

# **CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

<b>Document control table</b>			
<b>Document title:</b>	Child Safeguarding Policy		
<b>Author (name &amp; job title):</b>	Katy Bradford, Chief Operating Officer		
<b>Version number:</b>	V8		
<b>Date approved:</b>	Due for approval October 2018		
<b>Approved by:</b>	OGAT Board		
<b>Date of next review:</b>	October 2019		
<b>Document History</b>			
<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Note of revisions</b>
V1	23.02.12	KW	
V2	24.02.14	KW	Annual review
V3	16.03.15	KB	Annual review
V4	09.07.15	KB	Updated DfE Guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' Added Disqualification by Association Amendment of CRB to DBS Appendix E added Appendix F added
V5	30.11.15	KB	Additional recruitment checks added and named LADO required
V6	25.07.16	KB	Updated to reflect DfE KCSIE Sept 16, including: On-line safety So-called 'honour' based violence Children missing from education
V7	11.12.17	KB	Reference to Managing Medicines Policy amended to Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy.
V8			Updated DfE Guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2018 Appendix I 'sexting' added.

# CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Academy Commitment

## **Section 3 - Providing a Safe and Supportive Environment**

- 3.1 Safer Recruitment and Selection
- 3.2 Safe Practice
- 3.3 Sharing Safeguarding Information with Students
- 3.4 Partnership with parents/carers
- 3.5 Partnership with others
- 3.6 Academy Training and Staff Induction
- 3.7 Support, Advice and Guidance for Staff
- 3.8 On-line Safety
- 3.9 Related Academy Policies
- 3.10 Student Information
- 3.11 Roles and Responsibilities:
  - Academy Council
  - Principal
  - Designated Senior Person
  - All staff and volunteers

## **Section 4 – Identifying Children and Young People who may be suffering or are likely to suffer significant harm**

- 4.1 Definitions

## **Section 5 – Taking Action to Ensure that Children and Young People are Safe at the Academy and at Home**

- 5.1 Staff will immediately report
- 5.2 Responding to Disclosure
- 5.3 Action by Designated Senior Person
- 5.4 Action following Child Protection referral
- 5.5 Recording and Monitoring
- 5.6 Supporting the Child and Partnership with Parents/Carers
- 5.7 Allegations Regarding Person(s) Working in or on Behalf of the Academy
- 5.8 Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children
- 5.9 Work Experience
- 5.10 Children Staying with Host Families
- 5.11 Peer on Peer Abuse
- 5.12 Child on Child Sexual Violence and Harassment
- 5.13 Physical Intervention and Use of Reasonable Force
- 5.14 Alternative Provision
- 5.15 Private Fostering

## **Appendices**

Appendix A	Safeguarding Incident Recording Sheet
Appendix B	Notification of Suspected/Admitted/Known Abuse of a Child(ren) to Social Services
Appendix C	Making a Referral Flowchart
Appendix D	Allegations Against Academy Staff Flowchart
Appendix E	Adult Access to Students
Appendix F	Prevent Duty and Radicalisation
Appendix G	Child Sexual Exploitation
Appendix H	So-called 'Honour' Based Violence
Appendix I	Children Missing from Education
Appendix J	Sexting

## **NAMED PERSONS WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILD PROTECTION:**

**Designated Senior Person: KATE HERBERT**

**Deputy Designated Senior Person: TRACY MARTIN**

**Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): RUTH HOLMES – 01226 772341  
RuthHolmes@Barnsley.org**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

This policy is in response to:

- 1) Sections 157 and 175 of the Education Act 2002, implemented June 2004
- 2) 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' issued by the DfE in 2018

It is in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures and DfE guidance.

**This policy applies to all adults, including volunteers, working in or on behalf of the Academy or the Trust.**

Everyone in the education service shares an objective to help keep children and young people safe by contributing to:

- Providing a safe environment for children and young people to learn in education settings;  
and
- Identifying children and young people 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.
- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child.

### **2. OUTWOOD GRANGE ACADEMIES TRUST COMMITMENT**

The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its students. Each student's welfare is of paramount importance. We recognise that some children may be especially vulnerable to abuse e.g. those with Special Educational Needs, those living in adverse circumstances. We recognise that children 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. Whilst at the Academies, their behaviour may be challenging. We recognise that some children who have experienced abuse may harm others. We will always take a considered and sensitive approach in order that we can support all our students.

### **3. PROVIDING A SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT**

### 3.1 Safer Recruitment and Selection

The Trust pays full regard to DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2015. We ensure that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works in a Trust Academy who is likely to be perceived by the students as a safe and trustworthy adult, including volunteers and staff employed by contractors. Safer recruitment practice has been fully encompassed in the Trust's Recruitment Policy and its procedures. Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising applications, verifying identity and qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking rigorous selection procedures and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and other checks.

Recruitment practices in place are:

- An Enhanced DBS with Barred list check is obtained for all new appointments to the Trust workforce (all Governors are also required to undertake an Enhanced DBS check which includes S128 check for Board Directors and Members);
- Disclosure by Association checks undertaken for staff who are employed in relevant positions;
- Teacher Services checks are undertaken for all relevant staff, including QTS verification;
- ID and right to work in the UK is verified prior to appointment;
- Two references are taken for all appointments;
- An Enhanced DBS is obtained for volunteers following a risk assessment considering the frequency, regularity, duration and nature of contact with children and young people;
- The Trust ensures that any contracted staff are DBS checked where appropriate;
- Each Academy maintains a Single Central Record detailing the range of checks carried out on their staff, volunteers, governors and regular visitors;
- All new appointments to the Trust workforce are subject to identity, criminal conviction disclosure, health and rights to work in the UK checks prior to interview;
- The Trust satisfies itself that the same level of stringent checks have been undertaken on any supply staff.

