



Whistleblowing Policy

IMPORTANT

OAKWOOD ACADEMY WILL NOT TOLERATE ANY FORM OF ABUSE, RADICALISATION OR EXTREMISM TOWARDS CHILDREN OR YOUNG PEOPLE

OAKWOOD ACADEMY MISSION STATEMENT

"Promoting learning excellence - Inclusion beyond the barriers"

OAKWOOD ACADEMY: MORAL PURPOSE

"We are united in the belief that together we can inspire all learners to dream, persevere and achieve so that we can change lives for the better, now and for future generations to come"

WORRIED ABOUT A CHILD?

If you are worried about a child or young person speak to a member of staff immediately.

'SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYBODY'S RESPONSIBILITY'

Date of Last Review: September 2023

Date of Next Review: September 2024

Signed by

Oakwood Academy

September 2023

SAFEGUARDING POLICIES CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The safeguarding policies (see back page for complete list) are in place to help prevent children and young people up to 18 years of age being at risk of harm. Oakwood Academy advises the safeguarding policies are read in conjunction with each other. If you have any concerns or questions regarding policies please refer to a member of SLT.

WORRIED ABOUT A CHILD/YOUNG PERSON

If you are **worried about a child or a young person** being at risk of harm please speak to Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) - Mrs L Southwood or Deputy Safeguarding Lead - Mrs M Navin (DDSL). **DO NOT IGNORE IT.**

EXTREMISM/RADICALISATION

All staff and Governors are to be familiar with the indicators of vulnerability to extremism and radicalisation and the procedures for dealing with concerns. Staff are made aware of the potential indicating factors when a child is vulnerable to being radicalised or exposed to extreme views. These include peer pressure, influence from other people or the internet, bullying, crime and anti-social behaviour, family tensions, race/hate crime, lack of self-esteem or identity, prejudicial (damaging) behaviour and personal or political grievances. Staff to report any concerns to Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) - Mrs L Southwood or Deputy Safeguarding Lead - Mrs M Navin (DDSL).

SAFEGUARDING /HEALTH AND SAFETY

Oakwood Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. At Oakwood we provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child and we strive to provide this within our classrooms. All staff follow health and safety guidelines.

SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL & CULTURAL

Oakwood work to prevent children and young people from developing extreme and radical views by embedding SMSC principles throughout the curriculum. During lessons we strive to create a learning environment which promotes respect, diversity and self-awareness and equips all of our children and young people with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values they will need to succeed in their future lives.

For more details/information on Safeguarding refer to the following documents:

- Keeping Children safe in education (statutory guidance for schools and colleges) : September 2023
- Working together to safeguard children (A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children : March 2018
- Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in educational settings : October 2019
- Child Protection Policy (Oakwood Academy)

Important: Please refer to the list of safeguarding policies (on back page) includes specific Child Protection issues towards children and young people.

Introduction

Openness, probity and accountability are vital components of public service. Employees and other workers who discover lapses in these areas are encouraged to come forward and disclose their concerns to someone who can be trusted to take action. This process is known as 'whistle-blowing'. These issues will be taken seriously and treated in a confidential manner.

This policy applies to all school employees and those working in the school or on school premises. It also covers suppliers and those providing services under a contract with the school on their own premises.

The policy has been introduced to:

- allow workers to feel confident in raising serious concerns and to question and act upon concerns about practice;
- identify avenues for workers to raise those concerns and receive feedback on any action taken;
- ensure that workers receive a response to their concerns and that they are aware of how to pursue them if they are not satisfied;
- reassure workers that they will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation if they have reasonable belief that there is malpractice or impropriety and have made a disclosure in good faith.

Examples of areas covered

This policy is intended to cover areas of concern such as the following:

- conduct which may be a criminal offence;
- extremism- radicalisation;
- failure to comply with a legal obligation;
- dangerous procedures endangering the health and safety and welfare of pupils and workers and of other persons using the school buildings or site;
- possible damage to the environment;
- the unauthorised use of public funds including action which may breach financial regulations;
- fraud, bribery and corruption;
- sexual, mental or physical abuse of pupils;
- breach of procedures and regulations set by examination boards/awarding bodies.

This policy is not intended to replace the school's dispute resolution or other established procedures, but may lead to those being initiated.

IMPORTANT : Extremism and Radicalisation

It is essential to report situations regarding activities that could possibly lead to forms of extremism and radicalisation. We ALL need to look out for unusual patterns in behaviour/attendance. When delivering lessons we look out for indicators for example, inappropriate discussions/ choice of images etc! Report any concerns immediately to a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT). We work to prevent pupils from developing extreme and radical views by embedding SMSC principles throughout the

curriculum. We ALL have a duty of care and responsibility to prevent children, young persons and adults from developing extreme and radical views within Oakwood and the community.

To raise a concerns

As a first step you should normally raise concerns, either verbally or in writing, with the Executive Principle (or if the Executive Principle has created the concern or has failed to take appropriate action) the Chair of the school's governing body. Any concern should be raised at the earliest opportunity possible. As much information as possible should be supplied, including: dates, times and names.

Although you will not be expected to provide conclusive proof of the allegation, you will need to demonstrate to the person contacted that you have reasonable grounds for your concern.

If you make an allegation in good faith but it is not confirmed by a subsequent investigation, no action will be taken against you. If, however, you make an allegation frivolously, maliciously or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against you. You may invite your trade union/professional association representative or a workplace colleague to be present during any meetings or interviews in connection with the concerns you have raised. You are encouraged to put your name to the allegations whenever possible. Concerns expressed anonymously may be considered at the discretion of the Executive Principal/chair of governors. In exercising this discretion, the factors to be taken into account will include:

- the seriousness of the concerns identified;
- the likelihood of confirming the allegation from a credible source;
- whether the details provided contain sufficient information to allow the matter to be investigated.

