

APPENDIX A

Ark Acton Academy school approach and summaries covering localised school procedure, practice and guidance documents and /or links to documents are available below.

All Ark Acton Academy policies are available at: <https://arkacton.org/page-strips/our-policies-22>

Ealing policies are available at: <https://www.egfl.org.uk/services-children/safeguarding>

Contact details for all Ealing child protection advisors and safeguarding contacts can be found here - <https://www.egfl.org.uk/services-children/safeguarding/child-protection/contacts-advice-and-support>

Contents Page

What is Child Abuse? Definitions, signs and symptoms	2
What is abuse and neglect?	2
Physical abuse	2
Emotional abuse	3
Sexual abuse	4
Neglect	5
Dealing with disclosures	6
Child Sexual Exploitation	6-7
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)	7-8
Youth Violence and Gang Involvement	8-9
Child on Child Abuse	10-13
Alternative Provision (AP)	14
Student Attendance and Children Missing from Education (CME)	14
RSE Policy	14
E-Safety Policy	14
IT Policy	14
Whistleblowing	15
Definition of Private Fostering	15
SEND	16
Children/Young People with Medical Needs	16
Referral to the Local Authority Education Inclusion Service:	16
Responding to self-harm, suicide, mental health	16
Contextual Safeguarding	17
Staff Code of Conduct	18
Anti-Discrimination	18
Images/photography of students:	19-20
Complaints policy:	21
Health and Safety	21
Managing allegations against other students:	21-23
Procedure for managing allegations made against/concerns raised in relation to teachers, including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers and contractors	23-25
Where either the student is alleged to have suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm or a criminal offence is alleged:	26-27
Where the allegation relates to poor or inappropriate behaviour	27-29
False Allegations	29
Employee Assistance Programme	30
Lessons learnt	31

What is Child Abuse? Definitions, signs and symptoms

The following definitions are taken from ‘Working together to safeguard children HM Government (2015)’. In addition to these definitions, children can also be abused by honour-based violence, child on child abuse, forced marriage or female genital mutilation.

What is abuse and neglect?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Indicators of physical abuse / factors that should increase concern:

- Multiple bruising or bruises and scratches (especially on the head and face)
- Clusters of bruises – e.g., fingertip bruising (caused by being grasped)
- Bruises around the neck and behind the ears – the most common abusive injuries are to the head
- Bruises on the back, chest, buttocks, or on the inside of the thighs
- Marks indicating injury by an instrument – e.g., linear bruising (stick), parallel bruising (belt), marks of a buckle
- Bite marks
- Deliberate burning may also be indicated by the pattern of an instrument or object – e.g., electric fire, cooker, cigarette
- Scalds with upward splash marks or tide marks
- Untreated injuries
- Recurrent injuries or burns
- Bald patches
- Serious Violence

In the social context of the school, it is normal to ask about a noticeable injury. The response to such an enquiry is generally light-hearted and detailed. So, most of all, concern should be increased when:

- the explanation given does not match the injury
- the explanation uses words or phrases that do not match the vocabulary of the child (adult’s words)
- no explanation is forthcoming
- the child (or the parent/carer) is secretive or evasive
- the injury is accompanied by allegations of abuse or assault

You should be concerned if the child or young person:

- is reluctant to have parents/carers contacted
- runs away or shows fear of going home
- is aggressive towards themselves or others
- flinches when approached or touched
- is reluctant to undress to change clothing for sport
- wears long sleeves during hot weather
- is unnaturally compliant in the presence of parents/carers.
- has a fear of medical help or attention
- admits to a punishment that appears excessive.

Emotional abuse

This covers the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Indicators of emotional abuse:

- Developmental issues
- Delays in physical, mental and emotional development
- Poor school performance
- Speech disorders, particularly sudden disorders or changes.
- Acceptance of punishment which appears excessive
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Continual self-deprecation
- Neurotic behaviour (such as rocking, hair-twisting, thumb-sucking)
- Self-mutilation
- Suicide attempts
- Drug/solvent abuse
- Running away
- Compulsive stealing, scavenging
- Acting out
- Poor trust in significant adults
- Regressive behaviour – e.g., wetting
- Eating disorders
- Destructive tendencies
- Over attachment or over-protective behaviour
- Arriving early at school, leaving late
- Self-harm
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Withdrawal from social interaction
- Over-compliant behaviour
- Insecure, clinging behaviour

- Poor social relationships
- Extreme fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Self-disgust
- Low self-esteem
- Unusually fearful with adults
- Lack of concentration, restlessness, aimlessness
- Extremes of passivity or aggression

Sexual abuse

This involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Characteristics of child sexual abuse:

- it is often planned and systematic – people do not sexually abuse children by accident, though sexual abuse can be opportunistic
- grooming the child – people who abuse children take care to choose a vulnerable child and often spend time making them dependent
- grooming the child's environment – abusers try to ensure that potential adult protectors (parents and other carers especially) are not suspicious of their motives.

Indicators of sexual abuse:

Physical observations:

- Damage to genitalia, anus or mouth
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Unexpected pregnancy, especially in very young girls
- Soreness in genital area, anus or mouth and other medical problems such as chronic itching
- Unexplained recurrent urinary tract infections and discharges or abdominal pain

Behavioural observations:

- Sexual knowledge inappropriate for age
- Sexualised behaviour or affection inappropriate for age
- Sexually provocative behaviour/promiscuity
- Hinting at sexual activity
- Inexplicable decline in school performance
- Depression or other sudden apparent changes in personality as becoming insecure or clinging
- Lack of concentration, restlessness, aimlessness
- Socially isolated or withdrawn
- Overly-compliant behaviour
- Acting out, aggressive behaviour
- Poor trust or fear concerning significant adults
- Regressive behaviour, Onset of wetting, by day or night; nightmares
- Onset of insecure, clinging behaviour
- Arriving early at school, leaving late, running away from home

- Suicide attempts, self-mutilation, self-disgust
- Suddenly drawing sexually explicit pictures
 - Eating disorders or sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating
 - Regressing to younger behaviour patterns such as thumb sucking or bringing out discarded cuddly toys
 - Become worried about clothing being removed
 - Trying to be 'ultra-good' or perfect; overreacting to criticism.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy because of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs. Neglect is a lack of parental care, but poverty and lack of information or adequate services can be contributory factors.

