CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

St Mary Magdalene Academy is a Christian community of learning. We aim to nurture young people to become high achievers and to discover their vocation in the global society.

"Show by a good life that your works are done by gentleness born of wisdom"
James 3.13

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

ST MARY MAGDALENE ACADEMY

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1.1 **Introduction**

 1.1.1 St Mary Magdalene Academy and St Mary Magdalene Academy: the Courtyard recognise our statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 requires proprietors of academies to have arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at their Academy.

 1.1.2 The Academy's key safeguarding principles are:

  1.1.2.1 we will provide a safe environment where children are respected and valued;

  1.1.2.2 we will be alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective protection;

  1.1.2.3 pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support;

  1.1.2.4 our Child Protection Policy will be reviewed annually, unless an incident, new legislation or guidance requires an interim review.

1.2 **Definitions**

 1.2.1 **Safeguarding** refers to the process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing the impairment of development, ensuring that children receive safe and effective care and undertaking that role so as to enable those children to enter adulthood successfully.

 1.2.2 **Child protection** refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

 1.2.3 **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.

 1.2.4 **Child** refers to all young people under 18 years old.

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

1.3 **Roles and responsibilities**

 1.3.1 The Designated Teacher Child Protection Officer (DTCPO):

  1.3.1.1 acts as a source of support and expertise to the Academy staff;

1.3.1.2   attends child protection conferences;

1.3.1.3   ensures that all staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood the Child Protection Policy;

1.3.1.4   liaises with the nominated Governor and Headteacher as appropriate;

1.3.1.5   keeps written records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely but kept separate from, the child's general file;

1.3.1.6   refers cases of suspected abuse to children's social care or police;

1.3.1.7   ensures that when a pupil with a child protection plan leaves the Academy, his/her information is passed to their new school and the pupil's social worker is informed;

1.3.1.8   has an understanding of and implements procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB);

1.3.1.9   develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies;

1.3.1.10   makes the Child Protection Policy available to parents.

1.3.2   **The deputy DTCPO**

    1.3.2.1   in the absence of the DTCPO, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils;

    1.3.2.2   in the event of the long-term absence of the designated person, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

1.3.3   **The Governing Body**

    1.3.3.1   ensures that a Child Protection Policy is in place that is reviewed annually;

    1.3.3.2   ensures that the DTCPO attends appropriate refresher training every two years;

    1.3.3.3   ensures that all other staff who work with children undertake training at three yearly intervals;

    1.3.3.4   ensures that there are procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff;

    1.3.3.5   ensures that there are safe recruitment procedures that include the requirement for statutory checks on staff suitability to work with children;

    1.3.3.6   nominates a member (normally the Chair of Governors) to be responsible for liaising with the local authority and other agencies in the event of an allegation being made against the Headteacher;

    1.3.3.7   will submit an annual report to the local authority, if required, about how the Governing Body's duties have been carried out.

1.3.4   **The Headteacher**

    1.3.4.1   ensures that the Child Protection Policy is implemented and followed by all staff;

    1.3.4.2   allocates sufficient time and resources to enable the DTCPO and deputy DTCPO to carry out their roles effectively;

    1.3.4.3   ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about unsafe practice and that such concerns are

handled sensitively and in accordance with the Academy's whistleblowing policy;

1.3.4.4 ensures that pupils' safety and welfare is addressed through the curriculum.

1.4 **Staff guidelines**

Staff should follow good practice:

1.4.1 setting a good example by conducting themselves appropriately;

1.4.2 being good listeners;

1.4.3 being alert to changes in pupils' behaviour;

1.4.4 recording concerns and giving the record to the DTCPO;

1.4.5 recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse;

1.4.6 reading and understanding the Academy's Child Protection Policy and policies on wider issues, for example, bullying, behaviour, physical contact and information-sharing;

1.4.7 asking the pupil's permission before initiating physical contact such as physical support during PE;

1.4.8 maintaining appropriate standards of conversation with and between pupils and avoiding the use of sexualised language;

1.4.9 applying the use of reasonable force only as a last resort and in compliance with the Academy's policy.

