Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Approved by:	Trust Board	**Date:**	9th October 2019
Last reviewed on:	9th October 2019		
Next review due by:	September 2020		

Contents

1. The Policy 2
2. References 2
3. Overall aims 3
4. Key Principles 3
5. Key Processes 4
6. Expectations 5
7. Roles and Responsibilities of Staff, including the Designated Senior Person 6
8. The Trust Board / Governing Body 7
9. Responding to concerns about a child 8
10. Working with Parents and Carers to Protect Children 9
11. Working with Other Agencies to Protect Children: Multi-Agency Work 9
12. Our Role in the Prevention of Abuse 10
13. Our Role in Supporting Children 10
14. A Safe School Culture 10
15. Responding to an Allegation about a Member of Staff 11
16. Children with Additional Needs 11
17. Children who may benefit from early help 12
18. Children in Specific Circumstances and Specific Safeguarding Issues 12

1. The Policy

Advantage Schools (AS) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its pupils. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment;
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. We believe that all staff and visitors have an important role to play in safeguarding children.

1.1 We believe:

- All children have the *right* to be protected from harm as defined by Article 3 in the UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child.
- Children need to be safe and to feel safe in school in order to grow, learn and develop.
- Schools can contribute to the promotion of children's welfare and the prevention of harm.
- Children need support which matches their individual needs, including those who may have experienced abuse.

2. References

Advantage Schools will fulfil local and national responsibilities as laid out in the following documents:-

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE September 2019)
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (DfE Feb 2015 Part 2,6,7,)
- Working together to Safeguard Children (DfE July 2018)
- Teaching online safety in school (June 2019)
- The Policies & Procedures of Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board (BBSCB) - https://www.bedford.gov.uk/social-care-health-and-community/children-young-people/safeguarding-children-board/
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Education Act 2002 s175 / s157
- The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005
- The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act February 2015
- Sexual Offences Act 2003

3. Overall aims

3.1 This policy and the related documents which must be read alongside it will contribute to the prevention of harm by:

- Clarifying standards of behaviour expected for both staff and students
- Ensure all staff are aware of the systems in place which support safeguarding
- Ensuring all staff understand their responsibilities in terms of being aware and can recognise the signs of the causes of harm and indicators of abuse (physical, emotional and sexual) and neglect
- Encouraging pupils and parental participation in practice
- Reinforcing the necessity to address concerns at the earliest possible stage

3.2 This policy will contribute to the protection of our pupils by:

- Capitalising on opportunities to address issues relating to child protection/safeguarding through the curriculum
- Ensuring staff implement child protection policies and procedures
- Recognising the need to work in partnership with pupils, parents and other agencies.

3.3 This policy will contribute to supporting our pupils by:

- Identifying individual needs where possible and
- Providing a framework around how staff may plan to meet safeguarding, child protection or early help needs where necessary.

4. Key Principles

Key principles of our child protection work are:-

4.1 The safety and wellbeing of our children must, and always, be at the heart of everything we do. **Every adult in our school is responsible for protecting the welfare of every child**. Therefore staff should not assume that somebody else will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. If an adult has a concern about a child, then they must act. To say nothing is to do nothing. We will always strive to work together, and do the basic things as well as possible. We will always aim to see the child first. From there we will always follow procedures robustly and will ensure that dialogue and relationship building are central to securing the best academic and personal outcomes for our pupils.

4.2 We encourage pupils to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. We ensure that partisan political views are not promoted in the teaching of any subject in the school and where political issues are brought to the attention of the pupils, reasonably practicable steps have been taken to offer a balanced presentation of

opposing views to pupils. AS will promote fundamental British values as part of a broader requirement to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.

4.3 All staff will receive appropriate training in safeguarding, in line with statutory guidance.

5. Key Processes

5.1 All staff will read this policy, the schools safeguarding handbook, the school's behaviour policy (and related documents) and Part One (and know to refer to Annex A of Keeping for advice if necessary) of Keeping children safe in education 2019.

5.2 All staff should be aware of the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board which may be found here:-

https://www.bedford.gov.uk/social-care-health-and-community/children-young-people/safeguarding-children-board/

5.3 Staff will also be made aware that when working in a school setting that they are in a 'Position of Trust'. (Sexual Offences Act 2003.)

