

Ratified by the Oasis Community Learning Executive:
12th June 2009

Promoting Student Welfare and Child Protection Policy

Implementation: June 2009
Review: June 2011



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1 Introduction

This policy sets out:

- in Part A the Oasis Community Learning policy on the positive promotion of the welfare of all students in the Academy; and
- in Part B the Oasis Community Learning policy on Child Protection.

2 Part A – Promoting Student Welfare

2.1 It is Oasis Community Learning policy that each Academy will develop policies and strategies to ensure that:

- all students are well educated and prepared to become responsible citizens, active members of their communities and fulfilled adults;
- all students are enabled to reach their full learning potential;
- the principles embodied in Every Child Matters are at the heart of the Academy's practices;
- the Academy becomes and remains a 'listening Academy' where the views, opinions and concerns of all students can be voiced appropriately, are respected by staff and other students, and are dealt with appropriately by relevant staff;
- equal opportunity/anti-discrimination policies and procedures are put into place that ensure that all students are enabled as far as is reasonably practicable, to have access to the Academy's curriculum, premises and facilities;
- every student has access to at least one member of staff who knows them well e.g. a tutor, personal learning guide or teaching assistant;
- all students are enabled to participate in off-site activities and educational visits and have the opportunity to enjoy at least one residential experience during their career at the Academy;
- all students are protected by appropriate health, safety and security policies;
- a designated senior member of staff for Child Protection is appointed and appropriately trained;
- staff are trained in appropriate skills and practices for Child Protection;
- sufficient resources are made available to support the aims of the policies.

3 Responsibilities for Promoting Student Welfare

3.1 **Oasis Community Learning** is responsible for reviewing this policy at least every two years.

3.2 **The Academy Council** is responsible for:

- ensuring that this policy is enacted by appropriate procedures within the Academy;
- requiring and receiving reports from the Principal on the implementation of this policy;
- reporting to Oasis Community Learning as required on the progress of this policy; and
- providing adequate resources for implementing the policy requirements.

3.3 **The Principal** is responsible for:

- advising the Academy Council on the implementation of this policy;
- implementing the agreed procedures;
- ensuring that this policy and associated procedures are made known to all staff, and to parents and students as necessary;
- appointing a senior member of staff to be the Child Protection Manager (CPM), who will have the responsibility for child protection issues in the Academy as part of his/her job description;
- providing a budget to enable the requirements of the policies to be carried out as far as is reasonably practicable; and
- monitoring the progress of this policy and the procedures,

3.4 **Staff** given responsibilities under this policy are responsible for:

- ensuring that their responsibilities for implementing this policy are carried out; and
- reporting as required to the Child Protection Manager or Principal;

Part B – Child Protection

4 General Statement

- 4.1. Oasis Community Learning fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection. This policy applies to all Oasis Community Learning’s directors, staff (central and Academy-based), Academy Council members and volunteers working in and with Oasis Academies.
- 4.2 All students have a right to be protected, respected, valued and to be heard. This will be achieved by:
- The identification of students at risk of suffering significant harm
 - Raising awareness of all staff through effective communication and training
 - The referral of all disclosures to the appropriate agencies
- 4.3 The Oasis Community Learning aims are, therefore:
- to ensure that there are effective procedures in place to identify and deal with any child protection issues, which may arise;
 - to ensure that all Academies develop and implement policies and procedures in accordance with this policy;
 - to raise the awareness of all staff through effective communication and training;
 - to set out the various responsibilities

5 Contents of the Policy

- 5.1 There are five main elements to the policy. Oasis Community Learning is committed to ensuring that all Oasis Academies:
- practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children;
 - raise awareness of child protection issues and equip children with the skills needed to keep them safe;
 - develop and then implement procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse;
 - support students who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan; and
 - establish a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

6 Staff Recruitment

- 6.1 The Academy will ensure that each appointment panel has at least one member trained in safer recruitment techniques according to current government guidance. This should be verified by a certificate.
- 6.2 All applicants will be vetted. Applicants’ personal details set out on the application form will be verified, and qualifications checked.
- 6.3 All applicants’ criminal records will be checked.

