



EDUCATION

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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Apr 15	1.0	Revised and reformatted for new staff portal
July 15	1.1	Revised to recognise redesignation of DCPC as designated safeguarding lead (DSL)
July 15	1.2	Revised to take account of new statutory responsibilities around the 'Prevent' duty
April 16	1.3	Revised to ensure compliance and clarity

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Leigh Academies Trust (and all academies within it) fully recognises its responsibility, under section 175 (*section 157 for independent schools and academies*) of the Education Act 2002, to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. In addition, section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a statutory responsibility on academies to 'have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. This is known as the 'Prevent' duty.

Through their day-to-day contact with pupils and direct work with families, staff have a crucial role to play in noticing indicators of possible abuse or neglect and referring them to the child's relevant social care authority.

This policy sets out how the Leigh Academies Trust Board (LAT) and each Academy Board discharge their statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the academy. The policy applies to all staff, paid and unpaid, working in each academy, including governors. Teaching assistants, midday supervisors, secretaries or teachers can be the first point of disclosure for a child. Concerned parents/carers may also contact an academy and its governors.

This policy is consistent with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures.

There are four main elements to our policy:

1. **Prevention** through the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils and the creation and maintenance of a whole-school protective ethos;
2. **Procedures** for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse. The definitions of the four categories of abuse are attached (see Appendix A);
3. **Support for vulnerable children** who may have been abused or witnessed violence towards others;
4. **Preventing unsuitable people from working with children.**

1.0 Prevention

1.0.1 LAT recognises that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help to protect children.

1.0.2 Each academy will therefore:

- i) establish and maintain an environment in which children of all ethnic and national groups feel safe, secure, valued and respected, in both the real and the virtual world, and are encouraged to talk and are listened to;
- ii) ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty and that their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate;
- iii) recognise that children live in a multi-cultural, multi-faith community and seek to provide suitable support and guidance that acknowledges this;

- iv) develop effective, supportive liaison with other agencies;
- v) include in the curriculum activities and opportunities that equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse, both in the real and the virtual world, and information about whom to turn to for help;
- vi) include in the curriculum material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to child-care and parenting skills;
- vii) promote race, gender and cultural equality within all child-protection practices and procedures.

2.0 Procedures

- 2.0.1 Each academy will follow the procedures set out by its relevant Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- 2.0.2. Each academy will have an appropriately-trained designated safeguarding lead (DSL). Where the DSL role is not performed by a member of the leadership team, the Principal has direct line-management responsibility for all aspects of safeguarding across the academy, including the work of the DSL.
- 2.0.3 Each academy will:
 - i) ensure that the DSL undertakes refresher training relevant to the role every two years, in accordance with government guidance;
 - ii) recognise the importance of the role of the DSL and ensure that they have the time, training and support necessary to undertake their duties, which include providing advice and support to staff, taking part in inter-agency meetings and contributing to the assessment of children in need;
 - iii) ensure that every member of staff, paid and unpaid, and the governing body know who the DSL is and the procedures for passing on concerns, from the point of induction. LAT will publish this information on the Trust portal, which is available to all staff and governors;
 - iv) ensure that every member of staff, paid and unpaid, and the governing body know what the contingency arrangements are when the DSL is not available;
 - v) ensure that the DSL takes advice from a child-protection specialist when managing complex cases. The DSL will have access to both the relevant Area Safeguarding Advisor [Education] (ASA) and the social care authorities;
 - vi) consider appointing a nominated governor for safeguarding and child protection who has undertaken appropriate training;

- vii) ensure that every member of staff and every governor know:
 - the name of the designated person/s and their role;
 - how to identify the signs of abuse and neglect;
 - how to pass on and record concerns about a pupil;
 - that they have an individual responsibility to be alert to the signs and indicators of abuse and for referring child protection concerns to the DSL;
 - that they have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn;

- viii) provide child-protection training for **all** staff from the point of their induction and receive an update on a regular basis, so that staff are confident in:
 - the academy's legislative responsibility;
 - their personal responsibility;
 - the academy's policies and procedures;
 - the need to be alert to the signs and indicators of possible abuse, including possible child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation;
 - the need to record concerns;
 - how to support and respond to a child who speaks of abuse;

- ix) ensure that all staff, paid and unpaid, recognise their duty and feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children and that such concerns are addressed sensitively, effectively and in a timely manner, in accordance with agreed LAT whistle-blowing policy;

- x) ensure that parents are informed of the responsibility placed on the school and staff in relation to child protection;

- xi) ensure that this policy is available publicly, via the academy's website, and that information is provided informing them how to raise a concern should they believe that this is necessary.