5.4 Each school within the trust has a designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Leads. These are clearly identified to staff when they are inducted and staff are given regular reminders of the safeguarding staff thereafter. All the designated safeguarding personnel attend regular safeguarding training and/or appropriate forums. The designated safeguarding lead or one of the deputies will always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns.

5.5 All staff are familiarised with Safeguarding Children procedures and all concerns regarding child abuse or suspected child abuse are reported immediately to the designated safeguarding team of staff who have responsibility for referring suspected child abuse cases to Social Care. This includes concerns regarding a fellow staff member or volunteer's behaviour and all such concerns will be discussed with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

5.6 There is always at least one person on any interview panel who has had training in Safer Recruitment; we adhere to all guidelines issued by Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019 Part three 'Safer Recruitment' when vetting, selecting and recruiting potential staff and volunteers (see section 14)

5.7 All details of checks are kept on the school's Single Central Record (SCR). Procedures are in place for recording details of all staff and visitors to school.

5.8 We follow the guidelines of Keeping children safe in education 2019, (Part four: Allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff) in respect of any member of staff who has received an allegation made against them that may indicate that they would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work with students – see section 15

5.9 All staff members are updated annually regarding effective use of the systems and procedures which operate to support safeguarding and child protection.

5.10 All new staff to the school;

- Receive safeguarding training through our induction programme
- Are informed who the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies are
- Have to read the related documents (see paragraph 5.1) and the school's behaviour policy

5.11 All supply staff and visitors to the school are given a copy of our Safeguarding procedures and these are also displayed on our website.

5.12 Effective working relationships with other agencies are developed and promoted; e.g. the Local Authority, Police, Education Welfare, School Nurse, Social Care and the Early Help Service. The school follows the government guidance issued in Working together to safeguard children (July 2018) in order to act in the best interests of the children in our care.

5.13 In general, we will discuss concerns with parents / carers before approaching other agencies, and will seek their consent to making a referral to another agency. Appropriate staff will approach parents / carers after consultation with the Designated Senior Person. However, there may be occasions when the school will contact another agency **before** informing parents/carers because it considers that contacting them may increase the risk of significant harm to the child.

5.14 Parents / carers will be informed about our child protection policy through the school prospectus and website.

5.15 Both Elstow Primary and Bedford Free Schools are registered to receive D.A.N.S notifications. The D.A.N.S acts as a school notification service where incidents of domestic abuse have been reported in the previous 24 hours to Bedfordshire Police from households where children reside and are on the school roll. The D.A.N.S is coordinated by the Safeguarding Lead at both schools and is facilitated by the Early Help HUB within the MASH team at Bedford Borough Children's Services. The Scheme has been implemented within the majority of schools in Bedford Borough.

6. Expectations

6.1 All staff and visitors (for the purpose of this policy visitors are defined as: - individuals contracted by school to work with students unsupervised) will;

- Be familiar with this Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (for visitors working with children a summary of our policies and procedures will be provided together with information on how they should report concerns)
- Be alert to signs and indicators of possible harm

- Record evidence of potential harm (on the 'Disclosure and Concern Form') and ensure all 'Initial Concerns' are handed to one of the AS Designated Safeguarding personnel as soon as is safely possible
- Deal with a disclosure of abuse from a child in line with the guidance and procedures of the School, Safeguarding Staff Handbook
- Be involved, as required, in the implementation of any individual education, interagency child protection or child in need plans and
- Be subject to Safer Recruitment processes and checks whether they are new staff, supply staff, contractors or volunteers etc.

7. Roles and Responsibilities of Staff, including the Designated Senior Person

7.1 The Designated Senior Person for Safeguarding delegates regular reviews of vulnerable children. The reviews are evidenced in recorded notes, on a regular basis and during safeguarding update meetings. These meetings between the Designated Senior Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Leads and the Pastoral Co-coordinators also enable the regular review of all children for whom concerns have been raised.

7.2 Where a member of AS has reason to believe a student has, or is likely to be harmed, the Safeguarding Lead or one of the Deputies will decide what steps should be taken, including considering whether the matter needs to be referred to the relevant Children's Services and will record this decision in confidential notes.