Indicators of neglect:

Physical indicators of neglect:

- Constant hunger and stealing food
- Poor personal hygiene - unkempt, dirty or smelly
- Underweight
- Dress unsuitable for weather
- Poor state of clothing
- Illness or injury untreated

Behavioural indicators of neglect:

- Constant tiredness
- Frequent absence from school or lateness
- Missing medical appointments
- Isolated among peers
- Frequently unsupervised
- Stealing or scavenging, especially food
- Destructive tendencies
- Specific Safeguarding Issues

See further guidance here: **DFE advice**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What to do if you re worried a child is being abused.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf)

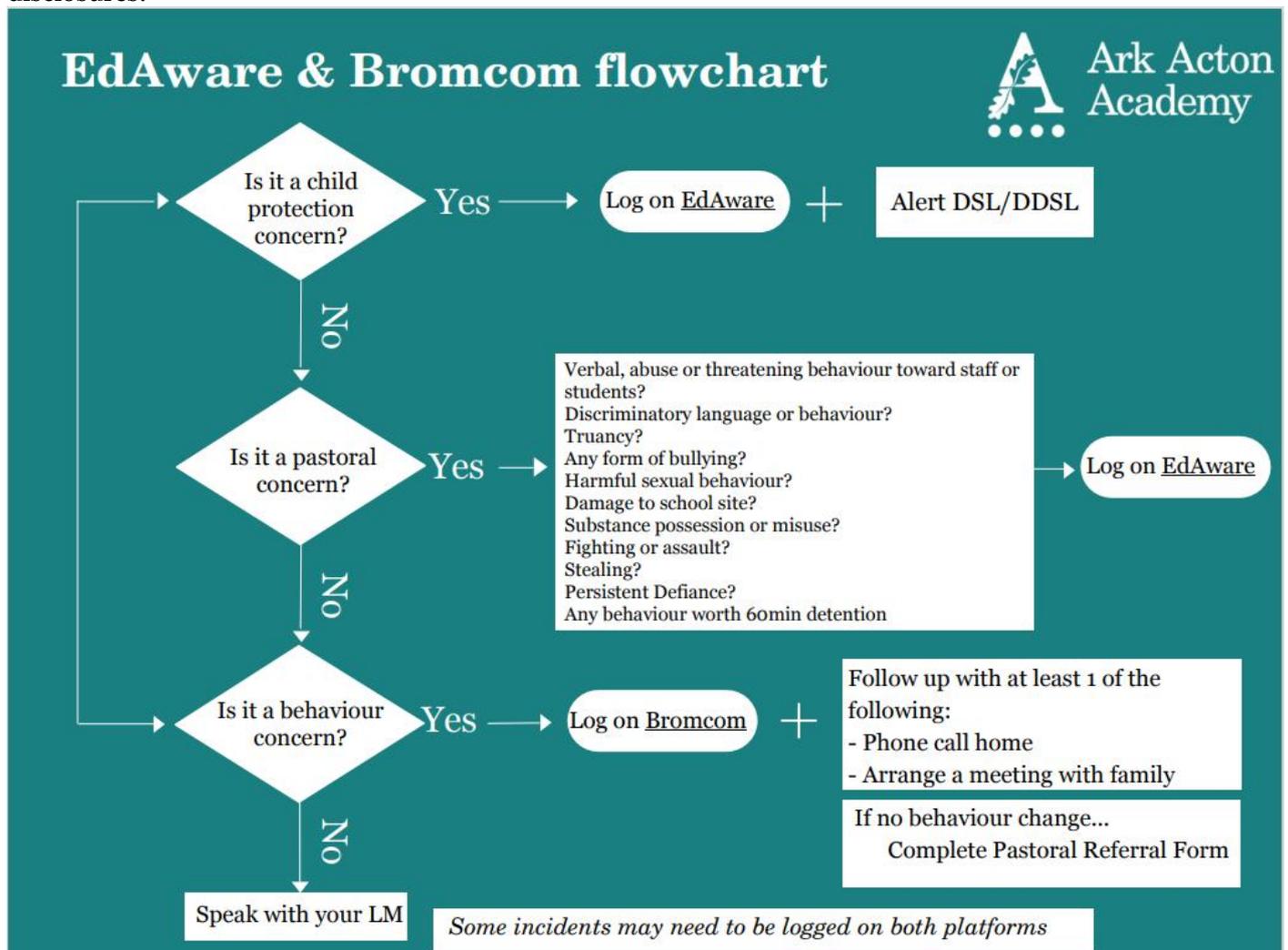
Dealing with Disclosures

A member of staff who is approached by a child should listen positively and try to reassure them. They cannot promise complete confidentiality and should explain that they may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child or other children safe. The degree of confidentiality should always be governed by the need to protect the child.

Additional consideration needs to be given to children with communication difficulties and for those whose preferred language is not English. It is important to communicate with them in a way that is appropriate to their age, understanding and preference. All staff should know who the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is and who to approach if the DSL is unavailable. The DSL or DDSL should be approached first to raise any concerns or safeguarding issues.

All safeguarding reports should be logged first using our online system: Impero EdAware: <https://uk.edaware.cloud/login> Ultimately, all staff have the right to contact Ark Head of Safeguarding directly or make a referral to the police or social care directly and should do this if, for whatever reason, there are difficulties following the agreed protocol, e.g. they are the only adult on the school premises at the time and have concerns about sending a child home or an aggressive/violent parent on the premises.

Ark Acton staff use the following **EdAware and Bromcom flowchart** to support with disclosures:



Child Sexual Exploitation

Child Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts,

money) because of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur using technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example, being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

Both girls and boys are at risk of sexual exploitation, and it is seriously harmful to children both emotionally and physically. Children and young people often find it very hard to understand or accept that they are being abused through sexual exploitation, and this increases their risk of being exposed to violent assault and life-threatening events by those who abuse them.

Signs to look out for include:

- Going missing for periods of time or regularly returning home late.
- Going places that you know they cannot afford.
- Skipping school or being disruptive in class.
- Suddenly acquiring expensive gifts such as mobile phones, jewellery – even drugs – and not being able to explain how they came by them.
- Having mood swings and changes in temperament.
- Noticeable changes in behaviour – becoming secretive, defensive or aggressive when asked about their personal life.
- Wearing age inappropriate clothing
- Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviours, such as over familiarity with strangers, dressing in a sexualised manner or sending sexualised images by mobile phone ('sexting').
- Getting into trouble with the police. Bruises, marks on the body, sexually-transmitted diseases, pregnancy, drug and alcohol abuse or self-harm.
- Repeated phone calls, letters, emails from adults outside family social circle.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is an illegal, extremely harmful practice and a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls.

Each NHS organisation will have local safeguarding protocols and procedures for helping children and young people who are at risk of or facing abuse. These should include multi-agency policies and procedures, consistent with those developed by their Local Safeguarding Children Board. If organisations have not already done so, these should be reviewed to include handling cases where FGM is alleged or known about or where there is a potential risk of FGM identified. These policies and procedures should consider the characteristics around FGM, ensuring that the response to FGM includes the sharing of information with multi-agency partners throughout the girl's childhood, and that if, or when, the risk facing the girl changes (which may mean it escalates or even becomes less immediate), this is identified and consideration is given as to whether or not a change in subsequent safeguarding actions are required. It must always be remembered that fears of being branded 'racist' or 'discriminatory' must never weaken the protection that professionals are obliged to provide to protect vulnerable girls and women.

As FGM is a form of child abuse, professionals have a statutory obligation under national safeguarding protocols (e.g. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015) to protect girls and women at risk of FGM. Since October 2015 registered professionals in health, social care and teaching also have a statutory duty (known as the Mandatory Reporting duty) to report cases of FGM to the police non-emergency number 101 in cases where a girl under 18 either discloses that she has had FGM or the professional observes physical signs of FGM.

One specific consideration when putting in place safeguarding measures against FGM is that the potential risk to a girl born in the UK can usually be identified at birth, because through the antenatal care and delivery of the child, NHS professionals can and should have identified that the mother has had FGM. However, FGM can be carried out at any age throughout childhood, meaning that identifying FGM at birth can have the consequence that any safeguarding measures adopted may have to be in place for more than 15 years over the course of the girl's childhood. This is a significantly different timescale and profile compared with many of the other forms of harm against which the safeguarding framework provides protection. This difference in approach should be recognised when putting in place policies and procedures to protect against FGM.