2.1 Liaison with Other Agencies

2.1.1 Each academy will:

- i) work to develop effective links with relevant services to promote the safety and welfare of all students;

- ii) co-operate as required, in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2013, with key agencies in their enquiries regarding child-protection matters, including attendance and providing written reports at child-protection conferences and core groups;

- iii) notify the relevant social care team immediately if:
 - it should have to exclude a student who is subject to a Child Protection Plan (whether fixed-term or permanent);

- there is an unexplained absence of a student who is subject to a Child Protection Plan;
- there is any change in circumstances with regard to a student who is subject to a Child Protection Plan.

2.2 Record Keeping

2.2.1 Each academy will:

- i) keep clear, detailed, accurate, written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to the social care authority immediately;
- ii) ensure that all records are kept securely, separate from the main student file, and in a locked location;
- iii) ensure that all relevant child-protection records are sent to the receiving school or establishment when a student moves schools, in accordance with Child Protection Record-Keeping Guidance.

2.3 Confidentiality and Information-Sharing

2.3.1 Child-protection information will be stored and handled in line with Data Protection Act 1998 principles and those of LAT. The Data Protection Act does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

2.3.2 Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, so children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a student or parent to see child-protection requests, they will refer the request to the DSL or Principal.

2.3.3 Each academy will:

- i) ensure that confidentiality protocols are adhered to and that information is shared appropriately. If in any doubt about confidentiality, staff will seek advice from the DSL, Principal or social care authority, as required;
- ii) ensure that the DSL or Principal will only disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a 'need to know' basis, including domestic violence notifications;
- iii) make all staff aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children;
- iv) ensure all staff are clear with children that they cannot promise to keep secrets.

2.4 Communication with Parents/Carers

2.4.1 Each academy will:

- i) ensure that parents/carers are informed of the responsibility placed on the school and staff in relation to child protection by setting out their duties on the school website;
- ii) undertake appropriate discussion with parents/carers prior to the involvement of another agency, unless the circumstances preclude this action. If the academy believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the situation, advice will be sought from the social care authority.

3.0. Supporting Vulnerable Children

3.0.1 LAT recognises that abuse or witnessing violence may have an adverse impact on children, which may last into adulthood without appropriate intervention and support.

3.0.2. The academy may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, when at the academy, their behaviour may be challenging and defiant, or they may become withdrawn.

3.0.3. LAT recognises that some vulnerable children may develop abusive behaviours and that these children may need to be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.

3.0.4. Each academy will support students through:

- i) curricular opportunities to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation;
- ii) an ethos that actively promotes a positive, supportive and safe environment and values the whole community;
- iii) the academy's Behaviour Policy, which will support vulnerable students. All staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of the student but does not damage their sense of self-worth. The academy will ensure that the student knows that some behaviour is unacceptable, but that s/he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred;
- iv) liaison with other agencies which support the pupil, such as the social care service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, School Nursing Service or Sexual Behaviour Service;
- v) a commitment to develop productive and supportive relationships with parents/carers;
- vi) recognition that children living in a home environment where there is domestic abuse, drug or alcohol abuse, or mental-health issues are vulnerable and in need of support and protection; they may also be young carers;

- vii) monitoring and supporting pupils' welfare, keeping records and notifying the social care authorities in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Children Board's procedures;
- viii) when a student who is subject to a Child Protection Plan leaves, information will be transferred to the new school immediately. The lead social worker from the social care services will also be informed;
- ix) when a child is missing from education, the academy will inform the Education Welfare Officer and social care services if a child is subject to a Child Protection Plan or if there have been ongoing concerns.

3.1. Substance Misuse and Child Protection

3.1.1 The discovery that a young person is misusing legal or illegal substances or reported evidence of their substance misuse is not necessarily sufficient in itself to initiate child-protection proceedings, but the academy will consider such action when there is evidence or reasonable cause:

- to believe the young person's substance misuse may cause him or her to be vulnerable to other abuse, such as sexual abuse or exploitation;
- to believe the pupil's substance-related behaviour is a result of abuse, or because of pressure or incentives from others, particularly adults;
- where the misuse is suspected of being linked to parent/carer substance misuse.

3.2. Children of Substance-Misusing Parents/Carers

3.2.1 Misuse of drugs and/or alcohol is strongly associated with significant harm to children, especially when combined with other features such as domestic violence.

3.2.2 When the academy receives information about drug and alcohol abuse by a child's parents/carers, they will follow appropriate procedures.

