



# Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

## Introduction

At TradeWinds Academy, we are committed to the safeguarding and welfare of children and young people. All staff, whether teaching or non-teaching, play an important part in safeguarding for children, and to this effect they must ensure that the correct procedures are followed, in order to protect children from harm or further harm. All members of staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned and must understand they have a responsibility to take appropriate action and report concerns or allegations of risk of harm to pupils. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the best interests of the child.

Awareness of safety and self-protection, including e-safety, is included in the curriculum; through personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE).

The Teacher Standards 2012 state that teachers, including Headteachers, should safeguard children's wellbeing. All staff have a pastoral responsibility towards the children; and therefore have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. In line with KSCIE 2016 safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone in the organisation.

This policy outlines the measures in place at TradeWinds Academy to ensure that our provision puts the safety and wellbeing of children first.

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# 1. Safeguarding

## 1.1 Designated Safeguarding Leads

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Gregory Scullion

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL): J. Devercelli

## 1.2 The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

One of the school Head Teachers will have lead responsibility for child protection. This Head Teacher is required to carry out the duties of the post including committing resources and, where appropriate, supporting and directing other staff. It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that any deficiencies or weaknesses in Child Protection arrangements are remedied without delay.

The broad areas of responsibility for the designated safeguarding lead are:

- Making referrals for all cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care
- Contacting the Police local authority (cases where a crime may have been committed).
- To act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
- Oversee the storage and updating of all child welfare and child protection records are kept securely in a locked location.

In addition, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- Ensure the school's policies are known and used appropriately
- Ensure the school's child protection policy is reviewed annually and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this.
- Ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school or college in this.
- Update and distribute the Child Protection prompt card to all staff, volunteers & Directors. In addition
- Ensure that all staff in regulated activities undertakes online training using the TES Develop for education training packages to which TradeWinds Academy subscribes.
- Where children leave the school ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

In the event of the Head Teacher (Designated Safeguarding Lead) not being in school for any reason, any member of staff who has concerns about any child should contact a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (who will act as the DSL until the DSL returns).

# 1. Awareness and Prevention

## 2.1 Safer Recruitment

TradeWinds Academy has a rigorous safer recruitment policy, detailing the procedures followed for the recruitment of all staff, including volunteers. We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and we expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

The school will take steps to ensure that appropriate child protection checks and procedures are in place for any staff employed by another organization and working with the school's pupils.

All new staff, volunteers and temporary staff meet the Designated Safeguarding Lead as part of their induction process. The safer recruitment policy is available on the school website.

## 2.2 Safer Working Practice

Guidance on how to behave appropriately is detailed in the Staff Code of Conduct. All staff should be familiar with this document.

In addition to the Code of Conduct, staff are instructed to:

- Never be alone in an enclosed space with a child (storage rooms, toilets etc.)
- Report any concerns without fear of reproach (whistleblowing)
- Maintain records and store these securely
- Follow other school policies carefully for the protection of self and others. Other relevant policies may include:
  - Communication
  - Use of technology
  - Counter-Bullying

## 2.3 Safeguarding Training

All staff and volunteers in regulated activity have regular face to face or online child protection training renewed on not less than an annual basis, with updates and best practice via email and staff meetings. Temporary and voluntary staff are made aware of the arrangements. They should;

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments.
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities 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 school's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff.
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers.
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals.
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses.
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.

## 2.4 Early Help

All staff at TradeWinds should be aware of the Early Help Process, and understand their role in it. Staff must be prepared to identify emerging problems and children who may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. In the first instance, staff should discuss early help requirements with the DSL or a member of the safeguarding team. Any member of staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment and in some cases acting as the lead professional in undertaking an early help assessment.

The school will:

- Undertake an assessment of the need for early help
- Provide early help services e.g. school nurse, pastoral support worker
- Refer to appropriate authorities

Abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

## 3. Types of Abuse

### 3.1 Physical Abuse

May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child. For example, this may include:

- Extreme, inappropriate physical chastisement.
- Deliberate, malicious injuries.
- Restraining the child inappropriately.
- Leaving a child unsupervised which results in accidents causing harm.
- Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child

### 3.2 Emotional Abuse

Is the persistent and frequent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. This may include:

- Over protection and limitation of exploration and learning.
- Preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.
- Causing the child frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or exploiting/corrupting the child.
- Persistent/frequent ridicule, rejection, humiliation, threats.
- Living in an atmosphere of fear and intimidation.
- Being allowed no contact with other children.
- Inappropriate expectations being imposed.
- Being bullied or scapegoated.
- An atmosphere of low emotional warmth or high criticism.