7.3 Child protection (which refers to a subset of Safeguarding Children practice, namely, abuse and neglect resulting in or likely to result in, significant harm which is attributable to the child's parenting) and other safeguarding information will be dealt with in a confidential manner. Staff will be informed of relevant details only when the Safeguarding Leads feels their having knowledge of a situation will improve their ability to support an individual child and / or family. A written record will be made of what action has been taken.

7.4 Child protection records will be stored securely in a central place separate from academic records. Electronic and in some cases hard copy files will be kept for at least the period during which the child is attending the school, and beyond that in line with current data legislation. Access to these records by staff, other than by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Leads, will be restricted to only those who need to know in order to keep the child safe.

7.5 Communications with parents will be in line with any home school policies and give due regard to which adults have parental responsibility.

7.6 AS Staff will not disclose to a parent any information held on a child if this would put the child at risk of significant harm.

7.7 Where a student moves to another educational establishment, child protection records will be forwarded on to the Designated Senior Person at the new school, with due regard to their confidential nature. We will forward the child protection records to their new

destination in their entirety and will ensure receipt is confirmed. We will archive electronic notes and destroy hard copies once receipt is confirmed. Contact between AS and the receiving school may be necessary. We will adhere to current guidance from the Data Commissioner and seek advice from our lawyers in respect of forwarding files abroad.

7.8 Any records sent by post will be sent by "Special/Recorded Delivery". For audit purposes the details of the transfer of any records concerning any student known to under child protection will be recorded, including the name of the recipient, location and date of transfer.

7.9 If a pupil is permanently excluded child protection records will be forwarded on to the relevant organisation.

7.10 When a Designated Senior Person or a Designated Safeguarding Lead resigns their post or no longer has safeguarding responsibility, there should be a full face to face handover/exchange of information with the new post holder. On handover, all permissions to secure files will be terminated.

7.11 In exceptional circumstances when a face to face handover is unfeasible, the Principal will ensure that the new post holder is fully conversant with all procedures and case files.

8. The Trust Board / Governing Body

8.1 There will be a nominated Safeguarding Governor for each Local Governing Body in the Trust who will be responsible for liaising with the Safeguarding Lead over all matters regarding the safeguarding of pupils. The role is strategic rather than operational – they will not be involved in concerns about individual pupils.

8.2 The Safeguarding Lead will liaise with the Nominated Governor and the Principal to produce reports for the Governors at least annually and will ensure that Safeguarding is a regular item on the agenda for Governors' meetings.

8.3 The Governing Body will ensure that the Trust:

- Has a Safeguarding Policy in accordance with DfE statutory guidance Keeping children safe in education, 2019;
- Operates, "safer recruitment" procedures in line with statutory guidance;
- Has at least one senior member of the school's leadership team acting as a Designated Senior Person for Child Protection;
- Ensures that the Designated Senior Person, and other DSLs, attend appropriate refresher training every two years;
- Ensures that the Principal and all other staff who work with children undertake training, which will be appropriate to their roles and in line with advice issued by BBSCB;
- Ensures that temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the school's arrangements for safeguarding children and their responsibilities.
- Remedies any deficiencies or weaknesses brought to its attention without delay and

- Have procedures for dealing with allegations of the abuse of pupils against any staff/volunteers.

8.4 The Trust Board will review its policies/procedures annually and the Governing Body will review its policies/procedures annually.

8.5 The Chair of the Trust Board/Executive Principal is nominated to be responsible for liaising with the local authority and other partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Principal or member of the Governing Body.

9. Responding to concerns about a child:-

9.1 Cause for concern:

- Record and detail concern on Disclosure Form
- Speak to a member of the Safeguarding Team

9.2 Discuss with:

- Concerned party,
- Safeguarding Personnel
- Parents where deemed appropriate and safe

Safeguarding personnel follow appropriate steps according to need:-

9.3 Monitor (within school)

- Placed on monitoring list and discussed at regular safeguarding update meetings
- Child leaves school – information passes to future DSL
- Where further concerns are raised go back to 9.2

