



## **SAFEGUARDING/CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

**Assistant Vice Principal KS3, October 2011**  
**Formal Review Date: October 2012**

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## **Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy**

### **Section 1**

#### **Key Contacts within the Academy:**

**Designated Senior Person:** Mrs Gillian Miller - Assistant Vice Principal KS3  
**Contact Number:** 0191 5615511 Ext 40190

**Deputy Designated Person:** Mrs Carol Crompton - Assistant Vice Principal KS4  
**Contact Number:** 0191 5615511 Ext 40198

**Principal:** Dr Therese Quincey

**Nominated Governor:** Mrs Carole Smith

#### **Key Contacts within the Local Authority:**

##### **The Education Safeguarding Team;**

**Named person:** Pam Gartland  
**Contact Number:** 0191 5532250  
**Email:** [Pam.Gartland@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:Pam.Gartland@sunderland.gov.uk)

**Named person:** Anne Murton  
**Contact Number:** 0191 5532252  
**Email:** [Anne.Murton@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:Anne.Murton@sunderland.gov.uk)

#### **Referral to Children's Services at Cassaton House, Sunderland:**

**Contact Number:** 0191 5661500

#### **Urgent Referrals – OUT OF OFFICE HOURS:**

**Emergency Duty Team:** 0191 5289110

**If urgent action is required in any situation contact the Police**

## **Section 2**

### **Introduction**

This policy is one of a series in the Academy's integrated safeguarding portfolio. Our core safeguarding principles are:

- the Academy's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of students is of paramount importance
- safer children make more successful learners
- representatives of the whole-Academy community of students, parents, staff and the Trust will be involved in policy development and review
- policies will be reviewed annually, unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review

### **Statement**

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all students. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where students are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that students receive effective support, protection and justice.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff and governors and are consistent with those of the Sunderland Safeguarding Children's Board (SSCB).

### **Principles**

Welfare of the child is paramount.

All students, regardless of age, gender, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection.

All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.

Students and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support.

### **Aims**

To provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their safeguarding responsibilities to ensure consistent good practice, to demonstrate the Academy's commitment with regard to safeguarding students, parents and other partners and to contribute to the Academy's Safeguarding Portfolio.

### **Terminology**

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students refers to the process of protecting students from abuse or neglect, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that our students grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and undertaking that role so as to enable those students to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

### **Section 3**

#### **Child Protection:**

Refers to the processes undertaken to protect students, who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of, suffering significant harm.

**Staff** refers to all those working for or on behalf of the Academy, full time or part time, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

**Child** refers to all young people who have not yet reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**Parent** refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

#### **Context**

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires local education authorities and the governors of maintained schools and further education (FE) colleges to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students.

Section 157 of the same act and the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 require proprietors of independent schools (including academies and city technology colleges) to have arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are students at the school.

Research suggests that more than 10 per cent of children will suffer some form of abuse. Due to their day-to-day contact with students, Academy staff are uniquely placed to observe changes in students' behaviour and the outward signs of abuse. Students may also turn to a trusted adult in the Academy when they are in distress or at risk. It is vital that Academy staff are alert to the signs of abuse and understand the procedures for reporting their concerns.

### **Section 4**

#### **Roles and responsibilities**

All Academies must nominate a senior member of staff to coordinate safeguarding arrangements. The local authority maintains a list of all designated senior persons (DSPs) for Safeguarding and Child Protection.

#### **The DSP: Designated Senior Person;**

- Is appropriately trained
- Acts as a source of support and expertise to the Academy community
- Has an understanding of LSCB procedures
- Keeps written records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely and flagged on, but kept separate from, the student's general file
- Refers cases of suspected abuse to children's social care or police as appropriate
- Notifies children's social care if a child with a child protection plan is absent for more than two days without explanation

- Ensures that when a student with a child protection plan leaves the Academy, their information is passed to their new school and the student's social worker is informed
- Attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences
- Coordinates the Academy's contribution to child protection plans
- Develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies
- Ensures that all staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood the Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy (See Appendix 4)
- Ensures that the Child Protection Policy is updated annually
- Liaises with the nominated governor and Principal (where the role is not carried out by the Principal) as appropriate
- Keeps a record of staff attendance at child protection training
- Makes the Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy available to parents

The Deputy Designated Person(s) is appropriately trained and, in the absence of the designated person, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of students. In the event of the long-term absence of the Designated Person, the Deputy will assume all of the functions above.

