



## Safeguarding Policy: Child Protection

Tees Valley Education Trust

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE .....	4
2	REASONS FOR FOLLOWING PROCEDURE .....	5
3	TYPES OF ABUSE.....	6
3.1	Physical abuse .....	6
	Possible Signs of Physical Abuse: .....	6
3.2	Sexual abuse .....	7
	Possible Signs of Sexual Abuse:.....	7
3.3	Emotional abuse .....	9
	Possible Signs of Emotional Abuse.....	9
3.4	Neglect .....	9
	Possible Signs of Neglect .....	9
3.5	Peer on Peer Abuse.....	8
3.6	Female Genital Mutilation	
3.7	Honour Based Violence	
4	GUIDELINES FOR MONITORING: .....	13
4.1	When? .....	13
4.2	Who? .....	13
4.3	What? .....	13
4.4	How? .....	14
5	PREVENTATIVE APPROACHES .....	14
6	STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES .....	15
6.1	Co-CEO and Head of Academy .....	15
	Nominated Person for Child Protection .....	16
6.2	Academy Staff .....	17
6.3	What to do when a child tells: .....	18
6.4	Summary and Action .....	18
6.5	The Trust Board .....	19
	ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF .....	19
		7
		8

THE DESIGNATED OFFICERS .....

19

9 MAKING A REFERRAL ..... 20

10 STAFF TRAINING ..... 21

11 CONFIDENTIALITY ..... 21

12 MINIMISING RISKS TO CHILDREN ..... 21

13 MONITORING AND REVIEW ..... 22

Appendix 1 - 'SEXTING'

## RELEVANT DOCUMENTATION

When reading this document, please be aware of the following related documents which work alongside this Child Protection Policy:

- Tees Local Safeguarding Children Procedures accessed at [www.teescpp.org.uk](http://www.teescpp.org.uk)
- HM Government (March 2015) Working together to safeguard children
- HM Government (2015) what to do if you are worried a child is being abused
- HM Government (2015) information sharing
- HM Government (2015) Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006
- HM Government (July 2015) Keeping children safe in education-information for all school and college staff
- The Counter Terrorism and Security Act
- Procedure for Managing Allegations against Staff, Carers and Volunteers- South Tess LSCB
- Safeguarding Children in Education (DFES 2004)
- The Sexual Offences Act 2002
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Anti-bullying policy
- Race Equality Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Harassment Policy
- Staff Disciplinary Policy
- Staff Recruitment Policy
- Whistle Blowing policy
- E Safety policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016

### 1 INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE

This document is in line with procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016.

This policy applies to all adults working on our sites.

There are five main elements to this policy:

- Ensuring the Trust and its academies practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children (See also 'Safeguarding Policy').
- Equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Supporting pupils who have been abused.

- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

The Trust recognises that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The academy may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at the academy, their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The academy will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum.
- The academy ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as Social Care, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, Education Welfare Service and Educational Psychology Service.
- Ensuring that when a pupil who is subject to a Child Protection Plan leaves, information is transferred to the new school/academy. If the academy does not know where the pupil has moved to, they must contact the LA child protection officer as soon as possible.

The Trust/academy 'Behaviour for Learning Policy' and 'Positive Handling Policy' are aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the academy. The academy will ensure that pupils know that some behaviour is unacceptable that they are valued and that they are not blamed for any abuse which has occurred.

The Trust and its academies fully recognise their responsibilities for child protection.

## **2 REASONS FOR FOLLOWING PROCEDURE**

- To protect the child to the best of the Trust/academy's ability.
- To avoid delay.
- To provide consistency.
- To protect all staff.
- To ensure that, if further action is taken by another agency, then the Trust/academy has followed agreed child protection procedures.

The Trust's main aim is to provide a safe, secure and stable base for children and to help to protect them from harm. The welfare of the child is of paramount importance to all the adults, including members of the Trust Board (hereafter referred to as 'the Board') and volunteers who work in the academies.

To achieve this aim the Trust/academies will:

- Ensure safer recruitment and vetting practices are followed, therefore checking the suitability of staff and volunteers who wish to work with its children.
- Assign a Designated Safeguarding Lead and a designated person for looked after children.
- Raise awareness of safeguarding / child protection issues to staff, parents and children.
- Provide an environment where children feel safe, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Help equip children with skills needed to keep themselves safe.
- Develop, implement and review policy and procedures in relation to child protection.

- Train and raise awareness of all staff, defining their role and responsibilities in reporting possible cases of abuse. (Reference to Keeping Children Safe in Education).
- Ensure there is effective communication between staff on child protection matters.



