



Marches Academy Trust

**Date of last review:** December 2016

# Safeguarding Policy

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## 1. Introduction

Marches Academy Trust trustees, governors and staff fully recognise the contribution the school makes to safeguarding children. We recognise that the safety and protection of all pupils is of paramount importance and that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part to play in protecting pupils from harm.

We believe that the Marches Academy Trust should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment which promotes all pupils' social, physical, emotional and moral development

Ultimately, effective safeguarding of children can only be achieved by putting children at the centre of the system, and by every individual and agency playing their full part, working together to meet the needs of our most vulnerable children in line with Working Together 2015 and Keeping Children Safe In Education (KCSIE) 2016

The aim of this policy is to:

- Ensure that the pupils' development is supported in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
- Raise the awareness of teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- Confirm the structured procedures to be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected harm or abuse.
- Emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff and those with designated responsibility for child protection, health and safety and other safeguarding responsibilities.
- Emphasise the appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies, procedures and arrangements of those service providers who use the school's premises to provide any other before and after school activities

This policy will have consideration for, and be in compliance with, the following legislation, statutory guidance and key information

- 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' statutory guidance for schools and colleges, 2016 Department for Education (DfE)
- Shropshire Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) online procedures
- Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2015
- The "Prevent" Duty July 2015
- Shropshire Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) Threshold Guidance Document
- Ofsted Common 'Inspection framework: safeguarding in maintained schools and academies' September 2015

## 2. Responsibilities

Marches Academy Trust governing body will ensure that:

Trained link governors are appointed for safeguarding and child protection and Children in Care (CIC) who will attend training/updates every three years.

A member of the governing body is nominated to liaise with the local authority and/or partner agencies on issues of child protection and in the event of allegations of abuse made against the head teacher.

The Marches Academy Trust create a culture of safe recruitment and, as part of that, adopt recruitment procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children (Part three: Safer Recruitment. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016). Also, to ensure that procedures for dealing with allegations against staff and volunteers in accordance with Shropshire Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) are followed.

At least one member of an appointed panel will have attended safer recruitment training.

A member of staff of the school or college's leadership team in each school in the trust is appointed to the role of DSL.

Schools within the Trust keep a single central record that as a minimum evidences the following:

- All staff have been employed in compliance with safer recruitment requirements (Part three KCSIE 2016)
- Date of employment
- Identity confirmed with date
- Qualifications checked with date
- Prohibition from teaching check with date (for teaching staff)
- Barred list check with date
- Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check with date
- Eligibility to work in the UK with date
- Checks confirmed by and date

The adequacy of resources committed to child protection, and the staff and governor training profile is regularly monitored.

The child protection policy is available to parents/carers on request and that this policy and practice complements other policies e.g. anti-bullying (including cyber-bullying, peer on peer abuse, health and safety, drug,) to ensure safeguarding.

The Marches Academy Trust fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding children. Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school. There are five main elements to our policy:

- a Ensuring we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children;
- b Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe;

- c Implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse;
- d Supporting students who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan;
- e Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

**The head teachers will ensure that:**

- The policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body are followed by all staff.
- The policy is updated annually, and be available publicly via the school or college website or by other means.
- DSLs review the six monthly updates of the SSCB procedures.
- Sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the DSL, deputy DSL's and other staff to discharge their responsibilities including taking part in strategy discussions and other multi-agency meetings, to contribute to the assessment and support of children and young people, and be appropriately trained.
- A list of all staff and volunteers, and their safeguarding training dates is maintained.
- All staff and volunteers feel able to raise their concerns about poor and unsafe practice in regard of pupils, and that such concerns are addressed in a timely manner in accordance with agreed policies.

Headteachers across the trust will access child protection training which is updated regularly, in line with advice from SSCB.

**The role of the chair of governors, for Safeguarding Child Protection shall include:**

Monitoring of procedures relating to liaison with the LADO, Children's Social Care and the Police in relation to any allegations of child abuse made against the Head teacher, including attendance at relevant meetings.

**Allegations against the Head teacher**

Where an allegation is made against the Headteacher or principal this should be referred to the chair of governors, as well as the LADO.

