



# Leigh Academies Trust



## Child Protection Policy

The Child Protection Policy of Leigh Academies Trust has been reviewed and adopted by the Governing Body on 14th September 2009.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Chief Executive

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Chair of Governors

**Date of Policy: September 2009**  
**To be reviewed: September 2010**

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## INTRODUCTION AND AIMS

The Governing body and staff take seriously our responsibility under Sections 175 and 157 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children; and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements are in place within each Academy to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering harm

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and related guidance. This includes the DfES guidance Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2007), the Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (2000) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006).

The Designated Child Protection Co-ordinators (DCPC) who has overall responsibility for Child Protection practice in the Academy are Mr N. Willis, Principal (Longfield) and Mr M Ditchfield Vice Principal (Leigh).

At Longfield Mr Willis is supported in this role by other designated Child Protection staff:  
Miss L. Walker, Vice Principal  
Mrs S. Craddy, Assistant Headteacher  
Mr S. Ashen, Assistant Headteacher  
Mr I. Hinks, Assistant Headteacher

At Leigh, Mr Ditchfield is supported in this role by other designated Child Protection staff:

Mr M Turner  
Mr K Brewer – LAC Co-ordinator

The Designated Child Protection Governor is Mr R. Webb

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

- ❑ Maintaining children's welfare as our paramount concern
- ❑ Providing an environment in which young people of all ethnic and national groups 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
- ❑ Recognising that we live in a multi-cultural and multi-faith community and thereby seek to provide suitable support and guidance for all students that acknowledges this, 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. These will actively promote the value of all cultures and promote racial harmony

- ❑ Working with parents to build an understanding of the Federations responsibility to ensure the welfare of all young people 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 Federation procedures and lines of communication.
- ❑ Monitoring 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
- ❑ Promoting race equality within all Child Protection practices and procedures

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

### **Federation**

The Federation is responsible for ensuring that all action taken is in line with Kent’s Safeguarding Children procedure. This process implemented in November 2007 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 each 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. Each Academy may also have a role in the provision of services to Children in Need and their families.

All adults engaged within the Federation 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 each Academy in situations where there are Child Protection concerns is NOT to investigate but to recognise and refer.

### **Federation Child Protection Governor**

The Governor will liaise regularly with the DCPCs to ensure that;

- All aspects of the CP Policy are being fully implemented.

- That there is an annual review of the CP Policy and Safeguarding Code of Conduct, and these are presented at the first Full Governors meeting of each Academic Year for ratification.
- Training strategies are in place for new staff, and that all members of the Federation receive appropriate refresher training.
- Senior Staff have received appropriate Safer Recruitment Training.
- That the CP Policy and supporting materials are available to all staff, and that the policy is published on each Academy website.

### **Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator:**

The Designated Child Protection Co-ordinators are responsible for:

- Co-ordinating Child Protection action within their 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 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 (in association with the CPD Co-ordinators in each Academy).
- Liaising with other professionals.
- Share good practice within the Federation

### **Other Designated Child Protection Staff**

These staff are identified on Page 3 of this policy. They have each undertaken Module 1 training and will assist the Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator by:

- Undertaking Child Protection action within the Academy, in accordance with the policy, including making referrals where appropriate.
- Ensuring that locally established procedures are followed including reporting and referral processes.
- Acting as a consultant for staff to discuss concerns.
- Representing the Academy at inter agency meetings with respect to Child Protection as directed by the DCPC.
- Liaising with other professionals and agencies.

## **GENERAL STRATEGIES**

### **Safeguarding Code of Conduct**

This is given in Appendix 1 of this Policy. This code sets out the standards of behaviour expected of all those associated with the Federation and the duty upon staff, volunteers and Governors to abide by.

## **Curriculum**

Issues relating to student safety are dealt within Citizenship+ (Longfield) and PHSE (Leigh)

Issues addressed include health education, personal safety, equal opportunities, drug education, and sex and relationships.

Sensitive issues are approached in an appropriate caring manner and staff work hard to create a secure learning environment. All students are made aware of sources of further information and support as necessary.

## **Behaviour Management Policy**

All Students that are vulnerable and / or exhibit challenging behaviours will be guided in understanding the boundaries of issues of confidentiality whilst being encouraged to talk about concerns in a safe environment. It will be made clear that this is a 'telling Academy'. The Student Support Co-ordinator will advise and assist in this process.

Each student will receive appropriate help in the form of one or more of the following:

- One to one support sessions.
- Focus groups
- Support to express their concerns and grievances with staff and other students in a controlled environment.
- Solution focussed brief therapy.
- Anger management.

Appropriate strategies for dealing with bullying, raising self-esteem and using the strengths of bullies in a more positive way, will be developed with individuals.

The Academy's Behaviour and Discipline Policy states that the Academy will work positively with external agencies. These include:

- Educational Psychology Service.
- Kent Attendance and Behaviour Service.
- Safe Schools.
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service.
- KCA Young Persons Drug and Alcohol Service.
- Time To Talk Counselling Service

## **Peer Mentoring & Cyberbully Mentoring**

Each Academy engages in Mentoring programmes which allow young people to support each other. Training programmes for each of these includes specific sections related to Child Protection. All mentors are aware of what to do and to whom to speak should they have any concerns raised with them.

## **Looked After Children**

The designated Looked After Child Co-ordinators are Mrs M. Willis, Director of Learning (Longfield), and Mr K Brewer (Leigh).

