



BEDFORDSHIRE SCHOOLS TRUST

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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DSL: *insert name*

DDSL: *insert name*

SAFEGUARDING GOVERNOR: *insert name*

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SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Incorporating Child Protection & Intimate Care Guidelines

CONTENTS

SECTION A	4
INTRODUCTION & LEGAL SCOPE	4
ACADEMY COMMITMENT	4
SECTION B	6
PRINCIPLES / PROCEDURES / PRACTICE & PROVIDING A SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT	6
SAFER RECRUITMENT & SELECTION	6
SAFE PRACTICE	6
SAFEGUARDING INFORMATION FOR PUPILS	7
PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	7
PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHERS	7
ACADEMY TRAINING AND STAFF INDUCTION	7
SUPPORT, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE FOR STAFF	8
RELATED ACADEMY PRACTICE AND POLICIES	8
HEALTH AND SAFETY	8
CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION	8
PRIVATE FOSTERING	9
CONFIDENTIALITY	10
PUPIL INFORMATION	10
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	11
LOCAL GOVERNING BODY	11
PRINCIPAL	11
DESIGNATED SENIOR PERSON	11
DEPUTY DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEADS	12
DATA MANAGER	12
MEMBER OF SLT WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT OF IT	12
THE ATTENDANCE OFFICER	12
THE PREMISES MANAGER	12
ICT NETWORK MANAGERS	12
ALL STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS, INCLUDING COMMISSIONED SERVICES (SUCH AS COUNSELLORS AND IT CONTRACTED STAFF)	13
PUPILS	13
SECTION C	14
IDENTIFYING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO MAY BE SUFFERING SIGNIFICANT HARM	14
DEFINITIONS	14
INDICATORS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT	15
ABUSE	15
NEGLECT	15

PHYSICAL ABUSE	15
SEXUAL ABUSE	15
EMOTIONAL ABUSE	15
CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)	15
FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)	16
HONOUR BASED ABUSE (HBA) / VIOLENCE (HBV)	17
DOMESTIC ABUSE	17
FORCED MARRIAGE	17
PEER ON PEER ABUSE	17
SEXTING AND UP-SKIRTING	18
PREVENTING RADICALISATION	18
RECOGNISING EXTREMISM	19
COUNTY LINES	19
MENTAL HEALTH	19
ONLINE HOAXES AND CHALLENGES	20
SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE	20
POSSIBLE SIGNS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE	20
POSSIBLE SIGNS OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE	20
POSSIBLE SIGNS OF NEGLECT	20
POSSIBLE SIGNS OF SEXUAL ABUSE	21
POSSIBLE SIGNS IN OLDER CHILDREN	21
SECTION D	22
TAKING ACTION TO ENSURE THAT CHILDREN ARE SAFE AT EACH ACADEMY AND AT HOME	22
STAFF WILL IMMEDIATELY REPORT	22
RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURE	22
TIMING OF REFERRALS	22
ACTION BY THE DESIGNATED SENIOR PERSONS (OR OTHER SENIOR PERSON IN THEIR ABSENCE)	23
ACTION FOLLOWING A CHILD PROTECTION REFERRAL	23
RECORDING AND MONITORING	24
SUPPORTING THE CHILD AND PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	24
WHISTLEBLOWING	24
ALLEGATIONS REGARDING PERSON(S) WORKING IN OR ON BEHALF OF THE ACADEMY (INCLUDING VOLUNTEERS)	24
MONITORING AND EVALUATION	25
APPENDICES LISTED	26
AUTHOR & DATE	26
APPENDIX 1: INTIMATE CARE	27
APPENDIX 2: RESPONSE FLOW CHART	28
APPENDIX 3: CONTACTS	29
APPENDIX 4: DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST TEACHERS AND OTHER STAFF	29

SECTION A

INTRODUCTION & LEGAL SCOPE

This policy is in line with:

- Department for Education Working Together to Safeguard Children, July 2018.
- 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' issued April 2012
- Relevant sections of the Children Act 2004
- Keeping Children safe in Education Sept 2018, 2019 and 2020 (January 2021 update)
- UKCCIS guidance: Sexting in schools and Colleges, responding to incidents and safeguarding young people Sept 2016
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children May 2018
- Safer working practice 2020

This policy applies to all adults, including volunteers and supply staff, working in or on behalf of Bedfordshire Schools Trust.

Everyone at Bedfordshire Schools Trust (BEST) shares an objective to help keep pupils¹ safe by:

- 1) Providing a safe environment for children and young people to learn in education settings.
- 2) Identifying pupils who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and taking appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home and in the education setting.

ACADEMY COMMITMENT

The staff and Governing Body at this Academy are committed to Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of all of its pupils and it aims to create a culture of vigilance. Each pupil's welfare is of paramount importance. We recognise that some pupils *may* be especially vulnerable to abuse e.g. those with Special Educational Needs, those living in adverse circumstances. The Academy recognises that pupils who are abused or neglected may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. Staff recognise that some pupils who have experienced abuse may harm others. Staff will always take a considered and sensitive approach in order to support all pupils. We will always act in the best interest of the pupil.

At the Academy, pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online threats, through various teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.

THE AIMS OF THIS POLICY ARE:

- To support pupils development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence
- To raise the awareness of both teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard pupils and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse or risk of abuse
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring pupils known or thought to be vulnerable or at risk of harm
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff both within individual academies as well as across sites
- To explain the system and procedure within the academy which will be followed by **all** staff if they are worried about a pupil's welfare or if they are being abused
- To develop and promote effective holistic working relationships with other agencies such as the Education Welfare Service, Education Psychology Service, Police and Children's Services
- To ensure that all adults within our academy who have access to pupils or who have access to information, data or meetings concerning children have been checked as to their suitability via their references and the disclosure and barring agency

¹ For the purposes of this policy, the term 'pupil' refers to both students and pupils

EACH ACADEMY WILL ENSURE THAT:

- They have a designated member of staff, who is a member of SLT and who is trained to the appropriate level, who undertakes regular training, in line with KCSIE
- They have at least 2 additional members of staff who will act in the designated teacher's absence
- A member of the Governing Body is designated to monitor Child Protection and the Director of Education (DoE) of Bedfordshire Schools Trust (BEST) is responsible for monitoring Safeguarding overall
- All members of staff will undergo basic safeguarding and Child Protection training and develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse and receive updated training every year, in line with designated good practice
- All members of staff know how to respond to a pupil who makes an allegation or appears to be vulnerable or at risk
- All temporary staff and regular volunteers, having contact with our pupils, will be checked (DBS) and given a copy of this policy or a brief checklist of what to do.
- All **parents/carers** are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures
- All pupils are made aware of who the Child Protection Team are and who they can speak to in the academy if they are worried or concerned
- Their procedures will be regularly reviewed and up-dated and reported, as appropriate, to the Governing Body. (Report produced by Designated Teacher on an annual basis)
- All new members of staff will be given a copy of the Academy's Child Protection Procedures as part of their induction into the academy
- Child Protection Awareness and updates will be carried out as part of INSET and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) with all staff annually with a staff discussion and review of the Policy taking place in September each year

SECTION B

PRINCIPLES / PROCEDURES / PRACTICE & PROVIDING A SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

SAFER RECRUITMENT & SELECTION

BEST pays full regard to the DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020, updated January 2021)'. We ensure that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works in the academy who is likely to be perceived by the children as a safe and trustworthy adult including e.g. volunteers and staff employed by contractors. Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising applicants, verifying references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and, where appropriate, Barred List Check and Disclosure and Barring Service checks.

