



Child Protection Policy and Procedures

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Child Protection Policy and Procedures

At Ashcroft Technology Academy our prime concern is the interest and safety of the child. The Executive Board has a commitment to provide an academy environment which promotes self-confidence, a feeling of worth and the knowledge that students' concerns will be listened to and acted upon.

Ashcroft Technology Academy fully recognises its responsibilities for Child Protection.

All staff at Ashcroft Technology Academy will be employed in line with the guidance set out in the Every Child Matters Act 2004 and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

We aim to:

- provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment
- motivate and challenge.
- recognise, respond to and respect individual needs.
- work together to achieve.
- celebrate success.

The purpose of this policy document is to affirm the academy's duty to recognise and refer children at risk:

- all children have a right to be protected from abuse;
- child abuse occurs in all cultures, all religions and all social classes

Procedures follow the recommendations of the Wandsworth Area Child Protection Committee 1997 and ensure that appropriate action is taken whenever a child is at risk of significant harm.

The Ashcroft Technology Academy has a commitment to:

- ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking suitability of our staff
- promote an atmosphere in which the students feel secure, are listened to and valued
- designate a Child Protection Liaison Officer
- having a range of adults to whom students can approach for help
- raise awareness of child protection issues and equip staff to recognise signs and symptoms of suspected abuse
- developing and implementing clear procedures and lines of communication for identifying and reporting cases or suspected cases of abuse
- work closely with parents and other agencies to support students who have been abused, or are in danger of being abused
- monitor students at risk

- provide child protection training for all new staff and regularly promote awareness to current academy staff, acknowledging their responsibilities for identifying and reporting actual or suspected abuse
- use the curriculum to raise students awareness and self-esteem, allowing for continuity and progress through all the Key Stages: ensure that curriculum development meets the following objectives: developing student self-esteem; developing communications skills; informing about all aspects of risk; developing strategies for self-protection; developing a sense of the boundaries between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour in adults and; developing non-abusive behaviour between students
- extend this policy to all community and out of school activities
- to take account of, and inform policy in related areas such as discipline and anti-bullying and physical restraint

Failure to Thrive - The Role of the Classroom Teacher

- if you have a concern about any child in the academy, if you suspect failure to thrive, it is your statutory duty to alert the Child Protection Liaison Officer (DP responsible for pastoral matters) who will inform the Principal
- when a child is making a disclosure to you, do not promise confidentiality

On no account should school staff notify parents when abuse is suspected. How and when the parent is to be informed is a decision taken by the Principal only, in consultation with Social services if necessary.

Procedures

If a member of staff suspects that a student has suffered abuse, or is at risk of suffering abuse, they have a duty to inform the CPLO as quickly as possible

Where there is disclosure or abuse is suspected contact social Services (see attached contact numbers)

In the absence of the CPLO the relevant Key Stage Learning Manager should be alerted: in every case the Principal must be informed.

In some cases it might be that a physical or behavioural change in a student causes concern; in these circumstances the CPLO may need only to provide reassurance and/or point out responsibilities where the protection of the student is required. Information is logged after liaison with Key Stage Learning Manager.

Appendices

What to do in case of disclosure:

When a student makes a disclosure of abuse, the member of staff concerned must not ask leading questions or promise complete confidentiality.

Whilst the student needs reassurance the member of staff should explain that they may not be able to keep what the student is about to tell them a secret, and that they may need to tell someone else who can offer them further advice and support.

Receive what is said

Accept what you are told – you do not need to decide whether or not it is true. If appropriate, encourage the child to allow the CPLO to be present.

Listen without displaying shock or disbelief.

Reassure the student

Acknowledge their courage in telling. Remind them they are not to blame (avoid criticising the alleged perpetrator – young people often love the adults who abuse them).

Do not promise confidentiality.

Re-assure them but do not pretend 'everything will be all right now' (it may not be)

React

If it is inappropriate to stop the child or seek the help of the CPO, respond to what the student has said but do not interrogate. Avoid leading questions like: 'Who was it? Did they do...to you?' Questions such as this in a subsequent court case might be suggested to have 'contaminated' the student's evidence. Ask open ended questions; 'Do you want to tell me anything else?' 'And?'

Record

Make brief notes as soon as possible and within 24 hours.

Keep original notes, then write up subsequent record – include date, time, place. Describe observable behaviour. Record the actual words the child uses.

Evidence of obvious physical injury should be described if appropriate.

NB. Where there are concerns but no disclosure record as described above, then the CPLO will decide whether to report the matter or monitor internally.

If the disclosure is after school hours, e.g. Extra-curricular activity, school trip, the member of staff may seek advice by ringing the Duty Officer at local Social Services.

Any disclosure of a sensitive nature will be kept by the Principal in a confidential file.

Where a member of staff is alleged to be involved in abuse the matter must be referred to the Principal immediately.

Information regarding children 'at risk' or on the Child Protection Register is highly confidential and shared on a 'need to know' basis only. Records are retained in a secure cabinet, separate from student records.

The Cover Director should be informed to arrange cover if a student is making a disclosure at a time when a member of staff should be teaching.

It is important that staff acquaint themselves with guidelines for recognising child abuse, emotional, physical or sexual

Sexual contact between students

Defining what constitutes normal sexual behaviour and identifying inappropriate sexual behaviour can be a complex task.

Children and adolescents are normally sexually curious. Adolescents may behave sexually inappropriately with each other – the boundary between sexual harassment and sexually abusive behaviour can be difficult to define – a major issue is likely to be whether the sexual contact is consensual or not.

Sexual behaviour that is a cause for concern includes:

- 1 A significant age difference (4+ years) between children. In particular, an adolescent who seemed interested only in younger children would give rise to concern.
- 2 Sexual behaviour involving threats, bribery or force. Children with special needs are particularly vulnerable where they may not have the intellectual or physical resources to resist abuse.
- 3 Inappropriate sexualised behaviour – a level of sexual knowledge inconsistent with the level of development that would normally be expected.
- 4 Physically intrusive and/or aggressive sexual behaviour, including poking objects or parts of bodies into the orifices of other people.

A more difficult decision involves behaviour often defined as harassment – for example, an adolescent boy cornering a girl and groping her.

It is essential that all such incidents are treated seriously and reported to the CPLO. The needs of the victim must be addressed, in addition to ensuring that the perpetrator is dealt with in such a way that they acknowledge the seriousness of their action. Where it is believed that this is an isolated incident and unlikely to recur, it may be decided not to contact Social Services. The Principal, however, may decide to contact the parents of both young people to give them an opportunity to support their child. It must be remembered that a criminal offence may have been committed and the victim has the right to pursue a complaint against someone who has assaulted them.

Wandsworth area Child Protection Committee (ACPC)

c/o Child Protection Unit
Social Services Department
The Town Hall
Wandsworth High Street
London
SW18 2PU

020 8871 7249/7208

**Out of hours
020 8871 6000**

LEAs and telephone numbers:

LB Hammersmith and Fulham	Town Hall King Street Hammersmith London W6 JU	020 8576 5337
LB Kensington & Chelsea	Isaac Newton Centre Lancaster Road London W11 1QS	
LB Lambeth	50 Acre Lane London SW2 5SS	020 7926 2189
LB Merton	Canterbury Centre Canterbury Road Morden Surrey SM4 6PT	020 8640 8634
LB Westminster	Box 240 Westminster City Hall 64 Victoria Street London SW1E 6QP	020 7641 6000