**The Trust ensures that the Academy has:**

- A DSP for child protection who is a member of the senior leadership team and who has undertaken training in inter-agency working, in addition to basic child protection training
- A child protection policy and procedures that are consistent with LSCB requirements, reviewed annually and made available to parents on request
- Procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against member of staff, including allegations made against the Principal
- Safer recruitment procedures that include the requirement for appropriate checks
- A training strategy that ensure all staff, including the Principal, receive child protection training, with refresher training at three-yearly intervals
- The DSP should receive refresher training at two-yearly intervals
- Arrangements to ensure that all temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the Academy's arrangements for child protection.

The Trust nominates a member (normally the chair) to be responsible for liaising with the local authority and other agencies in the event of an allegation being made against the Principal.

An annual report will be submitted to the local authority about how the governing body's duties have been carried out. Any weaknesses will be rectified without delay.

**The Principal:**

- Ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff
- Allocates sufficient time and resources to enable the DSP and deputy to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of students and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings
- Ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the Whistleblowing Procedures

- Ensures that students' safety and welfare is addressed through the curriculum.

## **Section 5**

### **Good Practice Guidelines**

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards students we need to agree standards of good practice.

#### **Good Practice Includes:**

- Treating all students with respect
- Setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- Involving students in decisions that affect them
- Encouraging positive and safe behaviour among students
- Being a good listener
- Being alert to changes in student behaviour
- Recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- Reading and understanding the Academy's Safeguarding Policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, physical contact and information-sharing
- Asking the student's permission before doing anything for them of a physical nature, such as assisting with dressing, physical support during PE or administering first aid
- Maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between students and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language
- Being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some students lead to an increased risk of abuse

## **Section 6**

### **Abuse of Trust**

All Academy staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards students is unacceptable and that their conduct towards students must be beyond reproach

In addition, staff should understand that, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a pupil under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that pupil is over the age of consent.

The school's code of Ethical Practice sets out our expectations of staff>  
(see Appendix 1)

## **Section 7**

### **Students who may be particularly vulnerable**

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. It is important to understand that this increase in risk is due more to societal attitudes and assumptions, and child protection procedures that fail to acknowledge children's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual child's personality, impairment or circumstances.

Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

**To ensure that all of our students receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:**

- Disabled or have special educational needs
- Living in a domestic abuse situation
- Affected by parental substance misuse
- Asylum seekers
- Living away from home
- Vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- Living in temporary accommodation
- Live transient lifestyles
- Living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- Vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion or sexuality
- Involved directly or indirectly in prostitution or child trafficking
- Do not have English as a first language

Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information and resources in community languages and accessible formats.

## **Section 8**

### **Support for those involved in a child protection issue**

Child abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved. We will support students and their families and staff by:

- Taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously nominating a link person who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact. Where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a student, separate link people will be nominated to avoid any conflict of interest
- Responding sympathetically to any request from students or staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety
- Maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- Storing records securely
- Offering details of helplines, counselling or other avenues of external support
- Following the procedures laid down in our whistleblowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures
- Cooperating fully with relevant statutory agencies

## **Section 9**

### **Complaints Procedure**

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a pupil or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a pupil that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a pupils, using sarcasm or humiliation as a form of control, bullying or belittling a pupil or discriminating against them in some way. Complaints are managed by senior staff, the Principal and the governors.

Complaints from staff are dealt with under the Academy's complaints and disciplinary and grievance procedures.

## **Section 10**

### **If you have any concerns about a colleague**

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a pupil are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. The Academy's Whistleblowing Code (**Appendix 2**) enables staff to raise concerns or allegations in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place. All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues should be reported to the Principal. Complaints about the Principal should be reported to the Chair of Governors.

**To ensure that all of our students receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:**

- Disabled or have special educational needs
- Living in a domestic abuse situation
- Affected by parental substance misuse
- Asylum seekers
- Living away from home
- Vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- Living in temporary accommodation
- Live transient lifestyles
- Living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- Vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion or sexuality
- Involved directly or indirectly in prostitution or child trafficking
- Do not have English as a first language

Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information and resources in community languages and accessible formats.

