

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

1. Background & Purpose

University Technical College Lancashire fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect and support young people in its care. Learners' welfare is of paramount importance.

This policy is consistent with:-

- the legal duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, as described in section 175 of the Education Act 2002, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2014 and Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education 2010
- Local Safeguarding Children Board Procedures, which contain the inter-agency processes, protocols and expectations for safeguarding children

The University Technical College Lancashire recognises that effective safeguarding and child protection work requires sound procedures, good inter-agency co-operation and a workforce that is competent and confident in responding to child protection situations.

The UTC will therefore:-

- establish and maintain an ethos where young people feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to
- ensure that young people know that there are adults in the UTC whom they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty
- include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for PSHE/Citizenship which equip young people with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse, and which will help them to develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is:-

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The UTC's Designated Senior Lead (DSL) for Safeguarding is:-

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The UTC's Deputy Designated Senior Lead (DDSL) for Safeguarding is:-

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2. Aims of this Policy

This policy aims to:-

- provide clear direction to staff and others about responsibilities and expected codes of behaviour in dealing with safeguarding and child protection issues
- to make explicit the UTC's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures
- ensure that child protection concerns and referrals are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that support the needs of the child
- ensure we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children
- raise awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe
- develop and then implement procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse
- support learners who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan
- establish a safe environment in which young people can learn and develop

3. Underpinning Values

Where there is a safeguarding issue, the UTC will work within the following principles and in accordance with the those outlined in the local Safeguarding Children Board Inter-agency Child Protection procedures:-

- A child's welfare is paramount. Every child has a right to be protected from harm and exploitation and to have their welfare safeguarded.
- Each child is unique. Action taken by child welfare organisations should be child-centred, taking account of a child's cultural, ethnic and religious background, their gender, their sexual orientation, their individual ability and any special needs.
- Children, parents and other carers should be made aware of their responsibilities and their rights, together with advice about the power of professionals to intervene in their family circumstances.
- Each child has a right to be consulted about actions taken by others on his/her behalf. The concerns of children and their families should be listened to and due consideration given to their understanding, wishes and feelings.
- Individual family members must be involved in decisions affecting them. They must be treated with courtesy and respect and with due regard given to working with them in a spirit of partnership in safeguarding children's welfare.
- Open-mindedness and honesty must guide each stage of assessment and of operational practice. The strengths of individual family members, as well as their needs, should be given due consideration.
- Personal information is usually confidential. It should only be shared with the permission of the individual concerned, or unless the disclosure of confidential personal information is necessary in order to protect a child. In all circumstances, information must be confined to those people directly involved in the professional network of each individual child and on a strict 'need to know' basis.
- Professionals should be aware of the effects of outside intervention upon children, upon family life and the impact and implications of what they say and do.
- Explanations by professionals to children, their families and other carers should be plainly stated and jargon-free. Unavoidable technical and professional terminology should be explained in simple terms.
- Sound professional practice is based upon positive inter-agency collaboration, evidence-based research and effective supervision and evaluation.
- Early intervention in providing support services under Section 17 of the Children Act (1989) is an important principle of practice in inter-agency arrangements for safeguarding welfare of children.

4. Supporting Children at Risk

The UTC recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. The UTC may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of some of the children under its care and therefore recognises that such children might exhibit challenging and defiant behaviour and will take careful note of the context of such behaviour. The UTC also recognises that some children who have experienced abuse may in turn abuse others. This requires a considered and sensitive approach in order that the child can receive appropriate help and support.

The UTC will endeavour to support all its learners and equip them to stay safe from abuse through:-

- the curriculum and in particular the content of the PSHE and Citizenship curriculum which will encourage self-esteem and self-motivation
- the provision of enrichment activities to raise awareness of a range of issues for example personal safety and the safety of others
- promoting a positive, supportive and secure environment which gives learners a sense of being respected and valued
- a coherent management of behaviour
- a consistent approach which recognises and separates the cause of behaviour from that which the young person displays – this is vital to ensure that all learners are supported within the UTC setting
- liaison with other professionals and agencies who support children and parents/carers
- a commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents/carers whenever it is in the child's interests to do so
- the development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group whose role it is to respond appropriately in child protection situations

The UTC recognises that, statistically, children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. It also recognises that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, children may also be vulnerable and in need of support and protection. Employees who work, in any capacity, with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and/or emotional and behavioural problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

(a) Safeguarding is *everyone's* responsibility.