Identify children who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

- Report cases or suspected cases of abuse to First Contact Team, Social Care.
- Work with Police (Operation Encompass) on suspected cases of domestic violence which involve children.
- Establish a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
- Provide a curriculum and ethos which aims to prevent children from being drawn into radicalised, extreme behaviour or acts of terrorism. Our academies will work in partnership with the Channel panel set up by the LA and staff will undertake CHANNEL and PREVENT training.
- Work in partnership with parents/carers and other professionals to provide co-ordinated support and help to protect children who are subject to protection plans, work in partnership with Social Care when undertaking section 17 or section 47 assessments.

In our academies, we respect our children. The atmosphere is one that encourages all children to do their best. We provide opportunities that enable our children to take and make decisions for themselves. The ethos promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives children a sense of being valued.

Our teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship, as part of our curriculum, helps to develop appropriate attitudes in our children, and makes them aware of the impact of their decisions on others. We also teach them how to recognise different risks in different situations, and how to behave in response to them (e.g. 'stranger danger' and 'internet safety'). Our curriculum is flexible to allow us to address the changing needs of the children.

We recognise that abuse and neglect can result in underachievement. We strive to ensure that all of our children make good educational progress.

### **3 TYPES OF ABUSE**

Child abuse can take a variety of forms:

#### **3.1 Physical abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, slapping, kicking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, misuse of medication, undue restraint, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as fabricated or induced illness.

#### **Possible Signs of Physical Abuse:**

- Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Untreated injuries
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Fear of parents being contacted

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- Bald patches
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Unexplained bruising:
  - In or around the mouth
  - Black eyes, especially if both eyes are bruised and there are no marks to forehead or nose
  - Grasp marks
  - Finger marks
  - Bruising of the ears
  - Linear bruising (particularly buttocks or back area)
  - Differing ages of bruising
  - Bite marks
  - Burns and scalds
  - Cigarette burns
  - Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
  - Fear of returning home
  - Fear of medical help
  - Self-destructive tendencies
  - Aggression towards others
  - Chronic running away

### 3.2 Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact including penetrative, (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Sexual abuse is often perpetrated by people who are known and trusted by the child – e.g., relatives, family friends, neighbours, babysitters, people working with the child in school, faith settings, clubs or activities. Children can also be subject to child sexual exploitation. It is often planned and systematic – people do not sexually abuse children by accident, though sexual abuse can be opportunistic. Children can be vulnerable to grooming. People who abuse children take care to choose a vulnerable child and often spend time making them dependent. Children can be vulnerable in many ways, but children with SEND can be even more vulnerable than others. Abusers try to ensure that potential adult protectors (parents and other carers especially) are not suspicious of their motives. Children can be sexually abused by both men and women.

#### Possible Signs of Sexual Abuse:

- Become insecure or cling to parent in a fearful way
- Show extreme fear of a particular person
- Cry hysterically when their nappy is changed



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- Become hysterical when clothing is removed, particularly underclothes
- Have some physical signs in the genital or anal areas: smell of semen, sexually transmitted infections etc.
- Have soreness or bleeding in the throat, anal or genital areas
- Regress to a much younger behavioural pattern
  - Behave in a way sexually inappropriate to their age, being obsessed with sexual matters as opposed to normal exploration
- Stare blankly, seem unhappy, confused, sad
- Become withdrawn, stop eating, have chronic nightmares, begin wetting again when previously dry
- Play out sexual acts in too knowledgeable a way with dolls or other children
- Produce drawings of sex organs such as erect penises
- Stop enjoying activities with other children, such as stories or games
- Seem to be bothered or worried, but will not tell why as if keeping a secret
- Change from being happy and active to being withdrawn and fearful
- Repeat obscene words or phrases said by the abuser
- Say repeatedly that they are bad, dirty or wicked
- Become aggressive and hurtful
- Act in a sexually inappropriate way towards adults
- Hint about secrets they cannot tell
- Say that a friend has a problem
- Ask if you will keep a secret if they tell you something
- Begin lying, stealing, blatantly cheating in the hope of being caught
- Have terrifying dreams
- Start wetting themselves
- Exhibit sudden inexplicable changes in behaviour, such as becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- Stop enjoying previously liked activities, such as music, sports, art, scouts or guides, going to summer camp, gym club
- Be reluctant to undress for PE
- Become fearful of or refuse to see certain adults for no apparent reason; show dislike of a particular baby-sitter, relative or other adult
- Act in a sexual way inappropriate to their age
- Draw sexually explicit pictures depicting some act of abuse
- Seem to be keeping secret something which is worrying them
- Have urinary infections, bleeding or soreness in the genital or anal areas
- Have soreness or bleeding in the throat
- Have chronic ailments, such as stomach pains or headaches
- Take over the parent role at home, seem old beyond their years (if a victim of incest)
- Become severely depressed, even attempt suicide