## **Section 11**

### **Staff who are the subject of an allegation**

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events can and do happen. A child may also make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. Even so, we must accept that some professionals do pose a serious risk to pupils and we must act on every allegation. Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not mandatory, nor is it automatic but, in some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected.

Allegations against staff should be reported to the Principal. Allegations against the Principal should be reported to the Trust.

The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (pp57-67). Further information is contained in the Academy's disciplinary procedures and the Safeguarding 'Quick Guide' for staff.

## **Section 12**

### **Staff training**

It is important that all staff have training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse and neglect and to know what to do if they have a concern. New staff and governors will receive training during their induction. All staff, including the Principal (unless the Principal is the DP) and governors will receive training that is updated at least every three years and the DSP will receive training updated at least every two years, including training in inter-agency procedures. Supply staff and other visiting staff will be given the Academy's Visiting Staff Leaflet (**see: Appendix 3**).

## **Section 13**

### **Safer recruitment**

Red House Academy endeavours to ensure that we do our utmost to employ 'safe' staff by following the guidance in Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (pp20-54) together with the Local Authority and the Academy's individual procedures.

#### **Safer recruitment means that all applicants will:**

- Complete an application form
- Provide two referees, including at least one who can comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children
- Provide evidence of identity and qualifications
- Be checked through the Criminal Records Bureau as appropriate to their role and be registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (2010 onwards)
- Be interviewed

All new members of staff will undergo an induction that includes familiarisation with the Academy's Child Protection Policy and identification of their child protection training needs.

All staff sign to confirm they have received a copy of the Safeguarding Policy.  
**(see: Appendix 4)**

## **Section 14**

### **Extended school and off-site arrangements**

Where extended Academy activities are provided by and managed by the Academy, our own Safeguarding Policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

When our students attend off-site activities, we will check that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place.

## **Section 15**

### **Photography and images**

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or using images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place. To protect pupils we will:

- Seek their consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications)
- Seek parental consent
- Use only the pupil's first name with an image
- Ensure students are appropriately dressed
- Encourage students to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.

## **Section 16**

### **Definitions of Safeguarding and Child Protection Issues**

There are four categories of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.

#### **Physical abuse**

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 (this used to be called Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy, but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).

#### **Emotional abuse**

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 for meeting 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, although it may occur alone.

#### **Sexual abuse**

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 (for example, 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.

### **Neglect**

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 misuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing or shelter, including exclusion from home or abandonment; failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; failure to ensure adequate supervision, including the use of inadequate care-takers; or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs. Definitions taken from ***working Together to Safeguard Children*** (HM Government 2006)

### **Bullying**

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause considerable anxiety and distress. At its most serious level, bullying is thought to result in up to 12 child suicides each year.

All incidents of bullying should be reported and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures. All pupils and parents receive a copy of the anti-bullying procedures on joining the Academy and the subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. If the bullying is particularly serious, or the anti-bullying procedures are deemed to be ineffective, the Principal and the DSP will consider implementing child protection procedures.

### **Indicators of abuse – what you might see:**

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated person. Remember, it is your responsibility to report your concerns. It is not your responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

### **A child who is being abused or neglected may:**

- Have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries
- Show signs of pain or discomfort
- Keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- Be concerned about changing for PE or swimming
- Look unkempt and uncared for
- Change their eating habits
- Have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- Appear fearful
- Be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety
- Self harm

- Frequently miss school or arrive late
- Show signs of not wanting to go home
- Display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- Challenge authority
- Become disinterested in their school work
- Be constantly tired or preoccupied
- Be wary of physical contact
- Be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol
- Display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DSP to decide how to proceed. It is very important that you report your concerns – you do not need ‘absolute proof’ that the child is at risk.

### **Taking action**

Key points to remember for taking action are:

- In an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, for example, call 999
- Report your concern to the DSP by the end of the day
- Do not start your own investigation
- Share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- Complete a record of concern
- Seek support for yourself if you are distressed

**(Appendix 5 provides a flowchart for reporting a concern)**

### **If you suspect a student is at risk of harm**

There will be occasions when you suspect that a pupil may be at risk, but you have no ‘real’ evidence. The pupil’s behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or you may have noticed physical but inconclusive signs. In these circumstances, you should try to give the pupil the opportunity to talk. The signs you have noticed may be due to a variety of factors, for example, a parent has moved out, a pet has died, a grandparent is very ill. It is fine to ask the pupil if they are OK or if you can help in any way.

Use the Academy concern form (**see Appendix 7**) to record these early concerns. If the pupil does begin to reveal that they are being harmed you should follow the advice in the section ‘If a pupil discloses to you’.

If, following your conversation you remain concerned, you should discuss your concerns with the designated person.

### **If a pupil discloses to you**

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual, their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell, they may have lost all trust in adults, or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault.

If a student talks to you about any risks to their safety or wellbeing you will need to let them know that you must pass the information on – you are not allowed to keep secrets. The point at which you do this is a matter for professional judgement. If you jump in immediately the student may think that you do not want to listen, if you leave it till the very end of the conversation, the student may feel that you have misled them into revealing more than they would have otherwise.

### **During your conversation with the pupil:**

- Allow them to speak freely.
- Remain calm and do not over react – the pupil may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting you
- Give reassuring nods or words of comfort – ‘I’m so sorry this has happened’, ‘I want to help’, ‘This isn’t your fault’, ‘You are doing the right thing in talking to me’.
- Do not be afraid of silences – remember how hard this must be for the pupil
- Under no circumstances ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the pupil’s mother think about all this
- At an appropriate time tell the pupil that in order to help them you must pass the information on
- Do not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused
- Avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying ‘I do wish you had told me about this when it started’ or ‘I can’t believe what I’m hearing’ may be your way of being supportive but the child may interpret it that they have done something wrong
- Tell the pupil what will happen next. The pupil may agree to go with you to see the designated person. Otherwise let them know that someone will come to see them before the end of the day
- Report verbally to the designated person
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible on the record of concern form and hand it to the designated person
- Seek support if you feel distressed

**(A Record of Concern Form is provided in Appendix 8)**

### **Notifying parents**

The Academy will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and the DSP will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

However, if the Academy believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children’s social care.

### **Referral to Children’s Services**

The DSP will make a referral to children’s services if it is believed that a student is suffering or is at risk or suffering significant harm. The student (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

### **Children with sexually harmful behaviour**

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the Academy's anti-bullying procedures where necessary. However, there will be occasions when a student's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures. In particular, research suggests that up to 30 per cent of child sexual abuse is committed by someone under the age of 18.

### **Confidentiality and sharing information**

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the pupil and staff involved but also to ensure that being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the Designated Person, Principal or Chair of Governors (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with Data Protection Act 1998 principles. Information is:

- Processed for limited purposes
- Adequate, relevant and not excessive
- Accurate
- Kept no longer than necessary
- Processed in accordance with the data subject's rights
- Secure

Record of concern forms and other written information will be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Every effort should be made to prevent unauthorised access and sensitive information should not be stored on laptop computers, which, by the nature of their portability, could be lost or stolen. If it is necessary to store child protection information on portable media, such as a CD or flash drive, these items should also be kept in locked storage. Child protection information will be stored separately from the student's school file and the school file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a student or parent to see child protection records, they should refer the request to the Principal.

The Data Protection Act does not prevent Academy staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child. The Academy's policy on confidentiality and information-sharing is available to parents and pupils on request.

### **Reporting directly to child protection agencies**

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in the policy. However, they may also share information directly with Children's Service or the Police if:

- The situation is an emergency and the Designated Senior Person, the deputy, the Principal and member of the Trust are all unavailable
- They are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the students' safety.

### **Related Policies and Documents:**

- Attendance Policy
- Physical Intervention and the Use of Reasonable Force
- Complaints Procedure Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- SEN Policy
- Looked After Children Policy
- Transition KS2-3 Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Missing Children
- Safer Recruitment & Selection Policy (adhering to "Safeguarding Children & Safer Recruitment in Education November 2007)
- Managing Allegations
- Grievance and Disciplinary
- Intimate Care Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Personal, Social Development Policy

### **Academy documents:**

- Prospectus
- Home-Academy Agreement
- Code of Conduct

### **Local Authority Documentation:**

- Sunderland LSCB Safeguarding/Child Protection
- Sunderland 'Whistleblowing' procedures

### **Government Documentation:**

- 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' (DOH, DCMS, DCSF, HO)
- Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (DCFS 2006)
- 'Criminal Records Bureau in managing the demands for Disclosure' (DfES 07/8/2002)
- 'Managing Medicines in Schools and Early Years' (DfES March 2005)
- 'Every Child Matters' (HM Government Children Act 2004)
- 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006)'
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People (DCSF update January 2009).

## Appendix 1

### Code of ethical practice for Academy staff

All Academy staff are valued members of the Academy community. Everyone is expected to set and maintain the highest standards for their own performance, to work as part of a team and to be an excellent role model for our students.

#### All Academy staff should:

- Place the safety and welfare of students above all other considerations
- Treat all members of the Academy community, including students, parents, colleagues and governors with consideration and respect
- Adhere to the principles and procedures contained in the policies in our safeguarding portfolio and in teaching and learning policies
- Treat each student as an individual and make adjustments to meet individual need
- Demonstrate a clear understanding of and commitment to non-discriminatory practice
- Recognise the power imbalances between students and staff, and different levels of seniority of staff and ensure that power and authority are never misused
- Understand that Academy staff are in a position of trust and that sexual relationships with a student, even over the age of 16, may be an offence
- Be alert to, and report appropriately, any behaviour that may indicate that a student is at risk of harm
- Encourage all students to reach their full potential
- Never condone inappropriate behaviour by students or staff
- Take responsibility for their own continuing professional development
- Refrain from any action that would bring the Academy into disrepute
- Value themselves and seek appropriate support for any issue that may have an adverse effect on their professional practice

Staff name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix 2**

Whistleblowing code for issues relating to children and young people.

### **Purpose of the code**

The Academy adheres to the Local Authority Whistleblowing Policy and procedures that enable staff to raise concerns relating to:

- Crime
- A miscarriage of justice
- Illegality
- Health and safety
- Environmental or property damage
- Unauthorised use of public funds
- Concealing or attempting to cover up any of the above

This code provides additional information to help staff to understand the role of whistleblowing in the context of poor practice and unacceptable conduct and attitudes towards children

### **When to use the code**

The whistleblowing procedures and this code may be used by anyone employed by the Academy in a paid or voluntary capacity who believes they have reason to suspect that the conduct of an employee towards a pupil is inappropriate

### **Inappropriate conduct includes, but is not confined to:**

- Bullying or humiliation
- Contravening health and safety guidelines
- Serious breaches of the Academy's code of ethical practice
- Professional practice that falls short of normally accepted standards
- Compromising pupils' welfare but in a way that does not meet the threshold for child protection intervention

### **Reasons for blowing the whistle**

Staff will naturally be reticent to report a concern about the conduct of a colleague. However, each individual must take responsibility for ensuring that pupils are fairly treated. If poor practice is allowed to continue unchecked, it could escalate with serious consequences.

Your action not only protects pupils, but also deters any suggestion that you have colluded with poor practice that you knew was occurring but chose to ignore.

Whistleblowing can also support the member of staff who is the subject of the concern. Their conduct may result from inexperience or lack of training that can be addressed by the Academy, or they may be under stress and be relieved when their conduct is questioned.

Staff who deliberately fail pupils and show no remorse or desire to improve are unlikely to welcome being exposed, but their conduct has to be confronted for the sake of the pupils and the reputation of the whole Academy.

## **Barriers to whistleblowing**

You may worry that you have insufficient evidence to raise a concern, that you will set in place an unstoppable chain of events, that there will be adverse repercussions for your career, that you may suffer harassment or victimisation, or that your suspicion or concern might be totally misplaced.

These concerns are entirely understandable but you can be reassured that whistleblowing procedures addresses these issues.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 protects employees from reprisals for public interest whistleblowing. Your Union, a solicitor or the Local Authority Services can provide you with information about your legal position.

## **Confidentiality and anonymity**

All concerns are treated in confidence and, as far as possible, your identity will not be revealed if that is your wish. However, absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed if, as a result of an investigation, you are required to provide a witness statement or attend a court hearing.

