



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Review Date:	March 2008	Last review date:	N/A
Policy Adopted:	August 2007	Next review date:	TBD

This Policy incorporates the Academy's vision and core values.

Introduction

It is our belief that students have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment where the staff are vigilant for signs of any student in distress and are confident about applying the processes to alleviate such problems.

Purpose:

The purpose of this Policy is:

- to identify, support and monitor vulnerable students
- to make clear support systems for students in distress
- to support students, parents/carers and staff in dealing with Child Protection issues
- to provide a regular, quality INSET training for all adults
- to identify a designated teacher for Child Protection referral procedures
- to develop access to support services that support students, parents/carers and staff in dealing with Child Protection matters, ensuring that contact details are readily and easily available to all
- to set out procedures to deal with accusations of staff misconduct

This policy links to the Attendance, Equal Equality and Racial Awareness policies.

Guidelines and Procedures

It is the responsibility of everyone in the Academy community to be vigilant about student safety and child protection.

Head of School will:

- ensure that everyone knows what child protection is and that it is taken seriously
- ensure that a member of staff is designated as the Child Protection Person and receives the appropriate training
- encourage students and parents to inform the Academy of issues
- ensure that the development of the use of new and existing media technologies do not expose students to any potential harm
- work with the Lead Teacher – ICT to ensure safeguarding when using digital media and education of students in safe use of the Internet
- ensure that the Academy has access to the external and internal resources to offer extensive support
- work with the governors to nominate a governor with responsibility for Child Protection and that the appropriate training is received
- ensure that all staff, governors and regular site users have had Enhanced Disclosure checks
- monitor the processes for Child Protection and ensure that adequate resources are given to it



Strategic Leadership Team:

- be visible around the site and alert to signs of student distress
- ensure that all staff are confident in how to deal with and refer on any issue surrounding Child Protection
- develop links with extended services that could be used to support students
- identify students in need of support and ensure that such support is allocated
- publicise all support services to students, ensuring that all such information is readily and easily accessible
- develop systems for student voice to be heard – as individuals and groups of students
- ensure that assemblies and citizenship programmes develop the Academy ethos of care, support and helping others
- ensure that the Academy site is secure, with all visitors being monitored and CP checks for regular site users
- ensure that all publicity materials and requests for information are dealt with appropriately, taking the issue of child protection into account.

All staff:

- be alert to all forms of student distress and encourage them to talk about any concerns, without promising confidentiality
- refer any concerns to a line manager or designated Child Protection Person (Deputy Head of School (Inclusion))
- be assertive in dealing with students, but not aggressive. Be sensitive to students' feelings. Be aware that some youngsters feel vulnerable and may need your support
- understand that physical contact should only be made to restrain youngsters in danger of hurting either themselves or someone else.

Students:

- understand the need to keep individuals safe and its impact upon others
- be aware of other people's feelings and sensitivities
- understand that some 'jokes' are not commonly understood or appreciated and may cause offence
- encourage each other to report any concerns or issues
- be prepared to accept that people make mistakes and can learn from them. This includes people who have been involved in bullying.

The Academy:

The Academy will respond to any reported incident of bullying:

- incidents will be dealt with quickly, firmly and fairly, parents/carers of bullies and victims should be involved where appropriate
- a reconciliation/peer mediation/mentoring scheme will be available for students.

The Academy has procedures for dealing with incidents such as bullying. If the bullying persists, staged action for both the bully and the victim will need to be adopted, with strategies included in the students' Individual Education Plans (IEPs). It may be appropriate to provide one-to-one counselling support.

The Academy will continue to raise awareness of bullying issues through its PSHE programme, the peer mediation scheme peer mentoring and the Academy Council.

Appendix: Additional Guidance

The response to bullying should aim to support the individual who feels under threat and change 'bullying' behaviour. Action should take into account the effect the behaviour has had on the victim; **remember**, the same behaviour will have different effects on different people. An awareness in the bully(ies) of the **effect** of his/her behaviour should therefore always be sought.

1. Staff should seek support if they are unsure what to do, feel unable to tackle any incident or feel they need to refer a situation on. Staff should only deal with incidents where they feel confident to do so. However, it is hoped that incidents can be responded to by:
 - their Director of Learning
 - Student Support Manager
 - Strategic Leadership Team members.
2. All reported incidents of bullying should be taken seriously, recorded and any **subsequent action logged** using the management information system.
3. **A variety of strategies may be used in response:**
 - a) A non-punitive response may be appropriate: **we recommend the 'no blame approach'** (below) as a **first-level** response in all cases (except where significant violence or other unlawful action has taken place).

THE NO-BLAME APPROACH

These steps prove to be very effective in stopping bullying recurring:

- **interviewing victim** - not to question fine details of incidents but to talk about how they feel, and who else is involved
- **convene a meeting with people involved** – this may include bystanders or colluders
- **explain the problems** - to tell them about the way the victim is feeling (not to discuss details of incident or allocate blame)
- **share responsibility** - encourage the group to take responsibility and do something about it
- **ask for ideas** - about how to make 'victim' feel happier from each member of the group
- **leave it up to them** - end the meeting by passing over responsibility to the group to solve the problem. Arrange to meet again to see how things are going
- **meet them again** - a week or so later to see how things are going. Also check with the victim - monitor the progress and keep the pupils involved and informed.

REMEMBER 'No Blame' does not mean 'No Action'

- b) **Sanctions** against a 'bully' (or bullies) may be appropriate in accordance with wider Academy policies and 'previous record' of pupils involved, repeated anti-social behaviour (not responding to 'no blame' approach) **OR** incident or significant violence or unlawful behaviour.

These might include:

- verbal warning
- detentions
- letter home
- exclusion

However, changing bullying behaviour is unlikely to be achieved through sanctions alone. Sanctions may also produce resentment which will further endanger 'the victim'. Therefore, also follow up sanctions by regularly checking with victim **and** bully about 'how things are going'. Record the response, where appropriate, and make any further input as necessary.

4. Victims of bullying may need additional support, the degree of which will be related to the effect that the incident has had on the victim.
5. Pupils who are habitually involved in bullying behaviour need to be counselled and their parents/carers informed (about the behaviour **and** the Academy's response).
6. New parents/carers need to be clear about the Academy's attitude to bullying and the Academy's response discussed as appropriate.
7. Verbal bullying should be recognised as equally serious as physical bullying. Where sanctions are involved they may need to be on a par with the sanctions used in cases of physical bullying.
8. Existing Academy guidelines on rights and responsibilities should be used in discouraging bullying behaviour in order to develop a supportive anti-bullying culture within the Academy.
9. A number of students will form a peer mentoring/mediation team, each of them having undergone training in counselling skills. The students will be attached to each Mini-school and will be available to assist students as necessary.

They will also assist in the Bullying-Awareness Activities.

10. Preventative work is specifically undertaken in a number of areas of the curriculum, e.g.
 - PSHE Working on self-esteem, rights and responsibilities, bullying, equality, racism, stereotyping, relationships
 - Year 7 Working together – Awareness of others' emotions and sensitivities
 - Drama Work on recognition of bullying, peer pressure, equal rights, gender.

This guidance will be reviewed:

- as part of the Anti-Bullying Policy review
- as part of a wider review of the overall Behaviour Management of the Academy.