressure from others (including people they know) threatens their personal safety and well-being, including knowing when and where to get help.
 - To use assertiveness techniques to resist unhelpful pressure.

14 SAFEGUARDING WITHIN THE ACADEMY

- No internal doors to classrooms will be locked whilst students are present in these areas.
- Entry to the Academy premises will be controlled by doors that are secured physically, or by staff supervision, or by video surveillance. Authorised visitors to the Academy will be logged into and out of the premises and will be asked to wear their identity badge. Unidentified visitors will be challenged.

- The presence of intruders or suspicious strangers seen loitering near the Academy, or approaching students, will be reported to the Police and the LA with a view to alerting other local schools as appropriate.
- Parents, carers or relatives may only take still or video photographic images of students in the Academy, or on Academy organised activities, with the prior consent of the Academy and then only in designated areas. If parents do not wish their son or daughter to be photographed or filmed, and express this view in writing, their view will be respected.
- Our Health & Safety and Trips and Visits policies, set out in separate documents, reflect the consideration we give to the protection of our students both within the Academy environment and when away from the Academy when undertaking Academy trips and visits.
- The Academy recognises the need to be alert to the risks posed by strangers, or others (including the parents or carers of other students), who may wish to harm students on the Academy site, or students travelling to and from the Academy. In such cases, the Academy will take all reasonable steps to lessen such risks.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Governing Body will review this policy at least every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the Academy.

Safeguarding and Child Protection
Reviewed November 2009 by E Evans
Revision due November 2011

This policy should be read in conjunction with the associated publications which are available via the links described below:

***What to do if you are worried a child is being abused* (2006)**

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/resources-and-practice/IG00182/>

A summary version of this document is saved on the staff shared area of the Academy network. All staff are encouraged to read this document in particular.

London Child Protection Procedures (2007)

http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/files/procedures/london_cp_procedures_v.3_print__10.01.08.pdf

Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Educations (2007)

<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/Final%206836-SafeGuard.Chd%20bkmk.pdf>

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006)

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/safeguardingandsocialcare/safeguardingchildren/workingtogether/workingtogethertosafeguardchildren/>

APPENDIX 1 – TYPES OF CHILD ABUSE AND THEIR SYMPTOMS

- Child abuse can be categorised into four distinct types, i.e.:
 - **Physical Abuse**
 - **Sexual Abuse**
 - **Emotional Abuse**
 - **Physical Neglect**
 - *Grave Concern/At Risk – this is not a distinct category but is dealt with separately*
- A student can be at risk from any combination of the four categories.
- These different types of abuse require different approaches. A student suffering from physical abuse may be in immediate and serious danger. Action should therefore be taken immediately. With other forms of abuse, there is a need to ensure that adequate information is gathered. There is also a need to make sure that grounds for suspicion have been adequately investigated and recorded. The need to collate information must be balanced against the need for urgent action. If there are reasonable grounds for suspicion, then a decision to monitor the situation should only be taken after consultation. A situation that should cause particular concern is that of a student who fails to thrive without any obvious reason. In such a situation a medical investigation will be required to consider the causes. Each of the five categories will now be explored in more detail.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

- This involves physical injury to a student, including deliberate poisoning, where there is definite knowledge or a reasonable suspicion, that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented. Typical signs of Physical Abuse are:
 - **Bruises and abrasions** – especially about the face, head, genitals or other parts of the body where they would not be expected to occur given the age of the student. Some types of bruising are particularly characteristic of non-accidental injury especially when the student's explanation does not match the nature of injury or when it appears frequently.
 - **Slap marks** – these may be visible on cheeks or buttocks.
 - **Twin bruises on either side of the mouth or cheeks** – can be caused by pinching or grabbing, sometimes to make a student eat or to stop a student from speaking.
 - **Grip marks on arms or trunk** – gripping bruises on arm or trunk can be associated with shaking a student. Shaking can cause one of the most serious injuries to a student; i.e. a brain haemorrhage, as the brain hits the inside of the skull. X-rays and other tests are required to fully diagnose the effects of shaking. Grip marks can also be indicative of sexual abuse.

- **Black eyes** – are most commonly caused by an object, such as a fist, coming into contact with the eye socket. NB A heavy bang on the nose, however, can cause bruising to spread around the eye but a doctor will be able to tell if this has occurred.
- **Damage to the mouth** – e.g. Bruised/cut lip or torn skin where the upper lips join the mouth.
- **Bite marks**
- **Fractures**
- **Poisoning or other misuse of drugs** – e.g. overuse of sedatives
- **Burns and/or scalds** – a round, red burn on tender, non-protruding parts, like a mouth; inside arms and on the genitals will almost certainly have been deliberately inflicted. Any burns that appear to be cigarette burns should be cause for concern. An experienced person will notice skin splashes caused when a student accidentally knocks over a hot cup of tea. In contrast, a student who has been deliberately ‘dipped’ in a hot bath will not have splash marks.

