



**Whitefield**  
Academy Trust

**Policy  
Document**

# Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

**Category: Leadership**

## **Key Elements**

This document sets out the responsibilities and expectations for all members of the Trust community in relation to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children and young people within the Whitefield Academy Trust

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Implementation is monitored by the Senior Leadership Teams supported by the Director with responsibility for Safeguarding

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**Agreed by:**  
Directors  
Safeguarding  
Committee



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# Safeguarding Children & Young People Policy

## 1. Introduction

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**This policy applies to all staff employed by the Whitefield Academy Trust and to all other adults supporting the work of the Trust on any of its sites, including members of the Project Search team.**

The Directors, Senior Leaders and staff of the Whitefield Academy Trust recognise their duty to safeguard and protect the children and young people within the Trust, many of whom are deemed particularly vulnerable. All staff and any other adults supporting the work of the Trust are expected to do everything they can to protect the children and young people from harm and to make the learning environment safe. All adults work with children and young people in a caring and positive way and seek to help them develop socially, physically and morally.

Adults working with children and young people are in a unique position to identify any welfare concerns and **must** take action to address them, where appropriate in partnership with other organisations.

Adults working within the Trust are expected to be open to the possibility that a child or young person in their care may be a victim of abuse and to act quickly.

**Any adult who has reason to believe that a child or young person is at risk of harm has a legal and moral duty to follow up their concerns through the proper channels.**

**It is better to be wrong than not to have acted**

There are 3 main areas of safeguarding which are covered by this policy

- Prevention: through providing a safe and positive atmosphere, helping children and young people to grow in confidence and teaching them to keep themselves safe as far as possible
- Policies and Procedures: through setting up and following clear procedures and training and supporting staff to be vigilant for any signs that children and young people may have suffered harm and to respond to safeguarding concerns in the right way
- Protection: for pupils thought to be experiencing, or at risk of, significant harm

The Trust provides information for parents about safeguarding by publishing this policy on its website, by information in the pupil Welcome Pack, by posters on display around the school and by regular parent workshops.

The Trust recognises the particular challenges which children, young people and their families face in today's society and is committed to a culture of informed vigilance in respect of radicalisation, child sexual exploitation and Female Genital Mutilation.

A separate policy covers E-Safety

## 2. Aims and Objectives of the policy

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### **The aims of this policy are:**

- to ensure that robust safeguarding systems and procedures are in place and known to Directors, parents and members of staff.
- to have in place procedures to respond appropriately and fairly if any adult within the Trust is accused of abuse

The Trust's procedures for safeguarding children are in line with the Local Authority and London Safeguarding Board procedures and follow 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (March 2018) and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2016)

### **The objectives of this policy are:**

- to support the development of the children and young people within the Trust in ways that will help them to grow in security, confidence and independence
- to raise the awareness of all staff of the importance of safeguarding children and young people and of their responsibilities in identifying, reporting and recording possible cases of abuse and any other causes for concern.
- to create a safe learning environment
- to ensure that children and young people know that there are adults whom they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty
- to have clear arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people on work placements, internships and educational visits
- to provide a systematic means of monitoring children and young people in need of support
- to provide clear child protection guidance for adults who believe that a child or young person may be suffering significant harm or at risk of doing so
- to set out safer recruitment procedures and to ensure that DBS checks are undertaken for everyone working within the Trust

The Trust seeks to create a culture of informed vigilance in which no-one is complacent about the risks facing children and young people.

Adults must always be aware that even though the Trust has robust systems

***It could happen here***

### 3. Roles and responsibilities within safeguarding

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Keeping Children Safe in Education says:

**“Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carer’s has a role to play in safeguarding children.”**

What this responsibility means is set out in the remainder of this policy, and in Part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education, **which all members of staff are expected to read and put into practice.**

In addition to the overall responsibility which everyone shares, certain people have specific responsibilities. Key roles are carried out by:

- Directors
- The Chief Executive Officer and Senior Leadership Teams
- Designated Safeguarding Leads (who must be members of the Senior Leadership Team)
- Safeguarding Teams
- Designated Teachers for Looked After Children

**See Appendix D for details**

### 4. The nature of abuse

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There are four main types of abuse:

- physical abuse, which involves deliberate physical harm such as inflicting pain of any sort or causing bruises, fractures, burns, electric shock, or any unpleasant sensation.
- sexual abuse, which involves sexual contact or sexual activity between an adult and child, allowing a child to witness sexual activity, or exposure to sexually explicit material in print or online
- emotional abuse, which involves verbal assaults, threats, harassment, humiliation, bullying-including e-bullying or intimidation, or failure to interact appropriately with a child or young person
- neglect, which involves failing to meet a child or young person’s need for food, shelter, clothing, protection, supervision and medical and dental care, placing them at undue risk or failing to provide the care and stimulation needed for them to develop

other categories of abuse include financial abuse (stealing money or other resources from vulnerable children and young people or their families) discriminatory abuse (abuse due to race, gender, age,

disability, sexual orientation or religion), Modern slavery (forced labour or servitude). Self-harming and self-neglect are also considered within the safeguarding framework.

Children and young people with special educational needs are known to be at greater risk of abuse and to have greater difficulty in telling people when they have been abused. Adults working within the Whitefield Academy Trust must therefore be doubly alert for any indications that a child or young person has been abused (See Section 16.1)

## 5. Children and young people harming one another

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Children and young people may act in ways which harm another child or young person. This could include:

- physical harm
- unpleasant language including language relating to the other person's gender, race, religion or sexual orientation
- inappropriate sexual behaviour, touching or comments
- inappropriate or unkind use of social media to insult or make fun of the other person
- intimidating or threatening behaviour
- attempting to elicit behaviour of concern

In the majority of cases this behaviour reflects the child or young person's SEN. In some cases, the behaviour may be with intent to harm and may be regarded as bullying.

