



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The aim of this policy is to provide a framework for schools and academies to develop secure processes for identifying and supporting students at risk of abuse.

KEY REQUIREMENTS

Schools/Academies

- must establish its own Child Protection Policy to meet the principles set out here; its particular organisational arrangements and the local arrangements for managing child protection. Procedures specified in this policy must follow Local Government guidelines on child protection including appropriate liaison with the Social Services and other agencies
- must designate a senior member of staff to be their Child Protection Manager (CPM) and a governor to become their Child Protection Governor (CPG)
- must ensure that all members of staff are trained appropriately and have an understanding of child abuse and its main indicators, and are alert to their reporting and confidentiality responsibilities
- must monitor the implementation of the Child Protection Policy and review its effectiveness. The findings must be reported to the LGB on a regular basis

1. Recommendations and Guidance

- 1.1 For students to feel that they are able to do their best, it is important that they feel safe and supported in the school/academy. UCST/ULT recognises the importance of listening to students, particularly when they are distressed and anxious and having appropriate facility for this to happen.
- 1.2 Schools/academies are also encouraged to identify quiet areas and provide the opportunity for students to take respite from the normal day when necessary.
- 1.3 Staff are expected to be vigilant in identifying the indicators of potential abuse and sensitive in their dealings with students at all times.
- 1.4 Staff are expected to adhere to the group's Confidentiality Policy Statement.

2. Curriculum Implications

- 2.1 The curriculum should include teaching to help all students to understand and respond positively to the rights of children to be safe and to know how to protect themselves and

others. This may be included in PSHE programmes, or be a strand running through several curriculum areas. Opportunities will be taken to develop positive attitudes to parenthood and childcare and to other responsibilities of mature adult life.

- 2.2 Students with special educational needs which may make them especially vulnerable to abuse should be provided with appropriate support so that they can communicate any concerns effectively to staff.

3. Pastoral Implications

- 3.1 It is a major priority in the group's schools and academies that an environment is created in which students know, and are confident about, the adults whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- 3.2 Designated staff are expected to establish and maintain effective working relationships with welfare colleagues from other agencies such as Police Liaison Officers and Social Workers.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- 4.1 The CPM should be responsible for:
- Being the first point-of-call for students and staff
 - Contributing to training
 - Co-ordinating action within the school/academy
 - Liaising with other agencies on suspected cases of abuse, taking advice where necessary from the local child protection panels, Social Services or NSPCC
 - Advising the Head/Principal about cases in hand according to the agreements already established about confidentiality
 - Monitoring students who have been identified as being at risk
 - Keeping securely, clear, accurate and confidential records of students' progress, providing information to other professionals, reports for case conferences, and participating in case conferences.
- 4.5 All staff are responsible for protecting children from abuse and from inappropriate and inadequate care, and have a responsibility to report suspicions and concerns to the CPM immediately.

5. Implementation and Procedures

- 5.1 On receiving a referral from a member of staff, the CPM should ask that staff member to document, briefly, the events which have given rise to the concern.

5.2 The CPM will then follow the procedures laid down in the Child Protection Policy, taking actions in accord with the guidelines of the local authority.

6. Recording and Record Keeping

6.1 Records and reports should be objective and based on evidence. They should distinguish between fact, observation, allegation and opinion. Staff should guard against myths and stereotypes- both positive and negative. This is particularly the case when working with ethnic minority families. Anxiety about being accused of racist practice should not prevent necessary action being taken to safeguard a child.

6.2 Records should be securely archived for ten years, ensuring confidentiality.

7. School Transfer

7.1 In the event of the transfer to another school/academy of a student about whom there are concerns, the school/academy should:

- Find out the name of the receiving school/academy
- Contact the relevant member of staff at that school/academy to discuss the transfer
- Send all information relating to the student to the school/academy
- Check with the school/academy that the student has actually arrived on the expected day
- Inform all relevant agencies of the transfer.

8. Links to other policies

8.1 In establishing their policies on Child Protection, schools and academies should be mindful of the links it will have with other UCST/ULT policies. In particular there will be connections with the policies on *Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and other Staff*, *Sex and Relationships*, *SEN and Inclusion*, and *Access to Student Records*.

Appendix 1: Confidentiality Policy

- 1.1 Staff will be required to adhere to the policy on confidentiality between themselves and students as set out within this section.
- 1.2 However, staff cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality. If confidentiality has to be broken the student should, if at all possible, be informed first and then supported, as appropriate.
- 1.3 It is only in the most exceptional circumstances that a school/academy should be in the position of having to manage information without parental knowledge. Where younger children (normally under the age of 16) are involved there will be grounds for serious concern and child protection clarity issues will need to be addressed.
- 1.4 Students should be encouraged to talk to their parents and given support to do so. If there is evidence of abuse child protection procedure should be adhered to, ensuring that students are informed of sources of confidential help, for example, the school/academy nurse, counsellor, GP or local young person's advice service.
- 1.5 Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of any sex education provided, but not from teaching the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction necessary under National Curriculum Science. The views of parents need to be borne in mind when implementing a sex and relationship education policy and parents will be invited to comment on the extent to which this policy reflects their wishes and the culture of the community served by their school/academy.

