

Policy Title:	Safeguarding, Child Protection and Promoting Student Welfare
Policy Reference:	TOA034
Description:	For information and guidance and incorporating the Academy's vision and core values. This policy forms part of the portfolio of policies designed to keep students safe, happy and cared for
Status:	Statutory
Category:	Student
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Change Record

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THE OXFORD ACADEMY

The Oxford Academy is a learning environment at the heart of its community. We promote care and respect and expect high standards in all aspects of Academy life.

We aim to build a community clearly based on a Christian ethos, recognising the integrity and the unique value of each individual. We aim to build self-esteem, model conflict resolution and protect the vulnerable. We are committed to justice and compassion. Mutual respect and trust are central within the Academy.

Our vision for The Oxford Academy is based on the following beliefs:

- Education matters in society: the provision of a well ordered, stimulating learning environment is a common right for all our children
- The Academy should articulate social and moral values and respect for others, irrespective of their class, gender, race or religion
- The Academy will promote the highest achievement in youngsters, irrespective of their abilities or self-expectations. Competition and collaboration are both equally important to learning. The aspirations of all our students will be nurtured
- The Academy will celebrate students' achievements and challenge fixed notions of ability. We will value and reward young people's verbal, practical, academic, sporting, artistic and leadership skills
- An effective and flourishing Academy should be "public" rather than "private", explaining to parents what is being taught and how the curriculum is being interpreted. It should be open to praise and constructive feedback in a genuine spirit of partnership
- An effective Academy should work closely with neighbouring schools to improve opportunities for children and young people
- The work of the Academy will be underpinned at all times by its ultimate aim – to improve standards, achievement and the life chances of young people. The Oxford Academy is, first and foremost, a place of high quality learning and teaching for young people aged 11-19

This policy, and its associated procedures and protocols, is based on these key principles.

COVER SHEET

Contacts in Academy

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Safeguarding, Child Protection and Promoting Student Welfare

1. Purpose

- 1.1 At the Academy, we believe that an effective whole-school safeguarding and child protection policy is one which provides clear direction to staff and others about expected behaviour when dealing with safeguarding and child protection issues. An effective policy also makes explicit the Academy's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures. This ensures that safeguarding and child protection concerns, referrals and monitoring may be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which support the needs of the student.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 The Academy believes that students have a right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment which includes the right to protection from all types of abuse; where staff are vigilant for signs of any student in distress and are confident about applying the processes to avert and alleviate any such problems. The Academy recognises that, because staff are in regular and frequent contact with students, they are particularly well placed to safeguard and promote their welfare and try to protect them from abuse and inappropriate and inadequate care. The Academy is aware of the responsibilities which all staff have with regard to the welfare of students and is committed to acting in accordance with the Local Authority procedures in all cases where there is concern.
- 2.2 Safeguarding is "the process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully"
Working Together to Safeguard Children, DfES 2006.
- 2.3 Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a statutory responsibility on the Governing Body to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are students of the Academy (Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education DfES2006 issued November 2006 came into force 1 January 2007). We will review policies and procedures annually.
- 2.4 There are four main elements to our safeguarding and child protection policy:
 - a) Safer Recruitment processes are followed to ensure that those who are unsuitable to work with children are not employed.

- b) Prevention through the creation of a positive Academy atmosphere and the teaching, and pastoral support offered to students.
- c) Protection by following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns.
- d) Support to students who may have been abused.

2.5 This policy applies to all students, staff, governors, volunteers and visitors to The Oxford Academy.

2.6 The Academy recognises it is an agent of referral and not of investigation and enquiry.

3. Environment

3.1 We recognise that, for our students, high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult helps to prevent abuse.

Our Academy will therefore:

- a) Establish and maintain an environment where students feel safe and secure and are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- b) Ensure that students know that there are adults within the Academy who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
- c) Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for PSHCE which equip students with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse.
- d) Include in the curriculum material which will help students develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills.
- e) Ensure that, wherever possible, every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from partner agencies.
- f) Encourage students to adopt safe and responsible practices and deal sensibly with risk particularly when:
 - handling hazardous equipment and materials
 - participating in outdoor activities
 - attending alternative education or work-related provision
 - using the internet
 - in contact with groups that encourage the use of violence