Adults should always act to protect the child or young person who is being harmed, to listen to what they are communicating about the experience and to help them feel safe.

Personal and proactive support plans should include guidance on how to minimise the risk that children and young people will harm one another and how to respond to any incidents.

Teachers plan lessons within the PSHE/ SED curriculum to support children and young people to work together and to explain why bullying is wrong. They support children and young people to respond appropriately to harmful behaviour by letting an adult know and, where possible, to be assertive towards anyone who is speaking unkindly or inappropriately to them.

Inappropriate or unkind language should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter'. Adults should make it clear, as appropriate to the child or young person concerned, that such behaviour is not acceptable.

Parents should be kept informed and encouraged to work with the school to support positive behaviour.

See Positive Behaviour Policy for further guidance.

## 6. Prevention

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All adults play a significant part in the prevention of harm to the children and young people in their care by vigilance and by working to develop trust and good lines of communication, whatever means of communication the children and young people are able to use.

All adults will therefore do everything they can to:

- support children and young people to feel secure, to communicate, to make choices and exercise control.
- create an ethos in which children and young people are always listened to.
- make every effort to support children and young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing
- treat all children and young people with care and respect
- act as role models for children and young people and other adults
- support behaviour for learning through positive approach
- ensure that all children and young people who are able to understand this know that they can approach adults within the Trust if they are worried or in difficulty.
- provide child and young people with accessible information on how to keep themselves safe
- support children and young people to respect one another and to work together
- respond quickly if children and young people hurt or bully others (including e-bullying)
- be aware of any indications of poor mental health or emotional wellbeing and seek to resolve the situation
- include safeguarding in the curriculum through Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) lessons which help children and young people to stay safe from harm by developing understanding, awareness and resilience and a knowledge of whom they should turn for help.
- provide children and young people with support and guidance in the safe use of technology (see separate e-safety policy)
- create a safe learning environment by taking care of the fabric of the building and reporting any problems in good time
- communicate clearly with one another so that the needs of the children and young people are met
- build positive relationships with families where key information is shared
- promote the wellbeing of children who are, or were previously, Looked After working in partnership with the designated teacher

The Code of Ethics sets out expectations for all members of the Trust community. Adults are expected to treat one another with respect and courtesy and to put the wellbeing, development and progress of the children and young people in their care first.

They are also expected to monitor their own behaviour and responses (for example, when working with a young person who shows challenging behaviour) and to seek support if they feel under undue pressure.

Members of staff should always discuss with their line manager any difficulties or problems that may affect their relationship with the pupils so that appropriate support can be provided and action taken.

## 7. Policies and Procedures

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All adults are expected to follow all procedures set up to keep children and young people safe. The procedures are set out in this document and also in the following policies:

- The Health and Safety Policy and Handbook
- The Educational Visits/Partnership Activities Policy
- The Positive Behaviour Policy
- The Relationship and Sex Education Policy
- The Looked After Children Policy
- The E-Safety Policy
- The Code of Ethics
- The Whistleblowing Policy

The Senior Leadership Teams, advised by the Designated Leads, work within the following guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE) - September 2016
- Working together to safeguard children (HM Government) – April 2018
- Information Sharing (HM Government) – March 2015
- Promoting the education of Looked After and previously Looked After Children (DfE) – February 2018
- Waltham Forest Safeguarding Children Board and London Safeguarding Children Board guidance
- Waltham Forest Safeguarding Adults Board guidance
- A guide to Thresholds and Practice for working with children and families in Waltham Forest – February 2018
- London MASH Information Sharing guidance

To support staff in following the correct procedures:

- All staff are issued with a copy of this Policy and the first section of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'
- All staff are trained in safeguarding and e-safety during their induction and every year from then on
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead and other members of the safeguarding team attend training for this specific role annually and attend other relevant training within the local authority
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead liaises with the local authority and other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children

## 8. Protecting children and young people who are experiencing significant harm

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Child protection is the term used for the intervention which takes place when a child is, or is at risk of, experiencing significant harm.

Children and young people who are abused, neglected or witness abuse may find it difficult to feel a sense of self-worth. They may feel helpless, humiliated and may blame themselves. In these circumstances their behaviour may change and they may become aggressive or withdrawn. Other children and young people may show no obvious reaction to the harm they experience.

Classroom staff who are in daily contact caring for and teaching such children and young people may provide the only stability in their lives and the only avenue for reporting concerns.

It is the responsibility of school staff and other adults working with children and young people within the Trust to:

- be absolutely vigilant for any signs that children and young people may have been harmed, whether at home, within education or anywhere else
- report any concerns about children and young people immediately and in writing to the Designated Lead for Safeguarding in their setting
- work together with other support services and with agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
- notify the Headteacher or Head of School and the Attendance Officer as soon as there is a significant concern over absence.
- provide continuing support to children and young people about whom there have been concerns
- report any significant concerns about another staff member to the CEO, Principal or Headteacher

## 9. Confidentiality

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All matters relating to Safeguarding are confidential and every effort should be made to maintain confidentiality. However, staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share concerns and information with the Designated Lead for Safeguarding and other professionals investigating a concern. Information is only shared on a need to know basis

The Trust works within the information sharing protocols agreed by the local authority. Data protection legislation does not affect the legal and moral duty to share relevant information with professionals who need access to it in order to protect or support a child or young person.