They liaise with the students, carers and external agencies, maintaining documentation as necessary.

Other designated Child Protection staff are aware of the students who are 'Looked After', and to which Child Protection matters may pertain.

Regular contact regarding Looked After Children is maintained between the Co-ordinator and appropriate social service teams.

The school nurse will have regular contact with Looked After Children to address any health needs.

## **School Nurse**

The school nurse assigned to Longfield Academy is Mrs S. Allen and Mrs C Syred/Mrs C Mulhleder at the Leigh. They, liaise with the DCPC or other designated Child Protection staff:

- Students on the Child Protection register to enable successful completion of any Child Protection Plan. This may include seeing each student once a month.
- Any student about whom she has concerns which may involve a Child Protection issue, and about whom she may make a referral.

The School Nurse Service attends Child Protection Conferences, reviews and core group meetings, as required.

## **PROCEDURES**

A copy of Kent's Child in Need/Child Protection Procedure and Assessment Framework is available to all staff through each DCPC and contains details of procedures and the categories and definitions of abuse.

### **Recognition and categories of abuse**

Everyone within the Federation 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

The signs and symptoms of abuse are listed in a leaflet 'Guidelines for School staff' distributed to all staff. It is also displayed on staff notice boards.

When staff join the Federation they will be made aware both verbally and through the relevant staff handbooks what to do and whom to contact if they have any Child Protection concerns. This is reinforced with all staff annually.

## **Responding to concerns**

Concerns for a 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 young person however insignificant this might appear to be should discuss this with the DCPC or other designated Child Protection staff as soon as is practically possible. More serious concerns must be reported immediately to ensure that any intervention necessary to protect the young person is accessed as early as possible.

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

- Allow the young person to make the disclosure at their own pace and in their own way
- Avoid interrupting except to clarify what the young person is saying
- Not ask leading questions or probe for information that the young person does not volunteer
- Reassure the 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 or other designated Child Protection staff.

If other designated Child Protection staff receives information they will, at the earliest opportunity, discuss with the DCPC the information received and any subsequent actions undertaken. This will enable an appropriate plan to be developed and implemented in relation to the specific disclosure.

## **Record keeping**

Staff 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 young person that gives cause for concern should be recorded on an incident sheet, copies of which are available in the staff room. It is important that records are factual and reflect the words used by the young person. Opinion should not be given unless there is some form of evidence base that can also be quoted. All records (including all additional notes) must be signed and dated with timings if appropriate. It is important to remember that issues are confidential and staff should know only on a 'need to know' basis.

### **Information to be recorded**

- Young person's name and date of birth
- Young person in normal context, e.g. behaviour, attitude, previous terms notes
- The incident(s) which gives rise for concern with date(s) and times(s)
- A verbatim record of what the 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.

### **Storage of records**

The DCPC will ensure that records relating to concerns for the welfare or safety of young persons are kept separate from other Academy files and are stored securely. Information will be shared by the DCPC 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 Area Child Protection Co-ordinator. Advice may also be sought from Children's Social Services Duty Social Workers 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 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 young person at the earliest possible stage and in the event of this becoming necessary, their consent to a referral to Children's Social Services will be sought.

Referrals to Social Services will be made using Kent's inter-agency referral form. In situations where there are felt to be urgent or grave concerns a telephone referral will be made prior to the form being completed. The inter-agency referral form upon completion will be faxed to the County Duty social services office.

If a young person is referred, the DCPC will ensure that 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 young person he should refer directly to Children's Social Services.

### **Children subject of a Child Protection plan**

The DCPC will inform members of staff who have direct pastoral responsibility for children and young people who are subject of a Child Protection plan. These children and young people must be monitored very carefully and the smallest concern should be recorded on an incident sheet and passed immediately to the DCPC or other designated staff 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 DCPC who will contact the Area Children's Officer (Child Protection) 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's, Chief Executive or the DCPC can be found in the Procedure for Managing Allegations Against Staff. Copies of this document are held by the DCPC.

**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.**

## **CODE OF PRACTICE**

All Federation staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with relation to Child Protection and this is outlined in more detail in Appendix 1.

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

## **SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT**

Any member of staff affected by issues arising from concerns for the welfare or safety of young people can seek support from the DCPC or the Student Support Coordinator (Longfield) or Student Services Manager (Leigh).

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.

Staff and parents can be put in touch with outside agencies for professional support if they so wish. Staff can also approach Support Line directly.

## **TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES**

The DCPCs, in conjunction with the relevant CPCD Co-ordinator is responsible for ensuring staff including themselves receive training in the area of Child Protection. The DCPC will have received training in the roles and responsibilities of the DCPC and the Child in Need/Child Protection Procedure. At the start of each Academic Year or when they join the Federation, all staff are made aware of issues relating Child Protection and to whom they should speak to should any concern be brought to their attention. Annual Child Protection training for all new and existing staff is undertaken through the whole Academy INSET programme.

All governors are encouraged to attend Child Protection training that is available through the whole Academy INSET programmes.

The DCPCs will ensure that they and other designated Child Protection staff are aware of and can access training to ensure that all key staff are up to date in their knowledge and practice.

Literature from the Kent County Council Child Protection Team regarding developments in Child Protection issues will be circulated termly to the DCPC and other designated Child Protection staff. It will be made available to the CP Governor.

### **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

This Policy will be available to all Federation personnel and Governors together with Parents and Carers. It is available via each Academy's website.

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