



Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Policy created on 1/9/2016 by D Hales

Policy reviewed Jan 19 by D Chell

Reviewed and approved by Head of Centre L Newbon

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Statement of intent

Alpha Learning is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare, both physical and emotional, of every pupil both inside and outside the Centre premises.

This policy sets out a clear and consistent framework for delivering this promise, in line with safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance.

It will be achieved by:

- Creating a culture of safe recruitment by adopting procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might pose a risk to children.
- Educating pupils on how to keep safe and to recognise behaviour that is unacceptable.
- Identifying and making provision for any child that has been subject to abuse.
- Ensuring that the centre head and staff members understand their responsibility, under safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance, to be alert to the signs of child abuse and to refer concerns to the designated safeguarding lead.
- Ensuring that the Head of Centre and any new staff members and volunteers are only appointed when all the appropriate checks have been satisfactorily completed.

The Centre's designated safeguarding lead is: Karl Burgess

In the absence of the designated safeguarding lead, child protection matters will be dealt with by: Lindon Newbon and Danielle Hales

External advisor Michael Carney

1. Definition

For the purposes of this policy, Alpha Learning will define safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing the impairment of children's health or development.
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

2. Legal framework

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

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Education Act 2002
- Education (Health Standards) (England) Regulations 2003
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Education (Independent Centre Standards) (England) Regulations 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- Education (Non-Maintained Special Centres) (England) Regulations 2011, as amended
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

- DfE (2015) ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015’
- DfE (2015) ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015’
- DfE (2015) ‘What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused’
- DfE (2015) ‘Information sharing’
- DfE (2015) ‘Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006’
- DfE (2015) ‘The Prevent duty’
- The Education (Centre Teachers’ Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- The Sexual Offences Act 2003

3. Roles and responsibilities

Senior Staff have a duty to:

- Ensure that the Centre complies with its duties under the above child protection and safeguarding legislation.
- Ensure that the policies, procedures and training opportunities in the Centre are effective and comply with the law at all times.
- Ensure that the Centre contributes to inter-agency working in line with the statutory guidance ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015’.
- Ensure that the Centre’s safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practice of the LA as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures established by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

Comply with its obligations under section 14B of the Children's Act 2004 to supply the LSCB with information to fulfil its functions.

- Ensure that a member of the governing body is nominated to liaise with the LA and/or partner agencies on issues of child protection, and in the event of allegations of abuse made against the Head of Centre or other governor.
- Ensure that there are effective child protection policies and procedures in place together with a staff code of conduct.
- Appoint a member of staff from the senior leadership team (SLT) to the role of designated safeguarding lead as an explicit part of the role-holder's job description – there should always be cover for the designated safeguarding lead.
- Consider how children may be taught about safeguarding, including protection for dangers online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Prevent people who pose a risk of harm from working with children by adhering to statutory responsibilities to check staff who work with children, taking proportionate decisions on whether to ask for any checks beyond what is required and ensuring volunteers are appropriately supervised.
- Ensure that at least one person on any appointment panel has undertaken safer recruitment training.
- Ensure that there are procedures in place to handle allegations against members of staff or volunteers.
- Ensure that there are procedures in place to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have been had they not resigned – this is a legal duty.
- Ensure that there are procedures in place to handle allegations against other children.
- Ensure that the child's wishes or feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide to protect individual children.
- Ensure that there are systems in place for children to express their views and give feedback.
- Appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of 'looked after children' and ensure that this person has undergone appropriate training.
- Ensure that staff members have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep 'looked after children' safe, particularly with regard to the child's legal status, contact details and care arrangements.
- Put in place appropriate safeguarding responses to children who go missing from Centre, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify any risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation and prevent the risks of their disappearance in future.

The Head of Centre has a duty to:

- Safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession.
Ensure that the policies and procedures adopted by the governing body, particularly concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect, are followed by staff members.