In each Academy the Principal, Senior Leadership Team and the named safeguarding governor have successfully undertaken the approved Safer Recruitment Training. At least one member of every interview or appointment panel has successfully completed this training.

Further details of the checks undertaken are outlined in the Trust's Recruitment and Selection Procedure and Contractor Policy.

### 3.2 Safe Practice

Each Academy has undertaken Child Safeguarding training for all staff and updates this training at least every 3 years to ensure that staff are safe and aware of behaviours which should be avoided. In addition the Trust's Staff Code of Conduct outlines acceptable and unacceptable behaviour towards children and young people. A summary of this is also provided in the Staff Safeguarding Induction Pack prior to taking up employment.

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

- Are responsible for their own action and behaviours and know how to avoid any conduct which could lead any reasonable person to question their motivation or intentions;
- Work in an open and transparent way;

- Discuss and/or take advice from the Academy management over any incident which may give rise to concern;
- Record any incidents or decisions made in relation to a child or young person;
- Apply the same professional standards regardless of gender or sexuality;
- Are aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them.

### **3.3 Sharing Safeguarding Information with Students**

The Trust is committed to ensuring that students are aware of behaviour towards them that is not acceptable and how they can keep themselves safe. All students know that we have a senior member of staff with responsibility for child protection and know who this is. We inform students of whom they might 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. Life lesson materials are used to help students learn how to keep safe.

Information is made available to students, including NSPCC and Childline.

The Trust's arrangements for consulting with and listening to students are via Vertical Mentor Groups, peer support and mentoring schemes, teaching and associate staff, Student Voice. We make students aware of these arrangements via Mentor Groups, assemblies, posters, letters, lessons etc.

### **3.4 Partnership with Parents**

The Trust shares a purpose with parents/carers to keep children safe from harm and to have their welfare promoted. All new parents/carers are provided with the following statement prior to their child starting with the Academy:

“The Trust takes child protection and safeguarding very seriously. We have a very comprehensive child safeguarding policy which we are happy to share with you upon request. If your child informs staff members at their Academy of any issues which cause us concern, we may request the help of outside agencies. Depending on the nature of the concern and the severity of the issue, we may or may not contact parents/carers regarding the disclosure the child has made. We would in this instance contact the relevant professional body and seek their advice. Please be aware that our aim is always to act professional with the child's safety and best interest at the forefront.”

We are committed to working positively, open and honestly with parents/carers. We ensure that all parents/carers are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. We respect parents/carers' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission or it is necessary to do so to protect a child. Each Academy will share with parents/carers any concerns we may have about their child unless to do so may place the child at risk of harm.

Outwood Grange Academies Trust follow each Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures when dealing with any matters of a child protection nature. The Academy will endeavour to discuss all concerns with parents/carers about their child/ren. However, there may be exceptional circumstances when an Academy will discuss concerns with Social Care and/or the Police without parental knowledge (in accordance with LSCB Child Protection Procedures). The Academy will, of course, always aim to maintain a positive relationship with all parents/carers. The Trust's Child Safeguarding Policy is available to all parents/carers upon request.

### **3.5 Partnerships with Others**

No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, **everyone** who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. Although inter agency working and information sharing are vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse, it is clear they are especially important to identify and prevent child sexual exploitation.

The Trust recognises that it is essential to establish positive and effective working relationships with other agencies. These include the Local Authority, Social Care, Barnardo's, Police, Health, Childline, NSPCC, Surestart etc.

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

### **3.6 School Training and Staff Induction**

Each Academy's Designated Person and Deputy Designated Person with Responsibility for Child Protection undertake basic child protection and safeguarding training on a 2 yearly basis. Each Academy Principal and all other staff, including associate staff, undertake appropriate induction training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively, which is updated at least every three years.

All staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) are provided with a written child Safeguarding Induction prior to taking up appointment and are provided with a copy of this and other relevant policies during Induction.

The Trust aims to provide training on a termly basis via Learning and Performance time on specific and relevant Child Safeguarding issues e.g. e-Safety, Safe Practice, Record Keeping.

All staff will be made aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), gender based violence/sexual assaults and sexting. The Trust's Policy on peer to peer abuse is at Appendix K.

### **3.7 Support, Advice and Guidance for Staff**

Staff will be supported by the Designated Person and Deputy Designated Person with Responsibility for Child Protection, who will provide guidance and training where appropriate. They will be supported by the Academy Principal and through the Trust.

Advice and support is always available from the Local Authority's Social Work Team and further advice is available from the Police.

### **3.8 On-line Safety**

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. The Trust has website filtering and monitoring software on all computers and devices available in its academies.

As part of a broad and balanced curriculum, the Trust offers a curriculum which covers the need for safeguarding, including online. This is covered through PSHCE, VMG and the assembly programme.



### **3.9 Related Trust Policies**

Safeguarding covers more than the contribution made to child protection in relation to individual children. It also encompasses issues such as student health and safety and bullying and a range of other issues, for example, arrangements for meeting the medical needs of children, providing first aid, school security, drugs and substance misuse etc. There may also be other safeguarding issues that are specific to the local area of population.