7 Safeguarding students on site and on authorised off-site visits

- 7.1 The safety and protection of children is of paramount importance to all those involved in education.
- 7.2 Children can develop a special and close relationship with Academy staff or volunteers and view them as significant and trustworthy adults.
- 7.3 Children, if they have been abused, may confide or disclose sensitive information to a teacher or other member of staff or volunteer working in the Academy.
- 7.4 Academy staff are in a unique position to notice any change in demeanour or circumstances. There is the opportunity to notice injuries, marks or bruises when students are doing P.E., games or swimming which might indicate that a student has been abused.
- 7.5 The Academy takes account of the government guidance in Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education, and follows the procedures laid down in current government guidance.
- 7.6 Staff leading Academy off-site visits, particularly residential ones, should provide a list of those students taking part to the Child Protection Manager to ensure that they are made aware of all essential information relating to the students in their care.

8 Allegations of Abuse

- 8.1 When a member of staff suspects that any student may have been subject to abuse, or a student has suggested that abuse has taken place either to themselves or another student, the allegation must be reported immediately to the Child Protection Manager (CPM).
- 8.2 The CPM will deal with the allegation in accordance with locally agreed procedures and Oasis Community Learning staff guidance (see appendix 1).

9 Allegations against Staff – reporting procedures

- 9.1 All allegations of physical or sexual abuse made against a member of staff in relation to a student must be reported to the Principal and CPM immediately. However if the allegation is about the Principal it should be reported to the CPM and he/she is responsible for reporting it to a member of the Oasis Community Learning Executive Board, who will decide who will undertake the role assigned to the Principal throughout this procedure.
- 9.2 In the event of the allegation being made against a member of the central Oasis Community Learning staff, the CPM is responsible for reporting the allegation in the first instance to the Principal who will consult the Chairman of the Oasis Community Learning Board, to determine who will undertake the role assigned to the Principal throughout this procedure.
- 9.3 The Principal, in consultation with the CPM, should decide whether any enquiries are necessary in order to decide whether or not to refer the matter to Social Services or the Police. If the allegation meets any of the following criteria, the Principal must report it to the local authority designated officer the same day. If it is alleged that a Teacher or member of staff (including a volunteer) has:
 - Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
 - Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
 - Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he/she is unsuitable to work with children.

- 9.4 Where the Principal considers that a referral may be warranted under Child Protection Procedures when an allegation appears to meet the above criteria, the Principal must inform the local authority's designated officer. The local authority's designated officer must be informed of all allegations that come to the Academy's attention so that he/she can consult police and social care colleagues as appropriate. The local authority designated officer should also be informed of any allegations that are made directly to the police or to children's social care. All alleged physical injuries must be investigated by the appropriate external agencies.
- 9.5 The full procedures for allegations against staff can be found in the Academy's Allegation against a Member of Staff Policy. In circumstances where allegations are made it is important that the policy is adhered to alongside this Child Protection Policy.

10 Support

10.1 Students and families

The Academy may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk.

Therefore, the Academy will endeavour to support students through:

- The curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation.
- 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.
- The implementation of Academy behaviour management policies.
- A consistent approach, which recognises and separates the cause of the behaviour from that which the student displays.
- Regular liaison with other professionals and agencies who support students and their families.
- A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in the student's interests to do so.
- The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations.

10.2 Staff

Receiving a disclosure or observing signs of abuse can be very distressing. All staff should discuss their feelings with the Child Protection Manager (CPM) or another named senior member of staff.

Members of staff may be asked to attend a child protection case conference for which they should provide a report. Staff involved will be helped by the CPM to provide relevant information.

Any member of staff who is concerned about involvement in child protection issues can discuss the matter with the Principal.

11 Listening to students

- 11.1 The Academy recognises the importance of listening to students at all times, particularly when they are distressed, worried or concerned. It is appreciated that at times students may feel stressed and confused. The Academy will identify quiet areas and provide the opportunity to students to take respite from the normal day when necessary.