4. Framework

- 4.1 Child protection is the responsibility of all adults and especially those working with children. The development of appropriate procedures locally and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of the Oxfordshire Local Safeguarding Children Board (OLSCB). The Oxford Academy endeavours to work within the framework set out by OLSCB.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- 5.1 All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them. There are, however, key people within the Academy and the Local Authority who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures. The names of those carrying out these responsibilities for the current year are listed on the cover sheet of this document.
- 5.2 It is the role of the Designated Child Protection Person to ensure that all of the child protection procedures are followed within the Academy and to make appropriate, timely referrals to Oxford City Assessment Team (01865 323048) or The Children and Families Local Assessment Team (01865 810501/0800 833408), in accordance with Academy procedures. If, for any reason, the Designated Child Protection Person (see cover sheet) is unavailable, a Senior Leadership Team Safeguarding Link has been identified who will act in their absence (see cover sheet). Additionally, it is the role of the Designated Child Protection Person to ensure all staff employed, including temporary staff and volunteers, within the Academy are aware of our internal procedures, to advise staff and to offer support to those requiring this.
- 5.3 The Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring that the Academy follows safe recruitment processes. As part of the Academy's recruitment and vetting process, enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) will be sought on all staff that have substantial and unsupervised access to students. ISA List checks (formerly List 99), identity and qualification checks and 'right to work in England' checks together with local intelligence checks will be carried out for all staff. This information is held in an immediately accessible Single Central Record by the Academy Office Manager.
- 5.4 The Academy will request written confirmation of the relevant checks for agency staff.
- 5.5 The Academy will ensure that DCSF guidance in relation to governors and volunteers is adhered to.
- 5.6 The role of the Nominated Governor for Child Protection is to ensure that the Academy has an effective policy, that LSCB Guidelines are complied with and to support the Academy in this aspect. Governors must not be given details relating to individual child protection cases or situations to ensure confidentiality is not breached.

- 5.7 The Designated Child Protection Person and the Principal provide an annual report for the Governing Body detailing any changes to the policy and procedures, training undertaken by all staff and governors and other relevant issues.
- 5.8 The Children and Families Local Assessment Team and Schools Safeguarding Team are available to offer advice and support. Specific training is available for the Academy's Designated Child Protection Person.

6. Procedures

- 6.1 All action is taken in line with the following guidance;
- a) Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Procedures Manual (as amended from time to time and currently July 2009).
 - b) When recruiting to posts which involve working with children and/or vulnerable adults, it is essential that safe recruitment processes are followed, including Criminal Record (CRB) checks. Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (DfES2006, issued November 2006, came into force on 1 January 2007) and can be found on www.everychildmatters.gov.uk.
 - c) Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006, Department of Health).
 - d) and all guidance documents on the ASCB website. Follow link to professionals then guidance.
- 6.2 Staff are kept informed about child protection responsibilities and procedures through induction, briefings and awareness training. There may be other adults in the Academy who rarely work unsupervised, more usually working alongside members of the Academy's staff. However, the Principal will ensure they are aware of the Academy's policy and the identity of the Designated Child Protection Person.
- 6.3 Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure of abuse, an allegation or suspects that abuse may have occurred **must** report it immediately to the Designated Child Protection Person (see cover sheet) or, in their absence, the Senior Leadership Team Safeguarding Link (see cover sheet). In the absence of either of the above, the matter should be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff.
- 6.4 The Designated Child Protection Person or the Senior Leadership Team Safeguarding Link will immediately refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the Duty Social Worker, Children and Families Local Assessment Team (see cover sheet).
- 6.5 Essential information to be provided will include the student's name, address, date of birth, family composition, the reason for the referral, whether the student's parents are

aware of the referral, the name of person who initially received the disclosure plus any advice given. A telephone referral to the Children and Families Local Assessment Team – in cases where there are immediate safeguarding concerns - should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours. This written confirmation must be signed and dated by the referrer. In cases where there have been mounting concerns about a student it is likely that a CAF (Common Assessment Framework) will already have been completed prior to a child protection referral.

- 6.6 The Academy will always undertake to share its intention to refer a student to the Children and Families Local Assessment Team with the parents or carers unless to do so could, in their view at the time, place the student at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. On these occasions advice will be taken from the Children and Families Local Assessment Team.
- 6.7 The Academy will routinely inform social workers about every exclusion, or removal from the school roll, of a student who is subject to a child protection plan.
- 6.8 A statement in the Academy brochure will inform parents and carers about the Academy's duties and responsibilities under child protection procedures. Parents can obtain a copy of the Academy's Safeguarding, Child Protection and Promoting Student Welfare policy from the website or on request.

7. Training and Support

- 7.1 The Principal and all other staff who work with students will undertake appropriate child protection awareness training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively. This will be kept up to date by refresher training at three yearly intervals as set out in Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education DfES2006.
- 7.2 The Academy will ensure that the Designated Child Protection Person also undertakes training in inter-agency working and refresher training at two yearly intervals to keep knowledge and skills up to date. Temporary staff and volunteers who work with students in the Academy will be made aware of the Academy's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities. There is specific Designated Person in school training in Oxfordshire.
- 7.3 Support will be available for staff from the Principal in the first instance, and from members of the Academy's leadership team where there are concerns about queries about child protection.
- 7.4 All staff should have access to advice and guidance on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct. These matters form part of staff induction.