3.2.3 This is particularly important if the following factors are present:

- use of the family resources to finance the parent's dependency, resulting in inadequate food, heat or clothing for the children;
- children exposed to unsuitable caregivers or visitors - e.g. customers or dealers;
- An inappropriate display of sexual and/or aggressive behaviour due to the effects of alcohol;
- chaotic drug and alcohol use leading to emotional unavailability, irrational behaviour and reduced parental vigilance;
- disturbed moods as a result of withdrawal symptoms or dependency;
- unsafe storage of drugs, alcohol or injecting equipment;
- drugs and/or alcohol having an adverse impact on the growth and development of the unborn child.

3.3. Domestic Abuse

- 3.3.1 Where there is domestic abuse in a family, the children/young people will always be affected; the longer the violence continues, the greater the risk of significant and enduring harm, which they may carry with them into their adult life and relationships.
- 3.3.2 Principals are notified of domestic abuse incidents to which the police have been called and which involve children and young people on their roll and will take appropriate action to ensure that children and young people are kept safe.

3.4. Female Genital Mutilation

- 3.4.1 Female genital mutilation (FGM) includes procedures that intentionally alter or injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It is a surprisingly common form of abuse in the UK.
- 3.4.2 FGM is carried out on children between the ages of 0–15, depending on the community in which they live. It is extremely harmful and has short- and long-term effects on physical and psychological health.
- 3.4.3 FGM is internationally recognised as a violation of the human rights of girls and women and is illegal in most countries, including the UK.
- 3.4.4 All academies will take these concerns seriously and staff will be made aware of the possible signs and indicators that may alert them to the possibility of FGM. The LAT FGM Policy, which provides additional information, is available to all staff through the Trust portal.
- 3.4.5 The DSL will follow the procedures outlined within the LAT FGM Policy if FGM is suspected. The case will still be referred to the social care team, even if it is against the pupil's wishes.

3.5. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

- 3.5.1 Child sexual exploitation involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something - for example, food, drugs, alcohol, gifts or, in some cases, simply affection - as a result of engaging in sexual activities.
- 3.5.2 Sexual exploitation can take many different forms, from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship to serious organised crime involving gangs and groups.
- 3.5.3 Exploitation is marked out by an imbalance of power in the relationship and involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation and sexual bullying, including cyber-bullying and grooming.
- 3.5.4 It is important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not show any external signs of this abuse and may not recognise it as abuse.
- 3.5.5 Young people who go missing can be at increased risk of sexual exploitation, so procedures are in place to ensure an appropriate response to children and young people who go missing, particularly on repeat occasions.
- 3.5.6 An academy will refer a case to the police and social care services if there is a concern that a young person may be at risk.

- 3.5.7 LAT and its academies will make clear reference within safeguarding training to the risk that children face from CSE and how concerns should be addressed.

3.6 Protecting Children from the Risk of Radicalisation

- 3.61 All academies have a vital role to play in protecting young people from the risks of extremism and radicalisation. Keeping them safe should be approached in the same way as safeguarding young people from other risks and any concerns that a member of staff has must be communicated to the DSL and Principal(s) of their academy.
- 3.62 Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is part of wider safeguarding duties across each academy and is similar in nature to protecting children from other harms - e.g. drugs, gangs, neglect or sexual exploitation - whether these come from within their family or are the product of outside influences.
- 3.63 Each academy will also build the resilience of students to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling them to challenge extremist views. It is important to emphasise that the 'Prevent' duty is not intended to stop students from debating controversial issues.
- 3.64 All academies will be a safe space in which children, young people and staff can understand the risks associated with terrorism and develop the knowledge and skills to be able to challenge extremist arguments.
- 3.65 Anybody associated with the academy can also make a referral to the 'Channel' programme, which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. The DSL and Principal(s) will make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation.

4.0. Preventing Unsuitable People from Working with Children

- 4.0.1 LAT and each academy within it will operate safer recruitment practices, including ensuring that appropriate DBS and reference checks are undertaken according to the government guidance, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2014), and the local authority's Safer Employment Policy.
- 4.0.2 LAT Human Resources will maintain a register of those members of staff who have undertaken safer recruitment training and will ensure that academies have access to appropriate training. Each academy will ensure that every interview panel has at least one member of staff who has completed the safer recruitment training.
- 4.0.3 Under Section 75 of the Childcare Act, 2006, individuals are disqualified from childcare provision if they have committed certain specified offences. Staff may also be disqualified by association if they are living or working in the same household as a person who is disqualified. This applies to any member of staff employed in early-years childcare (up to the

age of 5) or later-years childcare (up to the age of 8) in nursery, primary or secondary school settings or the management of such settings. Staff will sign a self-declaration form to confirm that they are not disqualified by association. A record of self-declaration will be kept on the academy's single central record.