**The role of the Designated Lead**

All DSL staff across the Trust will:

- Be a senior member of staff from the leadership team.
- Have their roles explicitly defined in their job descriptions.
- Be given sufficient time, funding, supervision and support to fulfil their child welfare and safeguarding responsibilities effectively.
- Ensure DSL and deputies undergo updated child protection training every two years.
- Liaise in accordance with the SSCB procedures when referring a pupil where there are concerns about possible abuse or harm.
- Be able to access the contents of the SSCB procedures and Personnel procedures (on Shropshire Learning Gateway) updated and make these accessible to all staff
- Ensure all staff, including supply teachers, visiting professionals working with pupils in the school and volunteers are informed of the names and contact details of the DSL and deputies and the school's procedures for safeguarding children.
- Support staff who attend strategy meetings and/or case conferences

- Support staff and volunteers who may find safeguarding issues upsetting or stressful by enabling them to talk through their anxieties and to seek further support from the school leadership group or others as appropriate.
- Ensure involvement of other lead professionals e.g. where there are concerns about any pupil including those who are CIC.
- Ensure all staff attend safeguarding and child protection training and receive updates via email or staff meetings to keep their skills and knowledge up to date.

**The DSL will also ensure that:**

- Written records of concerns are kept, even if there is no immediate need for referral; and monitored using the Early Help Assessment Framework (EHAF), Strengthening Families procedures.
- All child protection records are marked as such and kept securely locked, and separate from other files.
- Pupil records are kept separately, and marked as appropriate to indicate other confidential records are being held elsewhere
- If there are concerns about attendance and a pupil's wellbeing and safety, the Education Welfare Officer is contacted
- If a pupil has a Child Protection Plan, and is absent without explanation for two days, their key worker in Safeguarding is contacted.
- Phone calls in relation absences are similarly logged.
- Records are monitored for patterns of absence and appropriate action is taken.
- Where there are existing concerns about a pupil, and they transfer to another school in this authority, the information held e.g. an EHAF is forwarded under confidential cover and separate from the pupil's main file to the DSL for child protection in the receiving school.
- Where a pupil has a child protection plan and transfers to another school or college; or to the Social/Children's Services within a new authority or if the pupil is transferring to a school in another authority which has not yet been identified. The DSL of the new school/college is informed immediately.
- Their child protection file is transferred as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

### **3. Procedures**

We will follow the procedures set out by the Shropshire Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education (DofE)  
The school will:

- a. Ensure it has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at each school who will undertake regular, appropriate training for this role. Each school's DSL will be a member of Leadership Team.
- b. Ensure it has a member of staff who will act in the absence of the DSL:
- c. Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and the governing body knows the name of the DSL and their role;
- d. Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the DSL;
- e. Ensure that all staff are aware of the early help process and understand their role to take timely action to help a child if they have a safeguarding concern.
- f. Ensure that all staff are aware of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) knowing how to respond if they have a concern.

- g. Staff training- all staff will have undertaken Shropshire Safeguarding Children Board Raising Awareness Training
- h. Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection; we have a Child Safeguarding Policy on our website;
- i. Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding safeguarding matters including attendance at strategy meetings, initial case conferences, review conferences, core group, child in need review meetings and allowing access from host local authorities where appropriate to support the completion of Section 17 or 47 assessments.
- j. Ensure that all staff are aware of Child Sexual Exploitation signs and recognise their responsibilities in reporting any concerns immediately to the DSL.
- k. Ensure that the duty of care towards its students and staff is promoted by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe and unwise behaviour and assist staff to monitor their own standards and practice;
- l. Be aware of and follow procedures set out by Children's Services and the LSCB where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer;
- m. Ensure safer recruitment practices are always followed.
- n. Ensure that all governors across the Trust have an enhanced DBS Check.

Our procedures will be reviewed annually and up-dated in accordance with current legislation.

#### **4. School Staff, Volunteers and Visitors**

When staff join The Academy Trust they will be informed of the safeguarding children arrangements in place and given the 8 page safeguarding summary booklet. They will also be given electronic access to this policy both of which highlight who the DSL is and who acts in their absence.

The induction programme will include basic safeguarding information relating to signs and symptoms of abuse, how to manage a disclosure from a child, when and how to record a concern about the welfare of a child. All staff will be required to complete mandatory Child Protection regularly, in line with SSCB advice, currently every three years.

All volunteers and regular visitors to The Academy Trust will be told where our policy is kept and given the name of the DSL and the 8 page summary booklet. A copy of this policy will be available at the main school reception at each site. All staff wear name badges within school, all visitors sign into school for each visit.

All volunteers will be encouraged to undertake SSCB Level 1 Raising Awareness in Child Protection training.

#### **5. Procedures for off-site learning and work-based learning**

Our 'Employers Guide to Work Experience' booklet outlines in full the protocols for safeguarding students on work-based learning placements.

The Education Business Partnership (EBP) ensures that all placements for our students are appropriate in terms of Health and Safety, types of Business and insurance.

DBS checks are requested by the EBP if a placement is extended (more than 15 days) or if the employer is going to be in a 'one to one' situation with a student.

The EBP provides the workplace with guidance regarding health and safety and child protection protocols.