Other related Trust Policies and Protocols that should be referred to include:

Health and Safety Policy  
Anti-Bullying Policy  
E-Safety Policy  
Recruitment Procedure  
Staff Code of Conduct  
Whistleblowing Procedure  
Alcohol Tobacco and Drug Policy  
Educational Visits Policy  
Equal Opportunities Policy  
Work Placement/Experience Policy  
Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy  
SEND Policy

### **3.10 Student Information**

In order to keep children safe and provide appropriate care for them each Academy requires accurate and up to date information regarding:

- Names (including any previous names), address and date of birth of child;
- Names and contact details of persons with whom the child normally lives;
- Names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility (if different from above);
- Whether the child is Looked After;
- Emergency contact details;
- Details of any persons authorised to collect the child from the Academy;
- Any relevant court orders in place including those which affect any person's access to the child (e.g. Residence Order, Contact Order, Interim or Full Care Order, Injunctions etc);
- If the child is or has a Child Protection Plan (formerly known as being on the Child Protection Register);
- Name and contact details of any key persons from other agencies, including GP;
- Any other factors which may impact on the safety and welfare of the child.

### **3.11 Roles and Responsibilities**

*The Trust will ensure that:*

- The Trust has a Child Safeguarding policy and procedures in place that are in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance and locally agreed interagency procedures, and the policy is available to parents/carers upon request;
- The Trust operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on staff and volunteers who work with children;

- The Trust 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;
- A senior member of the Academy's Leadership Team is designated to take lead responsibility for Child Protection (and a deputy);
- Staff undertake appropriate child protection training, including at least annual updates via Learning and Performance;
- They remedy, without delay, any deficiencies or weaknesses regarding child protection arrangements;
- Where services or activities are provided on an Academy's 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;
- Ensure the Child Safeguarding Policy is updated and reviewed annually and work with the Local Academy Council regarding this;
- They review their policies and procedures annually and provide information to the LA about them and about how the above duties have been discharged;
- Appropriate online filtering and monitoring is in place and is kept up to date, whilst not preventing access to online learning opportunities;
- Should an allegation arise outside of the academy's term time and the designated safeguarding lead, deputy designated safeguarding lead and Principal are unavailable, the Trust has appointed the Chief Operating Officer to be responsible for managing the referral process in their absence.

***Each Academy Principal will ensure that:***

- The policies and procedures adopted by the Trust 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;
- appropriate levels of qualified staff are maintained within the Academy to ensure adequate levels of safeguarding practitioners at all times; and
- All staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regarding to children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with the agreed Whistleblowing Policy.

***Each Designated Person with Responsibility for Child Protection will:***

Referrals

- Refer cases of suspected or alleged abuse to the relevant investigating agencies;
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise within the educational establishment;
- Liaise with the Academy Principal to inform him/her of any issues and ongoing investigations and ensure there is always cover for this role.

Training

- To recognise how to identify signs of abuse and when it is appropriate to make a referral;

- Have a working knowledge of how the child protection cases operate, the conduct of a child protection case conference and be able to attend and contribute to these;
- Ensure that all staff have access to and understand the Trust's Child Safeguarding Policy;
- Ensure that all staff have induction training;
- Circulate relevant information and guidance to staff on a regular basis;
- Keep detailed and accurate secure written records and/or concerns;
- Are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at the Academy.
- Can recognise the additional risks that children with SEN and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support SEND children to stay safe online.
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses at least every two years.

### Raising Awareness

- Ensure parents/carers are made aware of the Child Safeguarding Policy which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made and the role of the Academy in this to avoid conflict later;
- Ensure that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They will also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The designated safeguarding lead will have details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child;
- Where a child leaves an Academy, ensure the Child Safeguarding file is copied for the new establishment ASAP and is transferred to the new school separately from the main student file. If a child goes missing or leaves to be educated at home, then the child protection file should be copied and the copy forwarded to the Principal Education Welfare Officer at the Local Authority.

### *All staff and volunteers will:*

- Fully comply with the Trust's policies and procedures;
- Attend appropriate training;
- Inform the Designated Person of any concerns;
- Understand the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessment under the Children Act;
- Record any potential safeguarding incidents appropriately.

## **4. IDENTIFYING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO MAY BE SUFFERING SIGNIFICANT HARM**

Teachers and other adults in each Academy 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, students, parents and the public which foster respect, confidence and trust can lead to disclosures of abuse, and/or Trust staff being alerted to concerns.

### **Safeguarding children is defined as:**

- The actions we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm are everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play.

### **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:**

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development.
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes  
Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 (page 6).

### **Safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm. It also relates to aspects of school life including:**

- Pupils' health and safety.
- The use of reasonable force.
- Meeting the needs of children with medical conditions.
- Providing first aid.
- Educational visits.
- Intimate care.
- Internet or e-safety.
- Appropriate arrangements to ensure school security, taking into account the local context.

### **Safeguarding can involve a range of potential issues such as:**

- Bullying, including cyber bullying (by text message, on social networking sites, etc) and prejudice based bullying.
- Peer on peer abuse.
- Racist homophobic or transphobic abuse.
- Extremist behaviour i.e. radicalisation.
- Child sexual exploitation.
- Sexting.
- Substance misuse.
- Issues which may be specific to a local area or population, for example gang activity and youth violence.
- Particular issues affecting children including domestic violence, female genital mutilations, honour based violence and forced marriage.

