

Safeguarding Policy

*Model Whole Settings Policy for Safeguarding
Incorporating Child Protection*

Updated 9 May 2023

Brackley STEM Academy is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which the children in our settings are protected from abuse, bullying, harm and radicalisation.

The academy will respond promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns regarding the safety of a child that may occur. The academy settings child protection procedures comply with all relevant legislation and with guidance issued by Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP).

The academy settings manager/leadership is responsible for safeguarding who is available at all times while the academy is in session. The manager coordinates safeguarding and child protection issues and liaises with external agencies (e.g. LADO, Social Care, NSCP and Ofsted including DBS).

Child abuse and neglect

Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm. An individual may abuse or neglect a child directly, or by failing to protect them from harm. Some forms of child abuse and neglect are listed below. We recognise that children are vulnerable to physical, sexual and emotional abuse by other children or siblings.

Abuse perpetrated by other children can be just as harmful as that perpetrated by an adult, so it is important that all staff and volunteers to remember the impact on both the victim of the abuse as well as to focus on the support for the child exhibiting the harmful behaviour. We understand that abuse can occur in intimate personal relationships between children; and that consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes' images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery) is a form of child on child abuse.

- **Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child so as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve making the child feel that they are worthless, unloved, or inadequate. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
- **Physical abuse** can involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may be also caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child.
- **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. This can involve physical contact, or non-contact activities such as showing children sexual activities or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- **Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and emotional needs. It can involve a failure to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, to protect a child from physical and emotional harm, to ensure adequate supervision or to allow access to medical treatment.

Signs of child abuse and neglect

Signs of possible abuse and neglect may include:

- significant changes in a child's behaviour
- deterioration in a child's general well-being
- unexplained bruising or marks
- comments made by a child which give cause for concern
- reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, e.g. in the child's home, or that a girl may have been subjected to (or is at risk of) female genital mutilation (FGM), or that the child may have witnessed domestic abuse
- inappropriate behaviour displayed by a member of staff, or any other person. For example, inappropriate sexual comments, excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their role, or inappropriate sharing of images.

If abuse is suspected or disclosed

When a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff or volunteer that member of staff will:

- reassure the child that they were not to blame and were right to speak out
- listen to the child but not question them
- give reassurance that the staff member will take-action
- record the incident as soon as possible (see *Logging an incident* below).
- If a member of staff witnesses or suspects abuse, they will record the matter straightaway using the '**Logging a Concern**' form.
- If a third party expresses concern that a child is being abused, we will encourage them to contact Social Care directly. If they will not do so, we will explain that the academy is obliged to and the incident will be logged accordingly.

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

FGM is an illegal, extremely harmful practice and a form of child abuse, and is therefore dealt with as part of our existing safeguarding procedures. All of our staff receive training in how to recognise when girls are at risk of FGM, or may have been subjected to it.

If FGM is suspected or disclosed

We will follow the same procedures as set out above for responding to child abuse.

Peer-on-peer abuse

Children are vulnerable to abuse by their peers. Peer-on-peer abuse is taken seriously by staff and will be subject to the same child protection procedures as other forms of abuse. Staff are aware of the potential uses of information technology for bullying and abusive behaviour between young people.

Staff will not dismiss abusive behaviour as normal between young people. The presence of one or more of the following in relationships between children should always trigger concern about the possibility of peer-on-peer abuse:

- Sexual activity (in primary school-aged children) of any kind, including sexting
- One of the children is significantly more dominant than the other (e.g. much older)
- One of the children is significantly more vulnerable than the other (e.g. in terms of disability, confidence, physical strength)
- There has been some use of threats, bribes or coercion to ensure compliance or secrecy.

If peer-on-peer abuse is suspected or disclosed

We will follow the same procedures as set out above for responding to child abuse.

Extremism and radicalisation

All childcare settings have a legal duty to protect children from the risk of radicalisation and being drawn into extremism. There are many reasons why a child might be vulnerable to radicalisation, e.g.

- feeling alienated or alone
- seeking a sense of identity or individuality
- suffering from mental health issues such as depression
- desire for adventure or wanting to be part of a larger cause
- associating with others who hold extremist beliefs

Signs of radicalisation

Signs that a child might be at risk of radicalisation include:

- changes in behaviour, for example becoming withdrawn or aggressive
- claiming that terrorist attacks and violence are justified
- viewing violent extremist material online
- possessing or sharing violent extremist material

If a member of staff suspects that a child is at risk of becoming radicalised, they will record any relevant information or observations on a **Logging a concern** form, and refer the matter to the DSL.

Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) - Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

We recognise that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) including pupils with Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) can face additional safeguarding challenges and these are discussed in any form of training and liaison from schools/academies and parents. These additional barriers can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying and impulsive behaviour without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

At Brackley STEM Academy, we recognise that a previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and all staff/volunteers should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe. When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children with EHCP and or SEND, it is important that all agencies work together, and prompt action is taken when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.

Online Safety

At Brackley STEM Academy, all staff and volunteers are aware that technology is a significant component in our setting in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. We understand that in many cases abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life. We know that children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography. Our settings curriculum computing equipment has a filtering system in place to block unsuitable and inappropriate websites including social media and gaming sites.

As part of the requirement for managers and staff to undergo regular updated safeguarding training, online safety training is also delivered. We will ensure online safety is a running and interrelated theme throughout the curriculum and is reflected in relevant policies, volunteer training, the role and responsibilities of the safeguarding lead persons and any parental engagement. We also receive resources and vital information from the National Online Safety team to support our settings and parents.

Working with parents and carers

Brackley STEM Academy is committed to working in partnership with parents/carers to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to support them to understand our statutory responsibilities in this area.

When new pupils join our class setting, parents and carers will be informed that we have a safeguarding policy in place and up to date. A copy can be provided to parents on request and is available on the academy website. Parents and carers will be informed of our legal duty to assist our colleagues in other agencies with child protection enquiries.

In order to keep children safe and provide appropriate care for them, the setting requires parents to provide accurate and up to date attendance booking registration information regarding:

- Full names and contact details of all adults with whom the child normally resides with;
- Full names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility (if different from above);
- Emergency contact details (if different from above);
- Full details of any other adult authorised by the parent or other parental responsibility to collect the child from STEM Academy (if different from the above).
- Accurate information concerning special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) (EHCP)
- Accurate information of any dietary or food allergies.

Safer recruitment

We ensure that the safer recruitment practices are followed in accordance with the requirements of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', KCSE (DfE) (2022). We undertake Disclosure and Barring Service checks (DBS) and other pre-recruitment checks as outlined in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' KCSE to ensure we are recruiting and selecting the most suitable person to work with our pupils.

Brackley STEM Academy will use the recruitment and selection process to deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying for or securing employment, and or volunteering opportunities.

We require details of a candidate's (student teachers/volunteers) present (or last) employment and reason for leaving; full employment history, (since leaving school, including education, employment and voluntary work) including reasons for any gaps in employment and evidence of original academic certificates.

We do not accept testimonials and insist on taking up references prior to interview. We will question the contents of application forms if we are unclear about them, and shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children.

All candidate's (student teachers/volunteers) require an Enhanced DBS check/certificate before taking up volunteering however, we process new DBS applications via eSafeguarding and The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

We undertake Disclosure and Barring Service checks and other pre-employment checks as outlined in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' KCSE to ensure we are recruiting and selecting the most suitable people to work with our children.

Safer working practice

All student teachers/volunteers who come into contact with our pupils have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare. There is a legal duty placed upon us to ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of our pupils are competent, confident and safe to do so.

Our classroom settings will have adult supervision procedures in place wherever pupils will be in attendance without their parent or carer. When possible, there will be more than one leadership adult and or adult student teacher(s) and parent volunteers.

All student teacher/volunteers will be provided with a copy of our settings code of conduct at induction. They will be expected to know our settings Code of Conduct and policy for positive handling and carry out their duties in accordance with this advice. There will be occasion when some form of physical contact is inevitable, for example if a child has an accident by means of carrying out first aid or behaviour complexities or is in a situation of danger to themselves or others around them. However, at all times the agreed policy for safe restraint must be adhered to.

If volunteers or parent helpers are working close with pupils alone they will, wherever possible, be visible to other members of adults/staff. They will be expected to inform another member of adults of their whereabouts in the setting, who they are with and for how long for.

Guidance about acceptable conduct and safe practice will be given to all student teachers, volunteers and parent helpers during induction. These are sensible steps that every adult should take in their daily professional conduct with children. This advice can be found in 'Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings' (February 2022). All volunteers are expected to carry out their work in accordance with this guidance and will be made aware that failure to do so could lead to disciplinary action.