Statutory changes, underpinned by regulations, are that:

1. A DBS Enhanced Disclosure is obtained for all new appointments to the Academy's workforce
2. The Academy must keep a Single Central Record detailing a range of checks carried out on their staff
3. All new appointments to the Academy workforce who have lived or worked outside the UK are subject to additional checks as appropriate in line with government policy
4. Senior Leadership must satisfy themselves that supply staff have undergone the necessary checks
5. Identity checks must be carried out on all appointments to the Academy workforce before the appointment is finalised

SAFE PRACTICE

Each Academy will adopt the IRSC "Guidance for Safe Working Practice for the Protection of Children and Staff in Education Settings" (May 2020). The Academy will ensure that all staff are aware of the Keeping Children Safe in Education document, which sets out the requirements for relationships with pupils and expectations of staff.

Safe working practice ensures that pupils are safe and that all staff:

- Are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions
- Work in an open and transparent way
- Discuss and/or take advice from academy management over any incident which may give rise to concern
- Record any incidents or decisions made
- Apply the same professional standards regardless of gender, sexuality or religion
- Are aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them.

SAFEGUARDING INFORMATION FOR PUPILS

BEST Academies are committed to ensuring that pupils are aware of behaviour towards them that is not acceptable and how they can keep themselves safe. Exactly how much information and the nature of the explanation should be age appropriate and determined by the individual setting. All pupils know that there are senior members of staff with responsibility for child protection and know who they are. Academy staff inform pupils who they can talk to, both in and out of the academy, their right to be listened to and heard and what steps can be taken to protect them from harm. The Academy recognises the importance of both mental and physical health of pupils.

Information is made available to pupils, such as Childline and NSPCC helplines, posters, NSPCC and Childline website addresses.

Academy arrangements for consulting with and listening to pupils are the tutor system, academy sixth form leadership team, prefect team, house councils, peer support schemes, mentoring, counselling services, pupil questionnaires and working collaboratively with parents.

Ensuring pupils are aware of these arrangements, and the staff involved, is a major part of the Induction programme for the new intake. This is followed up in tutor time, assemblies, weekly newsletters, PSHE and daily notices.

Academy staff regularly audit the curriculum schemes of work to identify appropriate opportunities where pupil safety and analysis of risk can be highlighted.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

We share a commitment with parents / carers to keep children safe from harm and to have their welfare promoted. Staff provide information in relation to safeguarding with parents / carers via parent mail, on the website and updates as necessary in the newsletter. Staff are committed to working with parents/carers positively, openly and honestly. Staff ensure that all parents / carers are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. The Academy respects parents' / carers rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless permission has been given or it is necessary to do so in order to protect a child.

The academy will share with parents / carers any concerns they have about their child unless to do so may place a child at risk of harm.

We encourage parents / carers to discuss any concerns they may have with the relevant pastoral team member.

Parents/carers are made aware of the Academy's policy by individual academy prospectus and newsletters, and parents/carers are made aware that they can view this policy on request or on the website.

BEST Academies follow the Central Bedfordshire Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. The academy will, in most circumstances, endeavour to discuss all concerns with parents about their children. However, there may be exceptional circumstances when the academy will discuss concerns with Children's Services and/or the Police without parental knowledge (in accordance with Child Protection procedures). The academy will, of course, always aim to maintain a positive relationship with all parents. The academy's Child Protection Policy is incorporated in this policy.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHERS

We recognise that it is essential to establish positive and effective working relationships with other agencies e.g. the LA, Children's Services, Police, Healthcare organisations, Childline, Children Centres and Early Intervention Service. These relationships are continually nurtured and developed via a range of activities and dialogue.

ACADEMY TRAINING AND STAFF INDUCTION

The Academy's senior members of staff with designated responsibility for child protection undertake child protection training and training in inter-agency working, that is provided by Central Bedfordshire

LSCB and undertake refresher training at 2 yearly intervals. The Principal and all other academy staff, including non-teaching staff, undertake appropriate induction training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively, which is kept up to date by refresher training annually. (The SCR holds all training dates and details). Staff are also committed to sign the BEST code of conduct and will also sign to say they have read the following:

BEST Anti-Bribery Policy (Nov 2019)

BEST Confidential Reporting (Whistle blowing) Policy (January 2021)

BEST GDPR & Privacy Notices Policy (June 2020)

BEST Health & Safety Policy (February 2020) (Covid-19 update circulated 9th June 2020)

Behaviour Policy (April 2020)

E-Safety Policy (April 2020)

Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2020) – PART I

SUPPORT, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE FOR STAFF

Staff will be supported by the Designated Staff for Child Protection.

The designated senior person will be supported by SLT, nominated Governor for CP and nominated LA staff. Advice and support is always available from the Local Authority Designated Officer. Advice is available from Children's Services HUB (0300 300 8585) and the Police Child Abuse Investigation Team - see contacts list at the end of this policy.

RELATED ACADEMY PRACTICE AND POLICIES

Safeguarding covers more than the contribution made to child protection in relation to individual children. It also encompasses issues such as pupil health and safety and bullying, and a range of other issues, for example, arrangements for meeting the medical needs of children, providing first aid, academy security, drugs and substance misuse, GDPR etc. There may also be other safeguarding issues that are specific to the local area or population. These related policies can be found on our website.

HEALTH AND SAFETY – (For more information see full and detailed policy)

BEST's Health and Safety Policy, which can be found on the BEST schools website, reflects the consideration given to the protection of children both within the academy environment and when away from the academy when undertaking academy trips and visits.