This guidance has been developed to provide information about the specific issues frequently encountered when dealing with FGM. In addition, it provides a framework which organisations may wish to adopt to support professionals in the ongoing consideration of risks pertaining to FGM.

Once concerns have been raised about FGM, there should also be a consideration of potential risk to other girls in the family and practicing community. Professionals should be alert to the fact that any one of the girl children amongst these groups could be identified as being at risk of FGM and may need to be safeguarded from harm.

Information sharing in relation to FGM:

Given the need to potentially safeguard over several years, it is appropriate to recognise here that there are several different responses to safeguard against FGM, and appropriate courses of action should be decided on a case by case basis, with expert input from all agencies involved. Sharing information in line with agreed policies and procedures is critical to safeguarding effectively. This is often sharing information to support safeguarding across organisational boundaries.

Staff should follow the FGM Mandatory reporting duty to report when a girl under 18 discloses she has FGM. **Ark Acton Academy procedure is that staff will inform the DSL and the DSL will make a report via 101 police non-emergency number immediately.**

Youth Violence and Gang Involvement

Ark Acton Academy understands that it has a duty and a responsibility to protect students from gang involvement and youth violence. It also recognises that it is well established that success in learning is one of the most powerful indicators in the prevention of youth crime.

All Academy Staff must be able to recognise the signs and symptoms of gang involvement and therefore, must understand the groups which could be identified as 'gangs. There are three such groups:

Organised Criminal Gangs – usually made up of adults and are involved in targeted organised crime (robbery, extortion, burglary, kidnapping etc).

Street Gangs – made up of adolescents and young adults, usually centred around a common identity, or territory, or ethnic group/religion, and whose activity is centred on criminal activity and violence. Such violence can include Serious Violence. In such cases the Academy response is informed by relevant guidance's such as the Consultation on a new legal duty to support a multi-agency approach to preventing and tackling serious violence

Peer Groups – young people who associate with each other in groups, only some of whom may be involved in the fringes of delinquency, or actual acts of delinquency.

Ark Acton Academy understands that students who are exposed to any such group listed above, either through peers or through family members, are at risk of abuse (emotional,

physical and/or sexual abuse or sexual exploitation) and that any students involved in a Peer Group (as defined above) are at risk of their involvement with gangs escalating to Street Gangs or Organised Criminal Gangs.

More broadly, Ark Acton Academy staff must be able to recognise the following as indicators of possible gang involvement:

- Sudden loss of interest in school, loss of attendance or achievement
- Starting to use new or unknown slang words
- Coming into unexplained money or possessions
- Staying out late without reason
- Changes in appearance, wearing a style or “uniform” that is the same as other young people
- New nickname
- Unexplained injuries
- Graffiti style “tags” on possessions, school books, walls
- Constantly talking about another young person who has a lot of influence over them
- Broken off from old friends and now spends most of time with one group.
- Increased use of social work network sites
- Adopting certain codes of group behaviour, ways of talking, gestures or hand movements
- Scared when entering certain areas, and anxious about the presence of unknown youths
- Expressing aggressive or intimidating views towards other groups of young people, some of whom may have been friends before

When a student is identified as being at risk of being involved with gangs or youth violence, these concerns must be shared with the designated senior person for child protection using the safeguarding procedures detailed within this policy and where a judgement is made that input from external agencies is needed, the designated person will seek advice from the local authority.

Ark Acton Academy is committed to developing students’ character and issues relating to peer pressure and crime are taught explicitly through our character programme.

Ark Acton recognises that children who become involved in gangs or youth violence pose a risk to themselves and others and may at times be in possession of prohibited items. As a result, we will search students and confiscate prohibited items if school leaders believe a student may be in possession of a weapon (including knives), alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco (and related paraphernalia), pornographic material, fireworks or stolen items. Referrals to the local authority will be made by the DSL as necessary.

School leaders will use the powers provided in the Department of Education guidance ‘Use of Reasonable Force – guidance for headteachers, staff and governing bodies (July 2013) to search students without consent if a concern is raised that the student(s) in question may be in possession of a weapon or illegal drugs

At Ark Acton Academy, all searches of students will be conducted in the presence of at least two members of staff and in the presence of a senior leader; in all instances of physical intervention, the staff involved are required to record the use of physical intervention with a written report completed on the academy proforma for recording the use of physical intervention. This report must be given directly to the relevant senior designated person for child protection immediately.

Child on Child Abuse

At Ark Acton, Child on Child Abuse is addressed in our anti-bullying policy. Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. Bullying can be:

Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures).

Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.

Racist: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.

Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments. Upskirting also falls under this, however the follow up for such offences will consider legal actions required.

Homophobic: because of, or focussing on, the issue of sexuality.

Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.

Cyber: all areas of internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging and calls, misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities.

Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting. These behaviours, however, do not in and of themselves mean that bullying is taking place. Likewise, bullying may occur without these behaviours appearing.

Students must be encouraged to report bullying at Ark Acton Academy. All staff must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with this policy. The Principal has a legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among students and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents/carers and students. Each Ark Academy will develop bespoke procedures for the reporting of, dealing with and prevention of bullying.



What we do to prevent bullying:

Everyone involved in the life of the academy must take responsibility for promoting a common anti-bullying approach. We aim to:

- Be supportive of each other.
- Provide positive role models.
- Convey a clear understanding that we disapprove of unacceptable behaviour.
- Be clear that we all follow the rules and shared values of Ark Acton Academy.
- Be fully involved in the development of the Anti-Bullying Policy and support antibullying practice.
- Support each other in the implementation of this policy.
- Have a zero-tolerance and no excuses approach to all instances of bullying

Ark Acton Academy

SAFEGUARDING



Mr Knight
Principal



Ms Briggs
Designated
Safeguarding
Lead



Ms Butler
Deputy
Designated
Safeguarding Lead

If you have a safeguarding concern about a pupil, please speak to Mr Knight, Ms Briggs, Ms Butler, or any other member of staff.

The Safeguarding Team:
 Mr Knight: oknight@arkacton.org
 Ms Briggs: nbriggs@arkacton.org
 Ms Butler: nbutler@arkacton.org
 Ms Lucas: olucas@arkacton.org
 Mr Tomlin: J.Tomlin@arkacton.org
 Ms Murphy: nmurphy@arkacton.org
 Mr Belgrave-Spence: bbelgravespence@arkacton.org
 Mr Ritchie: d.ritchie@arkacton.org
 Ms Peters: npeters@arkacton.org
 Mr Davis: ndavis@arkacton.org

