



VULNERABLE STUDENTS POLICY

January 2016

Policy and Procedure for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adult Users and Students under 18 years

1. Introduction

The reference to 'vulnerable students' in this document, is also equally applicable to 'vulnerable adult users' of the Academy Trust and its sites.

2. Policy Statement

2.1 Wardle Trust will comply with the requirements of the Child Protection Procedures, and will work in co-operation with other agencies to ensure the safety and welfare of its students.

2.2 The Trust recognises that some students by virtue of their age, disability or illness may be vulnerable to, be experiencing, or have experienced abuse.

2.3 The Trust will pass on concerns or allegations of abuse promptly to the appropriate agency.

2.4 The Trust will not knowingly employ any person who has a conviction for the abuse of a child or a vulnerable adult. The Trust completes Criminal Records Bureau checks for all staff appointed in line with recommended guidelines.

2.5 The Trust reserves the right to refuse to enrol any person who has a conviction for the abuse of a child or a vulnerable adult.

2.6 The Trust will promptly act upon and report any allegation of abuse that may be made against a member of the Trust staff. The Trust will always act to protect its students from abuse or exploitation.

2.7 The Trust will work with the appropriate referral agencies.

2.8 The Trust will publicise these procedures widely and will provide Trust staff with training in how they should be implemented.

3. Principles

Core Principles – the following core principles will apply in responding to suspicions, allegations or incidents of abuse involving vulnerable persons.

3.1 Privacy – the right of individuals to be left alone or undisturbed and free from intrusion or public attention into their own affairs.

3.2 Dignity – recognition of the intrinsic value of people regardless of circumstances by respecting their uniqueness and their personal needs; treating people with respect.

3.3 Self-Determination – the person's right to self-determination and involvement in decision-making is promoted to its fullest capacity.

3.4 Enabling – the person is enabled to protect himself or herself from harm. A student with a disability will be supported as appropriate through the process.

3.5 Awareness and involvement – the awareness and involvement of other agencies, organisations and the public is raised and promoted and with it a commitment to respond.

3.6 Legal rights – the vulnerable person and the alleged abuser has the right to the protection of the law.

3.7 Children’s rights – the Trust works to the key child protection principles found in the Children Act 1989 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. All children deserve the opportunity to achieve their full potential. They should be enabled to live in a safe environment and be protected from harm.

4. Definitions

4.1 The term “vulnerable” refers to any person who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age, illness and who is or may be unable to take care of himself or herself, or unable to protect himself or herself against significant harm or serious exploitation.

4.2 Abuse – Somebody may abuse a vulnerable student by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Vulnerable students may be abused within a dependent relationship or, more rarely, by a stranger. Abuse can be intentional or unintentional. There are 6 categories of abuse, which are physical, sexual, neglect, emotional or psychological and financial. It is not unusual for a vulnerable student to suffer more than one kind of abuse. Abuse may be a part of a pattern of behaviour or an isolated incident.

5. Categories of Abuse

5.1 Emotional/Psychological Abuse – Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the vulnerable person’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to the person that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may cause vulnerable persons to feel frightened or in danger. Some form of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment, though it may occur alone.

5.2 Physical Abuse – Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or purposefully causing physical harm to a vulnerable person. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent/carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately, causes ill health to the person for whom they are caring. This situation may be described as fabricated or induced illness by carer.

5.3 Sexual Abuse – Sexual abuse involves forcing a child, young person or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the person is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may involve non contact activities, such as involving vulnerable persons in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or in watching sexual activities, or encouraging persons to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

5.4 Neglect – Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a vulnerable person’s basic physical and/or emotional psychological needs and is likely to result in serious impairment of the person’s health or development. It may involve the failure by the parent/carer to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failure to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a person’s emotional needs.

5.5 Financial Abuse – Financial abuse is the theft of money or property, or exploitation which leads to the vulnerable person being put at a financial disadvantage.

6. Procedures

6.1 If a member of the Trust staff suspects or is told that abuse of a vulnerable person may have taken place they must inform the school's safeguarding officer within 24 hours. Form VSR1 (See below) must be completed by the safeguarding officer on being notified.

6.2 The Safeguarding Officer makes a telephone referral within 24 hours wherever practicable to the appropriate agency within 24 hours of receiving the allegation/suspicion and confirms the referral on form VSR1. The school's headteacher is also informed.

6.3 If an allegation of abuse is made against a member of the Trust staff individual headteachers (or if the complaint being investigated is against a headteacher) or Chief Executive Officer may suspend the employee from duty pending an investigation and the holding of a formal disciplinary hearing, in accordance with the Trust's Staff Disciplinary Procedure. Such a suspension is not a disciplinary act.

6.4 The implementation of these procedures will be reviewed regularly and the Safeguarding Officers of each school will prepare a statistical summary of referrals to be made available to the Stakeholders/Student Welfare Committee of the Governing Body.

Referral Form (VSR1)

STUDENT DETAILS		
Name: Address: Tel. No:	Date of Birth: Age:	
Course enrolled on:		
Initial Disclosure made to:	Additional Considerations:	
Date:	Learning Difficulty	
	Learning Disability	
Parental Responsibility (if appropriate)	Physical Disability	
Name:	Sensory Disability	
Address:	Mental illness	
Tel. No:	Other	
Outline of incident/disclosure:		
Has the person being referred indicated what action they would like taken?		
Referral made to:	Agency	Named Officer
Date:		

Date VSR1 copy and VSR2 sent		Date VSR1 given to Headteacher		Allegation involves School staff/agent	Yes	No
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Name signed: Designation:

Name printed: Date:

