

Darwen Aldridge Safeguarding of Children Policy



The vision of the sponsor is one of providing a caring environment where students feel safe at all times. The safeguarding of children in our care is a responsibility of all staff and their welfare is paramount in all that we do.

CONTENTS

Child Protection Policy Statement	Page no
Introduction and aims	3
Roles and responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Academy▪ Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator	3
General strategies	4
Procedures <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Recognition and categories of abuse▪ Responding to concerns▪ Record keeping▪ Information to be recorded▪ Storage of records▪ Referrals to Social Services▪ Concerns involving members of staff	5-8
Code of Practice	9
Supervision and support	9
Child Protection Register Students on the Child Protection Register Looked After Children	9-11
Training	11
Monitoring and Review	11

INTRODUCTION:

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Act 1989, Sections 175 and 176 Education Act 2002 and related guidance including The Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families and Working Together to Safeguard Children.

The Governors and Executive Leadership Team of The Darwen Aldridge Community Academy take seriously our responsibility to promote the welfare and safeguard all the children and young people entrusted to our care.

The Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator (DCPC) who has overall responsibility for child protection practice in the Academy is **Mr David Cane**, Vice Principal responsible for student care and guidance. The Deputy DCPC is **Mrs Fiona Beaumont**, Vice Principal responsible for curriculum, innovation and standards.

The designated Governor for safeguarding the children at DACA is, **Mr Bob Simpson**.

As part of the ethos of the Academy we are committed to:

- ❑ Maintaining children's welfare as our paramount concern.
- ❑ Providing an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected; confident to talk openly and sure of being listened to.
- ❑ Providing suitable support and guidance so that students have a range of appropriate adults who they feel confident to approach if they are in difficulties.
- ❑ Using the curriculum to provide opportunities for increasing self awareness, self esteem, assertiveness and decision making so that students have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others.
- ❑ Working with parents to build an understanding of the academy's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children including the need for referral to other agencies in some situations.

- Ensuring all staff are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and are aware of the academy's procedures and lines of communication.
- Monitoring children and young people who have been identified as "in need" including the need for protection; keeping confidential records which are stored securely and shared appropriately with other professionals.
- Developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

DACA:

The academy is responsible for ensuring that all action taken is in line with current child in need/child protection procedures. This process follows the requirements of the central government guidance contained in the Framework for Assessment of Children in Need and their Families and Working Together to Safeguard Children. The child protection process is now incorporated within a comprehensive policy and procedure for all children in need.

The role of the Academy within this procedure is to contribute to the identification, referral and assessment of children in need including children who may have suffered, be suffering or who are at risk of suffering significant harm. The school may also have a role in the provision of services to Children in Need and their families.

All adults in the academy have a role to play in relation to:

- Protecting children from abuse
- Promoting the welfare of children
- Preventing children from being harmed

The role of the Academy in situations where there are child protection concerns is NOT to investigate but to recognise and refer.

Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator:

The Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator is responsible for:

- Co-ordinating child protection action within the academy
- Liaising with other agencies.
- Ensuring that locally established procedures are followed including reporting and referral processes.
- Acting as a consultant for staff to discuss concerns.
- Making referrals as necessary.
- Maintaining a confidential recording system.
- Representing or ensuring the Academy is appropriately represented at inter-agency meetings in particular Child Protection Conferences.
- Managing and monitoring the academy's part in Child care / protection plans.
- Organising training for all academy staff.
- Liaising with other professionals.

GENERAL STRATEGIES:

This section gives an opportunity for staff to identify the specific ways in which child protection issues are addressed within the curriculum, policies and guidance or through academy/community initiatives.

This may include:

PHSE

Behaviour Management Policy

Peer mentoring

Community initiatives

Anti-Bullying Strategies

Care Plans/Education Plans

Complaints Procedures

Health and Safety

Risk Assessments

Extra Curricular Activities

PROCEDURES:

A copy of the BwD's child in need/child protection procedure and the continuum of need and response is kept in the staff room and contains details of procedures and the categories and definitions of abuse. All staff are advised to read this. A copy of the Assessment Framework can also be found on the staff room noticeboard.