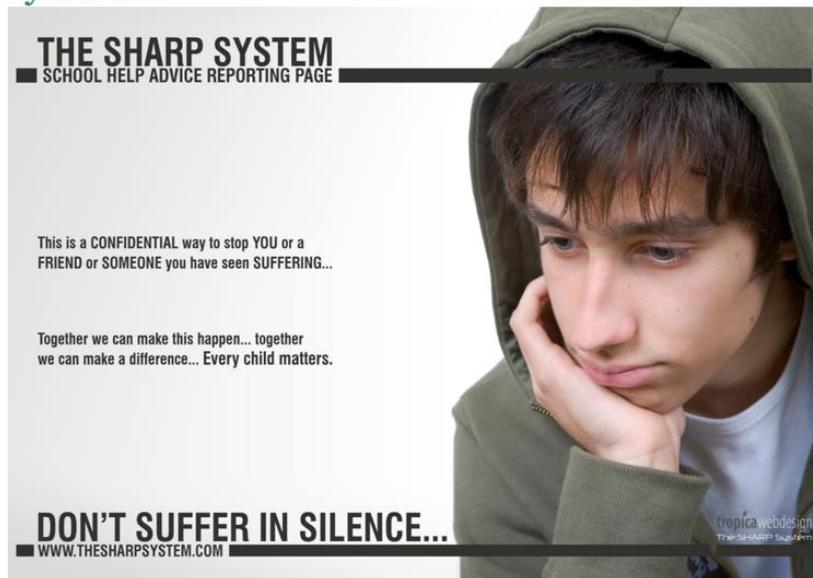


Phone numbers & Websites:

- Childline: 08001111
- CEOP (To report online abuse) – <https://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/>
- Sharp System – <https://arkacton.thesharpsystem.com>

Students at Ark Acton Academy are reminded of how to report bullying inside and outside of school. Students know that they can inform their form tutor, HOY and SLT link inside school. Alternatively they can visit reception and the school library to write an entry and place in the bullying box. These are checked by admin staff and the DSL daily. If students would like to make an anonymous report – they can use the Sharp System which is available through our school website. Whilst students can make anonymous entries, they are reminded to be specific about when, where and how the incident took place so that we can support them.

The Sharp System



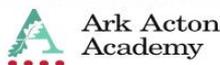
THE SHARP SYSTEM
SCHOOL HELP ADVICE REPORTING PAGE

This is a **CONFIDENTIAL** way to stop **YOU** or a **FRIEND** or **SOMEONE** you have seen **SUFFERING**...

Together we can make this happen... together we can make a difference... Every child matters.

DON'T SUFFER IN SILENCE...
WWW.THESHARPSYSTEM.COM

tropicawebdesign
THE SHARP SYSTEM



All members of the academy community are expected to report incidents of bullying. All Staff have a vital role to play as they are at the forefront of behaviour management and supporting students' sense of well-being. They have the closest knowledge of the students in their care, and should build up a relationship involving mutual support, trust and respect.

All Ark Acton Academy staff will:

- Provide students with a framework of behaviour including rules and routines which support the whole academy policy.
- always conduct themselves in a respectful and caring manner with students and colleagues so a positive atmosphere is always palpable.
- Raise awareness of bullying through activities, stories, role-play, discussion, peer support, academy council, PSHE etc.
- Keep the governing body informed through the Principal/Head of Primary School/senior staff member
- Provide a key staff member who is responsible for the monitoring of the policy.

For more information on the anti-bullying policy and the implementation of it, please see our anti bullying policy.

Alternative Provision (AP)

Ark Acton Academy is responsible for safeguarding of their students when they are placed in an alternative provision. Schools should obtain a written statement from the AP provider that they have completed all the vetting and barring checks that are necessary on their staff. Further information on this can be found by contacting a member of the safeguarding team.

Student Attendance and Children Missing from Education (CME)

Ark Acton Academy takes a thorough and systematic approach towards attendance. This includes preventative and proactive methods to address CME. The Attendance policy is found on our website.

RSE Policy

The RSE can be obtained by visiting our website or by asking for it at reception.

E- Safety Policy

Ark Acton Academy has a comprehensive E-Safety policy which can be viewed on the website.

IT Policy

The IT Policy can be obtained by contacting the school, where a member of the safeguarding team can provide you with a copy.

Dealing with Disclosures

All members of staff at Ark Acton Academy receive Level 1 Safeguarding Training annually and are trained in how to receive, record and report child protection disclosures.

At Ark Acton Academy, all Senior staff, Head of Years and PSHE Lead are level 3 trained in safeguarding. This ensures that disclosures are dealt with by highly trained members of pastoral staff with the support and assistance of the DSL and DDSL.

A member of staff who is approached by a child should listen positively and try to reassure them. They cannot promise confidentiality and should explain that they may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child or other children safe. The degree of confidentiality should always be governed by the need to protect the child.

Additional consideration needs to be given to children with communication difficulties and for those whose preferred language is not English. It is important to communicate with them in a way that is appropriate to their age, understanding and preference.

All staff should know who the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is and who to approach if the DSL is unavailable. The DSL or DDSL should be approached first to raise any concerns or safeguarding issues. All disclosures are recorded on Impero Edaware as soon as possible by the member of staff. Ultimately, all staff have the right to contact Ark Head of Safeguarding directly or make a referral to the police or social care directly and should do this if, for whatever reason, there are difficulties following the agreed protocol, e.g. they are the only adult on the school premises at the time and have concerns about sending a child home or an aggressive/violent parent on the premises.

What happens next?

After raising a concern, the member of staff should be informed by the DSL what has happened following the report being made. If they do not receive this information, they should be proactive in seeking it out. The DSL may only be able to share information on a need to know basis to staff which will not cover everything but will be enough to provide

support to the child.

If staff have concerns that the disclosure has not been acted upon appropriately, they might inform the safeguarding governor of the school and/or may ultimately contact the children's services department.

Receiving a disclosure can be upsetting for the member of staff and schools should have a procedure for supporting them after the disclosure. This might include reassurance that they have followed procedure correctly and that their swift actions will enable the allegations to be handled appropriately. All staff are trained annually on how to receive, respond to and report child protection disclosures and all referrals to the DSL are responded to initially and then follow-up contact is made to ensure that the member of staff understands what has happened to the information that they have shared. The DSL is available to support staff following disclosures being made.

Whistleblowing

The Ark Schools Whistleblowing Policy found on the school website ensures that procedures are in place to enable staff to raise concerns regarding serious wrongdoing without fear of reprisal and to do so with confidence that there will be a fair and impartial investigative procedure through which they will receive appropriate feedback.

The Ark Schools Whistleblowing Policy is applicable to concerns regarding wrongdoing within Ark Schools in relation to matters such as fraud, malpractice, mismanagement, breach of health and safety law or any other illegal or unethical act either on the part of management, the Governing Body or by fellow employees.

All employees and volunteers at Ark Acton will be directed as to where to find the Ark Schools Whistleblowing Policy as part of the induction process and/or staff meetings.

Similarly, all Ark Acton employees and volunteers are issued with the most recent edition of Keeping Children Safe in Education which informs readers that where they are concerned that the designated senior person is not taking appropriate steps to keep a child or children safe, they should contact social care directly.

Definition of Private Fostering

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) with someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. It is not private fostering if the arrangement was made by social services. Examples of private fostering situations include:

- children and teenagers living apart from their families for a variety of reasons e.g. if a parent is ill, has had to temporarily move for work or there has been an argument within the family
- children with parents working or studying elsewhere in the UK
- children with parents overseas
- children on holiday exchanges.

Local Authority Requirements:

Current arrangements for the regulation of private fostering originate from concern following the death of Victoria Climbié in 2000. Victoria was privately fostered by her great aunt. Arrangements were codified in the Children Act 2004. Following this, the Children (Private Arrangement for Fostering) Regulations 2005 set out the duties of local authorities in their arrangements for private fostering, and national minimum standards for local authorities were published in 2005.

SEND

Ark Acton Academy has a comprehensive SEND Policy which can be viewed on the website or by following the link.