- 11.2 All staff shall be made aware that students who are not known to be the subjects of concern may, however, be experiencing ill treatment, neglect or abuse. This means that staff should be aware of the need for sensitivity when dealing with students at all times.
- 11.3 The Academy recognises that students who are distressed through experiences outside the classroom may be less able to achieve their potential. While it is clear that such students need firm boundaries, staff will take into account the student's distress when managing behaviour.
- 11.4 If a student confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the student sensitively that he/she has a responsibility to refer the matter to the Child Protection Manager for the student's own sake. At the same time, the student should be reassured that the matter will be only be disclosed to the Child Protection Manager, who will then decide on appropriate action.

12 Confidentiality

- 12.1 Staff have the professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals particularly investigating agencies under the guidance of the Child Protection Manager (CPM).
- 12.2 Staff who receive the information about students and families in the course of their work must pass this on to the CPM.
- 12.3 Child protection records must be kept securely locked.
- 12.4 Personal information about all students and their families is regarded as confidential. All staff will aim to maintain this confidentiality. All records relating to child protection incidents will be maintained by the CPM and only shared as is consistent with the protection of children and the Freedom of Information Act.
- 12.5 Any external individual or organisation contracted by the Academy to work with Academy students **must** report any child protection incidents or disclosures from students to the Principal or CPM at the earliest opportunity.

13 Working with Parents

- Parents play an important role in protecting their children from abuse. The Academy is required to consider the safety of the student and should a concern arise the Child Protection Manager has the responsibility to seek advice prior to contacting parents;
- The Academy will work with parents to support the needs of their child;
- The Academy aims to help parents understand that the Academy has a responsibility for the welfare of all students and has a duty to refer cases to the Local Authority in the interests of the student as appropriate.

14 Action to be taken when a Student transfers to another school

- 14.1 In the event of a student who is being dealt with under the Academy's child protection procedures transferring to another school, the Academy will:
- Find out the name of the receiving school (and, where appropriate the local authority);
 - Contact the relevant member of staff at that school to discuss the transfer;
 - Send all information relating to the student to the receiving school (and where relevant the local Authority);

- Check with the receiving school that the student has actually arrived there on the expected day; and
- Inform all relevant agencies of the transfer.

15 Training

- This Academy has a commitment to training and attendance at inter-agency child protection meetings. Time will be given to enable this commitment to be met;
- The Child Protection Manager (CPM) will receive relevant training at least every two years;
- All staff and volunteers new to the Academy will be given appropriate child protection training as part of their induction programme to the Academy;
- An annual child protection refresher course will be run, and all Academy staff and volunteers will be expected to attend this at least once every three years;
- Training will be organised by the CPM following a programme drawn up by the Principal in consultation with the CPM, and agreed by the Academy Council; and
- The CPM will be expected to cascade learning to the wider staff group via meetings and any other appropriate methods.

16 Case Conferences and Core Group meetings

- 16.1 A member of staff may be required to attend a Child Protection Case Conference. Where possible the member of staff will be accompanied by the Child Protection Manager (CPM). The member of staff working with the CPM should prepare a report to present to the Case Conference Chair at the start of the meeting. The Chair will gather all information and assess the risks and take appropriate decisions.
- 16.2 If a child's name is placed on the local Child Protection Register a Core Group will be agreed in accordance with the Local Authority procedures. All Core Group members meet regularly (at least monthly) to monitor and progress the Child Protection Plan and Core Assessment. The Academy will give priority to attendance at these meetings.
- 16.3 The Child Protection Manager will be available to advise and support members of staff involved in Case Conferences and Core Group meetings.

17 Responsibilities

17.1 Oasis Community Learning Board

The Oasis Community Learning Board will determine and keep under review the general policy for the Oasis Academies.