In addition to this, the Local children safeguarding board (LCSB) procedures and policies can be found at www.blackburn.gov.uk. Should a member of staff either feel unhappy with the way in which a disclosure is dealt with by the Academy, or if they wish to contact Social Services. The contact is: Robinha Jillani on 01254 587547 who is the Local authority designated officer (LADO) for Blackburn with Darwen.

Recognition and categories of abuse:

All staff in The Academy should be aware of the definitions and signs and symptoms of abuse. There are four categories of abuse. These are:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

Responding to concerns:

Concerns for a child or young person may come to the attention of staff in a variety of ways for example through observation of behaviour or injuries or disclosure. Any member of staff who has a concern for a child or young person however insignificant this might appear to be should discuss this with the DCPC as soon as is practically possible. More serious concerns must be reported immediately to ensure that any intervention necessary to protect the child is accessed as early as possible.

If a child makes a disclosure of abuse to a member of staff they should:

- Allow the child or young person to make the disclosure at their own pace and in their own way.
- Avoid interrupting except to clarify what the child is saying (attentive listening/reflective feedback).
- Not ask leading questions or probe for information that the child or young person does not volunteer.
- Reassure the child or young person that they have been heard and explain what you will do next and to whom you will talk.
- Record the conversation as soon as possible.
- Inform the DCPC.

Record keeping:

Staff can play a vital role in helping children in need or at risk by effective monitoring and record keeping. Any incident or behavioural change in a child or young person that gives cause for concern should be recorded and handed in person to the designated person – David Cane. It is important that records are factual and reflect the words used by the child or young person. Opinion should not be given unless there is some form of evidence base which can also be quoted. At no time should the child be asked leading questions, just ensure that you have the facts. In addition to this, let the child know that you are unable to keep this information to yourself, and that you must pass it on to the designated person. Records must be signed and dated with timings if appropriate. It is important to remember that any issues are confidential and staff should know only on a 'need to know' basis.

Information to be recorded:

- Child's name and date of birth.
- Child in normal context, e.g. behaviour, attitude, (has there been an extreme change).
- The incident(s) which gives rise for concern with date(s) and times(s).
- A verbatim record of what the child or young person has said.
- If recording bruising/injuries indicate position, colour, size, shape and time on body map.
- Action taken.

These basic details are vital to the information gathering process and do not constitute an investigation. Written information should be passed to the DCPC. Preferably using the cause for concern sheets. The Principal should also always be kept informed of any significant issues.

Storage of records:

The DCPC will ensure that records relating to concerns for the welfare or safety of children are kept separate from other academy files and are stored securely. Information will be shared on a strictly need to know basis and in line with child protection policy guidance.

Referrals to Social Services:

It is the responsibility of the DCPC to decide when to make a referral to the Social Services Directorate. To help with this decision s/he may choose to consult with the LADO. Advice may also be sought from the referral and assessment team at Social Services who offer opportunities for consultation as part of the child in need / child protection process. Issues discussed during consultations may include the urgency and gravity of the concerns for a child or young person and the extent to which parents/carers are made aware of these. Some concerns may need to be monitored over a period of time before a decision to refer to Social Services is made. **In all but the most exceptional cases parents/carers will be made aware of the concerns felt for a child or young person at the earliest possible stage and in the event of this becoming necessary, their consent to a referral to Social Services will be sought.**

Referrals to Social Services will be made using the CAF referral form. The signature of parents is needed if the referral is made as a CAF. However, if it is a referral for a child in need, the document will be sent without the permission of parents. In situations where there are felt to be urgent or grave concerns a telephone referral will be made prior to the form being completed and sent to the referral and assessment team..

If a child or young person is referred, the DCPC will ensure that the Principal and other relevant staff are informed of this.

If after consultation with the DCPC a member of staff feels that appropriate action is not being taken in respect of his or her concerns for a child s/he should refer directly to Social Services. The Principal should be informed of this decision.