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- Have a poor self-image, self-mutilate
- Continually run away
- Regress to younger behaviour, such as thumb-sucking, surrounding themselves with previously discarded cuddly toys
- Show discomfort when walking
- Say that they are no good, dirty, rotten
- Be wary, watchful

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Repeat obscene words or phrases which may have been said during the abuse

- Attempt to sexually abuse another child
- Talk or write about sexual matters
- Find excuses not to go home or to a friend's house after academy (places where abuse may be happening)
- Act in a sexually inappropriate way towards adults

*(Produced courtesy of Kidscape "Protecting Children" Pack)*

### 3.3 Emotional abuse

The persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

#### Possible Signs of Emotional Abuse

- Physical, mental and emotional development lags
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, hair twisting, thumb-sucking)
- Self-mutilation
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Drug / solvent abuse
- Chronic running away
- Compulsive stealing
- Scavenging for food and clothes

### 3.4 Neglect

Neglect can be defined as the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing, failure to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect, or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

#### Possible Signs of Neglect

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- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Emaciation
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at academy
- Untreated medical problems
- Destructive tendencies
- Low self-esteem
- Neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, hair-twisting, thumb-sucking)
- No social relationships
- Compulsive stealing
- Scavenging for food and clothes

Our academies should closely monitor pupils who receive social care involvement and those and who are subject to a Child Protection Plan. Parents/carers should be made aware of the academy's child protection policy and the fact that this may require cases to be referred to the investigative agencies in the interests of the child.

### 3.5 Peer on Peer Abuse

In most instances, the conduct of students towards each other will be covered by the school's behaviour policy. Some allegations may be of such a serious nature that they may raise safeguarding concerns. These allegations are most likely to include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. These should always be taken seriously – it is not just 'banter' or 'part of growing up'.

As an academy, we will minimise the risk of allegations against other pupils by:-

- Providing developmentally appropriate teaching which raises children's understanding of acceptable behaviour and keeping themselves safe.
- Having an open ethos and trained staff for any pupil to raise concerns with, knowing that they will be listened to, believed and valued.
- Delivering targeted work to help pupils keep safe for those identified as being at risk.
- Developing robust risk assessments, action plans and providing targeted work for pupils identified as being a potential risk to other pupils.

Occasionally, allegations may be made against pupils by others in the school which are of a safeguarding nature. Safeguarding issues raised in this way may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

Examples of safeguarding issues against a student could include:

### **Physical Abuse**

- Violence, particularly pre-planned
- Forcing others to use drugs or alcohol

### **Emotional Abuse**

- Blackmail or extortion
- Threats and intimidation

### **Sexual Abuse**

- Indecent exposure, indecent touching or serious sexual assaults
- Forcing others to watch pornography or take part in 'sexting' (see appendix 1)

*Please remember, a child under the age of 13 cannot consent to sexual activity. Therefore, any child of primary age cannot give consent.*

### **Sexual Exploitation**

- Encouraging other children to engage in inappropriate sexual behaviour (For example - having an older boyfriend/girlfriend, associating with unknown adults or other sexually exploited children, staying out overnight)
- Photographing or videoing other children performing indecent acts

### **Procedure:-**

- When an allegation is made by a pupil against another pupil, members of staff should consider whether the complaint raises a safeguarding concern. If there is a safeguarding concern, the designated safeguarding lead ( □ ) should be informed.
- A factual record should be made of the allegation, but no attempt at this stage should be made to investigate the circumstances.
- The DSL should contact Social Care to discuss the case, and the police if necessary.
- The DSL will follow through the outcomes of the discussion and make a referral where appropriate.
- Parents, of both the student being complained about and the alleged victim, should be informed and kept updated on the progress of the referral.
- The DSL will make a record of the concern, the discussion and any outcome and keep a copy in the confidential files of both pupils.
- It may be appropriate to exclude the pupil being complained about for a period of time according to the academy's behaviour policy and procedures.
- Where neither social services nor the police accept the complaint, a thorough school investigation should take place into the matter using the academy's usual disciplinary procedures.
- In situations where the school considers a safeguarding risk is present, a risk assessment should be prepared along with a preventative, supervision plan.

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- The plan should be monitored and a date set for a follow-up evaluation with everyone concerned.

### 3.6 Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It is also known as female circumcision or sunna. Religious, social or cultural reasons are sometimes given for FGM. However, FGM is child abuse. It is very dangerous and a criminal offence. There are no medical reasons to carry out FGM and it can result in long lasting damage, both physically and emotionally.