The designated safeguarding lead has a duty to:

- Refer all cases of suspected abuse to children's social care, the LA designated officer (LADO) for child protection concerns, the DBS, and the police in cases where a crime has been committed.
- Liaise with the Head of Centre to inform him/her of safeguarding issues, especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children's Act 1989 and police investigations.
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff members on matters of safeguarding by liaising with relevant agencies.
- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention.
- Have a working knowledge of how LAs conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference, and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the Centre's Child Protection Policy and procedures, especially new and part-time staff members.
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and young carers.
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate and secure records of concerns and referrals.
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant training courses.
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings.
- Ensure the Centre's Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually and the procedures are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with the governing body regarding this duty.
- Ensure the Centre's Child Protection Policy is available publically and parents are aware of the fact that referrals regarding suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the Centre in this.
- Link with the local LSCB to make sure that staff members are aware of the training opportunities available and the latest local policies on safeguarding.
- Ensure that the pupil's child protection file is copied when transferring to a new Centre.

Other staff members should:

- Safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.
- Provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
- Identify children who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.
- Take appropriate action, working with other services as required.
- Support social workers to take decisions about individual children, in collaboration with the designated safeguarding lead.
If at any point there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, make a referral to children's social care immediately.
- Support social workers in making decisions about individual children, in collaboration with the designated safeguarding lead.
- Alpha Learning works in partnership with the LA's Channel Panel to assess the extent to which individual pupils are at risk of being drawn into terrorism.
- The Centre procedure for, and approach to, preventing radicalisation is outlined in the Anti-Terrorism Policy.

4. Female genital mutilation (FGM)

All Centre staff must be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. If staff members are worried about someone who is at risk of FGM or who has been a victim of FGM, they must share this information with social care or the police.

There are a range of potential indicators that a child may be at risk of FGM. While individually they may not indicate risk, if two or more indicators are present this could signal a risk to the child.

Victims of FGM are most likely to come from communities that are known to adopt this practice. It is important to note that the child may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so it is important for staff to be sensitive when approaching the subject.

The following indicators are taken from government guidelines regarding FGM:

Indicators that may show a heightened risk of FGM include:

- The position of the family and their level of integration into UK society.
- Any girl with a mother or sister who has been subjected to FGM.
- Any girl withdrawn from Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE).

Indicators that may show FGM could take place soon

- The risk of FGM increases when a female family elder is visiting from a country of origin.
- A girl may confide that she is to have a 'special procedure' or a ceremony to 'become a woman'.

- A girl may request help from a teacher if she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk.
- A girl, or her family member, may talk about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent.

It is important that staff look for signs that FGM has already taken place so that help can be offered, enquiries can be made to protect others, and criminal investigations can begin. Indicators that FGM may have already taken place include:

- Difficulty walking, sitting or standing.
- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet.
Spending long periods of time away from a classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems.
- Prolonged or repeated absences from Centre followed by withdrawal or depression.
- Reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations.
- Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.

If a member of Centre staff has a concern, they should activate local safeguarding procedures.

As of October 2015, Section 75 of the Serious Crime Act places a statutory duty upon teachers to report to the police any discovery, whether through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence, of FGM on a girl under 18. Teachers failing to report such cases will face disciplinary action.

Teachers will not examine pupils, and so it is rare that they will see any visual evidence, but they must report to the police where an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should also consider and discuss any such case with the Centre's designated safeguarding lead and involve children's social care as appropriate.

5. Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

CSE involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where a child may receive something, such as food, gifts or in some cases simply affection, as a result of engaging in sexual activities.

CSE can take many forms but the perpetrator will always hold some kind of power over the victim. It is important to note that some young people who are being sexually abused do not exhibit any external signs of abuse.

The Centre has adopted the following procedure for handling cases of CSE, as outlined by the DfE:

Step one – Identifying cases

Centre staff members are aware of and look for the key indicators of CSE, these are as follows:

- Going missing for periods of time or regularly going home late
- Regularly missing school
- Appearing with unexplained gifts and new possessions
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Undergoing mood swings or drastic changes in emotional wellbeing
- Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour

Step two – Referring cases

Where CSE, or the risk of it, is suspected, staff will discuss the case with the dedicated member of staff for child protection. If after discussion a concern still remains, local safeguarding procedures will be triggered, including referral to the LA.

Step three – Support

The LA and all other necessary authorities will then handle the matter to conclusion. The Centre will cooperate as needed.