Similar checks are in place for Young Apprenticeships and all pre-16 Provision.

## **6. Managing a Disclosure**

Teachers and other staff in schools are in a unique position to observe children's behaviour over time and often develop close and trusting relationships with students. If a child discloses directly to a member of staff, the following procedures will be followed:

- a. Listen carefully to what is said.

Ask no leading questions. (i.e. questions which may be considered to suggest what might have happened, or who has perpetrated the abuse, e.g. 'Did your Dad hit you?'). The questions will relate to clarification of what has been expressed by the student.

- b. Do not force the student to repeat what he/she said in front of another person.

Following a disclosure, the member of staff should talk immediately to the DSL and complete a written record.

## **7. Information Sharing & Confidentiality**

We recognise that all matters relating to Child Protection are confidential. The Headteacher or DSL will disclose any information about a student to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

- All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets or promise confidentiality and must always act in the interests of the child.

## **8. Record Keeping**

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse from a child or young person, or noticing signs or symptoms of possible abuse, will make notes as soon as possible (within the hour, if possible) writing down exactly what was said, using the child's own words as far as possible. All notes should be timed, dated and signed, with the name printed alongside the signature.

## **9. Supporting Children**

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the student through:

The content of the curriculum:

1. The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives students a sense of being valued;
2. The school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable students in the school. The school will ensure that the student knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred;
3. Liaison with other agencies that support the student such as Children's Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), education welfare service and educational psychology service and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children;
4. Contacting the Initial Contact Team immediately there is a significant concern.
5. Providing a range of support structures within the school, such as the buddying and mentoring programmes, referrals to mentors.
6. Providing continuing support to a student about whom there have been concerns who leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to the student's new school.
7. Provide opportunity for the child's wishes or feelings to be taken into account when determining the action taken, though always acting in the best interests of the child. Systems are in place to allow for this through discussion with the child.

## **10. Working with parents/carers**

- Parents and carers play an important role in protecting their children from harm.
- In most cases, the school will discuss concerns about a student with the family and, where appropriate, seek their agreement to making referrals to Initial Contact Team.
- Where there are any doubts, the designated lead should clarify with Initial Contact Team, whether, and if so when and by whom, the parents should be told about the referral.
- The student's views will be considered in deciding whether to inform the family particularly where the student is sufficiently mature to make informed judgements about the issues, and about consenting to that.
- The use of COMPASS – Early Help Line may also be used for advice and guidance in child protection matters.
- The school aims to help parents understand that the school, like all others, has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of all students. The school may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a student's welfare.

## **11. Children In care**

All school's within the trust will have a designated teacher for children in care. Under this role, for each child they:

- Know the child's looked after legal status (looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or an interim or full care order).

- Hold contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.
- Hold information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after them.
- Hold details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.

## **12. Children Missing Education**

Marches Academy Trust has in place appropriate safeguarding responses to ensure effective recording of children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse or Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future. Detailed risk assessments are to be completed as appropriate i.e SSCB Child Sexual Exploitation Guidance for practitioners.

## **13. Supporting Staff**

We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm, may find the situation stressful and upsetting. We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSL and to seek further support as appropriate.

## **14. Safer Recruitment and Selection of Staff**

All staff members should also receive appropriate child protection training which is regularly updated.

Schools across the Trust are compliant with the requirements of the LSCB, In Shropshire this includes regular auditing of child protection procedures.

There are clear policies in line with those from the LSCB for dealing with allegations against people who work with children. An allegation may relate to a person who works with children who 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

In addition:

The Designated Officer in the Local Authority (LADO) to be involved in the management and oversight of individual cases. The LADO should provide advice and guidance to schools, liaising with the police and other agencies and monitoring the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process;

Any allegation should be reported immediately to the head teacher within the school. The LADO should also be informed within one working day of all allegations that come to an employer's attention or that are made directly to the police; and  
If the Marches Academy Trust removes an individual (paid worker or unpaid volunteer) from work such as looking after children (or would have, had the person not left first) because the person poses a risk of harm to children, the organisation must make a referral to the DBS.

The Trust has a Safer Recruitment Policy and procedures linking explicitly to this policy. The following statement is included in all job advertisements, recruitment websites, and candidate information packs.

*This Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be subject to an enhanced disclosure from the DBS.*

The recruitment process is robust in seeking to establish the commitment of candidates to support the Trust measures to safeguard children and to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children or are otherwise unsuited to work with them. Schools within the Trust will access the new Teacher Services system as part of safer recruitment. This being a database that can be used prior to appointing a teacher to check for prohibitions, sanctions and restrictions that might prevent the individual from taking part in certain activities or working in specific positions.

## **15. Allegations against Staff**

We understand that a student may make an allegation against a member of staff.