1.5 **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 will receive training during their induction. Governors will commit to attending the relevant training course on election or appointment to the Governing Body.

1.6 **Abuse of trust**

All staff must be aware that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable. 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 Academy staff and a pupil

under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that pupil is over the age of consent.

1.7 **Safeguarding pupils who are vulnerable to extremism**

1.7.1 The Academy values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs / ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Both pupils/students and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

1.7.2 The current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation. The Academy is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern and will be followed up via the same protocol as other safeguarding concerns. In the event of a concern, the DTCPO will make a referral to Children's Social Care and alert the Islington Council Prevent Co-ordinator.

1.7.3 The Academy will comply with the duty to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements.

1.7.4 The Academy actively promotes the Prevent agenda by educating its pupils about British values and the dangers of extremism via the Citizenship and Guardian curricula and also in Academy assemblies.

1.7.5 The Academy is required to identify a Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to act as the lead within the organisation for safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism. The DTCPO has this responsibility.

1.7.6 When any member of staff has concerns that a pupil may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the SPOC.

1.7.7   A referral from the SPOC to the police and social care may lead to a pupil being identified as suitable for support via the Channel programme. Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. The programme uses a multi-agency approach to protect vulnerable people.

1.8   **Children who may be particularly vulnerable**

1.8.1   Some children may have an increased risk of abuse due to their particular life circumstances or physical and emotional needs.

1.8.2   To ensure that all of the Academy's pupils receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

1.8.2.1   disabled or have special educational needs;

1.8.2.2   affected by parental substance misuse;

1.8.2.3   looked-after children;

1.8.2.4   vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying;

1.8.2.5   living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations;

1.8.2.6   at risk of female genital mutilation or forced marriage; and/or

1.8.2.7   at risk of child sexual exploitation.

1.8.3   This list provides examples of particularly vulnerable groups and is not exhaustive.

1.8.4   The Academy recognises that the current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of vulnerable young people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism.

1.8.5   Our staff are trained and supported to recognise warning signs and symptoms in relation to specific issues including female genital mutilation (FGM) child sexual exploitation (CSE) and the Prevent Duty.

1.9 Female Genital Mutilation

1.9.1 Definition: Female genital mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It is important to note that the procedure has no health benefits.

1.9.2 The Serious Crime Act 2015 introduced a legal duty for specific professional groups to report to the police any girl who has had FGM. This duty applies when a girl informs the professional that FGM has been carried out on her and/or the professional observes physical signs on the girl appearing to show that FGM has been carried out. The duty applies to all teachers and all regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales.

1.9.3 If the Academy were to become concerned that a pupil may be about to undergo FGM or believe that a pupil has undergone this procedure already, this matter would be referred to the police and to social care.

1.9.4 FGM will be taught as part of the Citizenship curriculum in Year Seven in accordance with the Academy's duty to both educate and safeguard its pupils.

1.10 Helping children to keep themselves safe

1.10.1 Children are taught to understand and manage risk through the Academy's Citizenship Education lessons and through all aspects of Academy life. Our approach is designed to help children to think about risks they may encounter and work out how those risks might be overcome.

1.10.2 Children are also reminded regularly about e-safety and tackling bullying procedures. Pupils are encouraged to speak to a member of staff in confidence about any concerns they may have or report their concern via the Academy's website.

1.10.3 Random pupil searches are conducted every half-term in order to discourage the carrying of offensive weapons and other dangerous banned items. These searches are conducted by Pastoral Department staff authorised by the Headteacher to do so and in accordance with the powers that teachers have as per the DfE guidance document *Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for Headteachers, Academy staff and governing bodies* (DfE: 2014)

1.11 **Complaints**

The Academy's complaints procedure will be followed where a pupil or parent raises a concern about poor practice that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action.