All adults must be aware that they cannot promise a child or young person that they can keep secrets or promise confidentiality to staff or parents where a child or young person's safety is at risk.

**All adults must also be aware that they have an overriding duty to report to the Designated Lead for Safeguarding any incident in which they judge the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person to have been at risk.**

## 10. Supporting Adults

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Adults who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm will find the situation stressful and upsetting.

Support is provided through line management, the provision of a mentor for new staff and through training. Safeguarding training takes place during induction and annually from then on. Staff are also trained in supporting children and young people who show challenging behaviour, in e-safety and safe moving and handling. In addition to disseminating important information these sessions provide staff with the opportunity to raise any anxieties with the Designated Lead for Safeguarding and other senior colleagues.

Any adult who feels the need for support in a difficult situation should approach their mentor or line manager in the first instance or any other member of the school leadership teams, who will listen to their concerns and assist them to find the right ongoing support.

## 11. Allegations against adults

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All adults must be vigilant for words, attitude or actions which harm children and young people or put them at the risk of harm and must take responsibility for reporting any such incident to the CEO, Principal or Headteacher. All allegations will be fully investigated.

A parent, pupil, carer or member of the public may make an allegation against an adult. If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the CEO, Principal or Headteacher.

If the Principal or Headteacher receives an allegation about an adult, they will immediately contact the CEO to agree appropriate action.

The CEO follows the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education and Working Together to Safeguard Children and is guided by advice on handling allegations of abuse against staff in schools published by the Employers' Organisation for Local Government.

The Local Authority Designated Officer will be informed of any allegations which indicate that a child or young person is at risk of serious harm and/or which may require immediate intervention by social care or police and will support the CEO in taking appropriate action. Where necessary the police will be informed

## 12. Physical Contact

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The Whitefield Academy Trust's Policy on physical contact with children and young people is set out within the Relationship and Sex Education Policy and as Appendix B to this policy. Physical contact is used when it is in the *pupil's* best interest e.g. for communication, to support with a learning activity, for personal care or to carry out a physiotherapy programme.

## 13. Physical Intervention

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The Whitefield Academy Trust's Policy on physical intervention by staff is set out within the Positive Behaviour Policy. Staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, and at all times it must use the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to the children or young person concerned, to another person or to property.

Any physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered as a safeguarding issue and may be followed up within the disciplinary procedures.

## 14. Safer Recruitment

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The Whitefield Academy Trust is committed to using recruitment procedures that deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children and young people. Children and young people within the Trust are highly vulnerable and require high levels of vigilance. The Trust therefore treats all permanent staff and all regular classroom volunteers as if they were in 'regulated activity' (see Keeping Children Safe in Education for more details). The CEO ensures that, during the recruitment process for permanent staff, supply staff and volunteers, the Trust:

- sends clear messages about safeguarding to candidates from the outset
- ensures that shortlisting is carried out by at least two members of the Senior Leadership Team
- scrutinises applications and references with care
- arranges interviewing panels so that at least one member of an interviewing panel has successfully completed a Safer Recruitment Training programme
- checks all applicants for regulated activity, including trainee teachers employed by the Trust, through a DBS certificate, barred list check and prohibited list check for teachers
- checks all applicants for ongoing voluntary work through a DBS
- explains the requirement of current guidance on 'Disqualification by Association' to all successful candidates who will be working with children in the relevant age groups
- ensures that volunteers, supply staff and staff new to the school are appropriately supervised
- maintains a Single Central Record of pre-employment checks

The Trust follows the procedures set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education part 3. See Safer Recruitment policy (October 2016)

## 15. Other Adults on Site

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The Trust exercises vigilance in respect of all adults on site who may come into contact with children and young people. The CEO and HR Manager ensure that:

- the Trust obtains written confirmation from all agencies and third-party organisations employing staff based on the Trust sites (e.g. teacher supply agencies), that due checks have been completed and are satisfactory.
- the Trust obtains written confirmation from training providers placing students on the sites (e.g. trainee teachers, student nurses) that due checks have been completed and are satisfactory;
- the Trust obtains written confirmation from schools and colleges and other organisations off site where children and young people may undertake courses that due checks have been completed on staff supporting Whitefield Academy Trust students and are satisfactory;
- the Trust asks to see evidence of identity for professional visitors (e.g. educational psychologists) who will be in contact with children and young people within school;
- the Trust requires confirmation from schools or colleges placing students for work experience that the student concerned is appropriate for the role;
- the Trust obtains written confirmation from contractors employing staff who are to work at the Trust sites (e.g. cleaners, school meals service) that due checks have been completed and are satisfactory;
- the Trust has sight of a DBS check for all self-employed contractors who will have contact with children and young people on the Trust sites;

The Trust is not able to request DBS checks on visitors such as parents or carers attending events. They will therefore be supervised at all times.

## 16. Contacting and working with Other Agencies

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The safeguarding teams work with agencies outside the school where necessary and appropriate. This process is guided by the local authority's protocol for sharing information, as set out in training and guidance from the Local Children's Safeguarding Board. Information is shared with other professionals where this is in the best interests of the child or young person. It is shared with the consent of the child or their parent, unless there is good reason to believe that to seek consent would put the child or young person at risk.

### 16.1. Police

The safeguarding team will contact police if they believe that a crime has been committed or that a child or young person is at immediate risk of significant harm.

The school has a linked police officer who will share information with the school if they believe that a child or young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm. They will visit the school to support educational programmes which keep children and young people safe e.g. talking about knife crime.