Each Academy ensures the safety of its environment for pupils through:

- Controlling access to the site - a single entry/exit access point for visitors, which is supervised by reception staff
- Ensuring that the school complies with health and safety requirements for all on-site activities
- Ensuring risk assessments are in place before allowing any trips, visits or work experience placements
- Vigilant monitoring to guard against intruders, antisocial behaviour and drug and alcohol misuse on site
- Curriculum activities and social areas compliant with health & safety requirements.
- **Work experience arrangements that include safeguarding information for employers and a requirement that they accept their child protection responsibilities**
- Passes issued to visitors with prior appointments, after their identity has been checked
- Visitors being met at reception and escorted into the academy
- Signing-out arrangements for pupils with permission to leave the site
- Record of staff/visitors signing in/out
- Supervision of pupils at break and lunchtimes.

CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION

All academies follow the Central Bedfordshire Local Authority guidance. For further details, contact the Team Leader for Access & Inclusion or equivalent at Central Bedfordshire.

Knowing where pupils are during school hours is an extremely important aspect of Safeguarding. Missing school can be an indicator of abuse and neglect and may also raise concerns about other safeguarding

issues, including the criminal exploitation of children.

We monitor attendance carefully and address poor or irregular attendance without delay.

The Academy will always follow up with parents/carers when pupils are not at school. This means the Academy expects to have at least two up to date contacts numbers for parents/carers. Parents should remember to update the school as soon as possible if the numbers change. In response to the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020, updated January 2021) the school has:

1. Staff who understand what to do when children do not attend regularly
2. Appropriate policies, procedures and responses for pupils who go missing from education (especially on repeat occasions)
3. Staff who know the signs and triggers for travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage
4. Procedures to inform the local authority when the school plans to take pupils off-roll when they:
 - a) leave school to be home educated
 - b) move away from the school's location
 - c) remain medically unfit beyond compulsory school age
 - d) are in custody for four months or more (and will not return to school afterwards); or
 - e) are permanently excluded

The Academy will ensure that pupils who are expected to attend the school, but fail to take up the place will be referred to the local authority.

When a pupil leaves the school, the Academy will record the name of the pupil's new school and their expected start date. Further information can be found in 'Children Missing in Education: statutory guidance for Local Authorities-September 2016

PRIVATE FOSTERING

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.

A close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and step-parents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.

Parents and private foster carers both have a legal duty to inform the relevant local authority at least six weeks before the arrangement is due to start; not to do so is a criminal offence.

Whilst most privately fostered children are appropriately supported and looked after, they are a potentially vulnerable group who should be monitored by the local authority, particularly when the child has come from another country. In some cases, privately fostered children are affected by abuse and neglect, or be involved in trafficking, child sexual exploitation or modern-day slavery.

Each academy has a mandatory duty to report to the local authority where they are aware or suspect that a pupil is subject to a private fostering arrangement. Although the school has a duty to inform the local authority, there is no duty for anyone, including the private foster carer or social workers to inform the school. However, it should be clear to the school who has parental responsibility.

School staff should notify the designated safeguarding lead when they become aware of private fostering arrangements. The designated safeguarding lead will speak to the family of the pupil involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform the LA. The school itself has a duty to inform the local authority of the private fostering arrangements.

On admission to the school, the school will take steps to verify the relationship of the adults to the pupil who is being registered.

CONFIDENTIALITY

BEST has regard to Information Sharing and follow the Central Bedfordshire LSCB guidance and procedures. Personal information about children and families held by agencies should not normally be disclosed without the consent of the subject. The law permits, however, the disclosure of confidential information necessary to safeguard the child or act in their best interests.

Other relevant BEST / Academy policies / procedures which should be read in conjunction with this policy are:

1. Anti-racism Policy
2. Anti-Bullying Policy
3. Internet / e-safety
4. Equality Policy
5. Supporting Students and Pupils with Medical Needs Policy
6. Misuse of Drugs & Alcohol Policy
7. Educational Visits Policy
8. Attendance Policy
9. Behaviour Management & Physical Intervention Policy
10. Admissions Policy - BEST
11. Whistleblowing (Confidential Reporting Policy) - BEST
12. Teaching & Learning Handbook
13. Sex & Relationships Policy
14. Screening, Searching & Confiscation Policy
15. GDPR Policy & Privacy Notices - BEST

These policies can be found on either of the following links for BEST policies

<https://www.bestacademies.org.uk/page/?title=Governance&pid=7>

and **Academy policies** <https://www.samuelwhitbread.org.uk/page/?title=Policies&pid=19>

PUPIL INFORMATION

In order to keep pupils safe and provide appropriate care for them, the Academy will maintain accurate and up to date information regarding:

- Names and contact details of persons with whom the pupil normally lives
- Names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility (if different from above)
- Emergency contact details (if different from above)
- Details of any persons authorised to collect the pupil from the academy (if different from above)
- Any relevant court orders in place including those which affect any person's access to the pupil (e.g. Residence Order, Contact Order, Care Order, Injunctions etc.)
- If the pupil is or has been the subject of a Child Protection Plan
- Name and contact detail of G.P.
- Life threatening medical conditions
- Any other factors which may impact on the safety and welfare of the pupil
- The academy will collate, store and agree access to this information. The Data Protection Policy informs stakeholders how and what data is shared. Parents/carers are then able to opt out of this system. The academy's Data Manager has control over access to information.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

At BEST we recognise the possibility that adults working in the school may harm children. Any concerns about the conduct of other adults in the school should be taken to the head teacher ***without*** delay (or where that is not possible, to the Designated Safeguarding Lead); any concerns about the head teacher should go to the Director of Education, Alison Wilshaw who can be contacted by awilshaw@bestacademies.org.uk. The Director of Education will liaise with the Chair of Governors **XXXXXXXX** who can be contacted by xxxxxxx@bestacademies.org.uk.

LOCAL GOVERNING BODY (LGB)

The Local Governing Body ensures that:

- The academy has a child protection policy and procedures in place that are in accordance with Local Authority guidance and locally agreed inter-agency procedures, and the policy is made available to parents on request
- The academy operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure that all appropriate checks (DBS and prohibition) are carried out on staff and volunteers who work with children
- The academy has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers that comply with guidance from the local authority and locally agreed inter-agency procedures
- Has a named Governor for Child Protection/Health who meets with the Designated Officer termly; the BEST Director of Education will oversee Safeguarding
- A member of the academy's leadership team is designated to take lead responsibility for child protection and reports annually to the Full Governing Body
- Provides training to the Full Governing Body annually or as required
- Staff undertake appropriate child protection training
- They remedy, without delay, any deficiencies or weaknesses regarding child protection arrangements
- BEST Director of Education to be responsible for liaising with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and /or partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Principal
- Where services or activities are provided on the academy premises by another body, the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and child protection and liaises with the academy on these matters where appropriate; and they review their policies and procedures annually and provide information to the LA about them and about how the above duties have been discharged.
- Includes e-safety in its work and reviews effectiveness of provision in this area, through regular meetings with SLT member with responsibility for strategic development of IT.