Children/Young People with Medical Needs

There will be occasions when children are temporarily unable to attend school on a full-time basis because of their medical needs. These children and young people are likely to be:

- children and young people suffering from long-term illnesses
- children and young people with long-term post-operative or post-injury recovery periods
- children and young people with long-term mental health problems (emotionally vulnerable)

The phrase “long-term” defines any period exceeding 15 continuous school days of absence from school because of medical needs.

Where an absence will be for more than 15 continuous school days then the school should discuss further with Ark Central and their Local Authority and should not automatically be delayed until the 16th day of absence.

It is important that the referring school must notify the School Nurse service at the point it is identified that the child or young person medical need is preventing their attendance at school.

At all times during the period of absence the young person will remain on the roll of their home school and the home school will retain ultimate educational responsibility for the young person.

Referral to the Local Authority Education Inclusion Service:

Referral to the Education Inclusion Service (EIS) must be made by the young person’s home school and must be made via the Education and Inclusion Service referral form. Referrals should normally be supported by either:

- a Hospital Consultant
- a Senior Clinical Medical Officer
- a Consultant Child Psychiatrist
- a General Practitioner (GP)
- an Education Psychologist

Responding to self-harm, suicide, mental health

Ark Acton Academy recognises that for students to be successful, the academy and all academy staff have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy. In addition, it is understood that mental health problems can themselves be a sign or symptom of connected safeguarding concerns for a young person and/or leave them vulnerable to other specific safeguarding issues.

Ark Acton Academy also recognises that the early identification of mental health problems is critical in seeking to prevent the dangerous outcomes they can lead to such as suicide, self-harm or suicidal ideation.

The PSHE Character curriculum at Ark Acton Academy actively teaches students to approach matters of mental health in the same manner they would approach matters of physical health: seek advice from medical professionals, allow time for healing or recovery, plan to manage any symptoms as effectively as possible and seek support and comfort.

The academy also acknowledges that any stigma which can be associated with mental health problems and any condemnation of young people presenting with self-harming behaviours

undermines all attempts to promote good mental health and to address mental health problems.

Academy staff will also challenge the expression of views from students, colleagues or parents that mental health problems and self-harming behaviours are unimportant or dishonourable and where necessary, escalate such matters to the senior leadership team.

Contextual Safeguarding

Ark Acton Academy acknowledges the location and culture of the school and assesses the risks that young people may be exposed to, both inside and outside of the school or college community. A proactive and in other cases reactive approach is taken to support students on a wider level. A Contextual Safeguarding approach is taken to recognise that children and young people's risk experiencing significant harm in extra-familial contexts, and seek to include these contexts within prevention, identification, assessment and intervention safeguarding activities. “

Ark Acton Academy staff recognise that students experiencing a range of behaviour or emotional problems that are outside of the normal range of their age or gender could be displaying signs or symptoms of mental health problems. Such problems could include emotional disorders (phobias or anxiety states), conduct disorders (defiance or ASB), hyperkinetic disorders (attention and disturbance), developmental delays, attachment difficulties or eating disorders.

Form Teachers, Heads of Year and other school leaders involved in pastoral care and safeguarding meet on a weekly basis at Ark Acton Academy. Where concerns are raised that a student may be experiencing mental health problems, the concerns will be shared with the designated safeguarding lead and then with the student and with the family before deciding together the best approach. This might involve making a referral to a counselling service or making a referral to local healthcare professionals such as CAHMS or the local GP.

Where mental health problems present a persistent barrier to learning, it may be appropriate to identify the student as having SEN (Special Educational Needs) and such a decision should be taken by the academy SENCO in collaboration with the designated safeguarding lead.

All staff at Ark Acton Academy understand that certain individuals or groups are more at risk of mental health problems than others and that the risk factors are cumulative. Ark Acton Academy staff also understand that there are many protective factors and therefore work together with colleagues, students, families and other professionals to promote such protective factors.

At Ark Acton Academy, in addition to the whole-academy character curriculum, protective factors are also promoted in our behaviour policy and bullying policy.

Counselling services are also provided and there is an emphasis on positive classroom management based around using the least invasive form of intervention. Most importantly the academy has high expectations for all student's academic success and has robust systems and procedures in place for supporting student wellbeing and achievement.

Staff at Ark Acton Academy recognise that significant life events can lead to mental health problems for some children regardless of the number of risk and protective factors in their lives. These may include loss or separation; life changes or traumatic events and staff are alert to the need to offer immediate intervention where necessary in response to such events and know to seek advice about such matters from the designated safeguarding lead or pastoral team.

Despite the best efforts of all staff at Ark Acton Academy, the more dangerous outcomes of mental health problems (self-harm and suicidal ideation) cannot always be prevented. In such instances, Ark Acton Academy will make every effort to address them sensitively and effectively in partnership with families, healthcare professionals and other extended services. 11.13 Where self-harm, threats of self-harm or suicidal ideation are known to have taken place, staff at Ark Acton Academy must inform the designated safeguarding lead immediately. It may be necessary in such circumstances for the student to be taken to the local accident and emergency centre, to receive first aid at school or to have an emergency GP appointment arranged by the family. All such decisions would be taken by the designated safeguarding lead in collaboration with the student and the family where appropriate to do so.

Staff Code of Conduct

All Ark Acton Academy Staff are issued with the Academy handbook, which includes the code of conduct during Induction, where they familiarize themselves with its contents.

Anti-Discrimination

Ark Acton Academy has a comprehensive Equality Policy which can be viewed by following the link or accessing it via our website.

Images/photography of students:

Ark Acton has a responsible use of student image policy it adheres to. We are committed to keeping children safe and to the welfare and protection of young people to ensure that all students thrive and reach their potential. Every person working at the Academy shares the objective of helping to keep students safe by ensuring that all images of students are taken and stored in line with the Data Protection Act. The safe and appropriate use of images is covered as part of staff safeguarding training. At Ark Acton Academy we ensure that all images taken of students are used in a manner respectful of Data Protection Principles.

This means that images are:

fairly and lawfully processed and only used for limited, specifically stated purposes
retained for no longer than is necessary
processed in line with an individual's legal rights
kept securely and adequately protected if transferred outside the Academy.

Parental consent to take images:

Parents/carers have the right to opt their child out of any images or video being taken of their child when starting at Ark Acton Academy. Parents can opt out when they complete the Student Information Form which is kept on the student's file. Should permission be refused by a parent/carer, all members of staff are made aware and any images for public use are scrutinised to ensure that the student does not appear in them. If permission is withdrawn by parents/carers at any point during a student's time at Ark Acton Academy, any images of them will be removed.

Use of images/videos by the Academy:

Any images or videos of students that are displayed on the website or used for public display are carefully selected. Students' full names are never given in association with images/videos placed on the website. No images of any student are taken against their wishes. All images of students are always retained on site unless arrangements have been made otherwise (such as for the taking of annual portrait photographs of the children). Any member of staff who needs to take images of children off site for work purposes, appropriately protects and logs in and out of the academy any storage device containing the images and ensures it is returned.

The Academy has the authority to view any images taken and/or to withdraw or modify a member of staff's authorisation to take or make images at any time. Ark Acton Academy ensures that all photographs are permanently wiped from computer hard and portable drives or other relevant devices once the images are no longer of used.