SEXUAL ABUSE

- The involvement of dependent, developmentally immature students and adolescents in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent or that violate the social taboos of family roles. Typical signs of Sexual Abuse are:
 - **detailed sexual knowledge** inappropriate to the age of the student
 - **behaviour that is excessively affectionate or sexual** towards other students or adults
 - **attempts to inform**, by making a disclosure about the sexual abuse, often begin by the initial sharing of limited information with an adult. It is also very characteristic of such students that they have an excessive pre-occupation with secrecy and try to bind the adults to secrecy or confidentiality.
 - **fear of medical examinations**
 - **fear of being alone** – this applies to friends/family/neighbours/baby-sitters etc
 - **sudden loss of appetite, compulsive eating, anorexia nervosa or bulimia nervosa**
 - **excessive masturbation is especially worrying** when it takes place in public
 - **promiscuity**
 - **sexual approaches or assaults** – on other students or adults.
 - **urinary tract infections (UTI), sexually transmitted disease (STD)** are cause for immediate concern in students if his/her partner cannot be identified.
 - **bruising** to the buttocks, lower abdomen, thighs and genital/rectal areas. Bruises may be confined to grip marks where a student has been held so that sexual abuse can take place
 - **Discomfort or pain** particularly in the **genital or anal areas**.
 - **Drawing of pornographic or sexually explicit images.**

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- The severe adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a student caused by persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment – this category should be used where it is the main or sole form of abuse.

PHYSICAL NEGLECT

- The persistent or severe neglect of a student (for example, by exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation), which results in serious impairment of the student's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive. Persistent stomach aches, feeling unwell and apparent anorexia can be associated with Physical neglect.

However, typical signs of Physical Neglect are:

- **Underweight** – a student may be frequently hungry or pre-occupied with food or in the habit of stealing food or with the intention of procuring food. There is a particular cause for concern where a persistently, underweight student gains weight when away from home, for example, when in hospital or on an Academy trip. Some students also lose weight or fail to gain weight during Academy holidays when Academy lunches are not available and this is a cause for concern.
- **Inadequately clad** – a distinction needs to be made between situations where students are inadequately clad, dirty or smelly because they come from homes where neatness and cleanliness are unimportant and those where the lack of care is preventing the student from thriving.
- Physical Neglect is a difficult category because it involves the making of a judgement about the seriousness of the degree of neglect. Much parenting falls short of the ideal but it may be appropriate to involve Child Protection procedure in the case of neglect where the student's development is being adversely affected.

GRAVE CONCERN / AT RISK

- This is not a separate category of child abuse as such but covers a number of situations where a student may be at risk. It is in reference to students whose situations do not currently fit the above categories but where social and medical assessments indicate that they are at significant risk of abuse. Grave concern may be felt where a student shows symptoms of stress or distress (see below) and any of the following circumstances apply:
 - There is a known child abuser in the family.
 - Another child in the family is known to have been abused.
 - The parents are involved with pornographic material to an unusual degree.
 - There is an adult in the family with a history of violent behaviour.

- The student is exposed to potential risk or exploitation via the Internet e.g. pornographic material or chat rooms.

The symptoms of Stress and Distress

- When a student is suffering from any one or more of the previous four ‘Categories of Abuse’, or if the student is ‘at risk’, he/she will nearly always suffer from/display signs of stress and distress. An abused student is likely to show signs of stress and distress as listed below:
 - A lack of concentration and a fall-off in Academy performance.
 - Aggressive and hostile behaviour.
 - Moodiness, depression, irritability, listlessness, fearfulness, tiredness, temper tantrums, short concentration span, acting withdrawn or crying at minor occurrences.
 - Difficulties in relationships with peers.
 - Regression to more immature forms of behaviour, e.g. thumb sucking.
 - Self harming or suicidal behaviour.
 - Low self esteem.
 - Wariness, insecurity, running away or truancy – students who persistently run away from home may be escaping from sexual or physical abuse.
 - Disturbed sleep.
 - General personality changes such as unacceptable behaviour or severe attention seeking behaviour.
 - A sudden change in Academy performance.

Parental Signs of Child Abuse:

Particular forms of parental behaviour that could raise or reinforce concerns are:

- Implausible explanations of injuries.
- Unwillingness to seek appropriate medical treatment for injuries.
- Injured student kept away from the Academy until injuries have healed without adequate reason.
- A high level of expressed hostility to the student.
- Grossly unrealistic assumptions about child development.
- General dislike of child-like behaviour.
- Inappropriate labelling of students’ behaviour as bad or naughty.
- Leaving children unsupervised when they are too young to be left unattended.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY FOR STUDENTS

- **What to do if you feel you are experiencing unsafe or inappropriate situations outside of the Academy:**

“TELL SOMEONE”

- Find a member of staff that you can talk to. This could be one of your teachers or staff in the Student Information Centre, who will have a lot of experience in the area of child protection.
- This member of staff will probably be able to help but remember that if you are at risk a member of staff cannot agree to keep what you tell them a secret.
- Tell a parent/carer.

Steps to tackle abuse

- Give as complete an account as you can of what has happened to you.
- Are there friends, classmates or witnesses who can back up your story?