### 3.3 Sexual Abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. Sexual Abuse may involve:

- inappropriate physical contact.
- Inappropriate non-contact activities (such as involving the child in looking at pornographic material or watching sexual activities),
- Encouraging a child to behave in sexually inappropriate ways,
- Grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).
- Being involved in the sexual activities of adults.
- Being touched or talked to in sexually explicit ways – directly or indirectly.
- Being spoken to about sex in ways, which are inappropriate for the child and which, seek to gratify the needs of others.

Sexual Abuse may be committed by anyone (including men, women and children).

### 3.4 Neglect

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 and development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Neglect may involve:

- A parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing or shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment).
- Failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
- Failure to ensure adequate supervision.
- Failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care.
- Neglect of a child's basic emotional needs.
- Lack of interest in the welfare of the child.
- No provision of boundaries or limits in terms of actions and behaviour.

## 4. Possible Signs of Abuse

All school should be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection. Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect. If staff members are unsure they should always speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their deputy; excellent on line resources and guidance are also available from the NSPCC <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

### 4.1 Reactions to Abuse

A child may experience a range of reactions to abuse, including some or all of the following:

- A feeling of shame or guilt. "It must have been my fault". I'm bad.
- A feeling that s/he is dirty – spoilt – degraded
- Embarrassment "I'm sure everyone knows"
- A desire to continually talk about the abuse and to gain reassurance
- Dislike of being touched and touching others

- Loss of confidence
- Trouble sleeping, nightmares
- Hatred of self and of her body
- Destructive behaviour
- Inability to complete school work
- Inability to relate to other children or adults
- Many of the behaviours indicated are an attempt by the child to express feelings that she cannot express in words and are a response/reaction to abuse
- Difficulties may continue for a long time after the abuse and the child may need specialist support.

## 4.2 Physical Abuse

- Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent
- Improbable reasons given for injuries either by the child or the parent
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Admission of punishment that appears excessive
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Bald patches
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
- Fear of returning home
- Fear of medical help
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Aggression towards others
- Chronic running away

## 4.3 Emotional Abuse

- Physical, mental and emotional development lag
- Admission of punishment that appears excessive
- Overreaction to mistakes
- Sudden speech disorders
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Neurotic behaviour
- Self-mutilation
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Drug/solvent abuse
- Chronic running away
- Compulsive stealing/scavenging

## 4.4 Sexual Abuse

- Hint about secrets that they cannot tell about
- Say a friend has a problem
- Ask if you will keep a secret if they tell you something
- Begin lying, stealing, blatantly cheating in the hope of being caught
- Have unexplained sources of money
- Have terrifying dreams
- Start wetting themselves
- Exhibit sudden inexplicable changes in behaviour, such as becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- Stop enjoying previously liked activities such as music, sports, art, gym, uniformed organisations
- Become fearful or refuse to see certain adults for no apparent reason; dislike a baby sitter, relative or other adult
- Act in a sexual way inappropriate for their age
- Draw sexually explicit pictures depicting some act of abuse
- Seem to be keeping secret something that is worrying them
- Have frequent urinary infections, bleeding in the genital or anal areas
- Have soreness or bleeding in the throat
- Have chronic ailments, such as stomach pains or headaches
- Develop eating disorders, such as anorexia or bulimia
- Become severely depressed and even attempt suicide
- Have a poor self image, self mutilate
- Continually running away
- Regress to younger behaviour such as thumb sucking, surrounding themselves with previously discarded toys
- Show discomfort when walking
- Say they are no good, dirty rotten
- Be wary, watchful
- Repeat obscene words or phrases which may have been said during the abuse
- Attempt to sexually abuse another younger child
- Talk or write about sexual matters
- Find excuses for not going home or to a friend's house after school (places where abuse may be happening)

## 4.5 Neglect

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Emaciation
- Frequent lateness or non attendance at school
- Untreated medical problems

- Destructive tendencies
- Low self esteem
- Neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking)
- No social relationships
- Chronic running away
- Compulsive stealing or scavenging

## 5. Specific safeguarding issues

### 5.01 Mental Health

The overarching principles of the school's response to mental health problems are open-mindedness, support and education. In line with the School's Mental Health Policy staff should raise any concerns regarding a pupil's mental Health with the with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Child Protection and Safeguarding Team must be informed of any child who suffers from a significant mental health problem, for example those who self-harm, suffer from an eating disorder or have suicidal thoughts.