8. Professional Confidentiality

- 8.1 Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the student. A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to a student nor should they agree with a student to keep a secret, as, where there is a child protection concern, this must be reported to the Designated Child Protection Person and may require further investigation by appropriate authorities. Students can be reassured that only the people who “need to know” will be informed, that this will be the minimum necessary and that information will not become common knowledge.
- 8.2 Staff will be informed of relevant information in respect of individual cases regarding child protection on a “need to know basis” only. Any information shared with a member of staff in this way must be held confidentially to themselves.

9. Records and Monitoring

- 9.1 Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. We are clear about the need to record any concern held about a student or students within the Academy, the status of such records and when these records should be passed over to other agencies.
- 9.2 Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse must make an accurate record as soon as possible noting what was said or seen, putting the event in context and giving the date, time and location. All records will be dated and signed and will include the action taken.
- 9.3 These file notes are kept in a confidential file, which is separate to other files, and stored in a secure place in the Student Counsellor’s office. In the same way, notes must be kept of any student who is being monitored for child protection reasons.
- 9.4 If a pupil transfers from the Academy, these files will be copied for the new establishment and forwarded to the student’s new school marked confidential and for the attention of the receiving school’s Designated Child Protection Person within the statutory timeframe.

10. Attendance at Child Protection Conferences & Core Groups

- 10.1 It is the responsibility of the Designated Child Protection Person to ensure that the Academy is represented and a report is submitted to any child protection conference called for students on their school roll or previously known to them. Whoever attends should be fully briefed on any issues or concerns the Academy has.

10.2 Schools will be part of Core Groups for children subject to Child Protection Plans. Core Groups meet regularly to review and update Child Protection Plans and the Designated Child Protection Person will ensure that the Academy is represented at these meetings and that a record of the meetings are kept. When a student is made subject to a Child Protection Plan, it is the Designated Child Protection Person's responsibility to ensure that the student is monitored regarding their school attendance, welfare and presentation. The key worker will be informed if there is unexplained absence of two or more days of a student who is subject to a Child Protection Plan. If the Academy is part of the core group, the Child Protection Person should ensure that the Academy is represented at these meetings and that there is a record of attendance and issues discussed. All concerns about the child protection plan and/or the student's welfare should be discussed and recorded at the core group meeting unless the student is at further risk of significant harm. In this case the Child Protection Person must inform the student's key worker **immediately** and then record that they have done so and the actions agreed.

11. Supporting Students at Risk

11.1 The Academy recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth or view the world as a positive place.

11.2 School may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, whilst at the Academy their behaviour may still be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.

11.3 This Academy will endeavour to support students through:

- a) The curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation.
- b) The Academy ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all students and adults a sense of being respected and valued.
- c) The implementation of the Academy's behaviour management policies.
- d) A consistent approach agreed by all staff which will endeavour to ensure the student knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but s/he is valued and to encourage and enable them to report and concerns or complaints.
- e) Regular liaison with other professionals and agencies that support the students and their families.
- f) A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in the child's best interest to do so.

- g) The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group, trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations.
 - h) Recognition that statistically children and young people with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse, so staff who work in any capacity with students with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and/or emotional and behavioural problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.
 - i) Recognition that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, students may also be vulnerable and in need of support and/or protection.
- 11.4 This policy should be read in conjunction with the Attendance, Equal Opportunities, Complaints, Confidentiality (within the Sex and Relationship Education policy), Race Equalities policy and the DCSF document: Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education.

12. Safe School, Safe Staff

- 12.1 It is essential that the high standards of concern and professional responsibility adopted with regard to alleged child abuse by parents are similarly displayed when members of staff are accused of abuse.
- 12.2 Only authorised agencies may investigate child abuse allegations (Social Care Services, the Police or, in some areas, the NSPCC). Whilst it is permissible to ask the child(ren) simple, non-leading questions to ascertain the facts of the allegation, formal interviews and the taking of statements is not.
- 12.3 The procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff is set out in (i) Guidance for Education Staff facing an allegation of Child Abuse (August 2007), a copy of which is available in the Principal's office, and (ii) on the OSCB website.
- 12.4 The Principal or another member of the Senior Leadership Team should, in the first instance, contact the Local Authority Designated Person (LADO (schools) or LADO). Through discussion and consultation, a decision will be made whether to hold an Allegation Strategy Meeting. Where the allegation is against the Principal, the Chair of Governors will take this action.
- 12.5 If for any reason it is decided that an Allegations Strategy Meeting is not appropriate, it may be necessary to address matters in accordance with the Academy's disciplinary procedures in liaison with the Academy's HR Advisor.

13. Use of the School Premises by Other Organisations

- 13.1 Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, using the Academy premises, the Governing Body will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and child protection.

14. Policy Review

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Ensuring the annual review of this policy
- Ensuring that the list of key contacts on this cover sheet is kept up to date

Reviewed and approved by the Governing Body in November 2009