#### Possible signs of FGM

Prolonged absence from school

Behaviour change on return from a holiday abroad ie, withdrawn and subdued.

Bladder or menstrual problems

Complaining of pain between the legs

- Secretive behaviour/reluctance to take part in physical activity
- Repeated urinal tract infection
- Difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- Spend longer than normal in the toilet
- Have unusual behaviour after an absence from school
- Be particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations
- Ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear

Mandatory reporting duty for FGM was introduced via the Serious Crime Act 2015. If a staff member, in the course of their work discovers that an act of FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the staff member must report this to the police.

### 3.7 Honour Based Violence

Honour based violence is a violent crime or incident which may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family or community. It is often linked to family members or acquaintances who mistakenly believe someone has brought shame to their family or community by doing something that is not in keeping with the traditional beliefs of their culture. For example, honour based violence might be committed against people who:

- become involved with a boyfriend or girlfriend from a different culture or religion;
- want to get out of an arranged marriage;
- want to get out of a forced marriage;
- wear clothes or take part in activities that might not be considered traditional within a particular culture.

Women and girls are the most common victims of honour based violence. However, it can also affect men and boys. Crimes of 'honour' do not always include violence. Crimes committed in the name of 'honour' might include:

- domestic abuse;
- threats of violence;
- sexual or psychological abuse;
- forced marriage;
- being held against your will or taken somewhere you don't want to go; ☐ assault.

If you are concerned, these should be recorded on CPOMs and reported to the DSL.

### 3.8 Radicalisation

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

All staff are trained in 'Prevent'. The academy will try to prevent children from becoming radicalised by being alert to children who may be vulnerable or showing signs of radicalisation, promoting British Values both explicitly and through day to day work, and developing positive relationships with parents and other professionals. The academy will also ensure that the internet has appropriate filters to safeguard children from extremist material online. The Trust's External Speakers policy also helps to safeguard children from the propagation of these views.

As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately, which may include making a referral to the Channel programme. Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation. All concerns should be recorded on CPOMs and discussed with the DSL. Children at risk of radicalisation may display different signs or seek to hide their views. School staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately.

## 4 **GUIDELINES FOR MONITORING:**

### 4.1 When?

When there is a concern in the academy about:

- Marks on the body
- Unusual / different behaviour (including academic functioning)

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- Mood changes
- Puzzling / worrying statements or stories by a child
- Information from others
- If requested by another agency e.g. following a case conference
- Disclosures
- When any of the symptoms mentioned earlier are evident and cause concern

#### 4.2 Who?

- Teachers
- Other academy staff
- Other LA staff in regular contact with the child

#### 4.3 What?

- Patterns of attendance
- Changes of mood
- Changes in classroom functioning

Relationships with peers and adults

Behaviour

Statements, comments, stories, 'news', drawings

General demeanour and appearance

- Parental interest and comments
- Home / family changes
- Medicals
- Response to PE / sport
- Injuries / marks, past and present

#### 4.4 How?

The child's name is to be placed on academy's own 'Vulnerable Children' register kept by the designated person. This information will be shared at half termly Senior Leadership Meetings.

## **5 PREVENTATIVE APPROACHES**

Through the curriculum children can be taught about the risks of different kinds of child abuse and be equipped with the skills they need to help them stay safe.

A child protection programme should seek to support the child's development in ways which will foster security, confidence and independence. It should be regarded as central to the well-being of the individual and is, therefore, seen to be an intrinsic part of all aspects of the curriculum. The most appropriate approach is skills based, set alongside a knowledge component, with an emphasis on helping children to develop the personal and social skills they need to keep themselves safe and to become responsible and independent adults.



Child protection can be interwoven with many aspects of the existing curriculum. It can help children to:

- Promote their understanding of relationships, the interaction between relationships and the key concepts
- Increase self-esteem and awareness
- Make judgments and problem solve
- Be assertive
- Recognise, accept and express feelings
- Explore the nature of trust
- Identify 'okay' adults within personal safety networks
- Take decisions and accept responsibility for self and others
- Be self-reliant and independent

A supportive academy ethos can encourage children to feel safe and to talk about their feelings. It can:

- Reduce isolation in the emotions they experience
- Relieve tension by enabling children to talk and be listened to
- Provide an opportunity to develop an appropriate vocabulary, making violence less likely as a way of expressing needs
- Allow children to perceive situations more clearly for planning action or change
- Make children feel protected by a 'listening environment'. Abusive situations at home or academy thrive on secrecy

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All children need to know what to do in case someone tries to harm them. Knowing that the vast majority of children are abused or harmed by someone they know, teaching children to avoid dangerous situations, to recognise inappropriate touching, can encourage them to trust their own judgment and to feel safer, more aware and confident.