### 5.02 Faith abuse

Child abuse linked to faith or belief; includes: belief in concepts of witchcraft and spirit possession, demons or the devil acting through children or leading them astray (traditionally seen in some Christian beliefs), the evil eye or djinns (traditionally known in some Islamic faith contexts) and dakini (in the Hindu context); ritual or muti murders where the killing of children is believed to bring supernatural benefits or the use of their body parts is believed to produce potent magical remedies; and use of belief in magic or witchcraft to create fear in children to make them more compliant when they are being trafficked for domestic slavery or sexual exploitation.

### 5.03 Domestic violence and relationship abuse

This is considered to be any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This abuse can encompass but is not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional elements. It includes controlling behaviour including those acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour; as well as coercive behaviour; an act or pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.\*

\*This definition, includes so called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group.

### 5.04 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Professionals in all agencies and individuals need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the



practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found here [http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/resourcesforprofessionals/minorityethnic/female-genital-mutilation\\_wda96841.html](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/resourcesforprofessionals/minorityethnic/female-genital-mutilation_wda96841.html)

## 5.05 Trafficking

Child trafficking is child abuse and requires a child protection response. Child trafficking is also a crime and an abuse of human rights. Any concerns or suspicions regards Child Trafficking must be reported to a member of the Safeguarding Team immediately.

## 5.06 Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)

VAWG is the term given to all forms of violence and abuse (overwhelmingly from men and boys they know) experienced disproportionately by women and girls, or experienced by them because of their gender, and includes rape, domestic violence, forced marriage, FGM and sexual harassment.

In the context of a wider society in which gender inequality is unfortunately the norm; Staff working at TIS play a vital role in helping young people develop healthy relationships based on equality and respect. Any occurrences in which women and girls are simultaneously pressured into and shamed for sexual activity or are subjected to harassment, abuse and violence should be reported to a member of the Safeguarding Team.

## 5.07 'Hate Crime' & 'Mate Crime'

A Hate Crime is any behaviour that someone thinks was caused by hostility, prejudice or hatred of:

- **Disability** - including physical impairments, mental health problems, learning disabilities, hearing and visual impairment
- **Gender identity** - includes people who are transgender, transsexual or transvestite
- **Race** - skin colour, nationality, ethnicity or heritage
- **Religion** - faith or belief including people without a religious belief
- **Sexual Orientation** - people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or heterosexual

Mate Crime involves someone befriending a person in order to abuse them. Any examples of these behaviours should be reported to a member of the Safeguarding Team.

## 5.08 Radicalisation

The risk of radicalisation is the product of a number of factors and identifying this risk requires that staff exercise their professional judgement, seeking further advice as necessary. It may be combined with other vulnerabilities or may be the only risk identified. Potential indicators include:

- Use of inappropriate language.
- Possession of violent extremist literature.
- Behavioural changes.
- The expression of extremist views.
- Advocating violent actions and means.
- Association with known extremists.

- Seeking to recruit others to an extremist ideology.

## 5.09 Peer-on-Peer Abuse

We recognise that TradeWinds Academy has students aged from 2 years old to 14 years old, and therefore appropriate supervision is in place, where necessary. Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as Peer-on-Peer Abuse and can take many forms. This can include but is not limited to:

- Bullying.
- Physical abuse (including hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair-pulling or otherwise causing physical harm).
- Sexual abuse and emotional bullying (including cyber-bullying e.g. sexting (also known as youth-produced sexual imagery) and inappropriate 'banter').
- Gender-based violence (e.g. children being sexually touched / assaulted or being subject to inappropriate initiation ceremonies).
- Sexual violence (including rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault).
- Sexual harassment (e.g. sexual comments, remarks or taunting; physical behaviour and online harassment).
- Teenage-relationship abuse

Peer-on-peer Abuse can affect their social, mental and emotional health. The recognition and prevention of Peer-on-Peer Abuse is taught through the PSHE curriculum, assemblies and other whole school curricular themed days. This includes, but is not limited to, developmentally appropriate topics such as personal rights, boundaries and consent, identification of trusted adults, online safety and digital literacy, healthy relationships and healthy sexual behaviour.

### 5.09.1 Considerations following a report on Peer-on-Peer Abuse

The school will carefully consider any report of peer on peer abuse. The DSL is likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the school's initial response.

Factors to consider may include:

- The wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment. Victims should be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered;
- The nature of the alleged incident(s), including: whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour;
- The ages and developmental stages of the children involved;
- Any power imbalance between the children. For example, is the alleged perpetrator significantly older, more mature or more confident? Does the victim have a disability or learning difficulty?
- If the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse;
- Are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or school staff?
- The proximity of the alleged perpetrator and victim during and following the investigation.

### 5.09.2 Allegations involving Sexual Impropriety

It is important to recognise that children do engage in sexual play and experimenting, which is usually age appropriate. Tradewinds Safeguarding Team recognise that it is important not to criminalise behaviour that is a perfectly normal and healthy part of growing up, however, it is accepted that children can abuse others. The presence of one or more of the following points in situations where there has been sexual activity between children should always trigger some concern:

- There is an age difference of two years or more between the children
- One of the children is significantly more dominant than the other
- One of the children is significantly more vulnerable than the other eg.in terms of disability, confidence, physical strength
- There has been some use of threats, bribes or coercion to secure compliance or to maintain secrecy

Whenever a member of staff is approached by a pupil concerning an event involving alleged sexual impropriety between pupils, they must contact a member of the school safeguarding team immediately.

Parents and carers of the child should be informed of the referral before a referral to the relevant authorities however, parental consent is not required for a referral to be made. This should be avoided in cases where the parents/carers would place the child, the referrer or any others at immediate risk or prejudice the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime.

### 5.10 Children Missing from Education

Staff should be aware that a child going missing from an education setting is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Staff should report all children who go missing, particularly on repeat occasions using the missing pupil procedures. If staff are concerned about repeated absence, or in cases where a child has been absent for 10 days or more this should be reported to relevant DSL. goes missing or has an unexplained absence for more than two days then this must be reported by the DSL or a member of the Safeguarding Team.

## 6. Concerns & Disclosures

### 6.1 Concerns

Concerns (staff suspicions/ peer /parental discloses) about the following issues must be shared with the DSL or a member of the safeguarding team within 24hrs:

- Emotional Abuse
- Eating Disorders
- FGM / Female genital mutilation (N.B a mandatory reporting duty applies)
- Neglect
- Undisclosed private fostering arrangements

### 6.2 Disclosures

Disclosures including peer on peer allegations involving any of the following must be reported immediately to the DSL and if they are not available to the Deputy DSL,

- Physical Abuse
- Non - consensual sexual acts
- Sexting
- Suspicions of grooming or sexual exploitation
- Sexual impropriety
- CSE (Child Sexual exploitation)
- Gang/ Mate/Hate crime
- Sexual Abuse
- Mental Health Concerns – disclosures of self-harm or, suicidal thoughts
- Domestic Violence
- Faith Abuse
- Trafficking
- Vulnerability to radicalisation
- VAWG / Gender based violence

Any allegation of abuse or sexual impropriety by a member of staff or volunteer must be reported immediately to a Head Teacher or DSL. If the concern is about the Head Teacher staff must contact the school director.

### 6.3 The Distinctions between an allegation and a suspicion

An **allegation** should be dealt with immediately, once the allegation has been brought to the member of staff's attention then this member of staff should immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead so that the correct procedures can be put into place.

With a **suspicion** there may not be the urgency that an allegation would create. Again the Designated Safeguarding Lead will need to be told as quickly as possible (within 24hrs), but it does not need to be immediately.

## 7. Procedures

When someone discloses to you, remember you are not investigating, and sensitivity and discretion are paramount in these situations. The abused person may not understand that they are being abused and so not realise the significance of what they are telling you.

Some disclosures happen shortly after the abuse occurred others many years after the abuse. There may be good reasons for this for, therefore, any delay in an individual reporting an incident should not cast doubt on its truthfulness.

### 7.1 Actions to Take

- Try to ensure a child disclosing has a degree of privacy and if you are teaching arrange for cover for the class if necessary.
- Listen very carefully, be sympathetic and comfort the child as appropriate
- Do not show revulsion or distress
- Tell the child that:
  - They did a good/right thing in telling you even if the abuse may have happened a long time ago
  - You are treating the information seriously
  - It was not their fault and keep restating this
  - Anything they have told you will only be shared on a need to know basis, but that you are obliged to pass the information on, explain that this will be to the School Safeguarding Team (and explain who they are as needed) and explain that the Safeguarding Team may (depending on the disclosure) contact the relevant authorities and the Police

If the child would be leaving to return to where the abuse is happening, keep the child with you and contact a member of the Safeguarding Team immediately

#### **You must:**

- As soon as possible write a first-hand account of what was said and done, recording the disclosure on the CP concerns reporting form. Use blue or black ink and keep your writing very clear. (This record should use the actual words and phrases spoken as far as possible, be aware that this record may be needed later as part of a legal action or disciplinary procedure if an investigation by local authorities.
- When there are visible cuts, bruises or other marks on the skin use a body map to indicate their location, noting the colour of any bruising. Please note Staff MUST only view parts of children's bodies that are usually visible do not ask to see any other injuries.
- Be aware of your own feelings about abuse and find someone that you can share those feelings with once the procedures have been completed

Staff should be aware that any member of staff is entitled to make a referral to other external agencies.

## 7.2 Actions to avoid

### DO NOT

- Press the child for more details,
- Never ask any leading questions, simply allow the child to talk. Try using TED (Tell explain describe instead)
- Stop someone when they are telling you what has happened to them, or ask them to go and find someone else to tell
- Promise to keep secrets (you can never keep this kind of information confidential).
- Make false promises you cannot keep (such as, "I will never let this happen to you again") or that the police will not be involved
- Contact the alleged abuser
- Be judgmental (for example, "Why didn't you run away?")
- Gossip about the disclosure or share the information with anyone outside the Safeguarding Team or Police

## 7.3 Escalating concerns / re-consideration

If the child's situation does not appear to be improving after referral to a member of the Safeguarding Team, a member with concerns should press for re-consideration. Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point.

## 7.4 Responding to concerns & contacting Children's Social Care / Police

If, at any point, there is a risk of **immediate serious harm**, staff members must immediately contact a member of the TradeWinds Academy safeguarding team. The DSL, or in their absence the DDSL, will make a referral to children's welfare services.

If a child makes a disclosure then The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or in their absence a deputy DSL) must inform the appropriate local authorities immediately of the concern of abuse and this must be supported by written confirmation within 24 hours

If anyone, other than the designated safeguarding lead makes the referral they should inform the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible.

If there is any doubt, or the Child Protection Team considers the case to be borderline for referral a member of the safeguarding team will contact the appropriate authorities for advice.

## 7.4 Confidentiality

Staff have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about an allegation / keep information secret, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child; but should instead explain that they will pass the information only to those who need to know.

## 8. Staff Conduct

### 8.1 Managing Allegations of abuse/sexual impropriety by a member of staff/volunteer

The Head Teacher must be informed immediately if it is alleged that a teacher or member of staff at (including volunteers), regardless of whether the alleged abuse took place at school) 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 a child

The informant should be told that the matter will be referred in confidence to the appropriate people. This must be done, and the written record passed on the same day to the Head Teacher(s). If the Head Teacher(s) are absent, the allegation should be passed to the Director.

The circumstances should be kept strictly confidential. Where a crime may have been committed, the authorities will be informed immediately. In borderline cases discussion will be held with the School Director and Head Teacher(s).

Where it is clear that an investigation by the police or children's social care services is unnecessary, or the strategy discussion or initial evaluation decides that is the case, the Principal will discuss the next steps with the Director.

In the event of a substantiated allegation against a member of staff, the Safeguarding team will work with the Director and members of SLT to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching should be referred to the police.

### 8.2 Supporting those involved

TradeWinds Academy has a duty of care towards its employees; and will provide effective support for anyone facing an allegation, including providing the employee with a named contact if they are suspended. If an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer it must be responded to with utmost discretion, very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

TradeWinds Academy will act to manage and minimise the stress inherent in the allegations process. Individuals should be informed of concerns or allegations as soon as possible and given an explanation of the likely course of action, unless there is an objection by the children's social care services or the police. The individual will be advised to contact their trade union representative, if they have one, or a colleague for support. Social contact with colleagues and friends will not be prevented unless there is evidence to suggest that such contact is likely to be prejudicial to the gathering and presentation of evidence.

Parents or carers of a child or children involved should be told about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know of it. However, where a strategy discussion is required, or local authorities need to be involved, the Principal will not do so until those agencies have been consulted and have agreed what information can be disclosed to the parents. Parents should also be kept informed about the progress of the case, and told the outcome where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process in confidence.

Cases in which an allegation was proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious should not be included in employer references. A history of repeated concerns or allegations which have all been found to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious should also not be included in any reference.

If it is established that the allegation is not well founded, either on the basis of the medical evidence or further statements, then the person against whom the complaint has been made would normally be informed that the matter is closed.

If the Police decide to take the case further and the allegation is against a member of staff / volunteer he/she would normally be suspended or, where the circumstances are considered to warrant it, dismissed. It is reasonable to ask the Police to give some indication of their timescale. Should the allegation be made against a resident member of the staff and they are subsequently suspended then alternative accommodation away from children will be arranged for this member of staff pending completion of the investigation.

### **8.3 What to do if the complaint is about the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Head**

If the allegation or complaint is about the person who is designated as the Designated Safeguarding Lead for the school then any information obtained from the child should be shared with the DDSL who will then act as the Designated Safeguarding Lead for the school during the investigations and communicate with the school Director (within one working day). The person receiving the allegation should immediately inform the Director without notifying the Head Teacher first. In case of serious harm, the police should be informed from the outset.