You can, if you prefer, raise your concern anonymously. The Academy would need to decide whether the levity and credibility of the concern warrants investigation if the source of the concern, and the key evidence, is not readily available.

The Academy will fully support you and do all it can to protect you from any harassment or adverse repercussions that may arise from whistleblowing.

Allegations that prove to be deliberately fabricated and malicious will be dealt with through staff disciplinary procedures. However, no action will be taken against any member of staff who raises a genuine concern that proves to be unfounded.

## **Reporting procedure**

It may help if you write down, for your own benefit, what you have observed or heard that is causing alarm. One useful way to decide whether your concern should be reported is to consider whether you would want the conduct of this member of staff to continue unchecked if your own child or another young family member was involved. You may raise your concern verbally or in writing. You should report your concern directly to the Principal.

If the Principal is the subject of your concern, speak to the chair of governors. A friend, colleague or union representative may accompany you to the meeting if you wish. Ensure the Principal or Chair informs you of their proposed action and sets a date for a second meeting.

Timescales will depend on the complexity of the initial inquiry but the case should not be allowed to stall and you should receive initial feedback within 10 working days. The timescale for subsequent feedback should then be agreed. Ask for clarification about confidentiality and ensure you have your wishes regarding the protection of your identity recorded.

### **Process and outcome**

The Principal or Chair will make enquiries to establish the facts of the matter and whether poor practice or inappropriate conduct has occurred. Members of the Academy community, including governors, may be asked to provide information or advice. External advice, for example, from legal or human resources or children's services may be sought.

A written record of the conduct, established facts and outcome of the inquiry will be kept. The whistleblower will be kept informed of the progress of the inquiry. The outcome of the inquiry will be one of the following:

- No poor practice or wrongdoing is established and the case is closed
- The concern has some substance and the subject of the concern will receive advice and support from the Principal to improve practice
- Poor practice or wrongdoing is established and disciplinary proceedings are initiated
- The concern is more serious and an investigation is initiated. This investigation may involve the Local Authority's legal team, Children's Services or the Police.

If at any stage in the process, there is reason to believe that a student is at risk of significant harm, Children's Services will be immediately involved.

## **Appendix 3**

### **Visiting Staff Safeguarding Information Leaflet**

#### **WELCOME to Red House Academy**

##### **Academy Statement**

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all students. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where students are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that students receive effective support, protection and justice. While working in our Academy we expect you to take care of our students and follow our procedures.

##### **Key facts about child abuse**

Abuse and neglect can happen to any child, boy or girl, of any race, culture, ethnicity or sexuality. Disabled children and children with SEN are particularly vulnerable. Many students are unable to disclose what is happening to them and rely on us to interpret their behaviour and spot signs of abuse.

##### **A student may:**

- Have a bruise, burn or injury that seems suspicious
- Show signs of pain or discomfort
- Be unnaturally passive or withdrawn
- Be unpredictable and challenging
- Seem anxious, fearful or distressed
- Provide an unlikely explanation for their injury or their behaviour

If you are concerned for a student's health, welfare or safety in any way you must speak to the designated senior person.

(DSP) Mrs Gillian Miller or a senior member of staff, before you leave the Academy site.

Do not question the student or try to secure evidence. Your responsibility is to report your concern, not to investigate. If a student tells you something that suggests they are at risk of harm, allow them to tell you as much as they wish and let them know that you must pass the information on to the DSP. If you become concerned about a student's immediate safety, notify the nearest member of staff and tell them why you are concerned. You should complete a welfare concern form (attached) and hand it to the DSP or a senior member of staff before you leave the Academy site. Ask a senior member of staff if you would like help to complete the form.

If you have any questions or wish to see our Safeguarding Policy please contact the DSP.

## Appendix 4

### Confirmation of receipt of Safeguarding Policy

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of joining Red House Academy: \_\_\_\_\_

Post: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of induction: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and designation of staff member responsible for induction:

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I confirm that I have received and read the Academy Safeguarding Policy.