- 4.0.4 Any allegation of abuse made against a member of staff will be reported immediately and the LAT Allegations Against Staff Policy followed.
- 4.0.5 The school will ensure that any disciplinary proceedings against staff relating to child-protection matters are concluded in full, even when the member of staff is no longer employed at the academy, and that notification of any concerns is made to the relevant authorities and professional bodies and included in references where applicable.
- 4.0.6 Each academy will ensure that all staff, paid and unpaid, are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with students and parents/carers. As part of the induction process, all staff will receive guidance about how to create appropriate professional boundaries (in both the real and virtual world) with all children, especially those with a disability or who are otherwise vulnerable.
- 4.0.7 The academy will ensure that staff and volunteers are aware that sexual relationships with pupils aged under 18 are unlawful and could result in legal proceedings taken against them under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Abuse of Trust).
- 4.0.8 The school will ensure that communication between pupils and adults, by whatever method, are transparent, take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries and are open to scrutiny.

5. Children with Special Educational Needs

- 5.1. LAT recognises that, statistically, children with emotional and behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse.
- 5.2. Special academies, those that include SEN provision or which deal with children with complex and multiple disabilities and/or emotional and behavioural problems should be particularly sensitive to indicators of abuse. These academies will support staff to decide appropriate strategies that will reduce anxiety for the individual child and raise self-esteem as part of an overall behavioural support plan agreed with parents/carers.
- 5.3. As part of the personal, health, social and economic (PHSE) curriculum, staff will teach children personal-safety skills commensurate with their ability and needs. Children will be taught personal-safety skills, such as telling and who to tell, good and bad touches and good and bad secrets. The content of lessons will be shared with parents/carers so that these skills can be supported at home.
- 5.4. Academies should recognise that, where students with SEN have communication difficulties, they are especially vulnerable to abuse because they are unable to express themselves to others. Instead, such children will often exhibit changes in behaviour or signs and indicators of abuse recognised by staff with a good knowledge of the child.

- 5.5. Where necessary, the school will provide additional training to staff in the use of Signalong, the picture-exchange communication system (PECS) or other communication systems. Senior leaders will be vigilant, creating a protective ethos around the child.
- 5.6. We promote high standards of practice, including ensuring that disabled children know how to raise concerns and that they have access to a range of adults with whom they can communicate.

6.0. Governing Body Child Protection Responsibilities

6.0.1 The LAT Trust Board fully recognises its responsibilities with regard to child protection, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

6.0.2 It will:

- nominate a governor for safeguarding and child protection, who will monitor Trust compliance with statutory requirements and champion child-protection issues. Each Academy Board will nominate a governor to ensure that safeguarding processes within each academy allow it to meet statutory obligations;
- ensure that an annual report is made to the respective Academy Boards. Any weaknesses will be rectified without delay;
- ensure that this Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is reviewed and updated annually and shared with staff. It will be made available via academy websites and the Trust portal;
- ensure that safeguarding training is made available to all governors and directors.

6.1. Extended Academies and Before-and-After Academy Activities (On or Off Academy Site)

6.1.1 Where an academy provides extended academy facilities or before-and-after academy activities directly under the supervision or management of academy staff, child protection as written in this policy shall apply.

6.1.2 Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, either on or off the academy site, the Academy Board, through the LAT Business Director, will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place for safeguarding children and child protection and that there are arrangements to liaise with the academy on these matters, where appropriate.

Four categories of abuse

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

Neglect - 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. This may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. It may involve the neglect of or lack of responsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

It also includes parents or carers failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, including exclusion from home or abandonment;
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision, including the use of inadequate care-givers;
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

Emotional Abuse - This is persistent emotional maltreatment, causing severe and adverse effects on a child's emotional development.

It may involve conveying to a child that they are:

- worthless;
- unloved;
- inadequate;
- valued only insofar as they meet another person's needs.

It may include:

- not giving the child opportunities to express their views;
- deliberately silencing them;
- 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.

It may also feature age- or developmentally-inappropriate expectations being imposed on children, including:

- interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability;
- overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning;
- preventing participation in normal social interaction.

It may involve:

- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another;
- Serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger;
- The exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment, although it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse – This involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

This may involve:

- physical contact including assault by penetration (e.g. rape or oral sex);
- non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing;
- non-contact activities involving:
 - > children looking at, or in the production of, sexual images;
 - > children watching sexual activities;
 - > encouraging children to behave in sexually-inappropriate ways;
 - > grooming children in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.