Logging a concern

All information about the suspected abuse or disclosure, or concern about radicalisation, will be recorded on the **Logging a concern** form as soon as possible after the event. The record should include:

- date of the disclosure, or the incident, or the observation causing concern
- date and time at which the record was made
- name and date of birth of the child involved
- a factual report of what happened. If recording a disclosure, you must use the child's own words
- name, signature and job title of the person making the record.

The record will be given to the settings safeguarding lead who will decide on the appropriate course of action.

For concerns about **child abuse**, the safeguarding lead will contact Social Care. The safeguarding lead will follow up all referrals to Social Care in writing within 48 hours. If a member of staff thinks that the incident has not been dealt with properly, they may contact Social Care directly.

For minor concerns regarding **radicalisation**, the safeguarding lead will contact Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP). For more serious concerns the DSL will contact the Police on the non-emergency number (101), or the anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321. For urgent concerns the DSL will contact the Police using 999.

Managing allegations against staff & volunteers

If anyone makes an allegation against a member of a volunteer, staff or adult:

- The allegation will be recorded on an **Incident record** form. Any witnesses to the incident should sign and date the entry to confirm it.
- The allegation must be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The LADO will advise if other agencies (e.g. police) should be informed, and the academy will act upon their advice. Any telephone reports to the LADO will be followed up in writing within 48 hours.
- Following advice from the (Local Authority Designated Officer) LADO, it may be necessary to suspend the member of volunteer/tutor pending full investigation of the allegation.
- If appropriate, the academy will make a referral to the DBS Disclosure and Barring Service.

Our aim is to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the wellbeing and very best outcomes for the children in our settings. We do recognise that sometimes the behaviour of adults may lead to an allegation of abuse being made.

Allegations sometimes arise from a differing understanding of the same event, but when they occur, they are distressing and difficult for all concerned. We also recognise that many allegations are genuine and there are some adults who deliberately seek to harm or abuse children. We work to the thresholds for harm as set out in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018) and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', KCSE (DfE) (2022) below.

An allegation may relate to a person who works / volunteers with children who has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with pupils.

The 4th bullet point above recognises circumstances where a member of staff including volunteers is involved in an incident outside of the setting which did not involve children but could have an impact on their suitability to work with children; this is known as transferrable risk.

At Brackley STEM Academy we recognise our responsibility to report / refer allegations or behaviours of concern and / or harm to children by adults in positions of trust who are not employed by the setting to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) directly

Promoting awareness among staff

The academy promotes awareness of child abuse and the risk of radicalisation through its STEM volunteer training. The academy ensures that:

- the designated safeguarding lead has relevant experience and receives appropriate training in safeguarding and the prevent duty, and is aware of the channel programme and how to access it.
- designated person training is refreshed every two/three years.
- volunteer recruitment practices are followed for all new volunteers.
- all volunteers and tutors have a copy of this **Safeguarding Policy**, understand its contents and are vigilant to signs of abuse, neglect or radicalisation
- all volunteers and tutors are aware of their statutory duties with regard to the disclosure or discovery of child abuse, and concerns about radicalisation

- all volunteers and tutors receive basic safeguarding training, and safeguarding is a permanent agenda item at all available times of training.
- all volunteers and tutors receive basic training in the prevent duty
- volunteers and leadership are familiar with the Safeguarding file which is kept folder/filed in the academy.
- the academy institutions procedures are in line with the guidance in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2020)' and, settings manager and volunteers are familiar with 'What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused (2015)'.

Use of mobile phones and cameras

Photographs will only be taken of our children with their parents' written permission. Only the STEM academy camera will be used to take photographs of children in action behind/side only in class, except with the express permission of the manager. Neither staff nor children nor visitors may use their mobile phones to take photographs in the classroom. For more details see our **Mobile Phone Policy**.

Useful numbers

Social Care: 01604 626 938

Social Care out of hours contact: 01604 626 938

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer): 01604 362993 - Andy directly on 01604 367 862

Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) 07872 148 334

Local Authority Prevent Coordinator: Northamptonshire Police Prevent Team Police: 101 Ext: 341166

(non-emergency) or 999

(emergency) Anti-terrorist hotline:

0800 789 321

NSPCC: 0808 800 500

This policy was adopted by: Harvey Sharman	Brackley STEM Academy
Date adopted:	22 November 2021
To be reviewed: May 2024	Signed: Harvey Sharman

Written in accordance with the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021): Safeguarding and Welfare requirements: Child Protection [3.4-3.8] and Suitable People [3.9-3.13]*.