17.2 The Academy Council

The Academy Council will:

- determine the Academy's policy and procedures in line with the Oasis Community Learning policy;
- appoint a Nominated Member of Council to liaise with the Academy's Principal and Child Protection Manager on child protection issues;
- agree the Academy's training programme;
- receive and consider annually a report from the Principal on safeguarding students in the Academy;
- determine any changes to the Academy's policies and procedures as appropriate;

- be responsible for reviewing and approving the Academy's policy as appropriate.

The **Nominated Council Member** will liaise with the Principal and Child Protection Manager over child protection issues.

17.3 **The Principal**

The Principal will:

- be responsible for the implementation of the policy and ensuring that the outcomes are monitored;
- determine an appropriate training programme in consultation with the Child Protection Manager; and
- report annually to the Academy Council on the working of the policy.

17.4 **The Child Protection Manager (CPM)**

Details of the CPM and the deputy CPM must be clearly displayed in staff areas and any handbook of information for staff.

The Child Protection Manager is responsible for:

- ensuring that all cases of suspected or actual problems associated with child protection are investigated and dealt with;
- being aware of the latest national and local guidance and requirements and keeping the Principal and staff informed as appropriate;
- ensuring that effective communication and liaison takes place between the Academy and the Local Authority, and any other relevant agencies, where there is a child protection concern in relation to an Academy student;
- ensuring that all staff have an understanding of child abuse and its main indicators;
- advising staff on the Academy's and their own child protection responsibilities and supporting staff in their child protection role;
- dealing with allegations of abuse in accordance with local procedures;
- consulting with the Principal on an appropriate training programme;
- ensuring that appropriate training for staff is organised according to the agreed programme;
- ensuring that adequate reporting and recording systems are in place;
- liaising with the Academy Council's Nominated Council Member for Child Protection.

17.5 **The Staff**

- All staff, including supply teachers and other visiting staff (e.g. Academy nurses) and those supporting educational visits, will be informed of the Child Protection Manager's name, the named Deputy, and the Academy's policy for the protection of children:
 - During their first induction to the Academy
 - Through the staff/personnel handbook
 - Whole staff training or briefing meetings
- All staff need to be alert to the signs of harm and abuse. They should report any concerns if not immediately, as soon as possible, to the Child Protection Manager or named deputy. If in any doubt staff should consult with the Child Protection Manager.
- All relevant national and local procedures will be made available for staff reference and are located in **XXXXXX** office.

18 **Equal Opportunities**

- 18.1 The Oasis Community Learning Board and Directors and staff, and the Academy Council and Academy staff must take into account the Oasis Community Learning equal opportunities policies when discharging their duties under this policy.

19 Monitoring and Review

- 19.1 The Child Protection Manager will monitor the working of this policy and will report as required to the Principal and the Nominated Member of the Academy Council.
- 19.2 The Principal will report to the Academy Council annually on the working of this policy.
- 19.3 The Academy Council will report as required to the Oasis Community Learning Board.

20 Date of next review: June 2011

Signed: _____
Chair of the Academy Council

Date: _____

Appendix 1

Safeguarding Students - Staff Guidance

A. Procedures to be followed:

- **Members of staff who suspect abuse of a child should report their suspicions to the Child Protection Manager.** The Child Protection Manager, in consultation with the Principal, will determine whether the Social Services and in some instances, the Police will be notified.
- **Information is received from primary schools, other schools, parents, the Local Authority and various other sources.** Where it is thought that the Social Services are not aware of the case they will be informed.
- **Risk Register.** A confidential register will be maintained of all those students known to be at risk. Names will be entered on the register if it is confirmed by the Local Authority that the child is actually at risk.
- Where a student is known to be at risk, the Child Protection Manager will inform the relevant pastoral staff, members of the Leadership Team and the Nominated Academy Council member.
- Staff who organise off-site educational visits must publish the names of those students involved and liaise with the Child Protection Manager over any student at risk.
- The Child Protection Manager will attend any reviews called by the Local Authority, and may call on appropriate members of staff for reports.

Procedures in respect of Child Abuse

Abuse exists where children under the age of seventeen years have been physically or emotionally abused or severely neglected. Abuse of children who are over five years of age is likely to be noticed by the Academy staff and Health Workers or Education Welfare Officers. It is essential, therefore that all those whose work brings them into contact with children and their families know the signs of child abuse and are aware of the procedures that they must follow to safeguard the child.