## 16.2. Social Care

The safeguarding team will make a referral to social care via the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) where they believe that a child or young person is in need of care and protection or will benefit from help and support.

The safeguarding team will respond to requests for information via MASH where a referral has been made by another source.

The safeguarding team works in partnership with social care where a child or young person or their family is being supported by a social worker or an Early Help practitioner,

The school will immediately contact the Local Authority Designated Officer if an allegation has been made against an adult working with children and young people inside or outside the school and will co-operate with them whilst an investigation is under way.

If a member of school staff is found to have harmed a child or young person or the school has reason to believe that they are not a fit person to work with children or vulnerable adults, the school will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service and/or to the National College for Teaching and Leadership.

## 17. What to do if you have concerns about a child or young person's safety

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### 17.1. When to be concerned

It is the responsibility of all members of the Trust community to be vigilant, recognising that children and young people with SEN communicate in individual ways and may indicate abuse through speech, sign, symbol or changes in behaviour. You should be concerned:

When you see

- someone causing harm to a child or young person, physically or verbally
- behaviour towards a child or young person which makes you feel uneasy
- an injury that is unexplained and/or may be non-accidental
- signs of neglect
- a child or young person accessing inappropriate material online

When a child or young person's behaviour

- is withdrawn or depressed
- is sexualised
- is unusual for them
- changes suddenly
- suggests anxiety or mental health issues

When a child or young person expresses views which:

- are highly negative towards another person
- are racist, sexist or homophobic
- suggest they are at risk of being radicalised

When an adult (including parents or carers)

- shows anger towards a child or young person
- touches a child or young person unnecessarily
- shows attitudes which are racist, sexist or homophobic or suggest they are at risk of being radicalised
- says something which makes you think that a child or young person could be at risk
- says something about a child or young person which makes you feel uneasy

When a child or young person:

- discloses abuse or 'describes' something that may be associated with abuse. Many of our pupils are unable to verbally disclose and may rely on signs or symbols or may 'act out' behaviour which has been shown to them
- tells you that they have been bullied online via email or through social media (e-bullying)
- fails to thrive
- is absent from school for no clear reason, particularly if the absence is extended or if the family is visiting a country where they are at risk of being radicalised

When a family member, carer or member of the public shares information which indicates that a child or young person is at risk of harm.

When you are worried about a child or young person for some reason you can't quite identify.

***It is better to be wrong than not to have acted***

## 17.2. What to do if you have concerns about a pupil

If you see a child or young person being harmed, or at risk of harm, you must take immediate action to protect them ensuring that immediate safety and medical needs are met. There may be circumstances when you need to summon help from a senior colleague in order to do this.

If you have any welfare concerns or any reason to suspect abuse, then you must **immediately** inform the Safeguarding Team, unless you believe that a member of staff has harmed a child or young person or put them at risk of harm. Then you must inform the CEO, Principal or Head Teacher.

If you need to report a safeguarding concern please:

Log into Safeguard

Use the safeguarding email address [safeguarding@whitefield.waltham.sch.uk](mailto:safeguarding@whitefield.waltham.sch.uk) or give a written report (signed and dated) to Laura Pease or Gill Wadeson. It is important to make your report on the day that the concern arises.

Please use safeguard if you can, it enables us to store ongoing information more securely and in a more accessible way than the other systems.

If you need to refer any concerns to an outside agency (e.g. whistleblowing) please see the details on the safeguarding section on the front page of the intranet and on the board in the main staffroom.

If a child or young person's needs are not being met it may be appropriate for the school to give practical support in the short term e.g. by offering breakfast on arrival at school or by providing clothes for specific activities.

Two members of the Safeguarding Team will discuss the information and decide on the appropriate action.

In cases that require immediate referral to the relevant social care services then the Safeguarding Team will take the referral forward. You will be told the outcome of the contacts and may be asked to monitor the situation and keep records. The records may be used for a Safeguarding case conference and should either be kept in a locked cupboard and passed to the Safeguarding Team as soon as possible or stored electronically and sent by email.

In cases that do not meet the threshold for immediate referral, the Safeguarding Team may still ask you to monitor the situation, keep records and keep her informed. The records may be used for a later referral and should be kept in a locked cupboard and passed to the Safeguarding Team as soon as possible.

Any adult who has concerns may also contact social care themselves. Contact information can be found on the website for the relevant local authority.

### 17.3. What to do if you have concerns about an adult

The appropriate action depends on the severity of the concern. If the concern meets the threshold for an allegation, i.e. if you believe that an adult within the school community may have:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child or young person
- committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or young person
- behaved towards a child or young person in a way that suggests he or she would pose a risk of harm to children

you must immediately report your concerns to the CEO, Principal or Headteacher (or to the Vice Principal or Deputy Headteacher in their absence). You may be asked to write a statement setting out what you have seen or heard.

This will be followed up as an allegation – see section 11

If you have concerns about an adult within the school community which do not meet the threshold for an allegation, for example about their level of care for children and young people or their professional behaviour then you must report your concerns to their senior line manager (Head of School or Head of Admin). If you believe that an adult within the school community is finding it difficult to cope with their role and that if this continues they would be at risk themselves or put a child or young person at risk, the line manager will offer appropriate guidance and support, liaising with a member of the safeguarding team. Any documentation will be stored securely in the safeguarding file.

### 17.4. Recording Incidents

It is essential that you make detailed notes if you have any concerns or if a child or young person discloses abuse verbally or through signs and symbols. Write these up as soon as possible.