Use of photos/videos by children Still and video cameras provided for use by children (e.g. for fieldwork and other supervised off- site learning) and the images produced themselves will not be removed from the Academy.

Professional photographers who are engaged to record any events work according to the terms of the Academy's e-Safety policy. They sign an agreement which ensures compliance with the Data Protection Act and they do not have unsupervised access to students.

Use of images by the media:

Only pre-agreed personal information (e.g. first names only) can be published alongside images and videos. No authorisation will be given to unscheduled visits by the press under any circumstances.

Staff use of personal devices to take photos/videos of students Staff should endeavour to use the school cameras and devices to take photos/videos, however in rare cases this may not be possible, and staff may miss an opportunity to capture a positive moment. If staff need to take photos/videos on their personal devices, they should upload it to the shared drive within 24 hours and wipe the data from their personal devices at the same time.

Where students are found to have used their phone on the academy premises their phone will be immediately confiscated. If it is believed that students have used their phone to make inappropriate recordings, the confiscated phone will not be returned until senior teachers are confident such recordings have been removed and deleted and in line with the behaviour policy. Where relevant, the Anti-bullying procedures outlined above in Section One of this appendix will be implemented.

The academy uses CCTV in some areas of the school property to ensure the safety and security of students, staff, parents and the safety and security of academy buildings and equipment.

CCTV footage is only reviewed by senior teachers and members of the site-staff to review matters of safety and security including, but not limited to: students and adults entering and exiting the building, incidents of theft, violence or vandalism and incidents of trespassing.

PSHE and RSHE Curriculum:

Ark Acton Academy has a robust PSHE & RSHE curriculum taught to all students, covering PSHE & Citizenship /Relationship & Sex Education (RSE)/Spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) topics. We also have a character and extensive co-curricular programme. Further information on this curriculum can be found here: <https://arkacton.org/pshe-o> and <https://arkacton.org/enrichment>.

Visitor Management:

Access into the school building via the main access points will be controlled and supervised by the Main reception / admin staff. A register / record of all visitors to the school will be maintained. All visitors should wear an official visitor's identification red badge. All visitors will be asked to read a summary of the schools safeguarding procedures on arrival. This Commitment Agreement is clearly visible at the reception desk.

Safer Recruitment:

The purpose of this document is to provide a summary of the checks and information needed for the Single Central Register. The Department for Education advises that the following checks must be made on all people before working in an education service. For further guidance please see here.

All ARK Schools employees must have received the following checks prior to starting employment with ARK Schools:

- enhanced DBS disclosures;
- List 99 check (for staff in working regulated activity only);
- right to work documents;
- identity;
- overseas criminal record checks (if applicable),
- medical checks,
- qualifications; including QTS status and prohibition orders check for teachers,
- two references, one being most recent line manager.

For the safer Recruitment Policy, please contact the school to speak to our head of HR.

Complaints policy:

Ark Acton Academy has a comprehensive Complaints Policy which can be viewed on our website or by following the link.

Health and Safety:

Ark Acton Academy has a Health and Safety policy, which can be accessed by contacting our head of HR.

Managing allegations against other students:

Ark Acton Academy is committed to the importance of minimising the risks of peer-on-peer abuse. In most instances, the conduct of students towards each other will be covered by the school's behaviour policy. Some allegations may be of such a serious nature that they may raise safeguarding concerns. These allegations are most likely to include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. It is also likely that incidents dealt with under this policy will involve older students and their behaviour towards younger students or those who are vulnerable.

The intervention of child protection agencies in situations involving sexual activity between children can require difficult professional judgments. Some situations are statutorily clear – for example, a child under the age of 13 cannot consent to sexual activity. But it will not necessarily be appropriate to initiate safeguarding procedures where sexual activity involving children and young people below the age of legal consent (16 years) comes to notice. In our society generally, the age at which children become sexually active has steadily dropped. It is important to distinguish between consensual sexual activity between children of a similar age (where at least one is below the age of consent), and sexual activity involving a power imbalance, or some form of coercion or exploitation. It may also be difficult to be sure that what has or has been alleged to have taken place does have a sexual component.

As usual, important decisions should be made on a case by case basis, based on an assessment of the children's best interests. Referral under safeguarding arrangements may be necessary, guided by an assessment of the extent to which a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Key specific considerations will include:

- The age, maturity and understanding of the children;
- Any disability or special needs of the children;
- Their social and family circumstance;
- Any evidence in the behaviour or presentation of the children that might suggest they have been harmed;
- Any evidence of pressure to engage in sexual activity;
- Any indication of sexual exploitation;

There are also contextual factors. Gender, sexuality, race and levels of sexual knowledge can all be used to exert power. A sexual predator may sometimes be a woman or girl and the victim a boy.

Procedure:

At Ark Acton 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. We recognise that some students will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others and their

behaviour will be dealt with under the school's behaviour policy.

Prevention:

As a school we will minimise the risk of allegations against other students by: -

- Providing a developmentally appropriate Character programme which develops students understanding of acceptable behaviour and keeping themselves safe
- Having systems in place for any student to raise concerns with staff, knowing that they will be listened to, believed and valued
- Delivering targeted work on assertiveness and keeping safe to those students identified as being at risk
- Developing robust risk assessments & providing targeted work for students identified as being a potential risk to other students.

Allegations against other students which are safeguarding issues:

Occasionally, allegations may be made against students by others in the school, which are of a safeguarding nature. Safeguarding issues raised in this way may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. It is likely that, to be considered a safeguarding allegation against a student, some of the following features will be found.

If the allegation: -

- Is made against an older student and refers to their behaviour towards a younger student or a more vulnerable student
- Is of a serious nature, possibly including a criminal offence
- Raises risk factors for other students in the school
- Indicates that other students may have been affected by this student
- Indicates that young people outside the school may be affected by this student

Examples of safeguarding issues against a student could include:

Physical Abuse:

- Violence, particularly pre-planned
- Forcing others to use drugs or alcohol

Emotional Abuse:

- Blackmail or extortion
- Threats and intimidation

Sexual Abuse:

- Indecent exposure, indecent touching or serious sexual assaults
- Forcing others to watch pornography or take part in sexting

Sexual Exploitation:

- Encouraging other children to engage in inappropriate sexual behaviour (For example - having an older boyfriend/girlfriend, associating with unknown adults or other sexually exploited children, staying out overnight)
- Photographing or videoing other children performing indecent acts

Practice:

When an allegation is made by a student against another student, members of staff should consider whether the complaint raises a safeguarding concern. If

there is a safeguarding concern:

- The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) should be informed
- A factual record should be made of the allegation, but no attempt at this stage should be made to investigate the circumstances
- The DSL should contact their local children's social care team or Ark Head of
- Safeguarding to discuss the case
- The DSL will follow through the outcomes of the discussion and make a referral where appropriate
- If the allegation indicates that a potential criminal offence has taken place, a referral to the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) and the Police should be made
- Parents, of both the student being complained about and the alleged victim, should be informed and kept updated on the progress of the referral
- The DSL will make a record of the concern, the discussion and any outcome and keep
- a copy in the files of both students' files

It may be appropriate to exclude the student being complained about for a period according to the school's behaviour policy and procedures

Where neither social services nor the police accept the complaint, a thorough school investigation should still take place into the matter using the school's usual disciplinary procedures.

