



# Park Vale Academy

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## Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

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## 1. Executive summary

This policy applies to all Academy employees and associated governors, including volunteers.

The Academy takes its safeguarding and child protection duties very seriously. We deem it to be everyone's responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of all of our children. To this end, our policy has, at its heart, the following key principles:

1. Prevention (creating and maintaining a climate of openness and trust for our children and staff)
2. Protection (through clear, unambiguous procedures and training)
3. Support (for all those who might have or have been subject to abuse)
4. Close, robust working with parents and other agencies
5. The recognition that 'education' should be regarded as the fourth safeguarding partner. In accordance with the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018) the Academy recognises the role of schools in providing effective safeguarding and child protection
6. The Academy will conduct an annual review of its safeguarding protocols and policy.

In creating this policy, detailed attention has been given to the following key publications:

1. Keeping children safe in education – statutory guidance for academies and colleges (DfE September 2018)
2. Working together to safeguard children (HM Government July 2018)
3. Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (DfE, May 2018)
4. Information sharing – advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (HM Government July 2018)
5. Channel duty guidance, protecting vulnerable people being drawn into terrorism
6. Sexting in schools and colleges
7. Child sexual exploitation: definition and a guide to practitioners
8. Children and Social Work Act (2017)
9. Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings (Ofsted, October 2018)
10. Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006. Statutory guidance for local authorities, maintained schools, Academies and Free Schools (DfE June 2016)
11. Guidance for inspectors: what to do if a child or young person discloses a safeguarding concern (Ofsted, March 2018)
12. Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales (HM government 2015)
13. Early years inspection handbook (Ofsted, August 2015)

14. What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners (DfE, March 2015)
15. Statutory framework for the early years' foundation stage (DfE, April 2017)
16. Children Act (1989)

The local policy is aligned with guidance issued by the Nottinghamshire Local Safeguarding Arrangements.

## **2. Academy commitment**

Safeguarding arrangements in the Academy are underpinned by some key principles:

- Governors, the Senior Leadership Team, Heads of Subject, teachers, operational support staff and volunteers are committed to the belief that safeguarding is 'everybody's business and that we all take personal responsibility for our role in systems that safeguard and promote the well-being of our students and all other children.
- We will be vigilant to the possibility that 'it could happen anywhere', exercise professional curiosity when we identify possible concerns, share information appropriately and take decisive and timely action.
- When concerned about the safety or well-being of a child, we will always act in the best interests of the child.

The Academy adopts an open and accepting attitude towards children as part of its responsibility for pastoral care. Staff encourage children and parents to talk about any concerns and will see the Academy as a safe place when there are difficulties. Children's worries and fears will be taken seriously and children are encouraged to seek help from members of staff. We will ensure that all parents/carers are made aware of our responsibilities with regard to child protection procedures and how we will safeguard and promote the welfare of their children through our publication of this policy on our website.

## **3. Key areas of safeguarding**

Duties and responsibilities as set out within the Education Act 2002 sec 175 and 157, DfE revised Statutory Guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018 and HM Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 are incorporated into this policy.

### **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018) KCSiE 2018 – 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2018**

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2)

### **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) Working Together 2018**

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2)

## What to do if you're worried a Child is Being Abused (2015)

([www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2))

For the avoidance of doubt, children includes everyone under 18 years of age.

Safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm. It also relates to broader aspects of care and education including:

- children's health and safety and well-being, including their mental health
- meeting the needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the use of reasonable force
- meeting the needs of children with medical conditions
- providing first aid
- educational visits
- intimate care and emotional wellbeing
- online safety and associated issues
- appropriate arrangements to ensure Academy security, taking into account the local context

Safeguarding can involve a range of potential issues such as:

- neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse and emotional abuse
- bullying, including online bullying (by text message, on social networking sites, etc.) and prejudice based bullying
- racist, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse
- gender based violence/violence against women and girls
- extremist behaviour and/or radicalisation
- child sexual exploitation and trafficking
- modern slavery
- the impact of new technologies, including 'sexting' and accessing pornography
- teenage relationship abuse
- peer on peer abuse
- substance misuse
- issues which may be specific to a local area or population, for example gang activity and youth violence
- particular issues affecting children including domestic violence, FGM and honour based violence and forced marriage

Further detailed information on forms of abuse can be read in [Appendix 1](#).

## 4. Safeguarding roles and responsibilities

This policy applies to all staff, governors and visitors to the Academy. This Academy's arrangements for safeguarding will apply to all staff at all times including during off site visits and trips.

Where the Academy provides services or activities directly under the supervision or management of staff, the Academy's arrangements for safeguarding will apply. Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, the Academy should seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place to safeguard and protect children and there are arrangements to liaise with the Academy on these matters where appropriate.

**The Academy will follow the procedures set out by local safeguarding arrangements and Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) and take account of guidance issued by the DfE in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018 to:**

- ensure, that the Academy has a designated safeguarding lead and a deputy safeguarding lead who has received appropriate training and support for this role
- ensure, that the Academy has a nominated lead for 'looked after children'
- ensure, that the Academy has a link governor to the DSL responsible for safeguarding
- ensure, that every member of staff (including temporary, supply staff and volunteers) know the name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and their deputy) and the nominated person responsible for child protection and their role
- ensure, that every member of staff and all volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or to children's social care/police if a child is in immediate danger
- ensure, that every member of staff is aware of the process for making referrals to Children's Social Care and for statutory assessment that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments
- ensure, that every member of staff is aware of the early help process and understand their role in it
- ensure that there is a whistleblowing policy and culture where staff can raise concerns about unsafe practice and that these concerns will be taken seriously
- ensure that there is a complaints procedure in place for children and families
- ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the individual Academy and their staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the Academy prospectus
- notify Children's Social Care if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is subject to a child protection plan