## **6 STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **6.1 CEO and Head Teacher**

The CEO and Head Teacher should ensure that:

- Procedures for handling cases of suspected abuse, including allegations against staff and volunteers, which are consistent with those agreed by the Local Safeguarding Children Board and easily available to all staff and volunteers for reference, are put in place.
- The Board receives yearly awareness raising in respect of their roles and responsibilities in regard to Child Protection / Safeguarding.
- The Board adopts appropriate policies and procedures to safeguard children in our academies.
- Policies and procedures are implemented by staff.
- Parents / carers to be made aware each autumn term of the safeguarding policies that are in place and who the DSL is.
- Sufficient resources and time are allocated to carry out Safeguarding Children / Child Protection effectively.
- There is a DSL for each academy who has received appropriate training and support for this important role.
- Everyone understands the role of the designated person.
- All staff and adults working in our academies understand their safeguarding children responsibilities and are able to voice their concern if they feel a child is vulnerable or at risk.
- All staff receive training on safeguarding annually, and receive any updates as soon as possible.
- Advice on safeguarding is available in the staff handbook.
- Staff are aware of the 'whistle blowing' protocol and understand they must voice their concern of any individual working practices that are deemed unsafe and unprofessional.
- The academies develop effective working partnerships with relevant agencies and cooperate as required in regard to safeguarding children matters, including attendance at child protection conferences and other related meetings.
- All academies provide appropriate reports for child protection meetings.
- All information and records are kept confidentially and securely and information is shared on a need to know basis.
- Recruitment and vetting procedures are followed in all appointments of staff including those working in our academies in a voluntary / unpaid capacity.
- Any children suspected of being drawn into extremist radical behaviour or beliefs are acted upon with the Nominated/Deputy Person for Child Protection who will assess and appropriately refer to Social Care/Channel Panel.

Site security is in place with all visitors required to identify themselves, then sign in and sign out when leaving the academies.

- Ensure that all staff know and are alert to signs of possible abuse and know what to do if they have any concerns or suspicions.
- Work with local partners such as the LA and Social Care Department to create a safe environment for children at the academy.

## 6.2 Nominated Person for Child Protection / Designated Safeguarding Lead

Each academy has a nominated person for child protection, also known as the DSL. They have a responsibility for coordinating action within the academies and liaising with Social Care and other agencies in respect of suspected child abuse.

The main responsibilities for the DSL are:

- To ensure that all staff and volunteers receive appropriate training and adhere to and follow procedures outlined in the Local Safeguarding Children Board Procedures.
- To help identify signs and symptoms of abuse and be the first person education staff report cases to.
- To possess skills in recognising and dealing with child welfare concerns and act as a source of advice and coordinated action within the academy over cases of abuse or children in need.
- To ensure the child protection policy is updated and reviewed annually and work with the designated member of the Local Improvement Board for child protection regarding this.
- To ensure each member of staff has access to and is aware of the academy's child protection policy.
- To ensure that proper procedures and policies are in place and are followed with regard to child protection issues.
- To ensure all staff receive child protection awareness raising training to help them recognise and identify signs of abuse.
- To raise awareness of child safety issues within the academies.
- To ensure that the academies have an up-to-date child protection policy which is consistent with the LSCB procedures. The policy should be reviewed annually.
- To attend and represent the academy at child protection meetings.
- To be responsible for securely managing child protection files, compiling reports, and recording and sharing information appropriately.
- To ensure that all information and records are kept confidentially and securely.
- To liaise with and develop good working relationships / links with Social Care, the Health Authority the Child Protection Officer for Education and other relevant professionals.
- To raise awareness of their role with staff, parents and children.
- To be available to staff for consultation purposes.
- To be responsible for referring cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies according to the procedures established by their Local Safeguarding Children Board and Local Authority.

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- To ensure that where children leave the academy roll, their file is transferred to the new school/academy as soon as possible. (This can be done electronically). If a child leaves and the new school/academy is not known, the LA should be alerted so that these children can be included on the database for lost pupils.

### 6.3 Academy Staff

Academy Staff (teaching and non-teaching) have a responsibility to report any concerns they have about a child's safety to the Nominated Person for Child Protection without delay.

Teachers and support staff have a vital role to play in both the prevention and detection of abuse. Detection of abuse often depends in the first instance, on suspicion. Teachers and other staff in are in a unique position to observe children's behaviour over time, and often develop close and trusting relationships with pupils. Academy staff may well be the first to suspect that something is amiss when an individual behaves atypically, withdraws from social contacts with others, exhibits anxiety or stress symptoms in the academy, appears unusually distressed, confused or disturbed.