9.4 Seek external advice from appropriate agencies

And if deemed necessary:-

9.5 Refer to Children's Services (MASH)

- Assessment by MASH team (Children Services.) At times Children's services recommend that extra support is sought via an Early Help Assessment [EHA.] Where this is advised the school will contact the family [to gain consent] and complete it with them, to access external services.
- If no further action clarification for reason why should be sought by school's safeguarding team and then back to 9.3 Monitor (within school)
- Enquiries made under child protection procedures

9.6 Keep all records in line with policy

10. Working with Parents and Carers to Protect Children

10.1 In general we will discuss Safeguarding Children concerns with parents/ carers before approaching other agencies and will seek their consent to making a referral to another agency. However, there may be occasions when the school will contact another agency, before informing the parent/carers, because it considers that contacting them may increase the risk of significant harm to the child.

10.2 Parents/carers will be informed about our Safeguarding Children Policy through the website.

11. Working with Other Agencies to Protect Children: Multi-Agency Work

11.1 AS will follow Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board's new **Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements** (MASAs), published on 30 May 2019 and implemented from September 2019.

"The MASA sets out the arrangements for safeguarding partners to work together with other agencies to identify and respond to the needs of children in Bedford Borough and the three safeguarding partners Bedford Borough Council, Bedfordshire Police and the Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group have equal and joint responsibility for local safeguarding arrangements." https://www.bedford.gov.uk/social-care-health-and-community/children-young-people/safeguarding-children-board/

11.2 AS will work in partnership with other agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils. The school will, where necessary, liaise with the school nurse and make referrals to Children's Services. Referrals will normally be made by the Designated Safeguarding Personnel to Children's Social Care in the local authority where the child resides, although any member of staff can make such a referral. Where the child already has a safeguarding social worker, the request for service should go immediately to the social worker involved, or in their absence to their team manager.

11.3 We will co-operate with any child protection enquiries conducted by Children's Social Care: the school will ensure representation at appropriate inter-agency meetings such as initial and review child protection conferences, core group meetings and integrated support plan meetings.

11.4 We will provide reports as required for these meetings. If the school is unable to attend, a written report will be sent. The report will, wherever possible, be shared with relevant parties prior to the meeting.

11.5 Where a child in school is subject to an inter-agency child protection plan, a multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) meeting, or a Multi-Agency Planning meeting for Children at Risk of Sexual Exploitation the school will contribute to the preparation, implementation and review of the plan as appropriate.

12. Our Role in the Prevention of Abuse

12.1 We will identify and provide opportunities for children to develop skills, concepts, attitudes and knowledge to promote their safety and well-being.

The Curriculum

12.2 Relevant issues will be addressed through the wider school pastoral programme. For example, British values, self-esteem, emotional literacy, assertiveness, power, sex and relationship education, peer-on-peer abuse, sexting, e-safety and bullying.

12.3 Relevant issues may be addressed through other areas of the curriculum, for example, English, history, drama, art and for some children through social skills and other specific groups, as appropriate to individual needs.

Other Areas of Work

12.4 All our policies which address issues of power and potential harm, for example bullying, equal opportunities, positive handling, positive behaviour, will be linked to ensure a whole school approach.

12.5 Our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy cannot be separated from the general ethos of the School, which should ensure that children are treated with respect high expectations; dignity, feel safe, and honesty (are listened to).

13. Our Role in Supporting Children

13.1 Where we are aware, we will offer appropriate support to individual children who have experienced abuse, or who have abused others, as early as possible.

13.2 A record of any safeguarding support plans which are devised, implemented and reviewed regularly will be logged in the confidential Child Protection files. Plans will detail areas of support, who will be involved, and the child's wishes and feelings.

13.3 Children and young people who abuse others will be responded to in a way that meets their needs as well as protecting others within the school community through a multi-agency risk assessment. We will ensure that the needs of children and young people who abuse others will be considered separately from the needs of their victims.

13.4 We will ensure the school works in partnership with parents / carers and other agencies as appropriate.

14. A Safe School Culture

Safer Recruitment and Selection

14.1 All recruitment materials will include reference to the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of pupils. The Trust pays full regard to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2019. Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and undertaking appropriate checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). A 'Prohibition from teaching' check will also be completed for teaching staff.