The list of vulnerable children

The DCPC will inform members of staff who have direct pastoral responsibility for children and young people whose names are on this list. The categories for which their names are listed are:

- Children on the Child Protection Register.
- Children in our Care (CIOC).
- Young carers.
- Privately fostered children.
- Children with a CAF.
- Children in need.
- Children working with operation engage.
- Those families referred to “Family wise”.

These children and young persons must be monitored very carefully and the smallest concern should be recorded on a cause for concern sheet and passed immediately to the DCPC or the deputy DCPC/Principal in the DCPC’s absence.

Concerns involving members of staff:

Any concerns that involve allegations against a member of staff should be referred immediately to the Principal who will contact the LADO to discuss and agree further action to be taken in respect of the child and the member of staff.

Further information regarding the procedure for managing situations involving members of staff, the Principal or the DCPC can be found in the Child Protection Procedures for Managing Allegations Against Staff. These have been emailed to all staff and further copies of this document are held by the Principal.

All staff need to be aware that it is a disciplinary offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk.

When in doubt – consult. (For specific guidance on how to respond to allegations against staff, please refer to the Child Protection Procedures for Managing Allegations Against Staff).

CODE OF PRACTICE:

All academy staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with relation to child protection. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults. Physical intervention should only be used when the child is endangering him/herself or others and such events should be recorded and signed by a witness. Staff intervening need to be Team Teach trained. Any physical interventions must be in line with the agreed policy.

All academy staff should work towards providing an environment and atmosphere for children and young people to enable them to feel safe to talk. However, staff should never promise a child to keep certain information confidential. It must be explained that staff have certain duties to help keep that child safe, which may involve informing others.

In addition to this staff should:

- Have personal mobile phones switched off during the Academy day.
- Never give out their personal mobile phone number to any student.
- Never communicate with students through chat rooms and social areas such as Facebook either during the academy day or at any other time.
- Leave classroom doors open where possible.

SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT:

Any member of staff affected by issues arising from concerns for children's welfare or safety can seek support from the DCPC or the Academy Counsellor directly.

All newly qualified teachers and classroom assistants have a mentor or co-ordinator with whom they can discuss concerns including the area of child protection.

The DCPC can put staff and parents in touch with outside agencies for professional support if they so wish.

Students placed on the vulnerable children list

This is a confidential register that can be accessed by staff in the shared area. The document is read only and cannot be printed. At no time should there be open discussions about any child. The DCPC will let staff know if it is felt that it is necessary to do so about any developments, likewise, if a member of staff has any concerns about a student who is on the register, please contact the DCPC and hand over written information as noted above.

Children in our care

We seek to ensure that CIOC gain maximum life change benefits through access to high quality educational opportunities and services, appropriate to their individual needs.

A student receiving their education at The Darwen Aldridge Community Academy can expect -

- To be treated as an individual.
- Not to be singled out or discriminated against in any way.
- To be given the same opportunities and encouragement as all other young people in the school.
- Cultural, religious and special educational needs will be met.
- An up to date Personal Education Plan
- Help to catch up if they have missed school because their placement has changed.
- Help if they can't attend school.
- Support and encouragement to attend activities after school, such as cultural, clubs, arts, drama and music clubs or anything else they might be interested in or want to try.
- Support and encouragement to meet new people, make new friends and feel more confident.

Information we hold about them will be kept confidential. If information is to be shared with others, we will always try to tell them beforehand.

In addition

The Academy has a designated Teacher for CIOC, David Cane, who will help students with any concerns that they have about their education.

The Academy has a designated Governor to champion the needs of Looked After Children. This is Bob Simpson.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES:

The DCPC is responsible for ensuring staff including himself receive training in the area of child protection.

MONITORING AND REVIEW:

All school personnel and governors will have a copy of this policy and will have the opportunity to consider and discuss its contents prior to the approval of the Governing Body being formally sought.

This policy was initially written in April 2008 and has been reviewed in October 2009 to reflect the new guidance and legislation issued in relation to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare within educational institutions.

The policy forms part of our academy development plan and will be reviewed annually.

All staff should have access to this policy and sign to the effect that they have read and understood its content.

Signed _____

Chair of Governors _____ **Date** _____

Date of next review: Autumn 2010