How the school will respond

An initial assessment will be made by the Executive Principal/Chair of Governors to determine whether the concerns which have been raised warrant any action on the part of the school. Such an assessment may include a preliminary investigation. Some concerns may be resolved by agreed action without the need for investigation. Where the concerns do warrant further action, the matter will be referred to an appropriate person who will follow the appropriate procedure, e.g.

- a disciplinary investigation;
- referral to Department for Education (EFA). (In these circumstances, the DfE/EFA will assess whether all school processes have been applied and that the Assessor has done everything possible to resolve the issue. If this is not the case, the DfE/EFA will refer the matter back to the Assessor
- informing the police;
- referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer for child protection [the LADO].

Within five working days the person with whom the concern has been raised will write to the worker:

- acknowledging that the concern has been received;
- indicating how the school proposes to deal with the matter;
- informing whether further investigations will take place and if not why not;

- giving an estimate of how long it will take to provide a final response;
- supplying information on staff support mechanisms, which may include confidential counselling.

The amount of contact between the person considering the issues and the worker will depend on the nature of the matters raised, the potential difficulties involved and the clarity of the information provided. If necessary, the school will seek further information from the worker. Any meeting arranged for these purposes may be offsite, if requested. The school accepts that all workers need to be assured that the matters will be properly addressed. Subject to legal constraints, workers who have raised the concern will be informed of the outcomes of any investigation, to an extent which does not prejudice the right to confidentiality of others concerned.

Protection for whistle-blowers

The *Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998* makes it automatically unfair to dismiss a worker on the grounds that they undertook a 'protected disclosure' (i.e. a disclosure made in good faith with a reasonable belief that there has been a relevant malpractice or impropriety) and compensation in these circumstances is unlimited. In order for a worker to be protected under this legislation they must take reasonable steps to raise the matter internally first before going outside the organisation to raise their concern. Any attempt to victimise a worker who has reported a concern under this procedure may be dealt with under the school's *Disciplinary Procedure*.

What you should do if the school does not deal with your concerns

A worker who makes a 'protected disclosure', such as those set out in section 2, is protected provided that:

- they make the disclosure in good faith;
- they reasonably believe that the information disclosed, and any allegation contained in it, is substantially true;
- they do not make the disclosure for purposes of personal gain;
- at the time of the disclosure, they reasonably believe that they will be subject to a detriment by their employer, or relevant evidence will be concealed or destroyed, if they make a disclosure to their employer;
- in all the circumstances of the case, it is 'reasonable' for them to make the disclosure.

Making a disclosure outside the school is more likely to be 'reasonable' if it is made to a person or body that has appropriate jurisdiction. This will depend on the nature of the concern, but for local authority maintained schools might include:

Nature of concern	Relevant external body
Criminal activity Sexual Exploitation	Police / LA Childrens Services ('The Bridge' team)
Exam malpractice	Local authority assessment co-ordinator The awarding body Ofqual
Environmental damage	Environment Agency
Breach of governance regulations	Local Authority and Education Funding Agency (EFA)
Financial Irregularities	Education Funding Agency (EFA)
Serious misconduct of a teacher	The Teaching Agency
Health and Safety	Health and Safety Executive
Income Tax / VAT	HMRC

Child Protection	Local authority Designated Officer for child protection [LADO]
Building regulations	Local authority planning department

Depending on the circumstances, other appropriate bodies may include:

- Ofsted;
- The Secretary of State,
- Member of Parliament;
- National Audit Office;
- Health and Safety Executive;

You may also seek confidential external advice from:

- your trade union or professional association
- the citizens advice bureau
- **CONNECTING POLICIES FOR SAFEGUARDING PURPOSE**
- If you are worried about a child or young person (in relation to issues listed below) or have any concerns or questions regarding Child Protection refer to Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) - Mrs L Southwood or Deputy Safeguarding Lead - Mrs M Navin (DDSL).
- **LIST OF SAFEGUARDING/CHILD PROTECTION ISSUES**
- child missing from education: child missing from home care : child sexual exploitation (CSE) : bullying including cyber bullying : domestic violence : drugs : fabricated or induced illness : faith abuse : female genital mutilation (FGM) : forced marriage : gangs with youth violence : gender based violence against women and girls (VAWG) : mental health : private fostering : preventing radicalisation : sexting : teenage relationship abuse : trafficking.
- **From DfE, Keeping children safe in education: September 2023.**
- Oakwood Academy believes it is very important that all the Safeguarding Policies are read in conjunction with one another to quickly identify and take any necessary and appropriate action to help prevent children and young people up to 18 years of age being at risk of harm.
- **MORE INFORMATION VISIT:** NSPCC.org.uk: TES & NSPCC safeguarding: GOV.UK keeping children safe
- **SAFEGUARDING CONNECTING POLICIES** (situated on the Oakwood website) www.oakwoodacademy.co.uk
- Anti-Bullying
- Anti- Cyber Bullying
- Anti- Racism
- Anti-Radicalisation
- Attendance
- Behaviour
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Procedures
- Care/Intimate Care/Administration of Medication /Touch
- Children Missing From Home
- Complaints
- Child Protection (including the safeguarding of all children)
- Data Protection

- Drugs
- e-safety (online)
- FGM
- First Aid
- Health & Safety
- ICT and Computing
- Lone Worker
- PSHE
- Pupil Friendly Safeguarding
- SRE
- SMSC
- Safer Recruitment
- SMSC
- Trafficking
- Visits/Trips
- Whistleblowing
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- The Safeguarding Policies are up-dated annually or as necessary depending on new statutory guidance or legislation.

THE GOVERNORS AGREEMENT TO POLICY

Signed (Chair of Governors) Date

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