

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Sharpe Academy fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection. Our policy applies to all staff, directors and volunteers working in/for the Academy. There are four main elements to our policy:

- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

We recognise that because of their day-to-day contact with children, Academy staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The Academy will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the Academy whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities in the Academy curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

We will follow the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education and Skills and our local Councils to:

- Ensure we have a designated senior child protection officer who has received appropriate training and support for this role.
Senior Designated Person: Mr. Daniel J Sharpe
- Ensure we have a designated child protection officer in each centre who has received training and support for this role:
Designated Member of Staff (Rickmansworth, Ruislip, Northwood, Stanmore): Mr. Nick Jackson
Designated Member of Staff (Amersham, Beaconsfield): Mrs. Katherine Tuttle
- Ensure we have a designated third party outside of Sharpe Academy should an issue or concern arise involving one of our Child Protection Officers. Sharpe Academy has a reciprocal agreement with an independent third party performing arts school who will be able to assist you. Please contact **Shelley Otway, Director of Steppin Out Stars of Tomorrow** based in Berkshire. Up to date contact details for Shelley can be found by visiting www.steppinoutschool.co.uk
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and directors know the name of the designated senior person responsible for child protection and their role.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for child protection.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the Academy and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations on the Academy website www.sharpeacademy.co.uk.
- Notify social services if there are any unexplained absences of a pupil who is on the child protection register.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely; separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed.

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 Academy may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at the Academy their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The Academy will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum.
- The Academy ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- The Academy behaviour code which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the Academy. The Academy will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as social services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, education welfare service and educational psychology service.
- Ensuring that, where a pupil on the child protection register leaves, their information is transferred to the new performing arts academy (if applicable) immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.