If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the DSL who will inform the Headteacher.

The DSL on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the LA's Senior Adviser for Safeguarding Children in Education. If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Headteacher, a designated teacher will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will consult with the LA's Senior Adviser for Safeguarding Children in Education.

The school will follow the school's procedure for managing allegations against staff, a copy of which will be readily available in the school.

## **16. Prevention**

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our students by providing them with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

The school will therefore:

- a Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are always listened to.
- b Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty, such as the form tutor, student support teams within the Key Stage areas, buddying and mentoring systems.
- c Include in the curriculum opportunities that equip children with the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

## **17. Abuse of Trust**

We recognise that as adults working in the school, we are in a relationship of trust with the students in our care and acknowledge that it is a criminal offence to abuse that trust.

We acknowledge that the principle of equality embedded in the legislation of the Sexual Offenders Act 2003 applies irrespective of sexual orientation: neither homosexual nor heterosexual relationships are acceptable within a position of trust.

We recognise that the legislation is intended to protect young people in education who are under 18 years of age.

## **18. Equality**

Our Equality policy ensures the equality of education and opportunity for all students, irrespective of race, gender, disability, faith or religion or socio-economic background. Repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under safeguarding children procedures. A separate log of these incidents will be kept and shared on a regular basis with governors and LEA.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, staff will be aware that students with disabilities will be vulnerable to forms of abuse including Online abuse. Staff will respond appropriately to any concerns alerting the DSL with any concerns.

## **19. Online Safety**

Our ICT policy recognises that internet safety is a whole school responsibility (staff, students, parents).

*Children and young people may expose themselves to danger, whether knowingly or unknowingly, when using the internet and other technologies. Additionally, some young people may find themselves involved in activities which are inappropriate or possibly illegal.*

We therefore recognise our responsibility to educate our students, teaching them the appropriate behaviours and critical thinking skills to enable them to remain both safe and legal when using the internet and related technologies. These issues are addressed within the curriculum, in the tutor programme and in assemblies.

Students will access specific training through the curriculum alongside external visits, assemblies related to Online Safety.

1. Peer on Peer Abuse, staff will recognise the signs of peer on peer abuse and will report any concerns using the school's behaviour policy.
2. Sexting, staff will recognise that sexting is a form of peer on peer abuse, which needs reporting to the DSL immediately.

The school network filters for key words related to safeguarding concerns, including Prevent, is monitored monthly.

## **20. Health & Safety**

Our Health & Safety policy reflects the consideration we give to the safeguarding of our children both within the school environment and when away from the schools when undertaking school trips and visits.

## **21. Protecting children from radicalisation/Prevent**

Prevention in the Curriculum

Marches Academy Trust recognises the importance of developing pupils' awareness of behaviour that is unacceptable towards them and others, and how they can help keep themselves and others safe.

The PSHE programme in each key stage provides personal development opportunities for pupils to learn about keeping safe and who to ask for help if their safety is threatened. As part of developing a healthy, safer lifestyle, pupils are taught to, for example:

- Safely explore their own and others' attitudes.
- Recognise and manage risks in different situations and how to behave responsibly.
- Judge what kind of physical contact is acceptable and unacceptable.
- Recognise when pressure from others (including people they know) threatens their personal safety and well-being and develop effective ways of resisting pressure;

The trust promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions; we teach a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral and cultural development of pupils and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life. The Trust promotes community cohesion and safeguards against biased or unbalanced teaching and the promotion of partisan political views and ensures that when political or controversial issues are brought to pupils' attention, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.

The Designated Lead in each school will take on the lead role for Child Sexual Exploitation and prevention of radicalisation. Staff are encouraged to inform the appropriate Designated Lead if any issues arise related to the above areas.

## **22. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

If staff have any concerns with regards to people carrying out female genitalia mutilation of girls, this must be reported following the same procedures as with any other Child Protection issue. Staff will be aware of procedures and know how to report a concern related to FGM.

Reporting of female genital mutilation is mandatory and a legal duty. Reporting should be to the police if:

Informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her  
Or

Staff have observed physical signs which appear to show FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18

Complying with the duty does not breach any confidentiality requirement or other restriction on disclosure which might otherwise apply. The duty is a personal duty which requires the individual professional who becomes aware of the case to make a report; the responsibility cannot be transferred. The only exception to this is if the

member of staff knows that another individual from the trust has already made a report; there is no requirement to make a second.

## **23. Conclusion**

The Governing Body's legal responsibility for safeguarding the welfare of children goes beyond basic child protection procedures.

The duty is to ensure that safeguarding permeates all activity and functions, surrounding and supporting their education and general welfare.