The Education Service in general, and this Academy in particular, has the role of recognising and responding to potential indicators of abuse and neglect, all other action should be taken by those with statutory powers to help the child. Early contact and close liaison with such agencies is therefore regarded as essential by the Academy.

In the event of an actual or suspected case of child abuse by adults, parents, teachers or any other adult:

It is the responsibility of staff to report this to the Child Protection Manager as soon as possible. The Child Protection Manager is responsible for ensuring that children are identified and the appropriate agency involved. It is important that if staff overhear children discussing 'abuse' or 'neglect' that this information is relayed for investigation.

Staff leading Academy off-site visits, particularly residential ones, should provide a list of those students taking part to the Child Protection Manager to ensure that they are made aware of all essential information relating to the students in their care.

B. Indicators of Abuse and Neglect

Injuries:

Bruises or abrasions especially about the feet, head, genitals or other parts of the body where they would not normally be expected to occur given the age of the child.

Damage or injury to the mouth of a child e.g. bruises or cut lips.

Bite marks.

Burns and/or scalds especially small circular burns (often cigarette burns).

Bilateral injuries such as two black eyes – this rarely occurs accidentally.

Fractures in children under two years old.

Poisoning and other misuse of drugs.

Repeated minor injuries and/or self harming.

Other signs include:

Lethargy

Withdrawal

Wariness

Passivity

Frozen awareness

An unkempt, dirty appearance

Developmental retardation without a medical condition

Over-solicitous behaviour towards adults

Failure to thrive or grow without an underlying medical condition

C. Actions to be taken by Staff**i) Reporting to the Child Protection Manager**

Any concerns about students must be discussed with the Child Protection Manager (or the named deputy in their absence) as soon as possible and at least by the end of the teaching session.

ii) Immediate response to the student

It is vital that any staff actions do not abuse the student further or prejudice further enquiries, for example:

- Listen to the student, if you are shocked by what is being said try not to show it;
- It is acceptable to observe bruises but not to ask a child to remove or adjust their clothing to observe them;

- If a disclosure is made the pace should be dictated by the student without them being pressed for detail by being asked such questions as “what did they do next?” or “where did they touch you?” It is the staff role to listen not to investigate. Use open questions such as “is there anything else you want to tell me?” or “yes?” or “and?”;
- Accept what the student says. Be careful not to burden them with guilt by asking questions such as “why didn’t you tell me before?”;
- Acknowledge how hard it was for them to tell you this;
- Do not criticise the perpetrator. This may be someone they love;
- **Don’t promise confidentiality**, reassure the student that they have done the right thing, explain whom you will have to tell (the Child Protection Manager) and why. It is important that you do not make promises that you cannot keep such as “I’ll stay with you all the time” or “it will be alright now”.

iii) **Recording Information**

Staff should:

- Make some brief notes at the time or immediately afterwards; record the date, time, place and context of the disclosure or concern, recording facts and not assumption and interpretation. Notes must be signed and dated;
- Observed injuries and bruises are to be recorded on the Body Map;
- Note the non-verbal behaviour and the key words in the language used by the student (do not translate into “proper terms”);
- It is important to keep these original notes and pass them to the Child Protection Manager;
- All referrals to Social Services must be followed up within 24 hours in writing using the Academy’s referral pro-forma (Appendix 2).

Appendix 2

Academies are free to use their own reporting form, or to use the one suggested here.

Child Protection Form for Reporting Incidents

Once completed this form must be passed immediately to the Child Protection Manager

Member of staff	
Student	
Tutor group	
Date:	Time:
Place of disclosure:	Signature:

REPORT OF INCIDENT

Information about Incident Staff should include: a) Information given by student – facts only, no personal comments (including key words and/or non-verbal behaviour) or b) Evidence given to you by third party or signs observed that cause concern
Action taken e.g. Note that you referred matter to Child Protection Manager in the Academy