

# The Milton Keynes Academy

## Safeguarding and Promoting Student Welfare Policy

### 1. Introduction

Safeguarding is more than protecting children and young people from neglect and abuse. It is defined by a Government document called 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' in 2006 as:

'Protecting children from maltreatment and preventing impairment of children's health and development.'

It adds that "Effective child protection is essential as part of wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. However, all agencies and individuals should aim proactively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced."

Safeguarding encompasses keeping them safe from accidents, crime and bullying and actively promoting their welfare in a healthy and safe environment.

The Academy believes that students have a right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment which includes the right to protection from all types of abuse; where staff are vigilant for signs of any student in distress and are confident about applying the processes to avert and alleviate any such problems.

The Academy recognises that because Academy staff are in regular and frequent contact with children, they are particularly well placed to safeguard and promote the welfare of students. The Academy is aware of the responsibilities which all staff have with regard to the welfare of students.

See also the Academy's policies on Child Protection, Anti-Bullying, Behaviour, Professional Conduct, Whistleblowing, SEN, Recruitment, Exclusion, Health and Safety and Medicine Administration. Refer also to NEOST Guidance on Conduct September 2002 and 'Guidance on Safe Working Practice for the Protection of Children and Staff in Education Settings' issued by The National Network of Investigation and Referral Support Co-ordinators, 2005.

### 2. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is:

- to make clear support systems to safeguard and promote the welfare of students
- to support students, parent/carers and staff in dealing with students' welfare
- to provide regular, quality training for all adults
- to develop access to support services that support students, parents/carers and staff in dealing with Child Protection matters, ensuring that contact details are readily and easily available to all
- to set out procedures to avoid accusations of staff misconduct

### 3. Definition

Safeguarding is "the process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully" *Working Together to Safeguard Children DfES 2006*.

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 introduced a duty on governing bodies to have arrangements to ensure that they exercise their functions with a view to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This requires schools to review policies and procedures annually.

#### **4. Guidelines and Procedures**

It is the responsibility of everyone in the Academy community to be vigilant about safeguarding and student welfare.

##### **The Principal will:**

- Ensure that everyone knows what safeguarding is and that it is taken seriously.
- Ensure that a Vice Principal is designated as the person in charge of Looked After Children and receives appropriate training.
- Encourage students and parents to inform the Academy of any concerns.
- Ensure that the development of the use of new and existing media technologies do not expose students to any potential harm.
- Work with the ICT Manager to ensure safeguarding when using digital media and education of students in safe use of the Internet.
- Ensure that the Academy has access to the external and internal resources to offer extensive support.
- Monitor the processes for promoting student welfare and safeguarding to ensure that adequate resources are given to it.
- Work with the Governors to put mechanisms in place to ensure that students requiring safeguarding measures are monitored in relation to their situation and progress with their learning.
- An annual report will be prepared for Governors.
- Ensure all recruitment procedures follow safeguarding best practice.

##### **The Senior Leadership Team will:**

- Ensure that all publicity materials and requests for information are dealt with appropriately, taking the issue of safeguarding into account.
- Ensure that the Academy fulfils its statutory duty to co-operate with other agencies and that the chain of accountability is clear from front line to senior level.

##### **Staff should:**

- Always be aware of the needs of young people, and be vigilant for any possible signs of abuse.
- Not spend time alone with young people, especially away from others. Meetings with individual young people should take place as openly as possible. If privacy is needed, the door should be left partly open and other staff present or informed of the meeting.
- Not have unnecessary physical contact with young people. There may be occasions when physical contact is unavoidable or necessary, such as providing comfort or reassurance, or for physical support. Contact may also take place during sports. Physical contact should, however, only take place with the consent of the child and the purpose of the contact should be made clear. Staff/student sports events should be considered carefully and agreed with SLT before it takes place.
- Understand that physical contact should only be made to restrain youngsters in danger of hurting either themselves or someone else.
- Not take young people alone in a car journey, however short. Where this is unavoidable, it should be with the full knowledge and consent of the parents or carers, and someone in charge of the

activity. Staff should be able to state the purpose and anticipated length of the route and will have checked insurance liability.

- Not contact or meet with young people outside organised activities, unless it is with the knowledge and consent of parents and someone in charge of the activity.
- Plan residential experiences in accordance with safeguarding best practice.
- Be aware of the impact of domestic violence on young people.
- Ensure that their personal relationships do not affect the young people around them.
- Remember that on rare occasions young people themselves can be responsible for abusing their peers.

**Staff should never:**

- Engage in sexually provocative or rough physical games.
- Allow students to use inappropriate language unchallenged (e.g. racist, sexist or homophobic comments.)
- Make sexually suggestive comments in front of, about, or to a young person, even in fun.
- Use sarcasm.
- Let allegations made by a young person go without being addressed and recorded.
- Deter young people from making allegations through fear of not being believed.
- Jump to conclusions without checking facts.
- Rely on their own good name to protect them (i.e. everyone regardless of position should adhere to these guidelines.)

**Students should:**

- Understand the need to keep individuals safe and its impact upon others.
- Be aware of other people's feelings and sensitivities.
- Understand that some 'jokes' are not commonly understood or appreciated and may cause offence.
- Encourage each other to report any concerns or issues.
- Be prepared to accept that people make mistakes and can learn from them.

**Policy Ownership, Monitoring and Review**

The responsibility for ensuring that the Academy adheres to this policy and that this policy is periodically reviewed rests with: Principal of the Milton Keynes Academy.