- develop effective links with relevant agencies and cooperate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters, including attendance at child protection conferences
- keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately; documenting and collating information on individual children to support early identification, referral and actions to safeguard and ensure all records are kept securely; separate from the main pupil file
- ensure that we follow robust processes to respond when children are missing from education or missing from home or care
- develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer
- ensure there is a safer recruitment policy in place and practices are always followed
- apply the escalation policy if there is any concern about the actions or inaction of social care staff or staff from other agencies

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. There are, however, key people within the academy who have specific responsibilities. These are the key staff members that all incidents are reported to:

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Contact Details</b>
Link Governor responsible for Safeguarding	Mrs M Farmer	Tel: 0115 822 1244 Email: Mfarmer1@parkvaleacademy.org.uk
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mr L Morgan	Tel: 0115 822 1244 Email: Lmorgan@parkvaleacademy.org.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mr T Astle & Mrs S Matthews	Tel: 0115 822 1244 Email: tastle@parkvaleacademy.org.uk or smatthews@parkvaleacademy.org.uk
<i>LADO Allegations</i>	Mr S Bowhay	Tel: 0115 822 1244 Email: sbowhay@parkvaleacademy.org.uk
Child Protection Officer	Mr L Morgan	Tel: 0115 822 1244 Email: Lmorgan@parkvaleacademy.org.uk
PREVENT/ARNA Lead	Mr L Morgan	Tel: 0115 822 1244 Email: Lmorgan@parkvaleacademy.org.uk

Looked After Children Lead	Mr L Morgan	Tel: 0115 822 1244 Email: Lmorgan@parkvaleacademy.org.uk
<i>MASH (Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub)</i>	Mr L Morgan	Tel: 0115 822 1244 Email: Lmorgan@parkvaleacademy.org.uk

## The role of the Academy Headteacher

The Headteacher in the academy will:

- ensure there is a member of the Governing Body to take leadership responsibility for safeguarding and champion child protection issues within the Academy
- appoint a designated safeguarding lead from the Leadership Team to take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection and a designated leader for Looked After Children, who is appropriately trained
- the Headteacher and/or relevant members of the Senior Leadership Team undertake appropriate training to carry out their safeguarding responsibilities effectively, including Safer Recruitment training, and keep this up to date and ensure that staff receive safeguarding training for their roles
- sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the designated person and other staff to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in strategy discussions and other inter-agency meetings, and contributing to the assessment of children
- the child's safety and welfare is addressed through the curriculum in line with Department for Education requirements

The Headteacher delegates responsibility to the DSL to ensure that:

- the policies and procedures adopted by the Academy are fully implemented, and followed by all staff
- students are safe, feel safe and contribute to the wider safeguarding of each other
- all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing policies
- there are mechanisms in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in the latest version of Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education

## **The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

The DSL is a member of the Senior Leadership Team who co-ordinates the Academy's safeguarding and child protection arrangements. Responsibilities are explicitly detailed in their job description.

The DSL will be accountable to the Headteacher, who will provide line management and meet regularly.

Where it is believed that a child may be suffering, or may be at risk of suffering significant harm, the DSL will work with Children's Social Care and follow the Academy safeguarding procedures.

The DSL at the academy takes responsibility for all safeguarding records and for deciding at what point these records should be passed over to other agencies.

### **Referrals**

The academy DSL when necessary, will:

- refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies
- act as a source of support, advice and expertise within the educational establishment when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies
- consider the view of the child when making a referral; encourage a culture of listening to children and their wishes and feelings
- liaise with the respective Headteacher and Executive Headteacher to inform him/her of any issues and ongoing investigations and ensure there is always cover for this role
- refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies
- refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/ harm to a child and the DBS as required
- liaise with the case manager and the LADO where there are concerns about a staff member
- be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with educational needs and young carers
- take part in strategy discussions or attend inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so and to contribute to the assessment of children
- liaise with the Local Authority and other agencies in line with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018'
- ensure that in exceptional circumstances, where the DSL / DDSL is not available, provision / staffing is in place so there is no delay in an Academy undertaking appropriate action
- should ensure that relevant child protection files are transferred to the new school or college should the child move on, and be responsible for the process for doing this

- should be aware of the new arrangements for Looked After Children, in accordance with section 95 to 100 of KCSIE 2018

## **Training**

- designated safeguarding lead training will be undertaken every two years. Informal training and updating of knowledge and skills will be at regular intervals
- to recognise how to identify signs of abuse and when it is appropriate to make a referral
- have a working knowledge of how Safeguarding Boards operate (including the process concerning the Pathway to Provision, Early Help Assessment Form (EHAF) and Early Help Unit), the conduct of a child protection case conference, and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so
- understand the Prevent Duty and provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from these elements of KCSIE 2018
- ensure staff are aware of the new guidance on peer on peer abuse (KCSIE 2018) – section 89 to 90

## **Raising awareness**

The DSL in the Academy will:

- ensure the Academy's safeguarding policy annex is updated and reviewed annually in line with the KCSiE guidelines and work with the Academy regarding this.
- work strategically to ensure policies and procedures are up to date and drive and support development work within the Academy
- ensure parents have access to the child protection and safeguarding policy which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made and the role of the Academy in this process
- where children leave the Academy; ensure their safeguarding file is copied for the new academy as soon as possible, but transferred separately from main pupil file
- ensure that all Academy staff have a copy of (and an understanding of) Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018 – Part One
- ensure that all relevant Academy staff receive statutory safeguarding and child protection training which is updated annually
- ensure they understand how to deal with a safeguarding allegation against the Headteacher by liaising with the LADO or other appropriate officers within the Local Authority
- statutory training for all staff must include: PREVENT, Child Protection Refresher (existing staff) or Safeguarding Children & Young People (new staff to the Academy) and Female Genital Mutilation
- in addition to this training all staff members receive child protection and safeguarding updates (specifically from the revised 2018 KCSIE document) at least annually
- in partnership with the Headteacher, ensure that at least one identified member of staff / governor on each interview panel is safer recruitment trained

- ensure that training records are kept up to date for each member of staff and is fully recorded in the SCR
- ensure that all Academy staff are aware of the process for making referrals to Children's Social Care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989 and understand the role they may have in these assessments
- ensure that there is a structured procedure within the Academy, which will be followed by all of the members of the Academy in cases of suspected abuse
- be aware of the revised guidelines around Alternative Provision as set out in section 174 of KCSIE 2018 – 'each academy continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil...and should obtain written confirmation that appropriate checks have been carried out at that establishment'
- ensure that governing bodies, leadership and staff are aware of the new DfE advice on 'managing reports of child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment'- KCSIE Part 5 section 236-249 linked to the new document (link at top of the policy)

### **Availability**

During term time the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will available (during Academy hours) for staff. Should they both be out of the Academy at the same time, then the most senior member of staff should be contacted, in most cases this will be the Headteacher. A nominated member of SLT will be available for all activities that take place out of normal Academy hours.

### **The role of the lead person for Looked After Children**

A member of staff is appointed by the Academy with responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children who are looked after. They report to their academy DSL ensuring that the progress of the child is supported, linking with their social worker and parents where appropriate.

### **The role of all Academy employees/visitors/governors**

All employees/visitors/governors will be collectively responsible for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are fully embedded within its ethos and reflected in day to day safeguarding practices by:

- ensuring that the Academy has effective policies and procedures in line with statutory guidance (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018) as well as with local NSCB guidance and monitor the Academy's compliance with them and that these policies have been read and understood
- ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures are followed and appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to promote a child's welfare

- recognising the importance of information sharing between agencies. Ensuring cooperation with the Local Authority and other safeguarding partners
- ensuring that all staff read at least part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018 and ensure that there are mechanisms in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in part one
- ensuring that the Academy is collectively responsible for the Academy's safeguarding arrangements. All employees of the Academy will undertake training about child protection to ensure they have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities
- ensuring there is a training strategy in place for all staff and that training records are up to date
- ensuring that temporary staff and volunteers who work with children are made aware of the Academy's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities
- ensuring that there are specific procedures in place to manage safeguarding allegations against staff, and that these are understood by all staff and are distinct from wider whistleblowing protocol
- ensuring appropriate responses to children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse, including child sexual exploitation and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future
- ensuring that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to protect children online
- ensuring that children are taught about safeguarding online through teaching and learning opportunities
- ensuring that peer on peer abuse is included in safeguarding child protection policy, sexting and the Academy's response is included and different gender issues that are prevalent in peer on peer abuse
- giving staff the opportunities to contribute and shape safeguarding arrangements and policy
- following the Trust safer recruitment policy
- recognising that certain children are more vulnerable than others, such as looked after children and children with special educational needs and disabilities.

## 5. Training

The Academy will ensure that safeguarding training will be available to all members of staff at the appropriate times. This will include:

- Academy Leaders:
  - The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will complete detailed training every two years

- The Academy will ensure those members of staff with safer recruitment training undertake this training every five years, including all members of SLT.
- Staff:
  - All new Academy employees will complete initial safeguarding training on induction.
  - Child protection training is undertaken by each member of staff annually delivered by the DSL
  - Will receive annually a copy of Part One of KCSIE
- Governors:
  - All new Governors will complete initial safeguarding training on induction.
- Safer recruitment training:
  - Following the Academy Staffing (England) Regulations 2009 the Academy will ensure that at least one person on any recruitment panel has undertaken safer recruitment training. The Academy follows all revised guidelines set out in Part 3 of KSCIE 2018 regarding safer recruitment.

## **6. Safeguarding as part of the curriculum**

Students are helped to know about their rights and responsibilities, understand and respond to risks, to deal assertively with pressures and know who they can turn to for advice and help both in and out of the Academy, and how to make a complaint. This means they are able to recognise when they are at risk and are able to get help when they need it.

The following indicative areas are addressed within PSHE and the wider curriculum:

- Children's health and safety, including road, fire and water safety
- Bullying, including cyber bullying, homophobia, racism, sexism, and trans-phobic bullying
- Extremist behaviour
- Emotional well-being and mental health
- Online safety including sexting
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Issues which may be specific to a local area or population, for example gang activity and youth violence and County Lines
- Particular issues affecting children including domestic violence, sexual exploitations, female genital mutilation, honour based violence and forced marriage
- Healthy relationships and issues of consent
- Peer on peer abuse

## 7. Supporting vulnerable children

The Academy recognises that its response to safeguarding risks is proportionate to the perceived level of vulnerability experienced by the individual student. Where relevant, it will reflect the increased vulnerability arising from cumulative adverse childhood experiences, the potential or particular vulnerability that may arise from group membership and the wider contextual safeguarding concerns impacting on a student or other children.

To treat all children the same would be unfair on many and be a failing of our duty of care to some.