PRINCIPAL

The Principal ensures that:

- The policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body/Directors are fully implemented, and followed by all staff
- Sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the designated person and other staff to discharge their responsibilities
- 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.

DESIGNATED SENIOR PERSON – **NAME**

The Senior Member of Staff with Designated Responsibility for Safeguarding and Child Protection ensures that they or the Designated Officer:

- Refers cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies
- Acts as a source of support, advice and expertise within the educational establishment
- Liaises with Principal to inform him/her of any issues and ongoing investigations and ensure there is always cover for this role under Section 47 of the Children's Act 1989

- Keeps detailed accurate written records
- Ensures that this policy is updated and reviewed annually, and work with the governing body regarding this
- Recognises how to identify signs of abuse and when it is appropriate to make a referral
- Has a working knowledge of how the LSCB operate, the conduct of a child protection case conference and be able to attend and contribute to these
- Ensures that all staff have access to and understand the academy's child protection policy
- Ensures that all staff have induction training
- Obtains access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses at least every two years
- Liaises with the named Governors for Safeguarding and Child Protection
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) should always be available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. (availability via phone and or Skype or other such mediums is acceptable)
- If the DSL is not available, staff should speak to a member of the SLT and/or take advice from local children's social care -KCSIE (2020)
- A member of SLT is always available via telephone for all out of hours/out of term activities.

DEPUTY DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEADS (NAMES)

- All deputies should be trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Whilst the activities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection, as set out above, remains with the Designated Safeguarding Lead; this lead responsibility should not be delegated.

DATA MANAGER

The Data Manager is responsible for maintaining correct information on pupils.

MEMBER OF SLT WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT OF IT

- Liaising with staff, the Local Authority (LA), IT technical staff, Governors and SLT on all issues related to e- safety
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of the procedures that need to be followed in the event of an e-safety incident taking place
- Providing training and advice for staff
- Receiving reports of e-safety incidents and creates a log of incidents to inform future e-safety developments
- Co-ordinating and reviewing the Academy's e-safety education programme

THE ATTENDANCE OFFICER

The Attendance Officer, Designated Person or other appropriately designated staff is responsible for notifying Children's Services if a child on a Child Protection Plan is absent for more than two days.

THE PREMISES MANAGER/SITE AGENT

The Premises Manager is responsible for maintaining the safety and security of the site and ensuring safe access for pupils with disabilities.

ICT NETWORK MANAGERS

Each site's Network Manager is responsible for maintaining safe systems of internet access, blocking any undesirable (e.g. pornographic, racist, violent) sites. This includes checking that:

- The IT infrastructure in the academy is secure and meets e-safety technical requirements
- The academy's password policy is adhered to
- The academy's filtering policy is applied and updated on a regular basis and that its implementation is not the sole responsibility of any single person

- The Co-ordinator keeps up to date with e-safety technical information
- The academy's IT infrastructure (network, remote access, e-mail, VLE etc.) is regularly monitored in order that any misuse or attempted misuse can be reported to the E-Safety Manager, SLT, HOY or PSO for investigation/action/sanction.
- When children use the school's network to access the internet, they are protected from inappropriate content by our filtering and monitoring systems. However, many pupils are able to access the internet using their own data plan. To minimise inappropriate use, as a school we do not allow pupils to use their phones during the day and educate them about appropriate use using assembly and curriculum/pastoral time.

ALL STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS, INCLUDING COMMISSIONED SERVICES (SUCH AS COUNSELLORS AND IT CONTRACTED STAFF) SHOULD:

- Fully comply with BEST/the Academy's policies and procedures
- Attend appropriate training
- Inform the designated persons of any concerns
- Read and sign that they have understood the staff IT Acceptable Use Policy

PUPILS (to an age appropriate level)

- Are responsible for using the academy IT systems in accordance with the Pupil Acceptable Usage Policy, which they will be required to sign before being given access to academy systems
- Parents/carers will be required to read through and sign alongside their child's signature
- Need to understand the importance of reporting abuse, misuse or access to inappropriate materials and know how to do so
- Should understand the importance of adopting good e-safety practice when using digital technologies out of school and realise that the E-Safety Policy also covers their actions out of school, if related to their membership of the academy.

SECTION C

IDENTIFYING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO MAY BE SUFFERING SIGNIFICANT HARM

Teachers and other adults in our academies are well placed to observe any physical, emotional or behavioural signs which indicate that a child may be suffering significant harm. The relationships between staff, pupils, parents and the public which foster respect, confidence and trust can lead to disclosures of abuse, and/or academy staff being alerted to concerns.

Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges because:

- There may be 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
- Difficulties may arise in overcoming communication barriers.

At BEST Academies we identify pupils who might need more support to be kept safe or to keep themselves safe by following the Special Education Provision four-part cycle:

ASSESS - This could involve a range of methods including, but not limited to, teachers' assessment of pupil progress, attainment and behaviour, results of standardised tests screening and profiling tests, questionnaires of parents and young people and observations.

PLAN - This is likely to involve the SENCO, working with teachers to plan appropriate provision, which is clearly communicated with all concerned. This may be in class support or more targeted provision. Any planning will have a clear focus on expected outcomes for the child or young person.

DO - The SEND Code of Practice places the teacher at the centre of the day-to-day responsibility for working with all pupils, it is imperative that teachers work closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff involved to plan and assess the impact of targeted interventions.

REVIEW - The progress of pupils who are receiving SEN Support should be reviewed termly and academies should meet with parents three times a year. This may form part of the individual academies regular tracking processes.

DEFINITIONS

- **CHILD** - As in the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, a child is anyone who has not yet reached his / her 18th birthday
- **HARM** - Means ill-treatment or impairment of health and development, including, for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- **DEVELOPMENT** - Means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development
- **HEALTH** - Includes physical and mental health
- **ILL-TREATMENT** - Includes sexual abuse and other forms of ill-treatment which are not physical

INDICATORS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families.

ABUSE is 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. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

NEGLECT is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

PHYSICAL ABUSE is a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

SEXUAL ABUSE involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), 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 maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE) Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact: it can also occur through the use of technology. Like all forms of child sex abuse, child sexual exploitation:

- Can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16

and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex

- Can still be abused even if the sexual activity appears consensual
- Can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and noncontact sexual activity
- Can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both
- Can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence
- May occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media)
- Can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse
- Is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources

Some of the following signs may be indicators of child sexual exploitation:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation
- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late
- Children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education

CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION (CCE)

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country, forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- Children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM) Female genital mutilation refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The practice is illegal in the UK. FGM typically takes place between birth and around 15 years old; however, it is believed that the majority of cases happen between the ages of 5 and 8.