The notes must record

- the date
- time
- place
- nature of concern
- all the facts
- any observed signs of injury
- the actual words of the child or young person, if any
- all other relevant information

You may include any noticeable non-verbal behaviour. Record actual words used rather than translating them into adult language.

Record statements and observable things or behaviours rather than your opinions, interpretations or assumptions.

In the case of a reported incident state the location, the child or young person and adults present and exactly what was seen or heard.

The notes should be signed and handed to the Designated Lead for Safeguarding as soon as possible

Notes are stored in a central file under lock and key in a confidential folder. There should only be one set of records, **do not keep a copy of any notes.**

Your report may be required later in court, so give a full written description and be objective.

Where the case is not of immediate grave concern, then you may be required to monitor the case, **accurate logging is essential.**

Confidentiality is to be maintained throughout. On-going records and monitoring must be kept under lock and key. The Designation Lead for Safeguarding maintains a confidential file.

## 17.5. Dealing with disclosures

Listen to and accept what is being said without displaying shock or belief/disbelief. If a child or young person is unable to communicate verbally you need to be extra sensitive to signs of distress, non-verbal signs. The child or young person may use symbols and care will be needed to note accurately what symbols are used and the context. Keep the symbols in position and take a photograph of them.

Take notes and write them up as soon as possible and give to the Designated Lead for Safeguarding.

React to the child or young person only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter. **Do not** interrogate for full details. Some cases of abuse may need further and possibly extensive investigation therefore the child or young person should **not** be asked to repeat what they have said, for another adult.

**Do not** promise confidentiality you have a duty to refer. Explain to the child or young person what you will have to do next and who you will have to talk to and that you have to pass information on in order to get help.

**Do not** ask leading questions for example "What did he do next" (this assumes he did!) "Did she hit you with a belt?" "Did he push you down stairs?" Such questions may invalidate your evidence and the child's in court.

**Do** ask open questions "Anything else to tell me?" "Yes?", "And?"

**Do not** criticise the perpetrator

Remember the Safeguarding team are also there to provide support for **you** during this time.

## 18. What to do if you feel further action is needed

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If you have reported a concern and feel that adequate action was not taken, or that the child or young person remains at risk, it is your duty to follow up using one of the following channels:

- speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or another member of the Safeguarding Team to express your concern
- make a further referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- approach the safeguarding director – Owen O’Regan- via Frances Bence
- seek advice from MASH (social care) 020 8446 2310
- seek advice from the LADO (for concerns about professionals) 020 8496 3646
- seek advice from the NSPCC 0808 800 5000

If you have concerns about the way a situation has been handled within the Trust you may wish to use the Whistleblowing Policy.

The NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line can be contacted on 0800 028 0285

## 19. Current safeguarding issues

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### 19.1. Female Genital Mutilation

The Academy uses the World Health Organisation definition:

*"Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises of all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs whether for cultural or non-therapeutic reasons."*  
(World Health organisation 1997)

It is a crime to mutilate someone in the United Kingdom or to take someone overseas for the purpose.

Girls are at particular risk of FGM during school summer holidays. This is the time when families may take their children abroad for the procedure. Many girls may not be aware that they are at risk of undergoing FGM.

UK communities that are most at risk of FGM include Kenyans, Somalis, Sudanese, Sierra Leoneans, Egyptians, Nigerians and Eritreans. However, women from non-African communities that are at risk of FGM include Yemeni, Kurdish, Indonesian and Pakistani Women.

Indications that FGM has taken place include:

- prolonged absence from school with noticeable behaviour change, especially after a return from holiday
- difficulty sitting, walking or standing
- spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet

- being reluctant to undergo routine medical examinations
- asking for help without being explicit as to the reason

As many of the children and young people within the Whitefield Academy are unable to disclose, it is of paramount importance that all adults remain vigilant and observant to detect possible signs of abuse.

Adults should make a report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they observe any of the indications above or have any other reason to suspect that FGM may have taken place or may be planned.

Unexplained absence from school may also indicate that a family has gone abroad in order for FGM to be inflicted on a sibling.

Advice will be sought from the London Borough of Waltham Forest Referral and Advice team, and/or the Child abuse investigation team when concerns about FGM are raised.

If it comes to the attention of any adult that a girl or woman has already undergone FGM, then there is a duty to report this to Social Care or the police if there are younger siblings or extended family members who could be at risk.

If a child or young person discloses FGM then adult to whom the disclosure has been made is legally obliged to make a direct report to the police (as well as informing the DSL).

## 19.2. Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation occurs where a perpetrator (who may be another young person, or someone much older) uses their power over a child or young person to make them engage in sexual activities. They may be encouraged to exchange sex for gifts or believe that the person exploiting them is offering love, friendship or affection. Alternatively, there may be an element of bullying or intimidation.

PSHE lessons for children and young people who are able to understand the issues involved should include discussions about equality within relationships and issues around consent and the right to say 'no'. Children and young people should be advised to seek help from a trusted adult if they feel under pressure to engage in a sexual relationship.

If any adult has reason to believe that a child or young person has been the victim of Child Sexual Exploitation, or is at risk, they must make an immediate report to the Designated Safeguarding Leader who will seek advice from the local authority safeguarding team and/or the police.

## 19.3. Radicalisation

Radicalisation is the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist behaviour. It may be that a young person in one of the Trust schools is drawn into extremism or that a family supports terrorism and the children are therefore at risk of harm including, in extreme cases, the risk of being taken overseas to support a terrorist organisation. The **PREVENT** duty requires schools to be vigilant to these risks and to make a referral to social care or the police where they feel that a child or family is vulnerable to radicalisation.