As adults and/or professionals or volunteers at the UTC, everyone has a responsibility to safeguard children and promote their welfare. Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children – and in particular protecting them from significant harm – depends upon effective joint working between agencies and professionals that have different roles and expertise.

For those children who are suffering, or at risk of suffering significant harm, joint working is essential, to safeguard and promote welfare of the child(ren) and – where necessary – to help bring to justice the perpetrators of crimes against children.

All agencies and professionals should:-

- be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect
- be alert to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children
- share and help to analyse information so that an assessment can be made of the child's needs and circumstances
- contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote the child's welfare
- take part in regularly reviewing the outcomes for the child against specific plans; and work co-operatively with parents/carers unless this is inconsistent with ensuring the child's safety

(b) Board of Directors

In accordance with the Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment 2010 document, the Board of Directors will ensure that:-

- the UTC has a child protection policy and procedures in place, and the policy is made available to parents/carers on request
- the UTC operates safe recruitment practices, including appropriate use of references and checks on new staff and volunteers – see also VLT P07
- there are procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers
- a member of the UTC's Senior Leadership Team is designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with child protection and safeguarding – this is currently the Executive Principal
- in addition to basic child protection training, in inter-agency working that is provided by, or to standards agreed by, the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) the Executive Principal has refresher training at two-yearly intervals
- the Principal, and all other staff who work with learners, undertake appropriate training which is kept up-to-date by refresher training; and temporary staff and volunteers who work with learners are made aware of the UTC's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities
- any deficiencies or weaknesses brought to the attention of the Board of Directors are rectified
- the Chair of the Board of Directors (or, in the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair) deals with any allegations of abuse made against the Principal
- policies and procedures are reviewed annually
- there is an individual member of the Board of Directors who will champion issues to do with safeguarding children and child protection within the UTC, liaise with the Executive Principal, and provide information and reports to the Board of Directors

(c) The Principal

The Principal, who will be the Deputy Designated Senior Person for safeguarding issues, will ensure that:-

- the policies and procedures adopted by the Board of Directors are fully implemented, and followed by all staff
- sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the Executive Principal and other staff to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in strategy discussions and other inter-agency meetings, and contributing to the assessment of learners
- all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to learners, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner
- any member of staff who has been disciplined, dismissed or left service from the UTC prior to the completion of an investigation for causing emotional, psychological, physical or sexual harm, or neglect regarding a learner, will be reported to the Independent Safeguarding Authority

(d) Executive Principal

Executive Principal will be the Designated Senior Person for safeguarding issues and will:-

- coordinate all matters relating to child protection issues
- deal with reports of abuse against children
- deal with complaints against employees of the UTC by learners
- make referrals to child protection agencies if appropriate
- attend case conferences as required
- keep the Principal fully informed of all child protection issues that may arise;
- ensure all staff receive appropriate training in child protection

- ensure that all new staff are properly inducted regarding child protection
- liaise with the UTC Governance representative with special responsibility for safeguarding and child protection on all matters relating to child protection
- ensure the UTC Governance representative with special responsibility for child protection receives appropriate training in child protection

(e) All staff

All members of staff at the UTC will:-

- make sure they are fully conversant with the safeguarding and child protection policy
- respond to any issues or concerns as laid out in this policy
- refer any issue as soon as is practicably possible using the appropriate proforma
- wear identification at all times
- challenge anyone on site who is not wearing appropriate identification

6. Definitions and Thresholds

In order to ensure the procedures for safeguarding are properly applied all UTC staff should be fully aware of the definitions of abuse and neglect and the thresholds for referral.

(a) Definitions of abuse and neglect

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

(i) Physical abuse:

This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, scalding, poisoning, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. It may also occur when a parent or carer feigns symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as Fabricated or Induced Illness (FII) or Munchausen Syndrome by proxy

(ii) Emotional Abuse:

This is the persistent maltreatment of a child such to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children they are worthless and unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children.

These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capacity, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone

(iii) Sexual Abuse:

This involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

(iv) Neglect:

This is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing 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 child's basic emotional needs.