Risk factors for FGM include:

- Low level of integration into UK society
- Mother or a sister who has undergone FGM
- Girls who are withdrawn from PSHE
- Visiting female elder from the country of origin
- Being taken on a long holiday to the country of origin
- Talk about a 'special' procedure to become a woman

INDICATIONS THAT FGM MAY HAVE ALREADY TAKEN PLACE MAY INCLUDE:

Indications that FGM may have already taken place may include:

- Difficulty walking, sitting or standing and may even look uncomfortable
- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating
- Spending long periods of time away from a classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems
- Frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
- Prolonged or repeated absences from school or college, especially with noticeable behaviour changes (e.g. withdrawal or depression) on the girl's return
- Reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations
- Confiding in a professional without being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear
- Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

The Serious Crime Act 2015 sets out a duty on professionals (including teachers) to notify police when they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. In schools, this will usually come from a disclosure. Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out; and discuss any such cases with the safeguarding lead and children's social care. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases.

HONOUR BASED ABUSE (HBA) Honour based abuse can be described as a collection of practices, which are used to control behaviour within families or other social groups to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour. Such abuse can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their honour code. It is a violation of human rights and may be a form of domestic and/or sexual abuse. There is no, and cannot be, honour or justification for abusing the human rights of others. So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) or 'honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so called HBA/HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Where staff are concerned that a child might be at risk of HBA, they must contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead as a matter of urgency.

DOMESTIC ABUSE Domestic abuse is a safeguarding and child protection issue any child or young person who has been witness to or involved in incidents of domestic abuse will have suffered a degree of trauma, likely to be at risk of emotional damage and or physical injury. BEST academies work in conjunction with Central Bedfordshire's RELAY team to support those pupils where domestic abuse has affected them. Staff monitor, record and pass on any concerns to the relevant staff or agency. Allegations of domestic abuse or the risk of witnessing of such incidents will be referred to the Intake and Assessment Team under our Child Protection Procedures. BIC100 could be sent if required.

FORCED MARRIAGE

This is a safeguarding and CP issue. The academy will ensure:

- All staff need to be aware of any signs that would indicate a pupil is concerned that they may be taken away
- There are close checks on requests for holidays abroad or requests for leave of absence
- There is close monitoring of attendance and reasons for absence. This may include EWO involvement. Concerns regarding the possibility of forced marriage will be referred to the Intake & Assessment Team

PEER ON PEER ABUSE

Staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but not 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
- Gender-based violence
- Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery)
- Initiation-type violence and rituals.

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”. Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse. This could for example include girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation-type violence.

At BEST we believe that all children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm by adults in the school and other pupils. We recognise that some pupils will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others and their behaviour will be dealt with under the school’s Behaviour Policy. 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. It is likely that to be considered a safeguarding allegation against a pupil, some of the following features will be found.

The allegation:

- Is made against an older pupil and refers to their behaviour towards a younger pupil or a more vulnerable pupil
- Is of a serious nature, possibly including a criminal offence
- Raises risk factors for other pupils in the school
- Indicates that other pupils may have been affected by this pupil
- Indicates that young people outside the school may be affected by this pupil

The Academy will support the victims of peer on peer abuse by *investigating the allegation thoroughly and putting in the place the relevant sanctions. This may involve using police and other relevant agencies.*

Allegations of peer on peer abuse should be passed to the safeguarding team.

In cases where peer on peer abuse has been found to have taken place, a relevant risk assessment will be carried out for both the victim(s) and the perpetrator(s). The risk assessment will be shared with the appropriate staff and reviewed regularly.

The NSPCC runs a dedicated helpline (Report Abuse in Education) for people who have experienced sexual abuse in education. The number is **0800 136 663** and the email is **help@nspcc.org.uk**.

SEXTING AND UP-SKIRTING

In cases of ‘sexting’ we follow guidance given to schools and colleges by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) published in 2017: ‘Sexting in schools and colleges, responding to incidents, and safeguarding young people’. The criminalisation of “up-skirting” as discussed in KCSIE 2019, defines ‘up skirting’ as a colloquial term referring to the action of placing equipment such as a camera or mobile phone beneath a person’s clothing to take a voyeuristic photograph without their permission. It is not only confined to victims wearing skirts or dresses and equally applies when men or women are wearing kilts, cassocks shorts or trousers. It is often performed in crowded public places, for example on public transport or at music festivals, which can make it difficult to notice offenders. This is not tolerated and will be reported to relevant agencies.

PREVENTING RADICALISATION

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act, which received Royal Assent on 12 February 2015, places a duty on specified authorities, including local authorities and childcare, education and other children’s services providers, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (“the Prevent duty”).

Where staff are concerned that children and young people are developing extremist views or show signs of becoming radicalized, they should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has received training about the Prevent Duty and tackling extremism and is able to support staff with any concerns they may have.

We use the curriculum to ensure that children and young people understand how people with extreme views share these with others, especially using the internet.

We are committed to ensuring that our pupils are offered a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Teaching the school's core values alongside the fundamental British Values supports quality teaching and learning, whilst making a positive contribution to the development of a fair, just and civil society.

RECOGNISING EXTREMISM

Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:

- Showing sympathy for extremist causes
- Glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures
- Making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies outside school
- Evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- Advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups
- Out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (but there are also very powerful narratives, programmes and networks that young people can come across online so involvement with particular groups may not be apparent)
- Secretive behaviour
- Online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles
- Intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality
- Graffiti, art work or writing that displays extremist themes
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- Verbalising anti-western or anti-British views
- Advocating violence towards others

COUNTY LINES

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line"

Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

If a child is suspected to be at risk of or involved in county lines, a safeguarding referral should be considered alongside consideration of availability of local services/third sector providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation.

Safeguarding Leads may **contact the local police force or dial 101** (the non-emergency number) to discuss concerns in confidence and help gain access to support and advice.

The local authority or police might suggest a referral to the 'Channel' programme. 'Channel' is a voluntary Government funded programme which aims to safeguard children and adults from being drawn into terrorist activity. 'Channel' can provide a support plan and specific interventions to protect people at risk, including mentoring support or an ideological or theological intervention. For more information about 'Channel' call 101 to discuss concerns.

For further information refer to 'Prevent Duty Guidance for England & Wales', dated 2015, published by HM Government.