To ensure that all children receive an appropriate safeguarding and child protection response, we will be mindful of potential vulnerabilities and respond accordingly to children who are;

- Disabled or have Special Educational Needs
- Experience significant mental health difficulties
- Live in a known domestic abuse situation
- Affected by known parental alcohol abuse dependence or substance misuse
- Asylum seekers or refugees
- Living away from home, including private fostering arrangements
- Going missing from school, particularly on repeat occasions
- At risk of homelessness or living in temporary accommodation
- Living in transient lifestyles
- Living in chaotic, neglectful and unsupportive home situations
- Vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion or sexuality
- Children with an increased risk of sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, hate crime, radicalisation, forced marriage or so called honour based abuse
- Young carers
- Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children
- English as an additional language
- Children involved in the criminal justice system
- Children with family members in prison
- Children who have suffered previous abuse

### **SEND**

We recognise that children with special educational needs (SEN) and or disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Children with SEN and or disabilities are especially vulnerable when identifying concerns due to their impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse. They may have

speech, language and communication needs which may make it difficult to tell others what is happening.

This policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children which include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying- without outwardly showing any signs and communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

## 8. Identifying children who may benefit from early help

Where parents, carers or children tell us that they require support, or staff identify that there may be emerging needs and that services might be required an **Early Help Assessment** is likely to be beneficial. In such cases staff will have an open discussion with the parents/carers and the child about the support and services that might help and agree how they would be accessed. Full details of Early Help can be found in Chapter 1 of Working Together 2018.

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2)

Following a discussion, should any child emerge that may require early help staff must raise those concerns immediately with the DSL. The DSL will then consult the Nottinghamshire Pathway to Provision document to consider whether thresholds have been met. Staff also have the option of contacting the Nottinghamshire Early Help Unit for advice and support via 01623 433500 or via email at [early.help@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:early.help@nottscc.gov.uk) The Pathway to Provision document can be accessed here:

[www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/media/2292/pathway-to-provision-final-version.pdf](http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/media/2292/pathway-to-provision-final-version.pdf)

A copy of the EHAF form can be found via this link:

[www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/early-years-and-childcare/childcare-providers/early-helpassessment-form](http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/early-years-and-childcare/childcare-providers/early-helpassessment-form)

Where an EHAF is completed, this will be sent by secure email (or by a password protected document with the password sent separately) to the Early Help Unit.

If Early Help and/or other support are appropriate, the case should be kept under constant review. At each stage of the process where the child's situation doesn't appear to be improving or additional concerns emerge, a referral to Children's Social Care will be made.

## 9. Reporting concerns for all staff

### SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

Supporting information on many safeguarding issues and hyper-links to useful background material can be found in [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(Sept 2018\)](#) and in [Appendix 1](#) and [Appendix 2](#) of this document.

There will be occasions when it is suspected that a child may be at risk, but there is no real evidence to support this. The child's behaviour and or appearance may have changed, their attendance at school may be reduced, their ability to concentrate and focus may have altered or there may be other physical but inconclusive signs. In these circumstances, the child should be given the opportunity to talk. A record should be made as these early concerns may contribute to a bigger picture. This should then be referred to the head of house or SLT. If the concern persists then the DSL should be involved.

If a child or adult does begin to reveal that a child is being harmed, **you should follow advice in Appendix 4.**

#### **If information is disclosed**

A 'disclosure' is when a child confides information which is of a sensitive nature and which gives cause of particular concern e.g. being hit at home, a sexual assault, unfed, medical needs not attended to, and inappropriate punishments by parents, continual verbal abuse and pregnancy.

A child may approach any member of staff on their own, with a friend, or on behalf of a friend. If this happens then the student will be spoken to on their own, to ensure that the conversation remains confidential.

During the conversation with the child:

- The disclosure will be written in hard copy in the first instance on the Academy safeguarding incident form.

The member of staff will then inform the DSL/DDSL by passing on the disclosure form to them.

#### **Legal responsibility**

In the exceptional case of a safeguarding issue going to court, the need for all staff involved to make and keep accurate notes is particularly pertinent. Any member of staff may be required to testify under oath.

## Record Keeping

Any concerns about a child must be recorded within 24 hours, preferably immediately after discussion with the DSL. All records will provide a factual and evidence based account of the discussion.

Safeguarding, child protection and welfare concerns will be recorded and securely stored and away from the main pupil file. The main pupil file should have an obvious indicator to denote a separate file exists.

A 'confidential' file will be commenced in the event of:

- a referral to MASH/Children's Social Care.
- any minor concerns on the child's main academy file.
- any child open to social care.

## 10. Staff and child confidentiality

Without stifling the opportunity to build relationships with children, there are some important guidelines to be applied in conjunction with the Academy's ICT Acceptable Use Policy and the Trust GDPR Policy.

**ALL STAFF** must make themselves familiar with the GDPR Policy, ICT Acceptable Use Policy, Social Media Policy and the Staff Code of Conduct Policy.

The Academy will operate an information sharing system that has due regard for: [HM Government Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers \(2018\)](#).

All staff will be mindful of the need to act responsibly when acquiring, storing, processing, sharing and disposing of information. The Data Protection Act and GDPR regulations do not prevent or limit the sharing of information, they provide a framework to ensure that it is done in a responsible manner.

Staff should be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to LA children's social care.

If in any doubt about sharing information staff should speak to the DSL.

**Fears about sharing information should not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.**

Staff should discuss concerns with the DSL, DDSL or the most senior member of staff if they are unavailable. The person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it strictly on a need to know basis.

Wherever possible consent will be sought to share information, but where there are safeguarding concerns about a child, information will be shared with the appropriate organisations such as Children's Social Care without consent; in most cases concerns will be discussed with parents and carers prior to the referral taking place unless doing so would increase risk.