Appendix 2: UCST/ULT Notes of Guidance for Staff-Student Relationships

This guidance is not exhaustive and is designed to set out principles rather than to give detailed and specific advice. Clearly, the circumstances in which staff work vary (e.g. working with very young children, boarding staff, sports staff, etc.); this guidance is meant to give general principles only. Although this advice applies primarily to teachers and to other adults with educational roles, all adults working within schools/academies relate to students/pupils during the course of their duties; again, the general principles apply equally to all who are involved in the school/academy.

- 1 The relationship between staff and students/pupils is a professional one. It is fully expected – and, indeed, hoped – that staff in the school/academy have a friendly and caring relationship with students/pupils; nevertheless, the basis of that relationship is professional not personal. It is suggested that a good test to apply is to reflect on whether the child's parents would be happy with the relationship if they were standing with you.
- 2 A personal relationship between staff and a student/pupil is inappropriate unless it is with the full knowledge and consent of the student's/pupil's parents or guardians. Circumstances in which such a personal relationship may arise would be when your own children are friends with those in the school/academy or when you have a personal relationship with parents of children in the school/academy. It is not normally appropriate for a member of staff to meet with a student/pupil out of school hours or off school premises except with the prior knowledge and consent of parents and the school.
- 3 In general, unnecessary physical contact with students/pupils should be avoided. In some circumstances, physical contact between a member of staff and a student/pupil is necessary and beneficial; it might be, for example, that a Reception teacher might need to pick up a 5 year old who has fallen over in the playground, a sports coach may need to demonstrate to a student/pupil how to hold a racket or a secondary teacher may give a student/pupil a gentle pat on the back as encouragement. In rare circumstances it may be appropriate for members of staff to use reasonable restraint in circumstances where a student is behaving in a manner which endangers him or herself or other people. In these situations, staff are advised to be very sensitive to the student's/pupil's likely reaction and to watch out for signs that the student/pupil is apprehensive or uncomfortable. We all have our own personal space that needs to be protected. Wherever possible when working with students/pupils, other people (adults, colleagues or students/pupils) should be present or the door should be open.
- 4 Over-familiar words and actions, displays of affection, discussion of one's personal life or the personal life of the student/pupil are normally inappropriate. Sexual innuendo is wrong in all circumstances. Staff are advised to avoid actions, words or expressions that could be interpreted as suggesting that they have an emotional relationship with any student/pupil. In

the professional staff-student/pupil relationship it is not appropriate to single a student/pupil out for favours or to suggest to a student/pupil that he or she is a special friend.

- 5 Occasionally it is necessary for professional academic reasons for staff to communicate with students/pupils out of the school/academy. Except where absolutely necessary, personal email addresses, home or mobile phone numbers should not be given, asked for or used. A staff mobile phone number might be given to students/pupils for use during an educational visit; where possible, the school's/academy's mobile phone (if there is one) should be used for this purpose. Pastoral matters should not normally be dealt with by email or using personal phone contacts. Only in the most exceptional circumstances, for instance, where there is well-founded concern for the unexplained whereabouts of a student, should pastoral matters be dealt with by email or using personal phone contact. In any event, records of all contacts should be kept on the student file so that if it is necessary to use email or personal contact; the reason why will be specified in the written record. It is very difficult to envisage circumstances under which texting is appropriate.
- 6 It is not normally appropriate for students/pupils to visit a member of staff in their own home. Such a visit might be more likely within a boarding context where staff live on site and so might invite a group of students/pupils – say, a tutorial group – to their house for a meeting or for a celebration. Where such a visit does take place it should be with the full knowledge and consent of either the school or parents or guardians. If possible, more than one adult should be present on such an occasion.
- 7 With older students/pupils, a gathering might be held as part of a celebration. Generally, it is advisable if that is held in the school/academy. It is essential that professional criteria (e.g. all the students/pupils in a particular teaching or tutorial group) rather than personal criteria (e.g. selected students/pupils only) are used for inviting students/pupils, that the event is held openly, and that senior colleagues are aware of it. Staff on such an occasion have a particular duty to ensure that the supply and consumption of alcohol is appropriate, is responsible and falls within the law and the school's/academy's guidelines on alcohol.
- 8 Members of staff who in the course of their professional duties need to work on a one-to-one basis with a student/pupil (e.g. a piano lesson, a maths tutorial, etc.), in particular one of the opposite sex, are advised to take care to ensure that the circumstances of the meeting or lesson are professional. Staff are advised to use a room which has vision panels in the door or keep the door open and ensure that colleagues know that the meeting or lesson is taking place. It is helpful if the meeting or lesson can be arranged during normal school hours or immediately before or after school when there are plenty of other people about.
- 9 Staff are advised to avoid threatening words, raised voices and any aggressive contact such as holding, pushing, pulling or hitting, which could amount to or which could be interpreted as a criminal assault.

10. Members of staff do have the right to use reasonable physical force to restrain students/pupils in order to prevent them from committing a criminal offence, injuring others or themselves, damaging property or behaving in such a way as to compromise good order and discipline. The [DfES Circular 10/98](#) sets out more detailed advice simply and clearly.
11. If you are at all concerned about anything which has occurred or which has made you uncomfortable, you are strongly encouraged to discuss the matter with a senior colleague at the earliest opportunity even if it turns out that nothing untoward has happened. As a matter of good practice it is advisable to make a written record, dated and signed, of any such incident.