MENTAL HEALTH

All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. If staff have a

mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their Child Protection Policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

ONLINE HOAXES & CHALLENGES

A hoax is a deliberate lie designed to seem truthful. A challenge will generally involve the user recording themselves taking a challenge and then distributing it – the circulation of these challenges may dare or inspire others to try it. Many challenges can be potentially harmful or life threatening. In cases of online hoaxes or challenges, we follow the Harmful Online Challenges and Online Hoaxes non-statutory DfE guidance (published 12th February 2021).

The DSL should be involved with any suspected or reported cases of online hoaxes or challenges. Each case will be reviewed individually to assess the scale and nature of possible risk to children and young people. The DSL will assess the facts of the situation and whether it is a national risk or localised to the area or institution. The DSL can check the factual basis with reliable sources such as Professional Online Safety Helpline from the UK Safer Internet Centre. If it is a local risk, local advice will be sought such as the Local Authority or police as appropriate.

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE

- Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Improbable explanation for injuries
- Untreated injuries or lingering illness not attended to
- Disclosure of punishment which appears to be excessive
- Shrinking from physical contact
- Fear of returning home or of parents being contacted
- Fear of undressing
- Fear of medical help
- Aggression / bullying
- Running away from home
- Significant changes in behaviour with no apparent explanation
- Deterioration in work
- Unexplained pattern of absences which may serve to hide bruises or other physical injuries

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- Continual self-deprecation
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Self-harm or mutilation
- Drug / solvent abuse
- 'Neurotic' behaviour – obsessive rocking, thumb- sucking etc.
- Social isolation – does not join in and has few friends
- Desperate attention seeking behaviour
- Eating problems, including over-eating and lack of appetite
- Depression, withdrawal

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF NEGLECT

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Inappropriate clothing
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at the academy
- Untreated medical problems

- Low self-esteem
- Poor social relationships
- Compulsive stealing or scrounging
- Constant tiredness
- Weight loss

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

- Bruises, scratches, burns or bite marks on body
- Scratches, abrasions or persistent infections in the anal or genital regions
- Pregnancy, particularly in the case of young adolescents who are evasive concerning the identification of the father
- Sexual awareness inappropriate to the child's age shown in drawings, vocabulary, games etc.
- Frequent public masturbation
- Attempts to teach other children about sexual behaviour
- Refusing to stay with certain people or go to certain places
- Aggressiveness, anger, anxiety, tearfulness
- Withdrawal from friends

POSSIBLE SIGNS IN OLDER CHILDREN

- Promiscuity, prostitution, provocative sexual behaviour
- Self-injury, self-destructive behaviour, self-harm attempts
- Eating disorders
- Tiredness, lethargy, listlessness
- Over compliant behaviour
- Sleep disturbances
- Unexplained gifts of money
- Depression
- Changes in behaviour

SECTION D

TAKING ACTION TO ENSURE THAT CHILDREN ARE SAFE AT EACH ACADEMY AND AT HOME (see Flow Chart in Appendix 2)

It is **not** the responsibility of academy staff to investigate welfare concerns or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation. This may only be investigated by the Police, NSPCC or Social Care. All staff, however, have a duty to recognise concerns and maintain an open mind. All concerns regarding the welfare of pupils will be recorded and discussed with the designated senior person with responsibility for child protection (or another senior member of staff in the absence of the designated person) prior to any discussion with parents.

STAFF WILL IMMEDIATELY REPORT

- Any suspicion that a child is injured, marked, or bruised in a way which is not readily attributable to the normal knocks or scrapes received in play
- Any explanation given which appears inconsistent or suspicious
- Any behaviours which give rise to suspicions that a child may have suffered harm (e.g. Worrying drawings or play)
- Any concerns that a child may be suffering from inadequate care, ill treatment, or emotional maltreatment
- Any concerns that a child is presenting signs or symptoms of abuse or neglect
- Any significant changes in a child's presentation, including non-attendance
- Any hint or disclosure of abuse from any person
- Any concerns regarding person(s) who may pose a risk to children (e.g. Living in a household with children present).

RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURE

Disclosures or information may be received from pupils, parents/carers or other members of the public. The academy recognises that those who disclose such information may do so with difficulty, having chosen carefully to whom they will speak. Accordingly, all staff will handle disclosures with sensitivity. Should pupils have communication difficulties the academy will ensure they are enabled to express themselves to a member of staff with appropriate skills wherever possible.

Such information cannot remain confidential and staff will immediately communicate what they have been told to the designated person(s) and make a contemporaneous record as soon as possible following the disclosure.

TIMING OF REFERRALS

Academies have no legal right to stop the young person from going home at the end of the academy day, unless otherwise authorised by the relevant services, so it is vital that referrals are made as early as possible, especially if it is believed that the young person would not be safe in going home.

It is particularly important that any concerns about the Safeguarding and Protection of a child or young person is raised as soon as possible to ensure that matters can be dealt with prior to any academy holiday breaks. This is in order to safeguard the young person and ensure systems are in place, but also to ensure that relevant staff are available to attend any strategy meetings, conferences or to provide reports. Staff will not investigate but will, wherever possible, elicit enough information to pass on to the designated persons in order that s/he can make an informed decision of what to do next.

Staff will:

- Listen to and take seriously any disclosure or information that a child may be at risk of harm
- Try to ensure that the person disclosing does not have to speak to another member of academy staff
- Clarify the information if necessary
- Try to keep questions to a minimum and of an 'open' nature e.g. 'can you tell me what happened?' rather than 'did x hit you?' using the 6r's recognise, receive, reassure, respond,

record, refer. Staff may also choose to use 'TED': Tell me, Explain to me, Describe to me

- Try not to show signs of shock, horror or surprise
- Not express feelings or judgements regarding any person alleged to have harmed the child
- Explain sensitively to the person that they have a responsibility to refer the information to the senior designated person
- Reassure and support the person as far as possible
- Explain that only those who 'need to know' will be told but the information does have to be passed onto relevant members of staff
- Explain what will happen next and that the person will be involved as appropriate
- Share the information in writing as soon as possible even if there has been a verbal conversation using the c-poms system.
- See flow chart

ACTION BY THE DESIGNATED SENIOR PERSONS (OR OTHER SENIOR PERSON IN THEIR ABSENCE)

Following any information raising concern, the senior designated persons will consider:

- Any urgent medical needs of the child
- Discussing the matter with other agencies involved with the family
- Consulting with appropriate persons e.g. Children's services
- Making a report to the police
- The child's wishes

Then decide

- Wherever possible, to talk to parents, unless to do so may place a child at risk of significant harm, impede any police investigation and/or place the member of staff or others at risk;
- Whether to make a child protection referral to social care (intake and assessment) because a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm and if this needs to be undertaken immediately. Any serious concerns will be reported immediately to children's services via a written referral (bic 100) or via telephone prior to bic being completed

or

- Not to make a referral at this stage, an Early Help Assessment Form (EHA) may be more appropriate
- If further monitoring is necessary
- If it would be appropriate/beneficial to undertake an assessment (e.g. BIC 100/CAF) and/or make a referral for other services

All information and actions taken, including the reasons for any decisions made, will be fully documented. All referrals to Children's Services will be accompanied by a standard referral form (BIC 100).

