

Child Protection Policy

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CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

This policy should be read and understood in with reference to the following documents:

- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Intimate Care Procedure
- Online Safety Policy
- Sex & Relationships Education Policy – Being reviewed
- Equality Policy – being reviewed
- Secure Data Handling Policy – being reviewed
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings (2015)
- Keeping Children Safe In Education (July 2015 revised September 2016)
 - Child Missing in Education
 - Child Exploitation
 - Female Genital mutilation
 - Preventing Radicalisation
 - Private Fostering Children Act (1989)
- WSCB Policy for Managing Allegations against Staff and Volunteers 2015 (WSCB reviewing LADO role June 2016)
- Local Authorities Escalation Policy (2015)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015 revised |Oct 2017)
- WSBC 'Consent and Information Sharing Protocol' (June 2015)
- Thresholds for Safeguarding Children (2014)
- Keeping and Maintaining DFE Records (2015)
- Disclosure and Barring policy

NB Guidance around safeguarding is constantly changing and TMAP schools:

- refer to the WSCB website for up to date information and advice
- ensure a member of the Inclusion Team attends the CSL Safeguarding Forum meetings
- refer to government updates

The Mead Academy Trust fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection.

1. Purpose of policy

We recognise that because of their day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The Mead Academy Trust will therefore:

- establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to
- ensure children know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried
- include opportunities throughout the curriculum, including Computing and PSHEE, for children to develop the skills they need to recognise, and stay safe from abuse, and
- take advantage of experts outside school to reinforce those messages (e.g. NSPCC and Police regarding 'Stranger Danger')

2. Aims

This policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in each school. The policy has five main elements:

- ensuring we practice safer recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children
- raising awareness of a range of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe
- developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse
- supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with their agreed child protection plan, and
- establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

There are three main elements to the Trust's approach to safeguarding:

- **PREVENTION** (positive and safe school environment, careful and vigilant teaching, accessible pastoral care, support to pupils, good adult role models).
- **PROTECTION** (agreed procedures are followed, staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to safeguarding concerns).
- **SUPPORT** (to pupils, who may have been at risk of significant harm and the way staff respond to their concerns and any work that may be required).

3. Action to be taken by the school (based on s.175 Education Act 2002)

We will follow the child protection procedures set out by the Wiltshire Local Safeguarding Children Board and available at www.swcpp.org.uk and will take account of guidance issued by the Department of Education (previously the Department for Children Schools and Families) to:

- ensure we have a **Designated Senior Person and Deputy Senior Person for child protection** who has received appropriate training and support for this role which are site specific
- ensure we have a **nominated governor** taking a lead role for child protection, including:
 - championing child protection issues within each school and liaising with the Head of School
 - having an overview of Child Protection and all related policies
 - auditing safeguarding measures annually alongside the Designated Senior Person/Executive Head Teacher

- ensure that members of the Leadership Group/Inclusion Team are trained so that there is always a senior member of staff available who is aware of the more detailed procedures in the absence of the designated lead.
- ensure every member of staff, volunteer and governor knows the name of the designated senior persons responsible for child protection and their role

TMAT Lead: Head of Inclusion The Mead Academy Trust – Kirsty Jamieson Safeguarding Support: Gaby Simons TMAT Lead Governor: Stephanie Davis				
	The Mead Community Primary School (Hilperton site)	The Mead Community Primary School (Wingfield site)	Castle Mead School	River Mead School
Designated Senior Lead (DSL)	Emma Holton	Kate Seviour	Tracy Boulton/ Harriet Phillips	Leala Purdie/Lisa Penfold
Deputy Senior Person	Jo Birkett – Wendes	Jo Birkett – Wendes	Polly Marsh	Karen Austin
Nursery	Theo White	Kate Seviour	Terri Breakwell	Jill Baxter
Safeguarding Governor	Stephanie Davis	Stephanie Davis	Jayne Bullock	Helen Holland