## **4.1 Definitions**

As in the Childrens Acts 1989 and 2004, a child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached his/her 18<sup>th</sup> 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.

**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 (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

**Physical abuse** 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, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) 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.

**Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse 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. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, 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, though it may occur alone.

**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 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);
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

Whilst the above are the legal definitions, staff must also be aware of other forms of harm including forced marriage, radicalisation, honour based violence and female genital mutilation.

**Early Help** means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. In the first instance staff should discuss early help requirements with the designated safeguarding lead. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment. Staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs;

- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan);
- is a young carer;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or home;
- is misusing drugs or alcohol;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse; and/or
- has returned home to their family from care.

A **Child in Need** is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

## **5. TAKING ACTION TO ENSURE THAT CHILDREN ARE SAFE AT THEIR ACADEMY AND AT HOME**

It is not the responsibility of Trust staff to investigate welfare concerns or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation. All staff, however, have a duty to recognise concerns and maintain an open mind. Accordingly all concerns regarding the welfare of students 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/carers.

### **5.1 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, writing or acts).
- 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).
- Staff should be aware that children with SEND may face additional safeguarding challenges and should ensure that any potential barriers to them reporting concerns are removed.
- If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of Female Genital Mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 the teacher must report this to the designated safeguarding lead, who will inform the Police;
- Any children who they believe may benefit from early help, this includes identifying emerging problems, liaising with the designated safeguarding lead, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment and, in some cases, acting as the lead professional in undertaking an early help assessment.

### **5.2 Responding to Disclosure**

Disclosures or information may be received from students, 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 staff will handle disclosures with sensitivity.

Such information cannot remain confidential and staff will immediately communicate what they have been told to the designated person and make a contemporaneous record.

### ***Principles***

Staff will not investigate but will, wherever possible, elicit enough information to pass on to the designated person 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 the Academy's staff.
- 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?'
- 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 child that they have a responsibility to refer the information to the senior designated person.
- Reassure and support the child as far as possible.
- Explain that only those who 'need to know' will be told.
- Explain what will happen next and that the child will be involved as appropriate.

### **5.3 Action by the Designated Senior Persons (or other senior person in their absence)**

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

- Any urgent medical needs of the child.
- Making an enquiry to the Central Database (formerly the Child Protection Register)
- Discussing the matter with other agencies involved with the family.
- Consulting with appropriate persons e.g. Police, Children's Social Care etc.
- The child's wishes.
- Any suspicion of female genital mutilation of a girl under 18 years of age will be reported to the Police and Children's Social Care.

Then decide:

- Wherever possible, to talk to parents/carers, 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 Children's Social Care or the Police because a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm and if this needs to be undertaken immediately.

OR

- Not to make a referral at this stage.
- If further monitoring is necessary.
- If early help is appropriate the designated safeguarding lead should support the staff member in liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate and then ensure the case is kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care if the child's situation doesn't appear to be improving or is getting worse.
- If it would be appropriate to undertake a Common Assessment and/or make a referral for other services.

Referrals should ideally be made by a designated safeguarding lead, however in their absence, anyone can make a referral, and their absence must not delay the appropriate action being taken. Where referrals are not made by the designated safeguarding lead the designated safeguarding lead should be informed, as soon as possible, that a referral has been made.

All information and actions taken, including the reasons for any decisions made, will be fully documented. All referrals to Social Care will be accompanied by a standard Referral Form (appendix C).

#### **5.4 Action following a child protection referral**

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

- Make regular contact with Children's Social Services
- Contribute to the Strategy Discussion and Initial Assessment
- Provide a report for, attend and contribute to any subsequent Child Protection Conference
- If the child or children have a Child Protection Plan, contribute to the Child Protection Plan and attend Core Group Meetings and Review Child Protection Conferences
- Share all reports with parents prior to the meetings
- Where in disagreement with a decision made e.g. not to apply Child Protection Procedures or not to convene a child Protection Conference, discuss this with the Education Safeguarding Manager
- Where a child is having a Child Protection Plan moves from an Academy or goes missing, immediately inform the key worker in Social Services

#### **5.5 Recording and Monitoring**

**Each Academy will record:**

- Information about the child: name, address, D.O.B, those with parental responsibility, primary carers, emergency contacts, names of persons authorised to collect from the Academy, any court orders, if a child has been subject to a Child Protection Plan
- Key contacts in other agencies including GP details
- Any disclosures/accounts from child or others, including parents/carers (and keep original notes)
- All concerns, discussions, decisions, actions taken (dated, timed and signed) and arrangements for monitoring/reviewing

**All records should be objective and include:**

- Statements, facts and observable things (what was seen/heard)
- Diagram indicating position, size, colour of any injuries (photographs if appropriate)



- Words child uses (not translated into ‘proper’ words)
- Non-verbal behaviours

All child protection documents will be retained in a ‘Child Protection’ file, separate from the child’s main file. This will be locked away and only accessible to the Academy Principal and Senior Designated Person. These records will be copied and transferred to any school or setting the child moves to, clearly marked ‘Child Protection, Confidential, for the attention of the Designated Senior Person with Responsibility for Child Protection’.

If the child goes missing from education or is removed from roll to be educated at home then any Child Protection file should be copied and the copy sent to the Principal Education Welfare Officer.