ACTION FOLLOWING A CHILD PROTECTION REFERRAL

The designated senior person or other appropriate member of staff will:

- Make regular contact with Children's Services and wherever possible, contribute to the Strategy Discussion
- Provide a report for, attend and contribute to any subsequent Child Protection Conference
- If the child or children are the subject of a Child Protection Plan, contribute to the Child Protection Plan and attend Core Group Meetings and Review Child Protection Conferences
- Where possible, share all reports with parents prior to meetings
- Where a child who is the subject of a child protection plan moves from the academy or goes missing, immediately inform the key worker in Children's Services.

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

RECORDING AND MONITORING

Accurate records will be made as soon as practicable via the **C-POMS** system and will clearly distinguish between observation, fact, opinion and hypothesis. All records will be signed and dated, any information given will be recorded and a note made of the location and description of any injuries seen.

All C.P. documents will be retained in a 'Child Protection' file, separate from the child's main file in the **C-POMS** system. These records will be copied and transferred to any academy or setting the child moves to, clearly marked 'Child Protection, Confidential, for attention of Designated Person Child Protection.' Original copies will be retained until the child's 25th birthday.

SUPPORTING THE CHILD AND PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

- The Academy recognises that the child's welfare is paramount, however, good child protection practice and outcome relies on a positive, open and honest working partnership with parents
- Whilst Academy staff may, on occasion, need to make referrals without consultation with parents, they will make every effort to maintain a positive working relationship with them whilst fulfilling their duties to protect any child
- The Academy will provide a secure, caring, supportive and protective relationship for the child
- Children will be given a proper explanation (appropriate to age & understanding) of what action is being taken on their behalf and why.

The Academy will endeavour always to preserve the privacy, dignity and right to confidentiality of the child and parents. The Designated Senior Person will determine which members of staff "need to know" personal information and what they "need to know" for the purpose of supporting and protecting the child.

WHISTLEBLOWING

Where there are concerns about the way that safeguarding is carried out in the school, staff should refer to the Whistle-blowing Policy.

A whistleblowing disclosure must be about something that affects the general public such as:

- A criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed
- A legal obligation has been breached
- There has been a miscarriage of justice
- The health or safety of any individual has been endangered
- The environment has been damaged
- Information about any of the above has been concealed.

The NSPCC runs a whistleblowing helpline on behalf of the government, the number is **0800 800 5000**.

ALLEGATIONS REGARDING PERSON(S) WORKING IN OR ON BEHALF OF THE ACADEMY (INCLUDING VOLUNTEERS) – See Appendix 4: Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and other Staff

Where an allegation is made against any person working in or on behalf of the academy that he or she has:

- a. behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child
- b. possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or
- c. has behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children

the Academy will apply the same principles as in the rest of this document and always follow the Central Bedfordshire LSCB Guidance regarding allegations of abuse against a person who works with children, (Sept 2007).

DfE Guidance - Ensuring Good Behaviour in Schools – a Summary for Heads, Governing Bodies, Teachers, Parents and Pupils – September 2012 states that:

'Allegations of abuse must be taken seriously, but schools should ensure they deal with allegations quickly in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child and supports the person who is the subject of the allegation. Every effort must be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity

while an allegation is being investigated. Suspension must not be used as an automatic response when an allegation has been reported.'

Whilst the Academy acknowledge such allegations, (as all others), may be false, malicious or misplaced, it is also acknowledged that they may be founded. It is, therefore, essential that all allegations are investigated properly and in line with agreed procedures.

This also applies to supply teachers employed at the Academy. KCSIE (2020, updated January 2021) states "Where the school or college are not the employer of an individual they still have responsibility to ensure allegations are dealt with appropriately and that they liaise with relevant parties (this includes supply teachers and volunteers),

Whilst schools and colleges are not the employer of supply teachers, they should ensure allegations are dealt with properly. In no circumstances should a school or college decide to cease to use a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

The school or college will usually take the lead because agencies do not have direct access to children or other school staff, so they will not be able to collect the facts when an allegation is made, nor do they have all the relevant information required by the LADO as part of the referral process.

Where an allegation is made against a supply teacher, the Principal will immediately contact both the agency concerned and the LADO. The school will continue to support any investigation that is required.

For further information, please refer to Part 4 Allegations of Abuse Made Against Teachers and Other Staff (Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2020, updated January 2021).

In the first instance, the Head teacher or Principal, or where the Head teacher or Principal is the subject of an allegation, the Director of Education (in consultation with the Chair of Governors if available), should immediately discuss the allegation with the designated officer(s).

The purpose of an initial discussion is for the designated officer(s) and the case manager to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action. The designated officer may ask the case manager to provide or obtain relevant additional information, such as previous history, whether the child or their family have made similar allegations previously and the individual's current contact with children. There may be situations when the case manager will want to involve the police immediately, for example if the person is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. Where there is no such evidence, the case manager should discuss the allegations with the designated officer in order to help determine whether police involvement is necessary.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- All pupils at risk and with Child Protection Plans are monitored regularly at academy based safeguarding meetings where appropriate
- All pupils at risk and with Child Protection Plans are monitored by the designated Child Protection person, with relevant staff members, and appropriate outside professional agencies on a regular basis as appropriate
- The designated Child Protection person meets the Principal every two weeks and more frequently where necessary to monitor individual cases
- The designated Child Protection person provides the designated Governor with a briefing paper annually and discusses updated information more frequently where appropriate
- The designated Governor for overall Safeguarding will make regular 'blind' checks of a sample of staff to ensure correct practices are accurately understood
- All staff regularly receive updated Child Protection information and training
- All adults working on a temporary or casual basis are required to read and sign for key policies before working with pupil(s)
- Staff leading residential trips are given a briefing on CP procedure as disclosures are more likely in these types of situations.

Regular questionnaires regarding safeguarding issues and the perception of safety are issued to pupils, parents/carers and staff, the results analysed and data used to inform future planning and practice.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Intimate Care Guidelines

Appendix 2 - Safeguarding Raising a Concern Flow Chart

Appendix 3 - Signposting to Useful Contacts

Appendix 4 - Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and other staff

Author: BEST Director of Education in consultation with BEST DSLs

Date: September 2020 (updated March 2021)

APPENDIX I: Intimate Care Guidelines

Meeting a pupil's intimate care needs is one aspect of safeguarding. All staff responsible for the intimate care of pupils will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. It is acknowledged that these adults are in a position of great trust. The pupil's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance.