PSHE lessons for children and young people who are able to understand the issues involved should include a discussion of the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and encourage them to challenge extremist views expressed by members of any faith, culture or ideology. (See separate policies on promoting Fundamental British Values)

The Trust has systems to monitor absence and to follow up unexplained absence. The teacher must contact the attendance officer immediately if a child or young person does not return after a holiday or if a parent has not provided a satisfactory explanation for absence.

DSLs and deputies will attend **PREVENT** training and share relevant information with key staff.

The DSL will seek advice from Social Care or Channel if a child or young person is absent and there is cause to believe that they are at risk of harm.

The attendance officer will inform the local authority of any extended absence.

#### **19.4. Children and young people missing from education**

Unexplained absence from education may indicate abuse, neglect or very challenging family circumstances which mean that a child or young person's needs are not being met. It may also indicate that a child or young person has travelled abroad with their family so that a member of the family may undergo FGM or because the family have been drawn into terrorism.

The Trust has systems to monitor absence and to follow up unexplained absence from school. The class teacher should contact the attendance officer immediately if a child or young person does not return to school after a holiday or if a parent has not provided a satisfactory explanation for absence.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will seek immediate advice from the named person in the local authority for Children Missing from Education if a pupil is absent and there is cause to believe that they are at risk of harm.

The attendance officer will inform the local authority of any absence over 10 days for which the parent has not provided an acceptable explanation.

#### **19.5. Honour based crime**

An honour based crime is one committed by someone in the belief that someone has brought shame to their family or community by doing something out of keeping with their belief or culture, such as making a relationship with a boyfriend or girlfriend from another culture or failing to conform with expectations of clothing or activities.

Girls are most likely to be the victim but boys may also be affected.

Crimes may include:

- Physical abuse
- Threats of violence
- Psychological or emotional abuse
- Forced marriage

If a report of an honour based crime is made to the DSL, or there is cause for fear that a child or young person is at risk of honour based crime, they will seek immediate advice from the Metropolitan Police Community Safety Unit.

## 19.6. Sexting

Sexting is the sending of sexually explicit images over the internet by text messages, email or any other messaging app. If a sexually explicit image of a child or young person is sent in this manner, then the person sending it has sexually abused the young person and has committed a crime. Where a young person sends an image of themselves or a friend to another person this is sometimes known as youth produced sexual imagery.

As young people so readily and frequently share photos online as part of social media so the sending of sexually explicit images is on the increase. Where appropriate the pressure to send such images and the reasons for not doing so should be covered within the PSHE curriculum.

If a member of staff becomes aware that a sexually explicit image of a young person has been shared online they should report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will discuss the appropriate action with at least one other member of the safeguarding team.

Where there is reason to believe that the image has been shared by an adult this should immediately be reported to the police.

Where the image appears to have been sent by a young person the risks should be discussed with them and a decision made as to whether to make a referral via MASH. Parents should be made aware of the incident and involved in any decision as to the next steps.

For further guidance see the UKCCIS document, 'Sexting in Schools and Colleges'

## 19.7. Gang culture

Waltham Forest has recognised problems with gangs linked to particular neighbourhoods. Children and young people within the Whitefield Academy Trust may be at risk of being drawn into gangs or may be affected if their siblings are involved. Where appropriate the risks of gang memberships should be covered within the PSHE curriculum. If a member of staff becomes aware that a young person, or a member of their family, may be involved with a gang, they should report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will discuss the appropriate action with at least one other member of the safeguarding team.

If appropriate the Designated Safeguarding Lead will liaise with Waltham Forest's Bronze Team.

# **Appendix A: Whitefield Academy Trust Safeguarding Team**

## **Designated Leads for Safeguarding**

**Laura Pease – Whitefield Schools**

**Isobel Cox – Joseph Clarke School**

## **Safeguarding Team**

**Gill Wadeson, Lesley Middleton, Evelina Dimopoulou– Whitefield Schools**

**Sarah Bent - Joseph Clarke School**

Members of the Safeguarding Team: -

- are the first person with whom any discuss your concerns.
- inform or consult with relevant colleagues.
- Liaise with social services and other outside agencies
- inform you as to the progress of any concern.
- provide support and advice to anyone involved with Safeguarding issues.

## **Other members with DSL training**

**Marize Lawson, Joanne Sweeney, Nikos Tzenas-Whitefield Schools**

**Lorraine Boyse-Joseph Clarke School**

## **Attendance Officers**

**Gill Wadeson – Whitefield Schools**

**Sarah Bent – Joseph Clarke School**

## **Chief Executive Officer – Elaine Colquhoun**

**Principal Whitefield School- Laura Pease**

**Headteacher Joseph Clarke School – Isobel Cox**

The CEO, Principal or Headteacher is the first point of contact where there are concerns about the behavior of a member of staff towards a child or young person.

The CEO, Principal is to be consulted if no member of the safeguarding team is available.

## **Designated Director for Safeguarding – Owen O’Regan**

The Designated Director for Safeguarding leads on Safeguarding and Child Protection for the Whitefield Academy Trust, ensuring that the Trust has robust policies and procedures for safeguarding children and young people.

## **Safeguarding Committee**

**Members of the committee- Owen O’Regan, Richard Kramer, Laura Pease, Isobel Cox**

# Appendix B: Guidelines on touch

Adults need to use touch to communicate with many children and young people at Whitefield Academy Trust. Touch can be used to show them what to do. It can show that adults care for them and understand when they are anxious or unhappy. Adults may use touch to protect a child or young person from danger, when caring for them or to help them to move.

This document has been written to guide adults on using touch safely and appropriately in school.