The Academy will retain all original copies of child protection files until the child’s 25<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**Each Academy will monitor:**

- Injuries/marks
- Attendance
- Changes e.g. mood/academic functioning
- Relationships
- Language
- Behaviour
- Demeanour and appearance
- Statements and comments
- Medicals
- Stories, ‘news’, drawings
- Response to PE/sport
- Family circumstances
- Parental behaviours/care of child

**5.6 Supporting the Child and Partnership with Parents/Carers**

- The Trust recognises that the child’s welfare is paramount, however, good child protection practice and outcomes rely on a positive, open and honest working partnership with parents/carers.
- Whilst we may, on occasion, need to make referrals without consultation with parents/carers, we will make every effort to maintain a positive working relationship with them whilst fulfilling our duties to protect any child.
- We will provide secure, caring, supportive and protective relationships for the child
- Children will be given a proper explanation (appropriate to age and understanding) of what action is being taken on their behalf and why.
- We will endeavour always to preserve the privacy, dignity and right to confidentiality of the child and parents/carers. 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.

## **5.7 Allegations regarding Person(s) working in or on behalf of the Trust (including volunteers)**

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

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child a may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- Has behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicated s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

The Trust will follow the Local Safeguarding Children's Board Procedure for Dealing with Allegations against a Person who works with Children.

Detailed records will be made to include decisions, action taken and the reasons for these. All records will be retained securely as mentioned above.

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

### **Initial Action**

- The person who has received the allegation or witnesses an event will immediately inform their Academy Principal (or Executive Principal if the allegation is against the Principal) and make a record
- The Principal will take steps, where necessary, to secure the immediate safety of children and any urgent medical needs
- The member of staff will not be approached at this stage unless it is necessary to address the **immediate** safety of children
- The Principal may need to clarify any information regarding the allegation, however, no person will be interviewed at this stage
- The Principal will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in order to determine if it is appropriate for the allegation to be dealt with by the Academy or if there needs to be a referral to Social services and/or Police for investigation
- Consideration will be given throughout to the support and information needs of students, parents and staff
- The Principal will inform the Chief Operating Officer of any allegation.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their Principal, designated safeguarding lead or other senior colleague, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, they should refer to the Trust's Whistleblowing Procedure.

Required further investigations, including suspensions, and any relevant referrals will be managed within the Trust's Staff Disciplinary Procedure.

## **5.8 Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children**

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse or neglect. The Academy ensures that appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after status and care arrangements including contact. The designated teacher for Looked After Children and Designated Safeguarding leads have details of the child's social worker, as well as the name and contact details

of the local authority's virtual head for children in care. They will work with the virtual head to discuss how funding can be best used to support the progress of LAC and meet the needs in their PEP (Personal Education Plan)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-the-education-of-looked-after-children>  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-teacher-for-looked-after-children>

## **5.9 Work Experience**

The Academy has detailed procedures to safeguard students undertaking work experience, including arrangements for checking people who provide placements and supervise pupils on work experience which are in accordance with the guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education*. These are detailed within the Academy's Work Experience Policy.

## **5.10 Children staying with Host Families**

The Academy may make arrangements for students to stay with a host family during a foreign exchange trip or sports tour. In such circumstances this may amount to Private Fostering and the Academy follows the guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education* to ensure that hosting arrangements are as safe as possible.

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

## **5.11 Peer on Peer Abuse**

Sexting/bullying/sexual assaults/physical assault/hazing or initiating child on child abuse, will always be taken seriously and acted upon, under the appropriate policy e.g. safeguarding, behaviour, not dismissed as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. These issues will be part of PSHE lessons and discussions. Victims will be supported through the Academy's pastoral system.

## **5.12 Child on Child Sexual Violence and Harassment**

We will;

- never tolerate or normalise this behaviour and are very clear it is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerate or dismiss sexual violence or sexual harassment as "banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys";
- challenge behaviour (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia and flicking bras and lifting up skirts.
- understand that all of the above can be driven by wider societal factors beyond the academy, such as everyday sexist stereotypes and everyday sexist language. This is why a whole academy approach is important;
- Deal with any reports or disclosures in line with this policy and refer to the DSL (or Deputy).

We recognise children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are three times more likely to be abused than their peers. Additional barriers can sometimes exist when recognising abuse in SEND children. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- the potential for children with SEND being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying and harassment, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties overcoming these barriers.
- Therefore any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will involve liaison with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) and the SENCO

Children who are lesbian, gay, bi, or trans or questioning (LGBTQ) can be targeted by their peers. In some cases, a child who is perceived by their peers to be LGBTQ (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBTQ.

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

### **5.13 Physical Intervention and Use of Reasonable Force**

All staff are encouraged to use de-escalation techniques and creative alternative strategies that are specific to the child. Restraint will only be used as a last resort and all incidents of this are reviewed, recorded and monitored. Reasonable force will be used in accordance with government guidance. Safeguarding and welfare concerns will be taken into account when restraint is used on SEND students.

### **5.14 Alternative Provision**

We will obtain written confirmation from any alternative provision that all relevant checks have been carried out as we would with our own staff. We will share any risk assessments and safeguarding issues where relevant and will regularly visit the provision and our students. We will ensure they have effective safeguarding in place and keep the DSL appropriately informed, this is further detailed in the Trust's Alternative Provision Policy.