## **11. Allegations against members of staff**

The Academy follows the guidelines that are firmly established in section four of KCSIE (2018). General guidance for whistleblowing can also be found on the Government website at [www.gov.uk/whistleblowing/what-is-a-whistleblower](http://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing/what-is-a-whistleblower) and within the Academy Whistleblowing Policy.

**The Academy has very clear guidance on the correct protocol / hierarchy of reporting such a disclosure based on the need for confidentiality. This is set out in the [Appendix 3](#).**

Staff are encouraged to raise concerns in which it is alleged that a teacher or member of staff (including volunteers and governors) 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 he or she would pose a risk of harm to children

Should a member of the Academy staff find themselves in a situation whereby an allegation of abuse has been made against them, they should contact the Headteacher. Do not discuss the allegation with other staff or approach the child. The Headteacher will consult the [Appendix 3](#) of this policy document and will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer.

Allegations against the Headteacher should be referred to the Chair of the Local Governing Body of the Academy, who will contact the LA Safeguarding team for advice.

The NSPCC also has a dedicated 'whistleblowing' helpline 0800 028 0285. Staff may raise any concerns through this facility **as a last resort**, should they not feel comfortable with any part of the protocol laid out in [Appendix 3](#).

Staff should not feel that awareness of these potentially serious issues detracts from developing positive relationships with children or spoils the enjoyment that is derived from the challenge and pleasure of working with them. Both incidents of abuse and allegations against staff are relatively

rare. Staff should feel confident in the knowledge that they know the correct procedure and how the Academy will support them if they are involved in a safeguarding issue.

## **12. Peer on peer abuse**

Peer-on-peer abuse features physical, emotional, sexual and financial abuse of a child/young person by their peers. This is most likely to include but not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying)
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Sexting, also known as youth produced sexual imagery
- Initiation or hazing type violence and rituals

There is recognition of the gendered nature of peer-on-peer abuse, but the academy will respond in a similar way, regardless of the genders of those involved.

### **Sexual violence and sexual harassment**

Further information on sexual violence and sexual harassment is available at:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-betweenchildren-in-schools-and-colleges](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-betweenchildren-in-schools-and-colleges)

[www.farrer.co.uk/Global/Peer-on-peer%20abuse%20toolkit%202014.pdf](http://www.farrer.co.uk/Global/Peer-on-peer%20abuse%20toolkit%202014.pdf)

### **Sexting:**

Information and guidance based on the UKCCIS Sexting in Academies and Colleges guidance 2016 is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges>

### **Handling incidents of peer to peer abuse**

The Academy may become aware of the issue in a variety of ways i.e. from the child direct, a friend of parent or a member of staff.

We recognise that the child is likely to be very embarrassed and worried about what might happen. We also recognise the pressure that is on a child can be under to take part in sharing such

imagery but we will reassure them they are not on their own and will help and support them. We will also help them to understand what has happened and the context for the concerns. We will also discuss issues of consent and trust within healthy relationships.

All incidents will be followed in line with this safeguarding and child protection policy. Where an incident comes to our attention:

- the incident will be reported to the specific Academy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as soon as possible
- an initial meeting with the appropriate Academy staff will be held to:
  - establish if there is immediate risk & what further information is needed, whether or not the imagery has been shared
  - consider facts about the children involved which could influence a risk assessment.
- a meeting with the young person will be held (if appropriate)
- parents will be informed at an early stage

An immediate referral to Children's Social Care and/or the Police should be made if at the initial stage:

- the incident involves an adult
- the child has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed or if there are concerns about capacity to consent
- if the sexual acts are unusual for the developmental age or violent
- children under 13 years are involved
- the child is at immediate risk e.g. suicidal or self-harming

Where the above do not apply then a decision will be made by the Headteacher or DSL if this matter can be dealt with without involving the Police or Children's Social Care although this will be subject to review. This decision will be recorded.

The following information will be considered when deciding on a course of action:

- Why was the imagery shared? Was the young person coerced or put under pressure to produce the imagery?
- Who has shared the imagery? Where has the imagery been shared? Was it shared and received with the knowledge of the pupil in the imagery?
- Are there any adults involved in the sharing of the imagery?
- What is the impact on the children involved?
- Do the children involved have additional vulnerabilities?
- Does the child understand consent?

- Has the child taken part in this kind of activity before? Professional judgement will always be applied.

The images will not generally be viewed by staff unless there is a clear reason for doing so, reporting of the content is usually sufficient.

The DSL may in exceptional circumstances view the images with prior approval of the Headteacher and only where:

- it is the only way to make a decision whether to involve other agencies, as there is insufficient information available as to its contents
- it is necessary to report the image to a website or agency to have it taken down
- a pupil has reported the image directly to a member of staff in circumstances where viewing the image is unavoidable.

Once a decision has been made not to involve the Police or Children's Social Care then images may be deleted but we will be clear that this is an appropriate action.

Where it is necessary to involve the Police and it is appropriate we are authorised to seize any device (Education Act 2011) and pass it to the Police.

Children's Social Care will be involved where there are concerns which meet the threshold or if we know they are already involved with a child.

### **13. Children missing education**

The Academy operates a stringent attendance tracking system that is overseen by a member of the Leadership Team. The tracking and use of effective attendance management strategies enables the Academy to ensure every child is accounted for.

The Academy undertakes to tackle persistent absentees and reports on children who are persistently absent from school and the interventions and support being put in place in line with the Academy attendance policy

The Academy will only authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher will determine the length of time that the child can be away from the Academy.

The Academy recognises that some children seeking leave of absence, are vulnerable to risk of abuse, neglect or travelling to conflict zones, or at risk of FGM or forced marriage.