A wide range of possible situations can fall into the category of a 'disclosure'. Because it is impossible to know in advance what a child will say, it is advisable to follow the suggestions outlined below. Children will probably tell you about incidents involving bullying or bribes perhaps from peers. However, children who live in abusive situations, commonly ask teachers for help with minor anxieties. It can be a way of seeking out a safe situation in which to confide a major concern.

Children 'tell' in many different ways – through their behaviour, play and creative work as well as direct disclosure. Young children are more likely to confide, but lack the understanding of language to be able to. Older children can often feel that the abuse sets them apart. Our treatment of the issue may collude in the conspiracy of silence and keep victims isolated.

It is important to remember:

- Most children make some attempt to 'tell' in the early stages of abuse. Often they are not heard. They may never tell again.
- Sexual abuse of a young child within a family usually only ends when the secret is told. Such abuse can be ongoing over many years. It is rarely a one off event.
- No-one really wants to hear that a child is being abused, but unless someone hears, the abuse goes on.
- Children with SEND can be more vulnerable to abuse than their peers. Staff need to be vigilant around these children as with all other children, recognising that their ability to 'tell' may not be as developed as that of other children. It is therefore important to be aware of all the signs that can indicate abuse.
- Children react in different ways to the same home circumstances. If one child causes concern it is important to discuss the behaviour of other children in the family.
- Staff need to share concerns with other staff, monitor small incidents and be ready to listen to children's problems.
- It is not however, the responsibility of teachers and other staff to investigate suspected abuse. Care must be taken in asking and interpreting children's responses to questions about indications of abuse.

- Staff should not ask the child leading questions as this can later be interpreted as putting ideas into the child's mind.

The chief task is to listen to the child and not interrupt if he or she is freely recalling significant events and to make a note of the discussion to record on CPOMs. The note should record the time, date, place and people who were present as well as what was said.

- Staff should never give undertakings of absolute confidentiality to a pupil
- Extra care should be taken to interpret correctly apparent signs of abuse and neglect in children with SEND. The academy should try to create an atmosphere in which pupils with SEND feel confident and able to discuss these matters.

#### 6.4 What to do when a child tells:

If a child discloses directly, remember that it has taken a lot of courage to get to this point and your response is crucial. This child has chosen you as someone they trust.

- Listen seriously: abused children are often threatened by the perpetrator that they will not be believed. Listen without judging and show the child that you take their problem seriously. Tell the child that you believe him/her. Choose a place to talk where you will not be interrupted.
- Reassure the child: the threats that children live under to keep the secret are very powerful and they will be frightened of the consequences of telling. Reassure the child that they have done the right thing. Tell them they are not to blame. Offer ongoing support.
- Empathise: do not tell the child how they should feel. Validate their feelings and just listen. Avoid asking questions but feedback what they say if you need to respond verbally.
- Following a disclosure, you need to immediately talk to the designated child protection member of staff and record it on CPOMs or report to a member of the SLT if the designated member of staff is unavailable.

#### 6.5 Summary and Action

If a child discloses information that suggests possible abuse has taken place we recommend the following:

- Listen to the child.
- Never coach or lead the child.
- Do not investigate or over question the child.
- Reassure the child they were right to talk.
- Inform the DSL.
- Record events on CPOMs (e.g. what the child has said, word for word) □ Include the date and time.

If a staff member receives information (e.g. third party) or sees something (e.g. suspicious bruise or mark) which gives them a cause for concern, they must inform the DSL as soon as possible.

Staff should always consult with the DSL when they first begin to have any concerns about a child. This process will help clarify what action if any, needs to be taken to meet the needs of the child.

Where staff feel a child is expressing or demonstrating extreme, radical views or behaviours they should make the CEO/Head Teacher/DSL aware of their concerns.

□

In an emergency or if there is a genuine concern that appropriate action has not been taken, staff members can speak directly to Children's Social Care. This is called a referral and can be made by anyone.

If staff have concerns regarding the conduct of another staff member, they should inform the CEO or Head Teacher directly. If the concern is regarding the Head Teacher's conduct the staff member must contact the CEO. If the concern is regarding the Co-CEO's conduct the staff member must contact the Chair of the Trust Board. It is then that person's responsibility to ensure that the Trust policy is followed when dealing with an allegation against a member of staff (see section 7).

Where staff have concerns regarding safeguarding practices within our academies, the CEO / Head Teacher should be aware of these concerns. If after raising concerns, the staff member is not satisfied with the response/resultant action, staff members should refer to the Whistleblowing Policy.