### **5.15 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. (\*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.) The Academy will work within the guidance from the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Appendix A

**SAFEGUARDING INCIDENT RECORDING SHEET**

(Once completed pass to Designated Person with responsibility for Child Protection or the Principal)

Full name of Young Person	
Date of Birth and Address	
Year & VMG Group	
Date of Incident (day/month/year)	
Time of Incident (24 hour clock)	
Location	
Observed by (full name and position)	
Detailed Observation	
Concerns	
Have you spoken to the young person?	
What was said? (Please record in the young person's own words)	
Have you spoken to the parents/carers?	
What was said? (include full name of parent/carer spoken to)	
Referred to	
Your Name	
Your Position	
Signed	
Date and Time of Record	

## NOTIFICATION OF SUSPECTED/ADMITTED/KNOWN ABUSE OF CHILD(REN) TO SOCIAL SERVICES

This form should be completed by the **designated person with responsibility for child protection** on the basis of information readily available and should not be delayed on the basis of incomplete information.

<b>Information about the Child</b>	
Child(ren)'s surname	
Child(ren)'s forename(s)	
Child(ren)'s date of birth	
Other name(s) by which the child(ren) may be known	
Present location	
Home address of child	
<b>Information about Parent/Guardian</b>	
Parent/Guardian's surname	
Parent/Guardian's forenames	
Address	
Tel No	
Does this person have parental responsibility	
If not, insert the names and addresses of those with parental responsibility	
Surname/forenames, date of birth or age of any siblings/co-resident children	
<b>GP Information</b>	
GP's name	
Address	
Tel No	
Professional agencies known to be involved with the family: (contact name, address and tel no)	
<b>Reason for Referral</b>	
Reason for referral:	
<b>Action already taken</b>	

Referred in writing/by telephone to:	
On what date:	
Parents advised of referral?	
Child/young person advised of referral?	
Name of Designated Person	
Signature	
Date	

## Actions where there are concerns about a child



(1) In cases which also involve an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part four of this guidance.

(2) If, for any reason, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken.

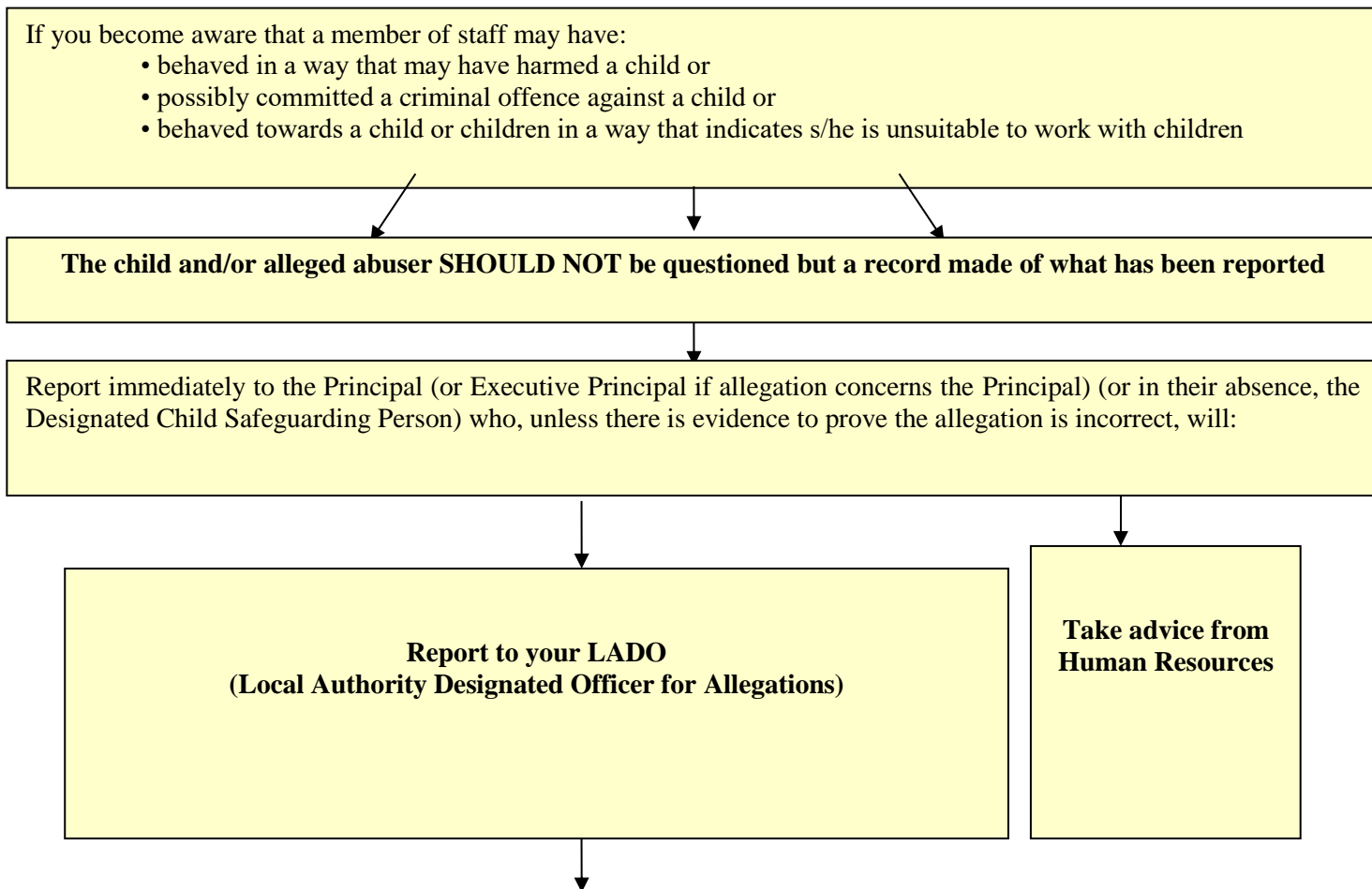
(3) Chapter 1 of Working together to safeguard children provides detailed guidance on the early help process.