14.2 All staff with responsibility for recruitment will have undertaken Safer Recruitment training. A Safer Recruitment trained member of staff will be involved in the recruitment of all staff and volunteers and will sit on the recruitment panel.

14.3 We recognise the stressful and traumatic nature of child protection work. We will support staff by offering then opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the Designated Senior Person or other Designated Safeguarding Lead and will assist them in seeking further support, as appropriate.

15. Responding to an Allegation about a Member of Staff

15.1 This procedure should be used in any case in which it is alleged that a member of staff, governor, visiting professional or 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 in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

15.2 Although it is an uncomfortable thought, it needs to be acknowledged that there is the potential for staff in school to abuse children.

15.3 All staff working within our organisation must report any potential safeguarding concerns about an individual's behaviour towards children and young people immediately. Allegations or concerns about colleagues and visitors must be reported directly to the Principal, unless the concern relates to the Principal. If the concern relates to the Principal, it must be reported immediately to the Executive Principal, Chair of Governors and Local Authority Designated Officer and they will decide on any action required.

15.4 AS will follow all advice and guidelines specifically within the DfE documents:- Keeping children safe in education 2019 and Working together to safeguard children July 2018

16. Children with Additional Needs

16.1 AS recognises that while all children have a right to be safe, some children may be more vulnerable to abuse, for example those with a disability or special educational need, those living with domestic violence or drug / alcohol abusing parents, etc.

16.2 Staff at AS recognises that children with Special Educational needs may be more prone to peer group isolation than other students and as such will consider additional pastoral support for those children.

16.3 When a school is considering excluding, either fixed term or permanently, a vulnerable pupil and / or a pupil who is the subject of a Child Protection Plan or about whom there are significant child protection concerns, we will take into account safeguarding factors when making the decision to exclude. In the event of a one-off serious incident, resulting in an immediate decision to exclude, agencies involved with the pupil will be informed of the decision and a risk assessment will be completed, if necessary. Any Looked After Child or child subject to a Child Protection Plan, will be placed in an educational provision from the first day of any exclusion, in line with DfE Guidelines.

17. Children who may benefit from early help

17.1 All staff will know that early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life and be prepared to identify and highlight children who may benefit from early help.

17.2 Any child may benefit from early help, but all AS staff should be particularly alert to highlight if necessary, to the school's Safeguarding Leads, the potential need for early help for a child who;

- Is disabled and has specific additional needs
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- Is a young carer
- Is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- Has returned home to their family from care
- Is a privately fostered child

17.3 If a student is referred by a member of staff to the Safeguarding Lead or one of the Deputies then an assessment may be undertaken to provide help to the child and family.

18. Children in Specific Circumstances and Specific Safeguarding Issues

18.1 All staff will have an awareness of specific safeguarding issues and circumstances which may give rise to them, some of which are listed below;

- Abuse including peer on peer, faith based
- Bullying and cyberbullying
- Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable county lines
- Children missing education
- Child missing from home or care
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Domestic Abuse
- Drugs
- Fabricated or induced Illness
- Female genital mutilation
- Forced marriage
- Gangs and youth and gender based violence
- Hate crimes
- Mental health
- Private Fostering
- Preventing radicalisation
- Sexting
- Contextual safeguarding

18.2 Staff should be aware that behaviours linked to issues such as listed above and for example drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education and sexting put children in danger.

18.3 All staff should also be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as peer on peer abuse. Peer on peer abuse can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to)

- bullying (including cyberbullying)
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence and sexual harassment
- upskirting (typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without the knowing)
- sexting
- initiating / hazing type violence and rituals.

All staff will deal with any behaviour which is deemed to be breaking the school code of conduct according to the school's behaviour policy and procedures

18.4 With regards to 'Child missing from Education' AS staff will work closely with the Educational Welfare Service and will follow Bedford Borough Council's guidelines for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future. It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks

of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, HBV, FGM and forced marriage.

18.5 School staff will follow school safeguarding procedures and heed the advice and use the guidance given on how to support children in specific circumstances as specified in paragraphs 18.1 - 18.4 in;

- Part One of Keeping children safe in education 2019
- Working together to safeguard children July 2018
- Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board:- https://www.bedford.gov.uk/social-care-health-and-community/children-young-people/safeguarding-children-board/