- ensure that all regular visitors, volunteers and students (either on one-off or regular placements) are given a copy of the school’s Safeguarding and Code of Conduct leaflet as part of their induction, which they must be asked to read and subsequently sign to acknowledge their receipt, which will be kept in the school office
- ensure that ‘one-off’ visitors and volunteers to the school see a copy of the school’s key Safeguarding Information and Code of Conduct leaflet, which they must read on arrival at the school. *This will be displayed by the sign in book.*
- ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse or neglect as well as lower level child welfare concerns, and their responsibility for recording any concerns and promptly referring any concerns to the Designated Senior Person responsible for child protection and safeguarding
- each school will notify the appropriate Children’s Social Care team if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is subject to a child protection plan
- ensure all staff and volunteers across each school receive child protection training every three years, and that lead people (designated senior person, their deputy and nominated child protection governor) are trained every two years (in accordance with Wiltshire Schools Child Protection Training guidance)
- ensure that, as part of The Mead Academy Trust’s induction procedures, all staff and trainee teachers are fully informed about The Mead Academy Trust’s policy and procedures
- develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences
- keep written records of child welfare and child protection concerns about children, including actions taken and outcomes as appropriate
- ensure all child welfare and child protection records are kept securely, and in locked locations
- ensure safer recruitment practices are always followed

- ensure staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities for safer working practices, as outlined in this policy
- ensure that any allegations against members of staff with a child protection aspect are dealt with following local procedures – all such concerns to be dealt with urgently, with concerns about staff to be reported to the Head of School, but concerns about the Head of School reported to the Chair of Governors (see Wiltshire Council schools' allegations flowchart)
- ensure that the school building and site are appropriately secure, with a clear record kept of any risk assessments carried out
- ensure that other Mead Academy Trust policies which have a safeguarding element (e.g. health and safety; anti-bullying; e-safety; behaviour) are all consistent with this policy and with each other and where appropriate make cross-reference to this policy
- ensure that the Governing body carry out an annual child protection and safeguarding audit, and track progress against a safeguarding action plan, reviewed mid-year, using the Wiltshire Annual School Safeguarding Audit return as a starting point
- ensure all staff, governors and volunteers receive and sign for a copy of this policy as part of induction procedures
- ensure that parents receive information from each school about the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection. This will be done through our website
- ensure that the designated senior person has a clear understanding of the Local Authority's Escalation Policy in the event that the school is unhappy with the response they receive from the LA.

4. Support to pupils at risk

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The Mead Academy Trust schools may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. Each school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- the content of the curriculum
- the ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued
- the behaviour for learning policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils. Each school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred
- liaison with other agencies supporting the pupil such as Children's Social Care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, education welfare service and educational psychology service, and where appropriate initiate and/or contribute to CAF and Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings
- ensuring that, where a pupil leaves a school within The Mead Academy Trust, any child protection records are promptly transferred to the new school. Child welfare records below the child protection threshold but with continuing relevance to the child's well-being are also transferred.

Children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities

- The school recognise that for a variety of reasons, children with additional needs face an increased risk of abuse and neglect; therefore adults are expected to take extra care to interpret correctly apparent signs of abuse or neglect. Indications of abuse will be reported as for other pupils.
- The school will provide an environment in which pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities feel confident and able to discuss their concerns. Whenever possible, pupils will be given the chance to express themselves to a member of staff with appropriate communication skills. The DSL will work with the Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Co-ordinator to identify pupils with particular communication needs.
- The school recognises that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in children with SEND. This can include:
 - assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury related to the child's disability without further exploration
 - children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying – without outwardly showing any signs, and
 - communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers
- Wiltshire Council provides targeted support services for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or a Disability who need additional support.
- As a school we ensure that parents/carers are aware of our responsibility with regard to child protection and advise parents/carers of this through our School Prospectus, as part of our Foundation Stage Induction and also through the school website.

5. Process for considering and acting on concerns about child abuse

All adults who work with or volunteer with children should be able to identify and act on concerns about child abuse.

What constitutes child abuse or neglect?

- All adults who work or volunteer with children should be able to identify concerns about child abuse. The four types of abuse, described in *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016* are:

- **Physical abuse**
 - **Emotional abuse**
 - **Sexual abuse**
 - **Neglect**
- **Specific safeguarding issues:** There are other specific safeguarding issues that staff must be aware of and alert to. These are detailed in Appendix 2b (Keeping Children Safe in Education – Part 2 Section 43). Five key areas are referred to in greater detail below
 - **Children missing education and poor school attendance:**
 - A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect. If a member of staff or volunteer becomes aware that a child is missing, or missing education, they need to report that to the DSL immediately.
 - After reasonable attempts have been made to contact the family, the school will follow the WSCB procedure and refer to the MASH team.
 - If a looked after child or a child who is the subject of a CP plan goes missing, we will refer them to the MASH team within 48 hours.
 - Poor school attendance, including any regular patterns of non-attendance can be a possible indicator of abuse and neglect. The school will monitor attendance and challenge poor attendance or specific patterns of absence to satisfy themselves that there is no cause for concern with regard to child protection.
 - Unauthorised absence procedures will be followed where a child or young person:
 - has 10 days or more continuous absence from school without an explanation and/or
 - has left school suddenly and the destination is unknown and/or
 - has not taken up an allocated school place as expected.
 - Any such concern will be reported to the LA through the Educational Welfare Service.
 - The school will also refer to the MASH team any child being withdrawn from school with the intent to be electively home educated where there are safeguarding concerns.
 - **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE):**
 - CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, an/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.
 - Child sexual does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.¹
 - The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe that they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them.
 - A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point.
 - There are several other signs that might be indicators of sexual exploitation and these are detailed in Annex A of Appendix 2b – Keeping Children Safe in Education – Part 2.
 - **Female genital mutilation (FGM)**
 - FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.
 - It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.
 - Staff must inform the DSL immediately if they suspect a girl is at risk of FGM (unless they have a good reason not to).

¹ Extract from DfE 'Child sexual exploitation' – February 2017

- There is a statutory duty upon individual teachers (along with regulated health and social care professionals) to personally report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18.
- **Allegations made against other children (peer on peer abuse):**
 - We believe that all children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm by adults in the school and other students.
 - The school, through its ethos and curriculum (particularly its PSHE curriculum) will address these issues with children at the appropriate level for their age.
 - Occasionally, allegations may be made against pupils by others in the school. This is most likely to include (but not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying), gender based violence, sexual assaults and sexting.
 - Staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”.
 - If there is a safeguarding concern the DSL should be informed, and will decide on the appropriate action(s) the school will follow.
 - Pupils who are victims of such abuse will be supported in the same way as all other children for whom there is a safeguarding concern,
 - A record will be made
- **Preventing Radicalisation:**
 - Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of the school's wider safeguarding duties and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse.
 - During the process of radicalisation it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being radicalised.
 - Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and speak to the DSL if they are concerned about a child. The DSL will act proportionately, which may include making a referral to the ‘Channel’ programme or the MASH team.
- The school will endeavour to identify and act upon any forms of abuse according to our procedures.

The types of abuse are:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Neglect
- Emotional (including seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another)

There are other types of specific abuse as outlined in the KCSIE document (Sept 2016), these include:

- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Children Missing in Education
- Private fostering
- Bullying including cyber-bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying

Preventing Radicalisation

- TMAT schools follow the guidance in the Home Office publication; Prevent Duty Guidance Mar 2016 (revised Mar 2016).
- Senior members of staff (Kirsty Jamieson, Head of Inclusion and Lindsay Palmer, head of the Teaching School, have been trained to deliver the appropriate ‘Prevent training’ within TMAT. Our schools also access this training through CSL
- The school has carried out a risk assessment and is developing an action plan with regard to radicalisation

6. Recording and reporting concerns

Where any adult has concerns about a child they should discuss these in the first instance with the Designated Senior Person, or in their absence, the Deputy. Discussions should be recorded on the school cause for concern sheet (appendix 15) with details of the concern and any agreed action that is to be taken. The record must be signed and dated and kept securely. The Designated Senior Person is responsible for ensuring that concerns and discussions are written up properly and acted on appropriately.

We recognise that children will talk to an adult they know and trust and therefore our expectation is that this person will listen to the child about their concerns and then report this to the Designated Person. The child should not then be asked to repeat their story unless each school has been advised by Children's Social Care to seek more information. When a child discloses abuse to an adult in a school, that person is responsible for making a written record of the disclosure as soon as possible after the event and reporting it urgently to the Designated Senior Person or their Deputy.