## 6.6 The Trust Board

The Trust Board should:

- Sanction the Child Protection Policy, review the policy annually, monitor and evaluate its effectiveness and be satisfied that it is complied with.
- Ensure that a designated person, together with a nominated member of the Local Improvement Board for child protection, are in place.
- Ensure that there are safe and effective recruitment policies and disciplinary procedures in place
- Recognise the importance of the role of the designated person and support them, ensuring the training necessary to be effective is undertaken and appreciate the additional duties taken on by the member of staff when carrying out this role, especially when there are ongoing child protection issues.
- Recognise the contribution the academy can make to helping children keep safe through the teaching of self-protection skills and encouragement of responsible attitudes to adult life.

## 7 **ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF**

Allegations against staff could be initiated in our academies by children, parents or staff.

If an allegation or cause for concern is made against a member of staff, the following action should be taken:

- The CEO/Head Teacher should be informed immediately.
- If the allegation is against the Head Teacher, then the CEO should be informed immediately.
- If the allegation is against the CEO, then the Chair of the Trust Board should be informed immediately.
- The CEO/Head Teacher/ Chair of the Trust Board should seek support and guidance from the local authority and follow the 'Procedure for Managing Allegations against Staff, Carers and Volunteers' provided by South Tees Local Safeguarding Board and the guidance in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016.

## 8 **THE DESIGNATED OFFICERS**

Immediate support and guidance should be sought from:

Redcar & Cleveland - Karen Curran (01642 - 771531)

Middlesbrough – Lynn Griffiths (01642 726004)

The Child Protection Officer for Education

Redcar & Cleveland - Marianne Dixon (01642-837744)

Middlesbrough – Mary Griksaitis (01642 201822)

Where an individual staff member in regulated activity is dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have been had they not resigned, the Head Teacher must make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). This is a legal duty and failure to do so is a criminal act.

## **9 MAKING A REFERRAL**

When a member of staff has reported a case of suspected abuse, disclosure or child in need concern to the designated person, he/she should refer the case to, or discuss it with the investigating agencies. If the designated person is unsure about whether a case should formally be referred, he or she can seek advice from the LA's Lead Officer for Child Protection or the local Social Care department. The designated person should keep the Head Teacher informed of a case. All staff can make a referral to Social Care, regardless of their position in the academy. However, it is advised that staff seek advice and support from the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

When making referrals regarding a child concern, (whether they are in need of support or protection) to Social Care, the designated person should ensure that they have, where appropriate and safe to do so, discussed their concerns with parent(s) / person(s) with parental responsibility / young person and sought their agreement to make a referral to Social Care.

The only exception to this would be where seeking parental consent would put a child at further risk of abuse / significant harm.

If consent to referral is not given, the designated person may wish to consult with Social Care, who will assist in ascertaining whether the threshold for child protection enquiries has been met, or whether any further action should be taken by the referring agency or themselves.

When making a referral, the designated person should state to the Social Care team member that he/she wishes to make a child protection referral. The Tees wide Child Protection Referral form should be completed and sent with the disclosed information.

*Please note – if a staff member, in the course of their work discovers that an act of FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the staff member must report this to the police.*

Telephone referrals should always be followed up by a written referral, which should be sent under confidential cover to the First Contact Team.

A referral should be made as soon as possible after concerns have been raised, and always during the same working day.

Through training, staff are aware of their responsibilities regarding 'early help'. In our academies, this includes a providing a range of support and advice to assist families in need of some assistance. This is always done with the consent of the parent, and is centred on meeting the needs of the child. Early help may include signposting to other services, creating a team around the family, liaising with other professionals eg: health visitors, school nurse, etc, or putting in short term plans for the child/family. For instance, this could be one



service working with a family for a limited period of time to address a particular need. Early help is often a key factor in preventing more serious situations or adverse outcomes developing. Please speak to the DSL for any further advice.

## **10 STAFF TRAINING**

All staff receive Child Protection training annually, which raises their awareness of processes and procedures agreed by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). Training also covers areas such as 'signs and symptoms' and 'internet safety'. Updates are given to staff when they arrive through the year. If a specific issue is identified in the academy, additional training will be arranged for staff.

Newly appointed staff receive training through our induction programme and attend specific courses ran by the Child Protection Officer for Education (e.g. NQTs).

Staff have also undertaken E-Learning courses promoted by the LSCB.

The Nominated Person for Child Protection receives training on an annual basis including LSCB facilitated courses.

The CEO, Heads Teacher and the designated safeguarding trust member have completed Safer Recruitment Training. Recruitment procedures follow the advice from this training to ensure that these help deter, reject or identify people who may be a risk to children. This is included in further detail in the Trust Recruitment policy.

## **11 CONFIDENTIALITY**

Confidentiality and trust should be maintained as far as possible, but we will act on the basis that the welfare of the child is paramount. The degree of confidentiality will be governed by the need to protect the child and personal information will be shared where this is necessary to protect the child (1998 Data Protection Act).