(4) Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. This can include section 17 and section 47 assessment. Chapter 1 of Working together to safeguard children provides detailed guidance on statutory assessments.

(5) This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).



**ALLEGATIONS AGAINST ACADEMY STAFF  
GUIDANCE FLOWCHART**



## Adult Access to Students

1.1 The word ADULT applies to anyone who is NOT a teacher, or whose employment by the Trust gives them specific approval to have direct contact with children. It also includes ex students who have recently left Academy.

If the DfE procedures are NOT to be followed, the LADO will agree with you an appropriate response (e.g. the school to undertake enquiries)

If the DfE procedures ARE to be followed, a Strategy meeting will normally be held by phone or in person. Normally the Principal, the LADO, HR and often Police are invited. Information is shared, risks to children considered and appropriate action agreed –e.g. S47 Children Act enquiries, school enquiries, disciplinary measures or (unusually) criminal proceedings. A record of the meeting will be made, and further meetings held every 4 weeks until a conclusion is agreed.

1.4 No adult is allowed to have access to a child without the continuous presence of an appropriate employee or the child's parents/carers.

### Your LADO will:

1. Consider the relevant facts and concerns re the adult and child/ren, including any previous history.
2. Decide on next course of action –usually straight away, sometimes after consultation with others such as HR.

1.6 If the Police request to see a student, this request will not normally be granted if the investigation relates to matters when the child was in the care of their parents/carers.

1.7 If Police wish to interview a child about matters which have taken place on Academy

This document is intended for use as a guide. Please refer to:  
'Keeping Children Safe in Education' DfE 2018

1.8 The only exception of item (5.5) would be if the Police were able to convince us that they were investigating serious criminal activity where speed was an essential part of their enquiries. In this case, if parents/carers could not be contacted, the Academy Principal would normally accept responsibility "in loco parentis" and inform the parents/carers afterwards.

1.9 Serious criminal activity would include certain types of child abuse. In these cases it would be a matter of professional judgement and liaison with the appropriate agencies as to how and when parents/carers would be informed.

1.10 These policy arrangements may occasionally mean that visitors asking to see a student may be required to wait for some considerable period of time. A genuine visitor will appreciate the rigour with which we protect the security of our students.

## **Prevent Duty and Radicalisation**

There are now duties imposed on schools and other agencies in relation to the [DfE guidance The Prevent Duty](#) . The prevent duty is now incorporated into our existing policies.

Further advice in relation to this is within Keeping Children Safe In Education in relation to:

- Risk assessment (page 5).
- Working in partnership (page 7).
- Staff training (page 7).
- It policies (page 8).
- Building children's resilience to radicalisation (page 8).

Where we are concerned about individual children we will follow the referral pathway defined.

The essence of our policy, however, is that we seek to protect children and young people from being drawn into, and against, the messages of all violent extremism. This includes and is not restricted to ISIL, AQ, Far Right, Neo Nazi, White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements.

The use of social media and the internet as tools to radicalise young people cannot be underestimated. We recognise that those that seek to recruit young people to follow extremist ideology often target those who are already vulnerable in some way and that exposure to extreme views can make young people vulnerable to further manipulation and exploitation.

As a Trust we are clear that we have a duty to safeguard young people from such dangers and we will actively promote resilience to such risks through our RE curriculum, SEND policy, assembly and VMG programme, our SMSC and anti-bullying work and our ICT Acceptable Use Policy.

The Trust has RAP trainers who will deliver training, on behalf of the Trust, to staff across our academies.

## **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Policy**

Outwood Grange Academies Trust adheres to the relevant Local Safeguarding Children's Board procedure in relation to child sexual exploitation. This is our policy to summarise our position.

We recognise that child sexual exploitation is a high profile issue both nationally and locally.

The Trust recognises that the child sexual exploitation can cause a great deal of harm to a child, including physically, emotionally, educationally and socially. Where it exists it can also cause harm to communities and academies.

Child sexual exploitation can happen in a number of ways to both boys and girls, for example it can happen in the virtual world through various social media and this can still cause significant harm. It can happen through inappropriate relationships such as older boy/girlfriends or through parties, gangs or organised abuse. Some children will be particularly vulnerable to being exploited, for example if they have had a chaotic upbringing or if they are in care or go missing, involved in gangs or being bullied. We recognise however that any child can become a target for exploitation, particularly where the internet and social media are involved. This is because the normal life events that go with being a child or teenager in today's age can be a challenge and make them susceptible to being groomed and exploited.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of CSE:

- 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; and
- Children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

As a Trust we recognise that prevention is the best position with regard to CSE. We seek to support children to develop confidence and build resilience. We will endeavour to support their age appropriate knowledge and raise awareness and understanding of what CSE is, to understand the risks of CSE and to spot the warning signs for themselves and also their friends and peers and by doing so keep safe.

If prevention is not possible we aim to identify children who are at risk of, or being exploited very early. Early intervention is key to effectively working with the child to prevent or reduce the level of risk. Once they have been groomed some children will find it difficult to withdraw from their abusers and we need to contribute to helping to protect them. Some children feel that they are in a relationship with these people. We commit to working with our inter-agency partners to safeguard and protect children.