The Designated Person will consider next steps to be taken, including referral to Children's Social Care

7. Responding to disclosures: guidance for staff

- As a school we recognise that children will talk to an adult they know and trust and therefore our expectation is that this person will listen to the child about their concerns and then report this to the DSL or their deputy as soon as possible afterwards.
- If a child discloses harm to any staff member, it must be remembered that the school role is to recognise and refer abuse, **not** to investigate. This is to avoid contamination of evidence gained in any subsequent investigation undertaken by the Police and/or the Social Services. This does not mean however that the staff member involved cannot ask any questions but must avoid anything that might be interpreted as 'leading' the child
- If a child wishes to confide in you the following guidelines should be adhered to:
 - take the child to a private and safe place if possible
 - stay calm
 - reassure the child and stress that he/she is not to blame and they were right to tell you
 - listen to the child and tell them that you believe them and are taking what is being said seriously
 - tell the child you have to speak to someone who can help keep them safe and what you are going to do next
 - do not interview the child: keep questions to a minimum and encourage the child to use his/her own words.
 - Questioning should only include **TED** questions:
 - **T**ell me
 - **E**xplain
 - **D**escribe
 - Or use the mirroring technique i.e. "*My dad hit me last night*" – respond by "*Your dad hit you last night?*"
 - Record as soon as possible exactly what the child has said to you, what you have heard, what you saw and any other relevant information (using Appendix 15a)
 - Immediately inform your DSL or DDSL (and nobody else) so that an appropriate action can be taken to protect the pupil if necessary.

DO NOT:

- make written notes whilst a child is disclosing abuse as this may deter them from speaking
- investigate the issue yourself
- ask the child to write down what they said or repeat it to another adult
- record the conversation on any device
- ask another adult to witness their disclosure – the child has chosen to tell you

- Following any disclosure from a child, staff will be involved on a 'need to know' basis so that the child can be supported throughout the process that follows. This may include time out and/or additional support from specific adults who they trust or feel comfortable with. However, there is no set process as the needs of each child are likely to be different, so the school will respond accordingly.
- The child should be kept informed regarding the process and the DSL (or their deputy) should ensure that they are supported.
- As a school we are also aware that the member of staff or volunteer to whom the disclosure has been made may also be in need of support and the school's senior management team will ensure that such support is given.

8. Safer working practice

The most recent government version of the government's 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People' indicates that there must be clear professional reason for all conduct of staff and volunteers.

- Our 'Staff Code of Conduct' clearly outlines the school's expectations for all staff who work at our school. All members of staff receive a copy of our 'Code of Conduct' when they join the school as part of their induction process.
- As part of the same induction process, all staff will be made aware of the school's Child Protection Policy and, where necessary, receive updated training. This will include an understanding of indicators of abuse.
- Staff must not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substance which may affect their ability to care for children. If staff are taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children, they should seek medical advice. Schools must ensure that staff only work directly with children if medical advice confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair that staff member's ability to look after children properly.
- Staff medication on the school premises must be stored securely and out of reach of children at all times.

9. Managing allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers

- The school follows the procedure set out in the WSCB '[Allegations against adults' flowchart](#) which is based on the [WSCB Allegations Management Policy](#).
- Any report of concern about the behaviour of a member of staff or volunteer, or allegation of abuse against a member of staff must immediately be reported to the Head Teacher who will refer to the Designated Office for Allegations (DOFA) at the local authority who can be contacted on 01225 713945
- Any concern or allegation against the Head Teacher will be reported to the Chair of Governors without informing the Head Teacher.
- Any allegation of abuse will be dealt with in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.
- In some circumstances the member of staff will, without prejudice, be asked to take a period of paid leave pending the results of the investigation.
- The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.
- Malicious allegations against staff will be investigated and dealt with by the Head Teacher and, if appropriate, a committee of governors.
- If staff members have concerns about another staff member or volunteer then this should be referred to the Head Teacher or Principal.
- Where there are concerns about the Head Teacher this should be referred to the Chair of Governors.
- Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must

remember that the welfare of a child is paramount. The school's Whistle Blowing Policy'² enables staff to raise concerns or allegations in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place.

- Where a member of staff feels unable to raise an issue with the Head Teacher or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, they should address their concerns to Chair of Governors.
- They may also find it helpful to refer to the [NSPCC whistleblowing helpline](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/whistleblowing/). Staff can call 0800 028 0285 (8.00am to 8.00pm – Monday to Friday) and/or by emailing help@nspcc.org.uk

10. Confidentiality

- Staff have a professional responsibility to share any relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly the investigating agencies.
- Information should only be shared with those who need to know.
- Staff should follow the guidance given in DFE: Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners (March 2015), together with the WSBC 'Consent and Information Sharing Protocol' (June 2015)

11. Policy review

This policy will be reviewed annually By Kirsty Jamieson, Head of Inclusion & Safeguarding