The DSL will, as soon as a concern is established, alert the Local Authority. Attendance staff are trained to look out for these triggers and the academy works in partnership with the Local Authority to ensure localised risks are particularly taken note of and shared with all staff.

Student absence will be followed up on a daily basis as a matter of priority. Where there is no response to indicate the whereabouts of the student, and circumstances indicate that a child is at risk, the academy will complete a home visit for every child who has a continuous period of unexplained absence of three days or more. When there is unexplained absence of 10 days or more, the matter should be reported to the Local Authority Children Missing Education team. The admissions register at the academy is kept up to date. The local authority will be informed of **all** deletions as soon as the grounds for deletion are met, in line with the local authority guidelines, but *no later* than deleting the pupil's name from the roll.

**No student will be removed from an academy roll until all safeguarding checks have been completed or the whereabouts of a pupil/student have been established.**

Statutory guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

## **Appendix 1 - Types of abuse – in accordance with KCSiE(2018)**

**Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children

### **Physical abuse, Emotional abuse, Sexual abuse and Neglect**

Further descriptions on these forms of abuse is available at:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/domestic-abuse/>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help>

### **Honour-based violence**

Further information is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/help-for-victims-of-forced-marriage-and-honour-based-violence>

### **Forced marriage:**

Further information is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage>

### **Prevent Duty and Radicalisation**

Further information is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty>

### **Child Sexual Exploitation:**

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the completely inappropriate 'consensual' relationship where sex is

exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some-kind-of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse. The following list of indicators is not exhaustive or definitive but it does highlight common signs which can assist professionals in identifying children or young people who may be victims of sexual exploitation.

Signs include:

- Underage sexual activity
- Inappropriate sexual or sexualised behaviour
- Sexually risky behaviour, 'swapping' sex
- Repeat sexually transmitted infections
- In girls, repeat pregnancy, abortions and miscarriage
- Receiving unexplained gifts or gifts from unknown sources
- Having multiple mobile phones and worrying about losing contact via mobile
- Having unaffordable new things (clothes, mobile) or expensive habits (alcohol, drugs)
- Changes in the way they dress
- Going to hotels or other unusual locations to meet friends
- Seen at known places of concern
- Moving around the country, appearing in new towns or cities, not knowing where they are
- Getting in/out of different cars driven by unknown adults
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Contact with known perpetrators
- Involved in abusive relationships, intimidated and fearful of certain people or situation
- Hanging out with groups of older people, or anti-social groups, or with other vulnerable peers
- Associating with other young people involved in sexual exploitation
- Recruiting other young people to exploitative situations
- Truancy, exclusion, disengagement with school, opting out of education altogether
- Unexplained changes in behaviour or personality (chaotic, aggressive, sexual
- Mood swings, volatile behaviour, emotional distress
- Self-harming, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, overdosing, eating disorders
- Drug or alcohol misuse

- Getting involved in crime
- Police involvement, police records
- Involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership
- Injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault

## **County lines**

New information in KCSIE Annex A has been added around child criminal exploitation; Children being used to carry drugs or money from urban to rural areas.

‘Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered.’

## **Modern slavery**

Further information can be found at: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-report-modern-slavery/how-to-report-modernslavery](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-report-modern-slavery/how-to-report-modernslavery)

Modern slavery is a serious crime. It encompasses slavery, servitude, and forced or compulsory labour and human trafficking. Modern slavery victims can often face more than one type of abuse and slavery, for example if they are sold to another trafficker and then forced into another form of exploitation.

A person is trafficked if they are brought to (or moved around) a country by others who threaten, frighten, hurt and force them to do work or other things they don't want to do.

## **Female genital mutilation (FGM)**

Helping or encouraging FGM in any way is a criminal offence.

Further information can be found at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/female-genital-mutilation-fgm/> and <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/female-genital-mutilation-resource-pack>

## **Appendix 2 - Further information/guidelines on good practice**

### **Visiting Speakers**

The Academy has:

- a formal invitation procedure, to include a clear outline by the speaker of their presentation in advance, and approval by the Headteacher
- appropriate suitability and background checks on the speaker and any organisation they represent, including an internet search
- an understanding that staff will be present during the visit including a member of the senior leadership team who will monitor the speech to ensure it aligns with the values and ethos of the Academy and British values

### **Peer Massage**

Peer Massage involving adults to children and pupil to pupil is prohibited in the Academy. The only exception to this policy should relate only to those children where it is part of their EHCP – for example in special schools.

Where massage is part of a child's EHCP, staff must gain accreditation to carry out the practice and carry it out in accordance with the plan.

### **Children staying with host families/exchange visits**

The Academy may make arrangements for students to stay with a host family during a foreign exchange trip or sports tour. In such circumstances this may amount to Private Fostering and the Academy follows the guidance in KCSiE(2018) ensuring that hosting arrangements are as safe as possible.

Some overseas students may reside with host families in the UK. These parents, and all in the home over 18 years of age, will be subject to a no cost enhanced DBS with barred list check.

In the case of school-arranged homestays abroad, the Academy will liaise with partner schools to discuss and agree the arrangements in place for the visit.

The Academy will consider, on a case by case basis, whether to contact the relevant foreign embassy of the country in question to ascertain what checks are necessary. The Academy will use its professional judgement to assess whether the arrangements are appropriate and sufficient to safeguard every child involved in the exchange.