(b) Thresholds for Referrals

There are three thresholds for any types of referral that need to be considered:-

- Is this a child with additional needs where their health, development or achievement may be adversely affected? This is the case if age appropriate progress is not being made and the causes are unclear or the support of more than one agency is needed to meet the child or young person's needs. If this is a child with additional needs discuss the issues with the UTC CAF practitioner, the child and parents/carers. Parental consent must be obtained for a CAF to be completed.
- Is this child in need? S17 of the Children Act 1989 says this is the case if the child is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have opportunity to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development, without the provision of services by a local authority; if their health or development is likely to be impaired, or further impaired without the provision of such services or if they are disabled.
- Is this a child protection matter? S47 of the Children Act 1989 says this is the case if a child is at risk or are suffering significant harm; if a child is suffering the effects of significant harm or if a child is suffering from serious health problems.

7. Procedures

The designated child protection person must be informed immediately by an employee of the UTC, pupil of the UTC, parent of the UTC or other persons, in the following circumstances:-

- Where there is suspicion that a child is being abused
- Where there is evidence that a child is being abused

In the event of the complaint being made by a child against an employee of the college the disclosure must be shared with the Principal or Chair of the Board of Directors.

- The Designated Senior Person will keep a full record of reports made and make referrals to child protection agencies if necessary.
- The Principal will be kept informed at all times.
- All staff at the UTC must be aware that if they are concerned about a young person, or suspect that abuse is taking place, it is their statutory duty to act on it by reporting as directed by this child protection policy.
- Concerns must always be reported immediately, whether this is inappropriate information, a false allegation, a disclosure or merely having concerns about a child.
- Staff must never wait to 'see what happens'.
- Staff must always abide by the procedures and never question a child or try to investigate themselves as this could prejudice a case by probing for more information than is given. If an investigation is necessary it will be handled by child protection professionals.

Full procedural details and typical signs and symptoms that may indicate a safeguarding issue are contained in the training materials that all staff will receive as part of their induction.

8. Safer Recruitment and Training

The UTC will operate safe recruitment procedures and make sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers who will work with children, including references, Disclosure and Barring Service checks and qualifications verification. The UTC's processes conform to the guidance given in Safeguarding Children: Safer Recruitment in Education document and local safeguarding board guidelines. Gaps in an applicant's employment history will be followed up as will instances where the applicant's last employer is not given as a point for references.

All senior staff will undergo Safer Recruitment Training and all interview processes will include safeguarding questions. A member staff trained and qualified in Safer Recruitment procedures will be present at every stage of each recruitment process.

If the UTC is asked to provide references for a member of staff about whom there have been concerns about child protection/inappropriate conduct, then advice will be sought from the relevant authority.

Newly appointed staff will have initial training in child protection as part of their induction programme. They will be made aware of the UTC and local Safeguarding Children Board procedures as part of that induction programme, and be given a copy of the schools Safeguarding Policy. The initial child protection training given to each member of the service should be updated every three years and recorded.

Higher level training will be attended by the Designated and Deputy Designated Senior Persons through the local Safeguarding Children Board Training Programme.

The UTC will establish a Single Central Record which will be held as required by local safeguarding and DfE guidance.

9. Confidentiality

Learners should never be given a guarantee of confidentiality as some kinds of information may need to be shared with others.

10. Record Keeping

Well-kept records are essential in situations where it is suspected or believed that a learner may be at risk from harm. Records should:-

- State who was present, time, date and place
- Use the learner's words wherever possible
- Be factual/state exactly what was said
- Differentiate clearly between fact, opinion, interpretation, observation and/or allegation
- Be written in ink and signed by the recorder

The UTC will:-

- Keep written records of concerns about children, even when there is no need to refer the matter immediately
- Ensure all records are kept securely and separate from the main pupil file and in locked locations. These records are currently locked in the Principal's Office in the Directors' Suite on the second floor of the UTC. The DSL and the DDSL (in the absence of the DSL) have access by key and door access cards, to these files.

11. Monitoring Impact & Review

- The consistent application and enforcement of an effective policy and the resulting procedures by all staff, with suitable monitoring to ensure this, can improve the safety of all members of the college community.

Ref: P21 April 2013 – reviewed Sept 2016

- The policy is to be reviewed annually and is linked to the Staff Recruitment & Selection Policy (P07).