In situations where the school considers a safeguarding risk is present, a risk assessment should be prepared along with a preventative, supervision plan.

The plan should be monitored, and a date set for a follow-up evaluation with everyone concerned

Procedure for managing allegations made against/concerns raised in relation to teachers, including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers and contractors

Introduction:

This procedure sets out Ark Schools' procedure for managing allegations of abuse made against any member of school staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors. It should be followed wherever an allegation of abuse is made and it should be noted that that a member of staff could be subject to an allegation even if they have not harmed a child or intended to harm a child. It is sufficient that the staff member's conduct could pose a risk to the child. This procedure applies to teachers, senior leaders, supply teachers, other professionals and staff working in or for an Ark school and contractors and volunteers, including governors.

Aims:

To set out the procedure for managing allegations of abuse in compliance with statutory requirements and to set out the support available to staff and volunteers who may be the subject of an allegation of abuse.

Purpose:

The framework for managing cases of allegations of abuse against teachers

and other staff is set out in the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2022) (KCSIE). The guidance can be found here - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1101454/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2022.pdf

This procedure should be read alongside the statutory guidance KCSIE September 2022 Part 4 and Ark Schools Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy s.18. This guidance should be followed where it is alleged that anyone working in the school or college that provides education for children 18 years of age and under, including supply teachers and volunteers 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 towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children or to a particular child;
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

This guidance relates to members of staff, supply staff and volunteers who are currently working in any school or college regardless of whether the school or college is where the alleged abuse took place. Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching should be referred to the police.

An allegation against a member of staff, supply staff or volunteer may arise from a number of sources e.g.: a report from a child victim; a concern raised by another child/adult in the school/organisation/agency; or a concern raised by a parent or carer.

It is essential that any Safeguarding issue, concern or allegation made against staff, supply staff, volunteers or other professionals in a school is dealt with very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time support the person who is the subject of the concern or allegation.

An overview of how allegations must be handled is relevant for the purposes of Section 175/157 of the Education Act 2002.

Supply Staff:

You may have to consider an allegation when the individual is not directly employed by the academy and the disciplinary procedures do not fully apply. The academy must ensure the allegations are dealt with properly and in no circumstances should a school or college decide to cease the use of a supply staff member due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the local authority designated officer (LADO) to determine a suitable outcome.

When using an agency, schools and colleges should inform the agency of its process for managing allegations. This should include inviting the agency's human resource manager or equivalent to meetings and keeping them up to date with information about its policies.

Defining an allegation:

In the first instance whenever an allegation is made against a member of staff,

supply staff or volunteer that meets any of the above criteria, the Principal must be informed immediately. It is the Principal's responsibility to immediately consult the Designated Officer (LADO) and inform the Regional Director and Head of Safeguarding as necessary.

If the allegation is made against a Principal, the person receiving the information must contact the Regional Director and inform the Head of Safeguarding. If the allegation is against an Executive Principal or Regional Director, the person receiving the information must contact the Director of Primary or Secondary Education and inform the Head of Safeguarding.

The People Business Partner should also be informed as soon as possible on any allegations against staff so that they can provide advice.

The Principal must advise the People Business Partner if an allegation:

- could result in, or has resulted in, a strategic case meeting being called by a Designated Officer (LADO);
- relates to a member of staff and, without prejudice to the case, the Principal judges that it may result in disciplinary action being taken.

Where a safeguarding concern or allegation triggers another procedure such as a grievance or disciplinary, the academy should refer to the appropriate policy and contact the Regional People Business Partner who will provide HR advice in these circumstances.

If an allegation requires immediate attention, but is received outside of normal office hours, the Principal should consult the Social Care Emergency Duty Team or the Child Abuse Investigation Team (CAIT) via local Police. The Principal should also inform relevant people as soon as possible following this action.

The Principal will consult the Designated Officer (LADO) to discuss the next action points. Advice may also be sought from social care and the police as required. The case manager in the first instance should be the Principal/Head of school and should inform the accused person about the allegation as soon as possible after consulting the designated officer(s), unless advised by LADO not to do so. It is extremely important that the case manager provides the accused with as much information as possible can at that time.

Conducting a fact-finding exercise:

- After a discussion with the Designated Officer (LADO), the Principal should not conduct an investigative process on the matter. S/he should undertake a fact-finding exercise and:
- obtain written details of the concern/allegation
- countersign and date the written details
- record any information about times, dates and location of alleged incident(s) and names of any potential witnesses
- make a record of any discussion about the child and/or member of staff, any decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions onto the safeguarding recording system – Impero EdAware
- if more information is required than the initial disclosure, the principal may obtain any additional information which may be relevant such as previous history, risk assessments, whether the child or their family have made similar allegations and the individual's current contact with children.

In cases of an allegation against the Principal, Regional Director or Executive Principal, s/he should not be asked to gather the above information themselves. The following definitions should be used when determining the outcome of allegation investigations:

- Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation;
- Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive;
- False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation;
- Unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence;
- Unfounded: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made.

After the fact-finding exercise and further discussion with the Designated Officer (LADO), and determined outcome one or more of the following may be applicable:

- The student is alleged to have suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm - this requires an immediate referral to social care.
- A criminal offence is alleged - this requires referral to the police.
- The allegation relates to poor or inappropriate behaviour and requires an investigation to be completed. The People Business Partner should be notified. In addition, the Head of Safeguarding should be informed to ensure staff/student support/external referral (as necessary)
- The allegation is clearly and demonstrably without foundation and no further action is required.

Where it is clear that an investigation by the police or Local Authority children's social care is unnecessary, or the strategy discussion or initial evaluation decides that is the case, in those circumstances the options open to the school are dependent on the nature and circumstances of the allegation and the evidence and information available. The school should refer to the Ark Schools Disciplinary or Capability Policy as appropriate.

The Principal will continue to update the Regional Director as well as the Head of Safeguarding and HR Business partner during the initial consideration process.

Responding to fact finding outcomes:

Following the fact-finding exercise, one or more of the outcomes below may be applicable.

Where either the student is alleged to have suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm or a criminal offence is alleged:

- The Designated Officer (LADO) will arrange a strategy discussion. The Principal, police, social care, Regional People Business Partner must be invited and Head of Safeguarding should be invited (if matter relates to SLT/Principal). The staff member should not attend.

The discussion will:

- focus on the needs of the student(s) who may be at risk; and
- determine what action should be taken regarding further investigation
- decide on who will inform the parents/carers of the child or young

person

Following the outcome of the strategy discussion, a strategy meeting will be convened. The Designated Officer (LADO) will convene the meeting with any other relevant people, such as the Principal, social care, police, and Regional People Business Partner. The staff member against whom the allegations is made against should not attend. The general purpose of the meeting is to consider evidence and discuss next steps.

The LADO will send out a letter inviting attendees to the meeting, detailing what will be discussed. At the end of the strategy meeting, it will be agreed how and who will inform the staff member of the outcome.

Subsequent strategy meetings will be held fortnightly, or at a minimum, monthly, to review progress. Each strategy discussion outcome will depend on the facts of the matter and the particular agencies which may be involved. Important note: where there is an allegation of harm or a crime has been committed, please also refer to sections 8 and 9 below.