## Private fostering

Private fostering is when a child or young person under 16 years old (or 18 if they have a disability) is looked after for 28 days or more by someone who is not a close relative, legal guardian or person with parental responsibility. Close relatives *only* include parents, step-parents, aunts, uncles and grandparents. It is not private fostering if the child is 'looked after' by the Local Authority (also known as 'in care' and which includes placement in residential care, with an approved foster carer or a 'kinship' carer). Private fostering occurs in *all* cultures, including British culture, and children may be privately fostered at any age.

Examples of private fostering situations include:

- children and young people living apart from their families for a variety of reasons e.g. a parent is ill, has had to temporarily move for work or there has been conflict, separation or divorce
- children whose parents work or study elsewhere in the UK or overseas
- children sent to this country by their parents for education and health care
- young people living with the family of a boyfriend or girlfriend
- children on holiday exchanges

People become private foster carers for all sorts of reasons. Private foster carers can be a family friend, or someone who is willing to care for the child of a family they do not know, for example host families supplied by a Guardianship Organisation. If a host family is going to be caring for a child for 28 days or longer, they are classed as private foster carers and the Local Authority must be notified.

By law, the Local Authority must be informed about all private fostering situations. The child's parents, private foster carers and anyone else involved in the arrangement or who becomes aware of the arrangement, e.g. guardianship agencies, schools or health professionals are *legally required* to inform Children's Services. Children's Services have a legal duty<sup>6</sup> to make sure all private fostering arrangements are safe for the child. Once informed of the arrangement, they will check the suitability of private foster carers, make regular visits to the child and ensure advice, help and support is available when needed. Where a member of staff becomes aware that a pupil may be in a private fostering arrangement s/he should raise this with the DSL. Where Children's Social Care are not already aware of the circumstances, the DSL should make a referral to them.

Further information is available at:

[www.privatefostering.org.uk](http://www.privatefostering.org.uk)

[www.ecpat.org.uk/News/dfc-training-for-foster-carers](http://www.ecpat.org.uk/News/dfc-training-for-foster-carers)

## Looked after children

A child who is being 'looked after' by their Local Authority is usually known as a 'Child in Care' or a 'Looked After Child'. They might be living with foster parents or at home with their parents under an Interim Care Order granted to social care, or in residential children's homes, or other residential settings like schools or secure units.

A child who is adopted is **not** a Looked After Child. Occasionally, children are placed into Local Authority foster care under an Interim Care Order when an adoption breaks down and the adoptive parents relinquish the child. Once a Full Care Order is agreed, the child remains on long term foster care. The adoptive parents may or may not have continued contact with the child, depending on the situation and the emotional impact on the child.

An Interim Care Order will remain in place until care proceedings are concluded (within 26 weeks in most authorities). At the conclusion of care proceedings in any situation, the child will either stay in long term foster care (under a Full Care Order) until they reach the age of 18 years, return to their parents (usually under a Supervision Order), reside with other family members/friends (usually under a Special Guardianship Order), or in some cases be adopted. In all of the latter situations, it is most usual for parents to have agreed contact arrangements with their child, most commonly three times per year.

A child may also have been placed in care voluntarily by their parents who are struggling to manage their children's behaviour, or meet their child's needs due to their own illnesses or disabilities (under section 20, Children Act 1989). In these cases, rehabilitation will always be the aim, but if this is not possible, the Local Authority will apply for an Interim Care Order and finally a Full Care Order. Usually, these parents will have continued contact with their child.

As a result of their experiences both before and during care, Looked After Children are at greater risk than their peers. Providing a secure, caring environment and enabling such children to develop strong, trusting and stable relationships with professionals is critical to their safety and wellbeing.

## **Appendix 3 - Formal Procedure in reporting a safeguarding / child protection incident involving Academy employees**

### **1. Action to be taken by the individual**

1.1 If an individual knows or suspects that some wrongdoing has occurred / is occurring regarding the safeguarding of children in or outside of the Academy, he or she should raise the matter immediately with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead *if the former is unavailable*).

### **2. The protocol**

2.1 As the first step, you should raise the concern with an appropriate designated person, which would normally be the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who would then take / escalate appropriate action.

There are three exceptions to this course of action;

2.1.1 If you believe that the Designated Safeguarding Lead is involved in the concern, then the Headteacher should be approached when making the initial disclosure, who would then take the appropriate action.

2.1.2 If you believe that the Headteacher is involved in the concern, then the Executive Headteacher should be approached when making the initial disclosure, who would then take the appropriate action.

2.1.3 If you believe that the Executive Headteacher is involved in the concern, then the Trust CEO or alternatively the Chair of the Executive Board should be approached when making the initial disclosure, who would then take the appropriate action.

2.2 If the safeguarding disclosure is such that you do not feel able to raise it with someone connected to the Academy, then you would need to refer to the LADO.

2.3 Safeguarding Concerns against a member of Academy staff may be raised verbally or in writing, but it is preferable for an allegation to be set out in writing to the correct person in the reporting hierarchy (as set out above). It is important, however, that when the concern is raised, you make it clear that the issue is being raised under the safeguarding policy and why you feel this is in the public interest.

2.4 You will be asked to provide as much information as you can to the person who you contact, so that they can be satisfied that there are sufficient grounds for concern.

2.5 If you wish to raise the safeguarding concern in confidence, this must be made clear to the designated person who is initially contacted.

2.6 If you have raised the issue verbally then you may be asked to put your safeguarding concerns into writing at a later stage.

2.7 You may not know how or when the matter has been investigated or a conclusion reached. The confidentiality is likely to remain with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and / or Academy Leadership Team.

2.8 The Designated Safeguarding Lead and / or the Academy Leadership Team will also notify the person who is the subject of the disclosure of the concern. Upon receipt of the information, this individual will be able to respond to the concern(s) raised.

