

Safeguarding Policy

All individuals who work in conjunction with Academic Families have an important role to play in creating a positive and safe environment where children are concerned. We further recognise our responsibility to protect children; to recognise the possible signs of abuse or neglect; radicalisation and extremism; and if there is cause for concern, to report any safeguarding and child protection concerns to our Child Protection Officer (CPO) or the Managing Director if the CPO is unavailable.

This policy applies to all employees, hosts, contractors, drivers and anyone else who provides a service on behalf of Academic Families.

Aims

The main aims of this policy are to:

- Set out the responsibilities of staff and contractors in relation to Child Protection issues;
- Define Child Abuse – to include bullying;
- Define radicalisation and extremism.
- Ensure that children have the right to be protected from abuse and harm at all times and in all situations;
- Ensure that everyone is aware that Child Protection is the responsibility of every adult who has involvement with children;
- Provide information on the ways in which abuse or neglect may present in the child.

Responsibilities

Responsibility for developing and maintaining a child-safe environment rests with everyone at some level.

Definitions

Child Protection

The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 states that each child has the right to protection from all forms of abuse, neglect or exploitation. Child protection means protecting a child from abuse or neglect. Abuse or neglect need not have taken place; it is sufficient to have identified a *likelihood* or *risk* of significant harm from abuse or neglect. It is helpful to consider the safety and well-being of any other child who may be at risk of harm in addition to the child you are concerned about.

The 1995 Act also states that children should be given the opportunity to express their views, if they wish, on matters affecting them and these views must be considered when reaching decisions.

Bullying

Bullying may be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.

Bullying is an unacceptable form of behaviour through which a child/ young person or groups feel threatened, abused or undermined by another individual or group.

Bullying is behaviour that can be defined as a repeated attack of a physical, psychological, social or verbal nature by those who are able to exert influence over others.

Bullying can take many forms. It may include physical aggression, intimidation, threatening, extorting, pressurising, name-calling or teasing.

Less obvious examples such as ignoring or excluding someone are also regarded as bullying and their possible effects should not be minimised.

Bullying can cause stress and can affect a child's health.

Anti-radicalisation and extremism

Prevent Duty Guidance defines radicalisation as "the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist group."

Extremism is defined as a "vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs."

There is no single way of identifying a student who is likely to be susceptible to radicalisation. As with managing other safeguarding risks, all parties should be alerted to changes in student's behaviour which could indicate that they may need help or protection.

Children at risk of radicalisation may display different signs or seek to hide their views. Academic Families staff and hosts should use their judgement in identifying a student who might be at risk.

Radicalisation is a child protection concern and as such any concerns should be raised with the Child Protection Officer who acts as our Prevent lead.

The key stages are:-

Notice - when you think there may be a concern, or the student is acting differently.

Check - check with others if they have noticed anything or speak to the student directly.

Share - with Academic Families and ultimately the CPO will share with school and parents

Refer - if necessary, dependant on the level of concern, the local authorities or police may need to be notified.

Child abuse and child neglect

The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2014) provides the following definitions:

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

While it is not necessary to identify specific areas of concern when adding a child's name to the Child Protection Register, it is still helpful to consider and understand the different ways in which children can be abused. The following definitions show some of the ways in which abuse may be experienced by a child but are not exhaustive, as the individual circumstances of abuse will vary from child to child.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is the causing of physical harm to a child or young person. Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child they are looking after. For further information, see the section on Fabricated or induced illness.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is persistent emotional neglect or ill treatment that has severe and persistent adverse effects on a 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 involve the imposition of age - or developmentally - inappropriate expectations on a child. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger, or exploiting or corrupting children.

Some level of emotional abuse is present in all types of ill treatment of a child; it can also occur independently of other forms of abuse.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is any act that involves the child in any activity for the sexual gratification of another person, whether or not it is claimed that the child either consented or assented. Sexual

abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts.

They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of indecent images or in watching sexual activities, using sexual language towards a child or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways (see also section on child sexual exploitation).

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. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or failure to respond to, a child's basic emotional needs. Neglect may also result in the child being diagnosed as suffering from "non-organic failure to thrive", where they have significantly failed to reach normal weight and growth or development milestones and where physical and genetic reasons have been medically eliminated.

In its extreme form children can be at serious risk from the effects of malnutrition, lack of nurturing and stimulation. This can lead to serious long-term effects such as greater susceptibility to serious childhood illnesses and reduction in potential stature. With young children in particular, the consequences may be life-threatening within a relatively short period of time.

Child Protection Training

Academic Families will seek out and promote relevant training for all staff in the field of child protection to ensure, in particular, that staff recognise the signs and presenting behaviour of children who may have been abused physically, emotionally, sexually or neglected.

Staff Response to Suspicions of Abuse or Radicalisation

All staff need to be vigilant when dealing with children. If a member of staff observes anything worrying about how a child is presenting, how he appears physically or has concerns that a child may be being abused or that a person may be abusing a child, the member of staff should immediately report that concern(s) to the Director.

Whilst staff may be reluctant to be seen to be over-reactive, the interests of individual children and their safety must be put before other considerations.

Who to contact

Roni Jennings, Child Protection Officer (CPO) who will contact the school CPO in accordance with individual School Guidelines.

roni@academicfamilies.com mobile 07532 414191

or

Lorna Clayton, Deputy Child Protection Officer

lorna@academicfamilies.com 07734 849554