Where the allegation relates to poor or inappropriate behaviour

In the course of an investigation, several elements may be followed: the Principal to liaise with the Regional People Business Partner to arrange for an investigation to be conducted. Guidance on who should undertake an investigation and how one must be completed can be found in The Ark Schools Disciplinary Policy.

Enquires and assessment by social care about whether a child is in need of protection or in need of services.

Suspension during an investigation:

- Refer to Ark Schools Disciplinary Policy
- Discuss suspension with your Regional People Business Partner prior to taking action. If your Regional People Business Partner is unavailable, please ensure you contact the AskHR team for advice. You must ensure the Regional Director and Head of Safeguarding are informed.
- At the conclusion of the investigation the possible outcomes are as follows:
 - No further action
 - Refer the matter to Informal management guidance and/or training
 - Refer to a disciplinary hearing and whether the case is potentially one of gross Misconduct
 - Refer to the Ark Schools Capability Policy and Procedure

Outcome where the allegation is clearly and demonstrably without foundation: the staff member should be told orally and in writing that the allegation is without foundation and no further action will be taken. Details of allegations that are found to have been malicious should be removed from personnel records

Informing the individual and others:

The Principal should inform the member of staff against whom the allegation has been made against, about the allegation as soon as possible after

consulting the Designated Officer (LADO), Head of Safeguarding and People Business Partner.

The Principal will discuss with the Designated Officer (LADO) at the initial consideration stage on how to inform parents or carers of the allegation. Thereafter, parents/carers should also be kept informed about the progress of the case and told the outcome where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process. The deliberations of a disciplinary hearing, and the information taken into account in reaching a decision, cannot normally be disclosed, but the parents or carers of the child should be told the outcome.

A referral to children's social care is required

- if a student has suffered, is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant or serious harm
- a student alleges a criminal offence has been committed
- where there is an allegation of a sexual nature
- These referrals are managed in accordance with referral processes and thresholds established by the local safeguarding partners.
- The Principal will liaise with the DSL when a referral to social care and or external body is required.

If a crime has been committed, and there is no reason to suspect significant harm, the Designated Officer (LADO) will immediately inform the police and organise a strategy discussion to decide if a police investigation is needed.

If it is not necessary to work with social care, but a police investigation is required, the Designated Officer (LADO) will then agree with the police, the school and any other agencies the nature of the allegation and how it should be addressed. The discussion will take place within one working day of the referral. The police will continue to monitor the case.

If the member of staff is not charged, the Principal and Designated Officer (LADO) will decide how to handle the case. If a charge is necessary, the police will inform the member of staff.

Suspension

In cases where suspension is a consideration refer to Ark Schools Disciplinary Policy. You must discuss suspension with your Regional People Business Partner prior to taking action.

Record keeping and information sharing:

The Principal will record any allegation, concern and discussions on a permission only part of Impero EdAware the safeguarding all-in-one online recording tool. Records should be completed as soon as possible after the allegation. This includes:

- incident details
- follow up action
- how it was resolved
- action taken
- any sanctions

Even if no police or disciplinary action is taken, a record will be kept of the allegation on the Impero EdAware online tool. If the actions of the member of staff, and the consequences of the actions, do not raise credible allegation concerns, but do raise other issues in relation to the conduct of the member of

staff or the student(s), this will be addressed in accordance with internal procedures.

Any information or referral forms submitted to the Designated Officer (LADO) or investigation agencies should be scanned into the file.

Information sharing: need to know

Other staff will only be informed on a 'need to know' basis. Notification may be delayed if the police believe it could prejudice an investigation. Those who will be told are likely to include:

- staff member;
- student concerned and their parent(s)/carers;
- individual making the allegation;
- principal and regional director;
- head of safeguarding and People Business Partner;
- head of communications;
- designated officer (LADO) and investigating agencies

If a staff member's suspension results in disciplinary action, the investigating officer and members on the disciplinary chair (if appropriate) will be given all information with redactions to protect the identity of students.

The individuals outlined above will be informed of the outcome/actions of any meeting, as well as Ark's Education Directors, the Chair of the governing body and Safeguarding link governor (as necessary).

False allegations

If an allegation is found to be false, action will be taken to see if the person making the allegation is in need of services. If it is a deliberately malicious allegation made by:

a student, the Principal will take action in line with the Behavioural Policy.

If made by a staff member, it will be handled in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy – the police may also consider taking action in this situation.

If it is clear an allegation is false and /or unfounded, the accused staff member will be informed orally and in writing that no further action will be taken.

Details of allegations that are found to have been malicious should be removed from personnel records.

Supporting those involved:

Ark has a duty of care to staff, supply staff and volunteers. The school aims to support the individual throughout the allegation process and will do all it can to manage and minimise stress. If the individual is external to the school, contact will be made with the relevant agency or service provider.

Information will be provided to the individual as soon as possible in line with the guidance set out in this procedure and throughout the allegation process. A named representative will be appointed to keep the individual informed of the progress of the allegation.

The member of staff or supply staff may wish to contact their Trade Union Representative, if they have one, or a colleague for support. Staff should also be reminded about the confidential counselling support, which is available through the Employee Assistance Programme.

Social contact with colleagues and friends should not be prevented unless there is evidence to suggest that such contact is likely to be prejudicial to the

gathering and presentation of evidence. The staff member should be advised not to discuss the case with any staff members.

Employee Assistance Programme

The service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year and is accessible by phone, email, instant messaging and website. The service offers assistance with any work, personal or family issue and includes professional consultation, access to face-to-face counselling (up to six sessions), information, resources and referrals to local services. EAP can be accessed, in the following ways:

FREEPHONE: 0800 243 458

EMAIL assistance@workplaceoptions.com

WEBSITE www.workplaceoptions.com (Username: Ark Schools, Password: employee)

Should medical advice and guidance be required this can be arranged through the member of staff responsible for HR within the academy, who will arrange for a referral to Ark's Occupational Health providers.

Confidentiality:

It is extremely important that when an allegation is made, the school makes every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. Schools should take advice from Ark Central on:

- who needs to know and, importantly, exactly what information can be shared;
- how to manage speculation, leaks and gossip;
- what, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation; and
- how to manage press interest, if and when it should arise.

If an allegation is founded, the KCSIE guidance should be consulted in conjunction with this procedure as to which referrals to professional bodies may be required.

Referral to Disclosure and Barring Service (BBS)

Schools have a legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:

- the harm test is satisfied in respect of that individual. To satisfy the harm test there needs to be credible evidence of a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults such as statements made by an individual regarding conduct/behaviour, etc.
- For a case to be considered as a risk of harm, relevant conduct would not have occurred but there must be tangible evidence rather than a "feeling" that a person represents a risk to children and / or vulnerable adults. For example, a teacher who confides in their head teacher that they are sexually attracted to children (but who had not engaged in 'relevant conduct') would satisfy the harm test.
- the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or if there is reason to believe that the individual has committed a listed relevant offence; and
- the individual has ceased working in a regulated activity or would have

been removed had they not left.

- Referral to Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) for consideration
- Where an allegation is substantiated and the member of staff is dismissed or resigns, school should consider referring the matter to the TRA for consideration for a prohibition order.

Lessons learnt:

If there is a substantiated allegation against a member of staff, the Principal, Regional Director, Head of Safeguarding, People Business Partner, DSL and Director of External Relations will work with the Designated Officer (LADO) to identify any changes, lessons learnt and improvements which could be made to help prevent similar events in the future.