2.9 The Academy will meet its legal duty to notify the DBS where a person has engaged in conduct that harmed (or is likely to harm) a child, or if a person otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child.

### **3 Additional guidance**

3.1 There are circumstances under which maintaining complete confidentiality may be difficult for the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) / Academy Leadership to maintain. For example:

- if the safeguarding matter leads to a legal procedure and evidence is required by the court.
- if the safeguarding matter raised comes within the remit of another incident and the staff member who originally disclosed the concern is asked to provide a signed statement as part of the evidence, thus revealing their identity.

### **4. Procedure – alerting outside bodies**

4.1 An individual should always, in the first instance, look to initially defer to an appropriate designated person in the organisation about any potential safeguarding breach, as outlined above.

4.2 If the individual is not satisfied with the response given, they are entitled to contact a relevant external body to express the concerns – in the case of safeguarding disclosures, this would be the LADO.

4.3 In doing this the individual should;

- have a reasonable belief that the safeguarding disclosure is based on correct facts
- have a reasonable belief it is in the public interest to make the disclosure

4.4 If there is evidence of criminal activity, then the designated investigating officer should inform the police. The Academy will ensure that any internal investigation does not hinder a formal police investigation.

### **5. Investigating allegations against staff**

- 5.1. Suspension will be considered under the guidance of the LADO, or should the allegation be upheld, the activity would continue to place a child at risk of harm or the case is so serious it may be grounds for dismissal.
- 5.2. Proven malicious and unsubstantiated claims may lead to disciplinary proceedings against the accuser, at the discretion of the Headteacher
- 5.3. Allegations of abuse against a teacher who is no longer teaching will be referred to the police.
- 5.4. All allegations of abuse made against a member of staff will be investigated as quickly as is possible, fairly and in a consistent manner that protects the child and supports the subject of the allegation.
- 5.5. The Academy will aim to resolve all allegations within 12 months but ideally within 3 months.
- 5.6. Should the LADO or police inform the Academy that a case is complete or closed, the DSL and Headteacher will decide whether further action, including disciplinary proceedings are required.
- 5.7. The accused person will be informed of the allegations as soon as practically possible.
- 5.8. Any investigation will be managed under the relevant disciplinary policy.
- 5.9. Individuals will be advised to contact their Trade Unions representative for support.
- 5.10. The Academy will be required to inform the parents of any child involved in an allegation of abuse as soon as possible.
- 5.11. Settlement agreements will not, under any circumstances, be offered to accused members in exchange for the Academy not pursuing disciplinary action or not meeting its legal duty.

### **Safe Staff and Supporting Staff**

- Safer recruitment processes will be followed in accordance with DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018 and will be detailed in the Academy Safer Recruitment Policy.
- Staff will have access to advice on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and will be aware of our staff code of conduct policy. This includes contact between staff and children outside the work context
- In the event of any complaint or allegation against a member of Academy staff, the Headteacher (or Designated Safeguarding Lead), will be notified immediately. If it relates to the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors will be informed without delay. We will respond to all allegations robustly in collaboration with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), the police and HR colleagues
- Staff may find some of the issues relating to child protection upsetting and may need support which will be provided by the Academy and through the Human Resources Team. Advice and support will be made available by the LADO and HR where appropriate to the Leadership Team.

This policy complements and supports a range of other policies, all of which can be found on the academy website.

These include:

- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Policy
- Sex and Relationships Education Policy
- Equality Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy

In addition to these Academy over-arching policies, individual academies may have other protocols or policies on, for example, use of social media and physical handling which may inform the safeguarding policy.

All investigations will remain confidential, unless otherwise required.

Investigations will be conducted in line with the Academy disciplinary procedure.

## Appendix 4 – Procedure for Reporting a Disclosure

A child may approach any member of staff on their own, with a friend, or on behalf of a friend. It is important to speak to the pupil concerned alone.

During the conversation with the child:

- Firstly, ensure that the environment is correct and the conversation is confidential
- When speaking directly with a pupil making a disclosure, it should be recorded in hard copy in the first instance
- Always believe the pupil and take the matter seriously, even if what is heard sounds unlikely. It may have taken time and courage to speak to an adult. If it is found to be not entirely true, the pupil still needs help and support
- Speak to the child in a quiet place straight away. Arrange emergency cover for duties if required. Request support from the DSL/DDSL or Senior Leadership Team if necessary. Use the nearest office/quiet space, preferably with a telephone and the Academy Safeguarding Incident Form. This disclosure will be reported up to the DSL
- Stay calm. Reassure the child
- Listen carefully and make notes. Only prompt the child by asking open questions e.g. What happened after that? What did he do then? How did that make you feel? Write notes using the pupil's own words/descriptions. Do not put words in the child's mouth and avoid leading questions/extensive questioning
- Take as much time as the child needs. Expect and respect silences
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing. Helpful phrases are: 'It's not your fault. I am sorry this has happened to you. I am glad that you have told me. I will make sure that you get help'
- Make sure the child understands that this information will need to be passed on to someone else in order to help them. This will only be on a 'need to know' basis; it will be confidential to as few people as possible
- Explain the role of the DSL to them
- Ensure any questioning is of an 'Open Nature', do not lead the child with regular questioning

What not to do:

- Do not delay speaking to the child
- Do not promise to keep secrets. 'Confidential' = 'need to know' basis
- Do not ask leading questions e.g. Did she hit you? Were you afraid?
- Do not interpret events when making notes

- Do not investigate further, refer to the DSL

### **Afterwards**

All staff must inform the DSL/DDSL by completing a disclosure form every time a safeguarding concern is raised.