Much of this work will be through our programmes of personal, social and health education (PSHE) or through our Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) work.

An important part of educating our children is focussing on what is a healthy relationship and issues of consent. This will also target potential abusers at an early age with the intention of helping to shape their attitudes to others.

We want to have a culture where the welfare of children is actively promoted and staff and students are vigilant. As part of this children will feel listened to and safe.

## So-called ‘Honour’ Based Violence

So-called ‘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 HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubts you should speak to the designated safeguarding lead.

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBV they should follow the normal reporting procedures protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children’s social care.

### *Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)*

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. Where FGM has taken place there is now a mandatory reporting duty placed on **teachers**.

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon **teachers** along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining students, but the same definition of what is meant by “to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out” is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies.

Teachers **must** personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should also still discuss any such case with the academy’s designated safeguarding lead and involve children’s social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures.

### *Forced Marriage*

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage.

Further information is available in the following documents: Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance on Female Genital Mutilation and Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance: Handling cases of forced marriage.

## Children Missing from Education

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Staff should follow the normal academy procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, Female Genital Mutilation and forced marriage.

The law requires all schools to have an admission register and an attendance register. All students must be placed on both registers.

The academy's attendance manager must inform their local authority of any student who is going to be removed from the admission register where the student:

- has been taken out of academy by their parents and the academy has received written notification from the parent they are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
- has ceased to attend the academy and no longer lives within reasonable distance of the academy;
- has been certified by the a medical official as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the academy after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- have been permanently excluded.

The local authority must be notified when the academy is removing a student from its register for any of the five grounds above. This should be done as soon as these grounds for removal from the register are met, and in any event no later than removing the student's name from the register. It is essential that our academies comply with this duty, so that local authorities can, as part of their duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are missing education and follow up with any child who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse or neglect.

Academies must also inform the local authority of any student who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the academy's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the academy and the local authority.

## Sexting Policy

### Definition of 'sexting'

There are a number of definitions of sexting but for the purpose of this advice sexting is simply defined as images or videos generated:

by children under the age of 18, or

of children under the age of 18 that are of a sexual nature or are indecent.

These images are shared between young people and/or adults via a mobile phone, handheld device or website with people they may not even know. There are many different types of sexting and it is likely that no two cases will be the same. It is necessary to carefully consider each case on its own merit. It is important to apply a consistent approach when dealing with an incident to help protect yourself, the school and the child. The range of contributory factors in each case also needs to be considered in order to determine an appropriate and proportionate response. All staff should be familiar with this policy.

### Dealing with Incidents of Sexting

#### STEP 1: Disclosure by a child

Sexting disclosures should follow normal safeguarding practices. A child is likely to be very distressed, especially if the image has been circulated widely and if they don't know who has shared it, seen it or where it has ended up. They will need support during the disclosure and after the event. They may even need immediate protection or a referral to Social Care.

The following questions will help decide upon the best course of action:

- Is the child disclosing about themselves receiving an image, sending an image or sharing an image?
- What sort of image is it?
- Is it potentially illegal or is it inappropriate?
- Are the Safeguarding Policy and practices being followed? For example, is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) on hand and is their advice and support available?
- How widely has the image been shared and is the device in their possession?
- Is it an academy device or a personal device?
- Does the child need immediate support and/or protection?
- Are there other children and/or young people involved?
- Do they know where the image has ended up?

The situation will need to be handled very sensitively to ensure the school Safeguarding and On-line Safety policies and practices are adhered to.

#### STEP 2: Searching a device

In an academy-based context, it is highly likely that the image will have been created and potentially shared through mobile devices. It may be that the image is not on one single device: it may be on a website or on a multitude of devices; it may be on either a school-owned or personal device. It is important to establish the location of the image but be aware that this may be distressing for the young person involved, so be conscious of the support they may need.

The revised Education Act 2011 brought to bear significant new powers and freedoms for teachers and schools. Essentially, the Act gives schools and/or teachers the power to seize and search an electronic device if they think there is good reason for doing so. A device can be examined,



confiscated and securely stored if there is reason to believe it contains indecent images or extreme pornography.

- When searching a mobile device, the following conditions should apply:
- The action is in accordance with the academy's Safeguarding and On-line Safety policies
- The search is conducted by the Principal or a person authorised by them
- The DSL or a deputy is present
- The search is conducted by a member of the same sex
- If any illegal images of a child are found, you should consider whether to inform the police. Any conduct involving, or possibly involving, the knowledge or participation of adults should always be referred to the police. If an "experimental" incident is not referred to the police, the reasons for this should be recorded in writing. Always put the child first.
- Do not search the device if this will cause additional stress to the child/person whose image has been distributed.

Never:

- Search a mobile device even in response to an allegation or disclosure if this is likely to cause additional stress to the child UNLESS there is clear evidence to suggest that there is an immediate problem
- Print out any material for evidence
- Move any material from one storage device to another
- View the image unless there is a clear reason to do so (see above) Send, share, copy or save the image anywhere
- Allow children to do any of the above

Always:

- Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Record the incident
- Act in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy and procedures
- Inform relevant colleagues/senior management team about the alleged incident before searching a device
- Confiscate and secure the device

If there is an indecent image of a child on a website or a social networking site, then you should report the image to the site hosting it.