6. Preventing radicalisation

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is part of the Centre's wider safeguarding duties. We will actively assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism. Staff will be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff will use their professional judgement to identify children who may be at risk of radicalisation and act appropriately – which may include making a referral to the Channel programme. The Centre will work with the LSCB as appropriate.

Training

The Centre's designated safeguarding lead will undertake Prevent awareness training to be able to provide advice and support to other staff on how to protect children against the risk of radicalisation. The designated safeguarding lead will hold formal training sessions with all members of staff to ensure they are aware of the risk indicators and their duties regarding preventing radicalisation.

Risk indicators

Indicators of an identity crisis:

- Distancing themselves from their cultural/religious heritage
- Uncomfortable with their place in society

Indicators of a personal crisis:

- Family tensions
- A sense of isolation
- Low self-esteem
- Disassociation from existing friendship groups
- Searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging

Indicators of vulnerability through personal circumstances:

- Migration
- Local community tensions
- Events affecting their country or region of origin
- Alienation from UK values
- A sense of grievance triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination

Indicators of vulnerability through unmet aspirations:

Perceptions of injustice

- Feelings of failure
- Rejection of civic life

Indicators of vulnerability through criminality:

- Experiences of dealing with the police
- Involvement with criminal groups

Making a judgement

When making a judgement, staff will ask themselves the following questions:

- Does the child have access to extremist influences?
- Does the child access the internet for the purposes of extremist activities (e.g. using closed network groups, accessing or distributing extremist material, contacting covertly using Skype, etc.)?
- Is there a reason to believe that the child has been, or is likely to be, involved with extremist organisations?
- Is the child known to have possessed or is actively seeking extremist literature/other media likely to incite racial or religious hatred?
- Does the child sympathise with or support illegal/illicit groups?
- Does the child support groups with links to extremist activity?
- Has the child encountered peer, social, family or faith group rejection?
- Is there evidence of extremist ideological, political or religious influence on the child?
- Have international events in areas of conflict and civil unrest had a noticeable impact on the child?

- Has there been a significant shift in the child's outward appearance that suggests a new social, political or religious influence?
- Has the child come into conflict with family over religious beliefs, lifestyle or dress choices?
- Does the child vocally support terrorist attacks; either verbally or in their written work?
- Has the child witnessed or been the victim of racial or religious hate crime?
- Is there a pattern of regular or extended travel within the UK?
- Has the child travelled for extended periods of time to international locations?
- Has the child employed any methods to disguise their identity?
- Does the child have experience of poverty, disadvantage, discrimination or social exclusion?
- Does the child display a lack of affinity or understanding for others?
- Is the child the victim of social isolation?
- Does the child demonstrate a simplistic or flawed understanding of religion or politics?
- Is the child a foreign national, refugee or awaiting a decision on their/their family's immigration status?
- Does the child have insecure, conflicted or absent family relationships?
Has the child experienced any trauma in their lives, particularly trauma associated with war or sectarian conflict?
- Is there evidence that a significant adult or other person in the child's life has extremist views or sympathies?

Critical indicators include where the child is:

- In contact with extremist recruiters.
- Articulating support for extremist causes or leaders.
- Accessing extremist websites.
- Possessing extremist literature.
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage.
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues.
- Joining extremist organisations.
- Making significant changes to their appearance and/or behaviour.

Any member of staff who identifies such concerns, as a result of observed behaviour or reports of conversations, must report these to the designated safeguarding lead.

The designated safeguarding lead will consider whether a situation may be so serious that an emergency response is required. In this situation, a 999 call will be made. However, concerns are most likely to require a police investigation as part of Channel, in the first instance.

ICT policy

The Centre will ensure that suitable filtering systems are in place to prevent children accessing terrorist and extremist material.

Extremist speakers

The Centre's Anti-terrorism policy prevents speakers who may promote extremist views from using Centre premises.

Building children's resilience

The Centre will:

- Provide a safe environment for debating controversial issues.
- Promote fundamental British values, alongside pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Allow pupils time to explore sensitive and controversial issues.
- Provide pupils with the knowledge and skills to understand and manage potentially difficult situations, recognise risk, make safe choices and recognise where pressure from others threatens their personal safety and wellbeing.
- Equip pupils to explore political and social issues critically, weigh evidence, debate, and make reasoned arguments.
- Teach pupils about how democracy, government and law making/enforcement occurs.
Teach pupils about mutual respect and understanding for the diverse national, regional, religious and ethnic identities of the UK.