1.12 **Concerns about a member of staff**

1.12.1 Staff members who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a pupil must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. The Academy's whistleblowing policy enables staff to raise concerns or allegations in confidence. All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues should be reported to the Headteacher. Complaints about the Headteacher should be reported to the Chair of Governors.

1.12.2 When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed. We must accept that some professionals do pose a serious risk to pupils and we must act on every allegation. Staff members 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 the default option and alternatives to suspension will always be considered. Allegations against staff will be dealt with in accordance with the Academy's dealing with allegations of abuse policy.

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

Child abuse can result in distress for staff members who become involved. We will support staff by:

1.13.1 taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously;

1.13.2 responding sympathetically to any request from staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety;

1.13.3 offering details of helplines and counselling.

1.14 **Safer recruitment**

1.14.1 Our Academy endeavours to ensure that we do our utmost to recruit appropriate staff.

1.14.2 Safer recruitment means that all applicants will:

1.14.2.1 complete an application form;

1.14.2.2 provide two referees, including at least one who can comment on the applicant's suitability to work

with children;

    1.14.2.3   provide evidence of identity and qualifications;

    1.14.2.4   be checked in accordance with the Disclosure and Barring Service regulations as appropriate to their role; and

    1.14.2.5   be interviewed by at least one member of staff trained in "Safer Recruitment"

1.15 Site security

Visitors to the Academy, including contractors, are asked to sign in and are given a badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site.

Academy staff and Sixth Form students are expected to wear an Academy lanyard for easy identification. Any adults who are not wearing a lanyard will be challenged to confirm their identity if necessary.

1.16 Extended services and off-site arrangements

Where extended Academy activities are provided by and managed by the Academy, our own Child Protection Policy applies. If other organisations provide services on our site we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place. When our pupils attend off-site activities, we will check that effective child protection and health and safety arrangements are in place by ensuring that their staff are DBS and Barred List check and or pupils are always accompanied by a member of the Academy staff who has been DBS and Barred List checked.

1.17 Photography, filming and images

    1.17.1   Some people abuse children through taking or using images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place.

    1.17.2   To protect pupils we will:

    1.17.2.1   seek their consent for photographs and films to be taken or published;

    1.17.2.2   seek parental consent;

    1.17.2.3   use only the pupil's first name with an image; and

    1.17.2.4   ensure pupils are appropriately dressed.

1.18 E-Safety

Pupils routinely use mobile phones and computers and are therefore

open to the receipt of abusive texts, comments and emails or attempts to entice children to engage in sexually harmful conversations or face-to-face meetings. The Academy's e-safety policy explains how we try to keep pupils safe in the Academy. Chat rooms and social networking sites are the more obvious sources of inappropriate and harmful behaviour and pupils are not allowed to access these sites in the Academy. Cyber-bullying by pupils, via texts, emails and social media sites will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through the Academy's Anti-Bullying policy.

1.19 Recognising abuse

To ensure that our pupils are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect. There are four categories of abuse:

1.19.1 Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

1.19.2 Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or making fun of what they say. It may involve serious bullying; causing children frequently to feel frightened or it may involve the corruption of children.

1.19.3 Sexual abuse and exploitation

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse.

1.19.4 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 involve a parent failing to provide adequate food and clothing or shelter; failing to ensure

adequate supervision; or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

1.19.5 **Indicators of abuse**

1.19.5.1 Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, or broken bones. It is quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries as deliberate with any degree of certainty. It is vital that staff members are also

aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the DTCPO.

1.19.5.2 A child who is being abused or neglected may:

1.19.5.3 have bruises, bleeding, burns or fractures;

1.19.5.4 show signs of pain;

1.19.5.5 keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather;

1.19.5.6 be concerned about changing for PE;

1.19.5.7 look unkempt and uncared for;

1.19.5.8 change his/her eating habits;

1.19.5.9 have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships;

1.19.5.10 be reckless with regard to his/her own or other's safety;

1.19.5.11 self-harm;

1.19.5.12 frequently miss school or arrive late;

1.19.5.13 show signs of not wanting to go home;

1.19.5.14 become uninterested in his/her Academy work;

1.19.5.15 be constantly tired;

1.19.5.16 be wary of physical contact;

1.19.5.17 be particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol;

1.19.5.18 display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age.