- Adults touch children or young people when they need to be touched – e.g. if they need to be guided or cared for, or if they need physical support to explore materials
- Adults think about whether children and young people want to be touched and respect their wishes unless touch is essential for safety reasons
- Children and young people are not encouraged to kiss or cuddle adults in school. They should shake hands, 'high five', 'fist bump' or touch them on the arm or shoulder
- Adults show that they care about children and young people by smiles, speech and gesture. Where children and young people need physical communication adults may use a touch on the arm or shoulder or a sideways hug
- Adults must take care that when children and young people make physical contact with them they contact non-sexual body parts e.g. they may rest their head on an adult's shoulder not their breast or lap
- If a child or young person intentionally makes, contact with an adult's sexual areas or seeks to bring the adult into contact with their sexual areas the team will agree a strategy to teach the child or young person that this is not appropriate and to shape more appropriate physical contact. The incident will be reported to the safeguarding team.
- Adults hold hands with children and young people only when this is needed to keep the pupil safe. In other circumstances, adults link arms or use a 'sighted guide' technique or encourage children and young people to walk beside them.
- Where adults need to make intimate contact with a child or young person when washing or changing them they must alert them to what is happening and must withdraw contact if the child or young person appears anxious or distressed. Adults take time to complete care tasks and treat the child or young person with respect.
- Restrictive physical intervention is only used by staff who have been Team Teach trained
- If an adult need to be on their own with a child or young person out of sight of other people, this will be recorded in planning for the session. The adult will always tell another member of staff before they are on their own with a child or young person. They will use a room which is accessible to other people and which has a window in the door.

- Children and young people are not allowed to kiss or cuddle one another. They should link arms, hold hands or put an arm around the shoulder.
- Adults keep an eye on one another. They talk about anything which worries them or which they think could be misunderstood.
- Adults must report any concerns about a colleague to the Principal/Headteacher or CEO.

See also:

DCSF (2009), Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education settings (Adapted and updated by the Safer Recruitment Consortium from an original IRSC/ DfE document and with thanks to CAPE (Child Protection in Education) 2015)



# **APPENDIX C: Safeguarding Posters**

# Safeguarding and Child Protection

## If you are worried...

- about a child's welfare
- about something a child says
- about unusual behaviour
- about an unexplained injury
- because a child says they have been abused
- because someone has been unkind to a child

## Report

### Using the 'Safeguard' system (see the intranet)

Only if it is impossible to use Safeguard...

e-mail [safeguarding@whitefield.waltham.sch.uk](mailto:safeguarding@whitefield.waltham.sch.uk) or send a paper report to Laura Pease or Gill Wadeson

Paper/e-mail reports, should be a factual account of events, with a separate section on why it made you concerned. Write it as soon as possible and date it.

## If you have significant concerns about a member of staff

## GO

To the Principal

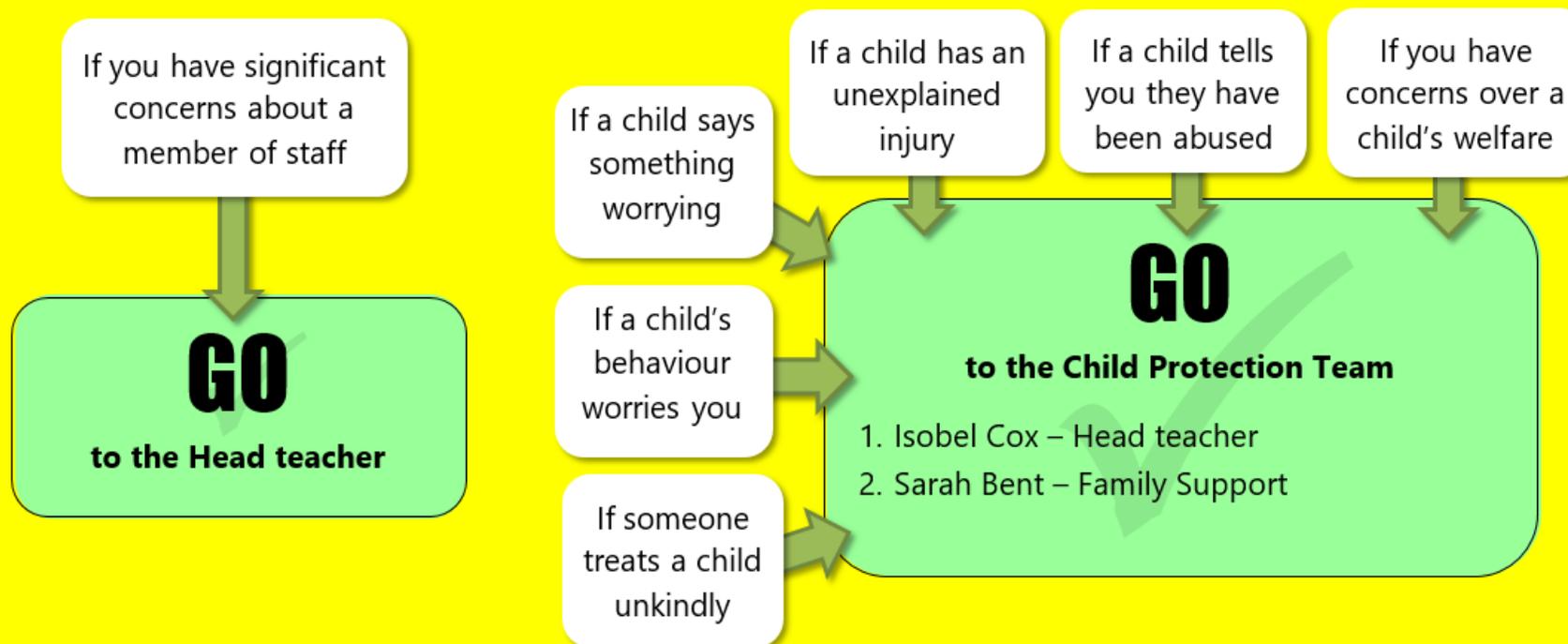
## DO NOT

- Go to the nurses (unless immediate treatment is needed)
- Discuss it with colleagues