Resources

The Centre will utilise the following resources:

- The LSCB
- Local police (contacted via 101 for non-emergencies)
- The DfE's dedicated helpline (020 7340 7264)

7. A child missing from education

A child going missing from Centre is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect. Staff will monitor children that go missing from Centre, particularly on repeat occasions, and report them to the designated safeguarding lead – following normal safeguarding procedures.

In order to ensure accurate data is collected to allow effective safeguarding, the Centre will inform the LA of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- Have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system, e.g. home education.
- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within a reasonable distance of the Centre.
- Have been certified by the school nurse as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the Centre after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and we do not reasonably believe they will be returning to the Centre at the end of that period.
- Have been permanently excluded.

The Centre will inform the LA of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the Centre's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more.

8. Safer recruitment

An enhanced DBS check with barred list information will be undertaken for all staff members engaged in regulated activity. A person will be considered to be in 'regulated activity' if, as a result of their work, they:

- Are responsible on a daily basis for the care or supervision of children.
- Regularly work in the Centre at times when children are on Centre premises.
- Regularly come into contact with children under 18 years of age.

Pre-employment checks

The governing body will assess the suitability of prospective employees by:

- Verifying the candidate's identity, preferably from current photographic ID and proof of address except where, for exceptional reasons, none is available.
- Obtaining a certificate for an enhanced DBS check with barred list information where the person will be engaged in regulated activity.
- Obtaining a separate barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available.
- Checking that a candidate to be employed as a teacher is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State, using the Employer Access Online service.
- Verifying the candidate's mental and physical fitness to undertake their working responsibilities, including asking relevant questions about disability and health to establish whether they have the physical and mental capacity for the specific role.
- Verifying the person's right to work in the UK. If there is uncertainty about whether an individual needs permission to work in the UK, the Centre will follow the advice set out on the gov.uk website.

- If the person has lived or worked outside the UK, making any further checks that the Centre considers appropriate.
- Verifying professional experience and qualifications as appropriate.

A DBS certificate will be obtained from candidates before or as soon as practicable after appointment. An online update check may be undertaken through the DBS update service if an applicant has subscribed to it and gives their permission.

If there are concerns about an applicant, an enhanced DBS check with barred list information may be requested, even if he/she has worked in regulated activity in the three months prior to appointment. An enhanced DBS check may be requested for anyone working in the Centre that is not in regulated activity, but not with a barred list check.

Written information about their previous employment history will be obtained from candidates and the appropriate checks undertaken to ensure information is not contradictory or incomplete. References will be obtained directly from referees and scrutinised, with all concerns satisfactorily resolved prior to confirmation of employment.

References will be sought on all short-listed candidates, including internal ones, before interview and checked on receipt to ensure that all specific questions were answered satisfactorily.

Information about past disciplinary action or allegations will be considered carefully when assessing an applicant's suitability for a post.

Written notification will be obtained from any agency or third-party organisation contracted by the Centre, confirming that the organisation has carried out the same checks on an individual who will be working at the Centre that the Centre would otherwise perform. Checks will be conducted to ensure that the contractor presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

An enhanced DBS certificate and barred list check will be obtained for all trainee teachers.

The Centre will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed a child, poses a risk of harm to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed an offence and has been removed from working in regulated activity. A supervised volunteer who regularly teaches or looks after children is not in regulated activity.

No volunteer will be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity until the necessary checks have been obtained. An enhanced DBS certificate with barred list check will be obtained for all new volunteers in regulated activity that will regularly teach or look after children on an unsupervised basis or provide personal care on a one-off basis. An enhanced DBS certificate will be obtained for new volunteers not in regulated activity. The Centre will consider obtaining an enhanced DBS certificate with barred list check for existing volunteers that provide pastoral care.

Unless there is cause for concern, the Centre will not request a DBS certificate with barred list check for other unsupervised volunteers that are continuing with their current studies, as the volunteer should already have been checked.