1.19.6 **Children with sexually harmful behaviour**

Children may be harmed by other children. The management of

children with sexually harmful behaviour is complex and the Academy will work with other agencies to maintain the safety of the whole Academy community. Children who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator. Staff members who become concerned about a pupil's sexual behaviour should speak to the DTCPO as soon as possible **Sexual exploitation**

Children can be unwittingly drawn into sexual exploitation through the offer of friendship and gifts. Sexual exploitation is a serious crime and can have a long-lasting adverse impact on a child's health. All staff must report concerns to the DTCPO as soon as possible.

1.19.7 **Action**

Key points for taking action are:

1.19.7.1 in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, for example, call 999;

1.19.7.2 report your concern to the DTCPO by the end of the day;

1.19.7.3 do not start your own investigation;

1.19.7.4 share information on a need-to-know basis only;

1.19.7.5 complete a record of your concern;

1.19.7.6 seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

1.20 **If you are concerned about a pupil's welfare**

1.20.1 There will be occasions when you suspect that a pupil may be at risk, but you have no actual evidence. The pupil's behaviour may have changed, they may write stories that reveal distress, or you may have noticed physical but inconclusive signs. In these circumstances, you should try to give the pupil the opportunity to talk. It is fine to ask the pupil if they are OK or if you can help in any way.

1.20.2 You must record these early concerns. If, following your conversation, you remain concerned; you should discuss your concerns with the DTCPO.

1.21 **If a pupil makes a disclosure**

1.21.1 It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. If a pupil 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.

1.21.2   During your conversation with the pupil:

    1.21.2.1   allow them to speak freely;

    1.21.2.2   remain calm and do not over react;

    1.21.2.3   give reassuring nods or words of comfort - 'I'm so sorry this has happened', 'This isn't your fault';

    1.21.2.4   under no circumstances ask investigative questions, such as how many times this has happened;

    1.21.2.5   do not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort;

    1.21.2.6   tell the pupil what will happen next. The pupil may agree to go with you to see the DTCPO. Otherwise let them know that someone will come to see them before the end of the day;

    1.21.2.7   report verbally to the DTCPO as soon as possible;

    1.21.2.8   record your conversation in writing and hand it to the DTCPO;

    1.21.2.9   seek support if you feel distressed.

1.22 Notifying parents

The DTCPO will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. However, if the DTCPO believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, then advice will first be sought from children's social care.

1.23 Referral to children's social care

The DTCPO will make a referral to children's social care if it is believed that a pupil is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The pupil (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.

1.24 Confidentiality and sharing information

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

1.24.2   Staff should only discuss concerns with the DTCPO, Headteacher, Lead Safeguarding Governor or Chair of Governors. That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it. Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with Data Protection Act 1998 principles.

1.24.3   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. Child protection information will be stored separately from the pupil's Academy file and the Academy file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held.

1.24.4   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. The Data Protection Act does not prevent Academy staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

1.25 **Reporting directly to child protection agencies**

1.25.1   Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care, police or the NSPCC if:

1.25.2   the situation is an emergency and the DTCPO, their deputy, the Headteacher and the Chair of Governors are all unavailable; and

1.25.3   they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil's safety.

1.26 **Responding to Ofsted/Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**

1.26.1   If any concerns are raised by the LADO or Ofsted about safeguarding issues at the Academy, the following actions should be taken:

1.26.2   the DTCPO must carry out an investigation as a priority and must comply with any deadlines given by the LADO or Ofsted;

1.26.3   the Chair of Governors must report to the LADO or Ofsted on the findings of the investigation and set out any appropriate action to be taken by the Academy;

1.26.4   the Academy must endeavour to comply as soon as possible with any recommendations from the LADO or Ofsted.