Intimate care can be defined as any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out a procedure to intimate personal areas which most people usually carry out themselves but some pupils are unable to do because of their young age, physical difficulties or other special needs. It may also include invasive or non-invasive medical procedures. It also includes supervision of pupils involved in intimate self-care.

BEST staff who provide intimate care are trained to do so. This includes training in child protection, health and safety, and training in moving and handling, and are fully aware of best practice regarding infection control.

There is careful communication with each child who needs help with intimate care to discuss their needs and preferences, aiming for as much independence as possible. Where the child is of an appropriate age and level of understanding permission should be sought before starting an intimate procedure.

Pupils who require regular assistance with intimate care have this noted on their care plan. Where a care plan is not in place, parents/carers will be informed the same day if their child has needed help with meeting intimate care needs.

It is generally best practice for two people to undertake personal care of a young person, however, it is not always practical for two members of staff to assist with an intimate procedure and also this does not take account of the pupil's privacy. A member of staff will inform another adult when they are going to assist a child with intimate care.

It is best if there is a rota of carers known to the child who will take turns in providing care. This will ensure, as far as possible, that over-familiar relationships are discouraged from developing.

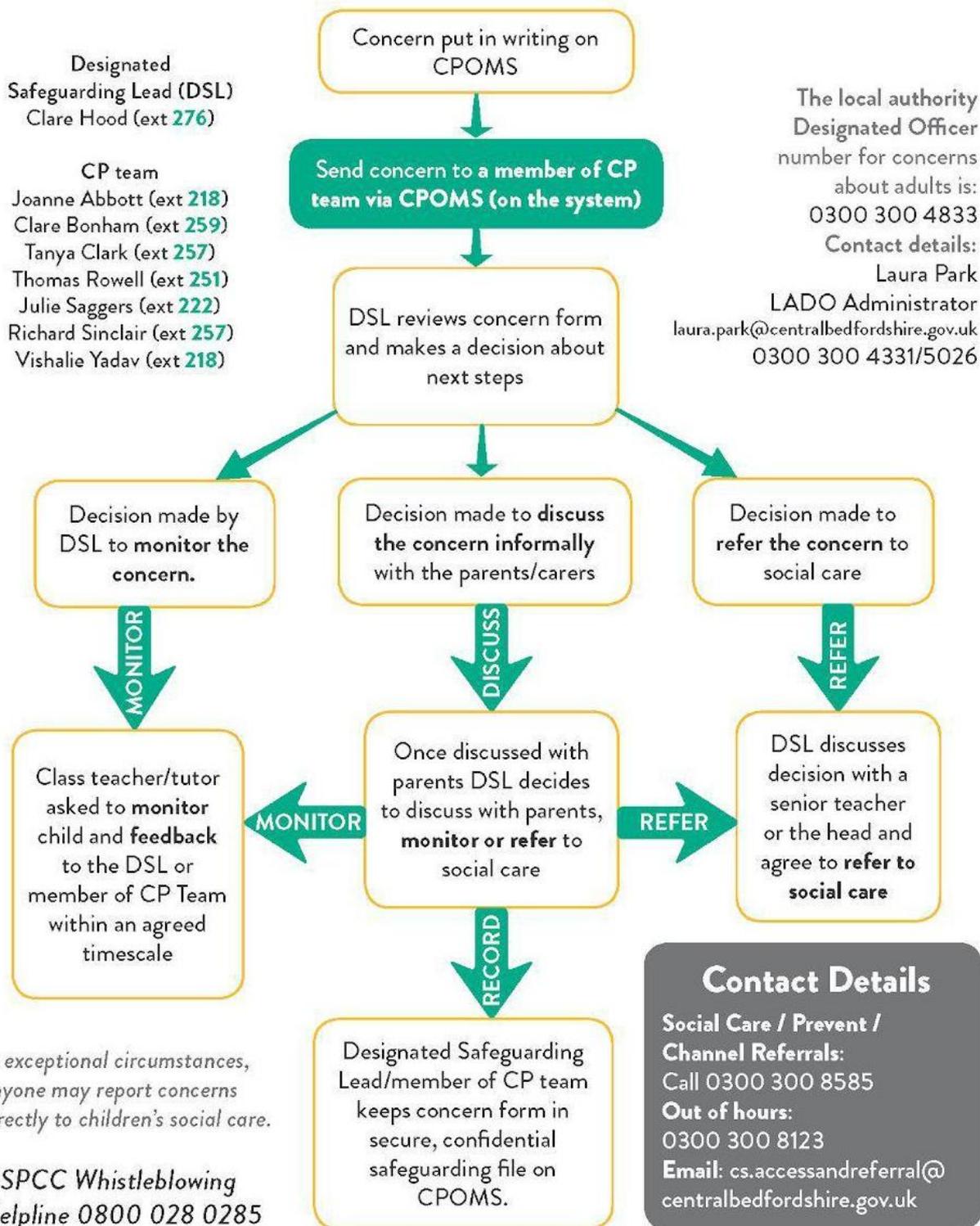
Wherever possible staff should care for a child of the same gender.

Intimate care involves risks for pupils and adults as it may involve staff touching intimate areas on a pupil's body. It may be unrealistic to expect to eliminate these risks completely but best practice will be promoted and all adults will be encouraged to be vigilant at all times.

A written record will be kept in an agreed format every time a child requires assistance with intimate care, including date, times and any comments such as changes in the pupil's behaviour. It should be clear who was present. These records will be kept in the pupil's file and available to parents/carers on request.



FLOW CHART FOR RAISING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD



APPENDIX 3: USEFUL CONTACTS

Local Authority Designated Officer (schools) - 0300 300 4833

<http://centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/children/child-protection/report-abuse.aspx>

Local Safeguarding Children Board - 0300 300 6676

Central Bedfordshire LSCB. <http://www.bedfordshirelscb.org.uk/home>

Access and inclusion 0300 300 6291 - <http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/school/pupil-support/home-education/support.aspx>

Intake and Assessment 0300 300 8585; <http://centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/children/child-protection/report-abuse.aspx>

KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE

www.ceop.gov.uk <http://www.dotcomcf.org/> www.kidscape.org.uk www.childline.org.uk
www.nspcc.org.uk www.ceop.org.uk/thinkuknow www.childnet-int.org www.kidsmart.org.uk

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

<http://www.centralbedscpd.co.uk/safeguarding/cpd/default.asp?sid=>

Email: LSCB.Training@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Telephone number: 0300 300 6676

APPENDIX 4 - Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and other staff

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/361444/DFERR192.pdf