



# Whitefield

Schools

A member of  
Whitefield Academy Trust

28<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I would like to take this opportunity to share with you some information about safeguarding at Whitefield School. I have recently taken over the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead from Laura Pease, the Principal, and I will be working closely with our Family Support Team in their safeguarding role.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and all our staff members, irrespective of their job role, work hard to keep our pupils safe. All staff attend regular training, know the signs to look out for which might indicate that a child is at risk and who to report their concerns to.

Some of you may have read about the national response to the Everyone's Invited website in recent weeks. This is a website that has been set up to highlight examples of sexual harassment and abuse through anonymous testimonies.

Whitefield Academy Trust recognises that it is possible that a pupil within the school may experience sexual abuse or harassment either from another pupil at the school or from someone outside the school community. This behaviour is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.

I wish to remind parents of the measures that we have in place to make sure that our pupils continue to remain safe:

- All staff have regular updated safeguarding training in line with the latest government guidance. In addition, our Safeguarding Children Policy has guidance within it around the indicators of peer on peer abuse and harmful sexual behaviour along with our response procedures. It is available on our academy website at <https://www.whitefield.org.uk>
- All pupils are appropriately and well supervised during the day.
- Where appropriate PSHE and RSE lessons will include discussion of these topics, making it clear that they are not acceptable and that anyone who has experienced them should speak to an adult whom they trust.
- We ensure that pupils are aware of online safety issues and know how to keep themselves safe and what constitutes inappropriate and/or unacceptable behaviour. Pupils are taught in lessons what to do if they see or receive content which is upsetting to them.
- We promote high expectations of behaviour from all members of our community with an emphasis on respect, honesty, kindness, tolerance and courtesy. We communicate these values through our everyday interactions, reflection times and assemblies as well as the PSHE curriculum.

- All our pupils are reminded who the safeguarding team are through termly safeguarding walks where we join classes and talk about our roles and reassure them that they can come to us to discuss any concerns. We also have posters around the school with photographs of these members of staff to ensure that pupils know who they can go to for this support.

We benefit from the strong governance of the Whitefield Academy Trust and our Board of Trustees. In practice, this involves regular, detailed monitoring of safeguarding processes alongside high-quality training and developmental support.

*What should I do if I have concerns?*

You can contact us by telephone via the school reception or by email at [safeguarding@whitefield.waltham.sch.uk](mailto:safeguarding@whitefield.waltham.sch.uk)

*Where can I find more information?*

External support is always available from NSPCC on 0800 136663. This helpline is free and anonymous and will be open Monday to Friday 8am-10pm and Saturday to Sunday 9am-6pm. <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/peer-on-peer-sexual-abuse>

**We have added a list of questions and answers about 'Everyone's Invited' on the next page which you may find useful.**

We remain committed to ensuring that every child benefits from a calm and respectful climate for learning. I hope that this letter offers you reassurance that we recognise the importance of this issue.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Evelina Dimopoulou  
Vice Principal  
Designated Safeguarding Lead

## Questions & Answers

### **Question 1: What is the Everyone's Invited website?**

Everyone's Invited was set up last year as a place where victims, mostly in schools, are encouraged to record their experiences of sexual assault and abuse. It features accounts from university-age students to pupils as young as nine. There are however some testimonials about the actions of staff members. You can review the website and testimonials at: [www.everyonesinvited.uk](http://www.everyonesinvited.uk)

### **Question 2: Have any of the testimonials come from Whitefield Academy Trust?**

The testimonials are anonymous and as such difficult to track. The cases are more likely to happen in mainstream secondary schools and universities rather than primary and special schools. If you suspect that one of the testimonials is from your child, please contact the school.

### **Question 3: Has the abuse taken place in person?**

The majority of the testimonials on the Everyone's Invited website detail direct sexual harassment, abuse or assault. However, abuse can happen online where children and young people were manipulated or coerced into sexual activity by adults through live streaming or online gaming activities.

Further details of a relevant study can be found at:

<https://www.iwf.org.uk/news/%E2%80%98beyondheart-breaking%E2%80%99-abuse-predators-groom-children-film-siblings-and-friends>.

### **Question 4: What should I do if I am concerned that my child is being sexually harassed, abused or assaulted?**

If your child tells you that they have been sexually harassed, abused or assaulted then you should report this to the police, your local authority Children's Services, your local authority Safeguarding Children Partnership or to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

### **Question 5: What does the school have in place to protect my child and what actions are you taking as a school to address this issue?**

As a Trust we have a culture that children communicate their feelings, concerns and worries not just through language but also through their behaviour and overall demeanour. Staff are very vigilant in observing, recording and reporting all their concerns no matter how small, as this helps us build a better picture of the child and what may be happening to them.

Where actions are needed, such as making a referral to Children's Services, a child's allocated Social Worker or to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), they are taken in a timely manner. All pupils' emotional wellbeing is closely monitored and reviewed.

The school have taken the following initial actions as a result of Everyone's Invited:

- We have updated our Safeguarding Children Policy, to ensure that it adequately guides staff when they have concerns that a child is being sexually harassed, abused or assaulted. We have also updated our E-safety and RSE policies.
- We have organised training to raise staff awareness of the severity of the situation and both the short- and long-term potential impact of sexual abuse on children and young people's physical and emotional wellbeing.
- We have emphasised the need for children to be explicitly taught about awareness of themselves and others, relationships (including online), being respectful to each other, bullying, self and peer advocacy.
- We have looked at our Relationships Education (Primary) and Sex and Relationships Education (RSE) (Secondary) curriculums to ensure that we are adequately preparing pupils for this aspect of their lives.
- We are working with our transport providers to raise awareness of this issue for drivers and passenger assistants.