Child protection records should be kept securely locked and are exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act for manual records, the Education (Academy Records) Regulations exempt information relating to child abuse from the requirement of disclosures.

Academies should be notified by Social Care when a child who is subject to a Child Protection Plan starts the academy. It is the academy's responsibility to pass the information on immediately and securely if a child transfers to a new academy/school. The DSL will hand deliver, wherever possible, safeguarding information, and receive signed confirmation that the material has been handed over.

Prior to meetings with other professionals, the designated person will request brief written details from staff to support child protection report writing or to facilitate dialogue at case conferences, core group meetings etc. Staff will be asked to complete brief notes using the 'Class Teacher Conference/Meeting Notes'.

## **12 MINIMISING RISKS TO CHILDREN**

ALL STAFF MUST READ THE KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION (2016) Document. They also sign to say that they have done so. Training in relation to this document, particularly as it impacts on schools or has changes to previous guidance, will be included in the annual Child Protection training. If necessary, further

training will be provided to ensure all staff are fully aware of their responsibilities and understand the guidance.

(All staff refers to teachers, non-teaching staff, students, staff from other agencies and volunteers)

Staff will not initiate affectionate physical contact except in circumstances where a child is showing immediate signs of being upset e.g. following an accident. Here the staff member, where possible, will seek to ensure any physical contact is witnessed by a third party and is not prolonged in nature.

Staff will not discuss with children in any depth details about their personal life or relationships they hold outside of our academies.

Staff will not seek social relationships with children outside of our academies, including relationships developed through means of social media.

No staff member will communicate via telephone, through email or social media directly with any child on role except through the academy's official email accounts where all communication can be tracked.

### **13 MONITORING AND REVIEW**

The Trust Board will ensure that we undertake the following:

- Annually review our Child Protection Policy.
- Ensure that each academy has a senior member of staff as Nominated Person for Child Protection.
- Review annually the workload of the Nominated Person for Child Protection by requesting a report detailing related child protection work undertaken. Local Improvement Board (LIB) to support as felt appropriate.
- Monitor and evaluate child protection training that staff receive.
- Review all aspects of safeguarding children/ working practices and develop as required.
- Ensure that the Nominated Person has appropriate supervision from a fellow professional.

#### **Appendix 1 'Sexting'**

*For further information and support, please refer to the Sexting in Schools Support Pack*

There is no clear definition of 'sexting'. Many professionals consider sexting to be 'sending or posting sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs, via mobiles or over the Internet.'

The types of incidents which this advice covers are:

- A child under 18 creates and shares sexual imagery of themselves with a peer under the age of 18 □  
A child under 18 shares sexual imagery created by another person under 18 with a peer under 18 or an adult
- A child under 18 is in possession of sexual imagery created by another child under 18

This advice does not cover:

- The sharing of sexual imagery of people under 18 by adults. This constitutes child sexual abuse and the academy will ALWAYS inform the police.

- Young people under the age of 18 sharing adult pornography or exchanging sexual texts which don't contain imagery. This should be referred to the DSL who will work with the SLT to decide on an appropriate course of action, keeping the child's best interests at the centre of their decision making.

Incidents involving youth produced sexual imagery should primarily be treated as a safeguarding issue. The academy may respond to incidents without involving the police. The police may, however, need to be involved in cases to ensure thorough investigation including collection of all evidence (eg: through multiagency checks), and there are incidents which should always be referred to the police (see below).

Any direct disclosure by a pupil should be taken seriously. A pupil who discloses they are the subject of sexual imagery is likely to be embarrassed and worried about the consequences. It is likely that disclosure is a last resort and they may have already tried to resolve the issue themselves.

When an incident involving youth produced sexual imagery comes to the academy's attention:

- The incident should be referred to the DSL as soon as possible
- The DSL should hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff
- There should be subsequent interviews with the young people involved (if appropriate)
- Parents should be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put the young person at risk of harm
- At any point in the process if there is a concern a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

An **immediate referral to police and/or children's social care** should be made if at this initial stage:

1. The incident involves an adult
2. There is reason to believe that a child has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example owing to special educational needs)
3. What you know about the imagery suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the child's developmental stage, or are violent
4. The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the imagery is under 13
5. You have reason to believe a pupil is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of the imagery, for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming

If none of the above apply, then the academy may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care (a school can choose to escalate the incident at any time if further information/concerns come to light).

The decision to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care would be made in cases when the DSL is confident that they have enough information to assess the risks to pupils involved and the risks can be managed within the school's pastoral support and disciplinary framework and if appropriate local network of support.