I have been made aware of my duty to safeguard and promote student's welfare. The procedure for reporting concerns about a student has been explained to me.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

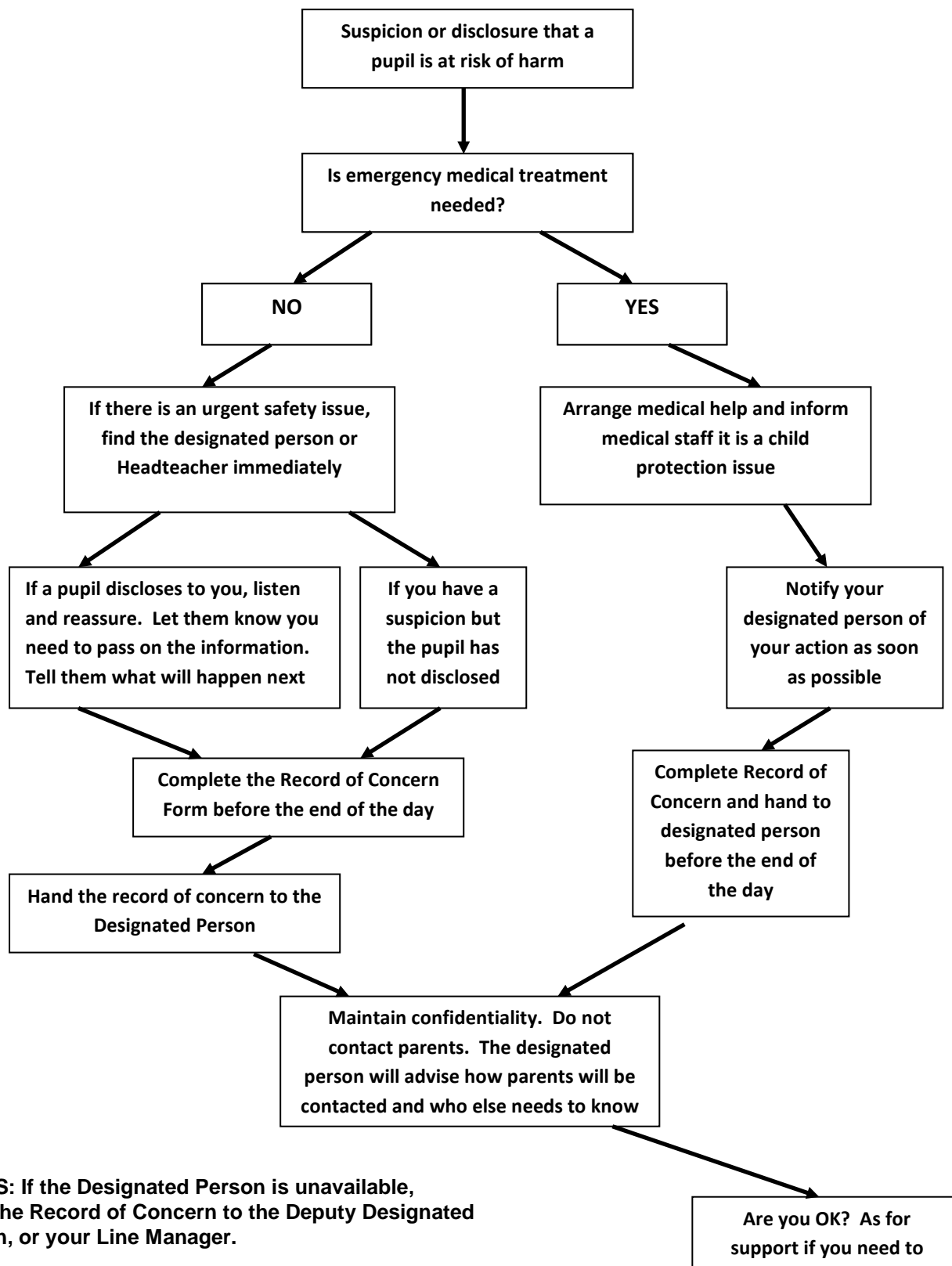
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please sign and return this form to the Designated Senior Person:

Mrs Gillian Miller \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 5

### Reporting a concern flowchart



**NOTES:** If the Designated Person is unavailable, hand the Record of Concern to the Deputy Designated Person, or your Line Manager.

**Do not wait for 'evidence'. You do not need proof of your concern. Do not try to investigate.**