A risk assessment will be undertaken for volunteers not engaged in regulated activity when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check. Governors that are volunteers shall be treated on the same basis as other volunteers.

The Centre will ensure that any contractor or employee of the contractor working at the Centre has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check. Contractors without a DBS check will be supervised if they will have contact with children. The identity of the contractor will be checked upon their arrival at the Centre.

The Centre will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm during work experience placements.

The Centre will set up and maintain a single central record of whether or not the following checks have been carried out on, or certificates obtained from, members of the governing body, staff members, volunteers and other individuals working with children in the Centre:

- An identity check
- A barred list check
- An enhanced DBS check
- A prohibition from teaching check
- Further checks on people living or working outside the UK
- A check of professional qualifications
- A check to establish the person's right to work in the UK

DBS certificates will be securely destroyed as soon as practicable, but not retained for longer than six months from receipt, as outlined in the Data Protection Act 1998.

A copy of the other documents used to verify the successful candidate's identity, right to work and required qualifications will be kept for the personnel file.

9. Training

Staff members will be made aware of systems and policies within the Centre which support safeguarding during their HR inductions. The designated safeguarding officer will undergo updated child protection training every two years. The Head of Centre and all staff members will undergo child protection training which is updated regularly, in line with LSCB advice.

10. Reporting

Staff members should raise any concerns that they may have about a child with the Centre's designated safeguarding lead, including situations of abuse which may involve other staff members.

The safeguarding lead will decide whether to make a referral to children's social care, but any staff member can refer their concerns to children's social care directly.

The referrer shall press children's social care for re-consideration if the decision was taken not to undergo an early help assessment and the child's situation does not improve.

The early help assessment should be undertaken by a lead professional who could be a teacher, special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), general practitioner (GP), family support worker, and/or health visitor.

An inter-agency assessment will be undertaken where a child and their family could benefit from coordinated support from more than one agency. These assessments should identify what help the child and family require in preventing needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed.

A child will immediately be referred to children's social care if there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child.

Annex A – Staff disqualification declaration

Name of Centre:	
Name of staff member:	
Position:	
Orders and other restrictions	Circle one option
Have any orders or other determinations related to childcare been made in respect of you?	Yes/No
Have any orders or other determinations related to childcare been made in respect of a child in your care?	Yes/No
Have any orders or other determinations been made which prevent you from being registered in relation to childcare, children's homes or fostering?	Yes/No
Are there any other relevant orders, restrictions or prohibitions in respect of you as set out in Schedule 1 of the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009?	Yes/No
Are you barred from working with children by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)?	Yes/No
Are you prohibited from teaching?	Yes/No
Specified and statutory offences	
Have you ever been cautioned, reprimanded, given a warning for or convicted of:	
• Any offence against or involving a child (person under the age of 18)?	Yes/No
• Any violent or sexual offence against an adult?	Yes/No
• Any offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003?	Yes/No
• Any other relevant offence?	Yes/No
Have you ever been cautioned, reprimanded for or convicted of a similar offence in another country?	Yes/No
Disqualification by association	
To the best of your knowledge, is anyone in your household disqualified from working with children under the regulations? This includes the person having an Order of Restriction, as outlined in the 'Orders and other restrictions' section, against them or having been cautioned, reprimanded, given a warning for or convicted of any offence in the 'Specified and statutory offences' section.	Yes/No
Provision of information	
If you have answered yes to any of the questions above, provide details below in respect of yourself, or, where relevant, the member of your household concerned. You may provide this information separately, but you must do so without delay.	
Details of the order restriction, conviction or caution:	
The date(s) of the above:	

The relevant court(s) or body/bodies):	
You should also provide a copy of the relevant order, caution, conviction, etc. In relation to cautions/convictions, a DBS Certificate may be provided.	
Declaration	
In signing this form, I confirm that the information provided is true to the best of my knowledge and that:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I understand my responsibilities to safeguard children. • I understand that I must notify my Head of Centre immediately of anything that affects my suitability to work within the Centre. This includes any cautions, warnings, convictions, orders or other determinations made in respect of me or a member of my household that would render me disqualified from working with children. 	
Signed:	
Print name:	
Date:	