**If in doubt, report.** It is better to be wrong than to miss something

# Safeguarding and Child Protection

It could happen here



**DO NOT**

Go to the nurses (unless immediate treatment is needed)  
Discuss it with colleagues

For any safeguarding or child protection concerns, please contact: [safeguarding@josephclarke.waltham.sch.uk](mailto:safeguarding@josephclarke.waltham.sch.uk)

# **Appendix D: Roles and responsibilities within safeguarding**

## **Directors**

Directors are responsible for ensuring that robust and up to date policies and procedures are in place and for monitoring their effectiveness. There is a designated director for safeguarding who will advise the board on safeguarding issues.

Directors appoint the Designated Safeguarding Lead for each school

Governors also have a role to play in monitoring how safeguarding is carried out in each school, although the ultimate responsibility sits with Directors

Receive reports of specific areas of safeguarding concerns

## **The CEO and Senior Leadership Teams**

- ensure that the safeguarding team is appropriately trained and supported and that sufficient time and resources are made available for them to carry out their role
- monitor the learning environment, bearing in mind that staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn
- monitor the effectiveness of safeguarding through discussions at SLT and the Academy Strategy Team
- ensure that staff have annual training and regular updates in safeguarding
- ensure that information on safeguarding, including the names of key people, is displayed in formats accessible to children and young people and staff

## **The Designated Lead for Safeguarding**

- is a member of SLT
- takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection
- has sufficient time within their role to undertake the duties of the post and will be supported to delegate key tasks (but not the final responsibility) to deputies and to other appropriately trained colleagues
- is trained every two years, with regular updates so that they are fully aware of statutory requirements and ongoing developments
- is always available during school hours, or makes sure that a deputy is available, to discuss concerns and take appropriate action swiftly
- ensures that referrals to social care are made swiftly and are backed up with accurate and thorough information and follows up as necessary
- monitors all children and young people in need of support and the action being taken to support them and their families, following up any concerns
- works with social care where children and young people have been identified for support through the 'Child in Need' procedures, attending relevant meetings or ensuring that an appropriate person does so, making sure that clear and accurate reports are provided and that the school carries out any tasks assigned through the child protection process

- works with social care where children and young people have been identified as experiencing, or at risk of experiencing significant harm, attending relevant meetings or ensuring that an appropriate person does so, making sure that clear and accurate reports are provided and that the school carries out any tasks assigned through the child protection process
- liaises with the designated teacher for Looked After Children and the Headteacher of the Virtual School
- liaises with the local authority social care teams and other agencies as necessary, in line with the systems set out in 'working together to safeguard children'
- reports to SLT, governors and directors at least termly so that they are able to monitor the effectiveness of safeguarding and are aware in general terms of the key issues
- ensures that the deputy designated leads receive appropriate training, advice and support so that they can carry out their roles

### **Safeguarding Teams (Deputy Designated Leads)**

Safeguarding teams support the DSL in the role outlined above, sharing responsibility for safeguarding and child protection and carrying out key tasks to safeguard and protect children and young people.

They

- have sufficient time within their role to undertake safeguarding duties
- are trained every two years, with regular updates so that they are fully aware of statutory requirements and ongoing developments
- will be available during school hours to discuss concerns and take appropriate action swiftly
- make referrals to social care in good time, backed up with accurate and thorough information and follow up as necessary
- monitor children, young people and their families where concerns have been identified – for example, monitoring and supporting attendance and punctuality or the way in which a child or young person is dressed and cared for
- offer practical support and advice to children, young people and their families as agreed – for example, helping families to access benefits or to support their child's behaviour at home
- work with social care where children and young people have been identified for support through the 'Child in Need' procedures, attending relevant meetings and providing clear and accurate reports and carrying out any agreed actions within the CIN plan
- work with social care where children and young people have been identified as experiencing, or at risk of experiencing significant harm, attending relevant meetings and providing clear and accurate reports are provided and carrying out any agreed actions within the Child Protection plan
- liaise with the local authority social care teams and other agencies as necessary, in line with the systems set out in 'working together to safeguard children'

# Appendix E: External Contacts

MASH (social care) Tel: 020 8496 2310

LADO Tel: 020 8496 3646 or 020 8496 6310

[help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

NSPCC whistleblowing Tel: 0800 028 0285

NSPCC helpline Tel: 0808 800 5000

# Appendix F: Relevant Documentation

**This policy was written with due regard to this legislation:**

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Education Act 2002
- The Education (Health Standards) (England) Regulations 2003
- The Further Education (Providers of Education) (England) (Regulations) 2006
- The Education (Pupil Referral Units) (Application of Enactments) (England) Regulations 2007 as amended by SI 2010/1919, SI 2012/1825, SI 2012/3158
- The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009 as amended by SI 2012/1740 and SI 2013/1940
- The Education (Non-Maintained Special Schools) (England) Regulations 2011 as amended by SI 2015/387
- The education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Keeping Children Safe Education September 2016
- Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2015





# Whitefield

Academy Trust

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