CASTLE MEAD
ACADEMY

EARLY HELP POLICY

Policy Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the academy. The Academy Council will review the policy annually, unless there are significant legislative changes in the interim period.

Version:	6.0
Date created:	30.06.2020
Author:	Head of Safeguarding
Ratified by:	Nik Murphy
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Review date:	September 2027

Revision History:

Version:	Date:	Author:	Reason for Change:
V2	20.09.22	NMU	Updates to roles and responsibilities. Updates to safeguarding alert and reporting procedure.
V3	11.09.23	NMU	Updated names and roles of DSL. Addition of Mental Health Early Help offer.
V4	31.10.24	NMU	Updated names of DSL, amended contact details for Early Help
V5	15.10.25	NMU	Updated DSL names and amended minor details of CMA Early Help offer
V6	27.10.26	CFR	Updated DSL names

At Castle Mead Academy staff are trained in recognising the signs of Child Abuse and Extremism and are committed to and know the benefit of Early Help as a way of supporting families and young people before their needs become acute and Social Care or other specialist intervention may be necessary.

The academy has a range of robust safeguarding procedures in place which puts the safety and protection of children at the heart of any decisions. The academy's safeguarding team is made up of the following academy personnel:

- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Mr Tom Gardner
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL): Miss Lea, Miss Chamberlain, Miss C French
- The DSL and all DDSLs complete inter-agency safeguarding training on a two yearly programme. All other academy staff complete safeguarding training on a yearly basis and are updated regularly to any changes in legislation.

Reporting Concerns

If any member of academy suspects that a child may be at risk of harm or who has been harmed they will report the incident to a DSL using the academy's safeguarding reporting and Alert system. The Alert Slip should be handed in person to a member of safeguarding team. Staff are expected to report a concern as soon as possible through the reporting system. If a member of staff believes that a child is at risk of or has been subjected to significant harm then this must be reported immediately in person to either the academy's DSL or one of the DDSLs, then followed up via the reporting process.

It is academy policy that at least one member of the safeguarding team will be on site at any one time. All concerns to be reviewed by at least two members of the team at any one time (via telephone if needed) to ensure an appropriate course of action decided upon.

The primary aim of the academy's Early Help systems is to try to intervene early with families before it gets to the stage when a child may be at risk of harm.

Involvement of Families

The academy will always involve the family in all Early Help strategies and most will only be put in place with their permission. The academy will aim to work with families in a supportive, non-judgemental way so that trust is built up and the best possible outcomes achieved.

There are occasions, however, when the academy's safeguarding team or member of academy staff may believe that a child may be at immediate risk of significant harm and that by informing the parents/carers of the concern may put the child at further risk. In these cases the academy will implement section 47 procedures. This will involve an immediate referral to social care without the parents/carers knowledge.

Academy Indicators for Children or Families That May Require Early Help

The following list provides examples of areas where, without intervention a family may break down or a child may be put a risk of neglect, emotional, physical or sexual harm. This also includes the risk of extremism. The academy has no pre-prescribed criteria for supporting children and families. Each case is assessed according to needs and a bespoke programme put in place for that child and/or family. Indicators for early help include:

- Low parenting skills
- Substance/alcohol abuse
- Domestic abuse
- Child mental health
- Bereavement
- Child unaware of danger and how to keep themselves safe
- Extremist views
- Poor diet - obesity, malnourished
- Young carer
- Breakdown in community relationships
- Adult mental health
- Changes in behaviour and risk of exclusion
- Child demonstrates sexualised behaviours
- Low income or poverty
- Breakdown in family relationships
- Isolation
- Disability of a child
- Poor attendance and punctuality
- Frequent house or academy moves
- Limited community integration
- Transport
- Special Educational Needs (refer to Local and Academy offer)
- Disability of an adult
- Physical health
- Child unaware of how to keep themselves safe online
- Cleanliness and hygiene

For more information about Early Help please contact the school, or to speak to someone outside of the academy, contact 0116 454 1004 or email casp-team@leicester.gov.uk

Early Help at Castle Mead Academy

Below is a list of how we aim to support our families initially with issues that may arise. Each case is judged separately and on its own merit and will vary according to the family and the context. Where issues continue to be a concern, the academy will discuss an early help referral with families for extra support.

Attendance	
What we offer	Measurable Outcomes
• Attendance rewards • Tutor group attendance rewards	• Overall and individual scholar attendance improves.

• Attendance data monitored • Attendance Manager • EWO (Educational Welfare Officer) • Family Support Worker (FSW) • EWO meetings with parents • First day phone calls made to find out the reason for absence and encourage parental engagement • Home visits with the Attendance Manager or FSW • Letter home when attendance falls or a pattern is spotted • Meet and greets to settle scholars into school • Regular monitoring of groups • Attendance data shared weekly with tutors to have conversations • Monitoring of leave of absence requests which initiate a meeting to prevent future term time holidays • Panel meetings • School nurse (where there's a medical condition) • Breakfast club to support punctuality.	• Whole academy targets are met.

Transition	
What we offer	Measurable Outcomes
• Extra visits/induction for vulnerable scholars • School nurse /counsellor • Induction Day • Link between educational phases • Scholars are adequately supported upon entry • Pupil passport • Specialist referrals if required e.g., SALT (Speech and language therapists) • Pastoral care support team. • Staff meetings between educational phases • Transition days • Visits for prospective families • Transitional communication with feeder schools regarding upcoming scholars • SEND support.	• Scholar's needs are met during transition.

SEMH	
What we offer	Measurable Outcomes
• School counsellor sessions • Educational Psychologist support • Support referrals to CAMHS (Children, Adolescent Mental Health Service) • PHSE mental health and wellbeing sessions • Inclusion key worker support • Pupil passports to share teaching strategies that best support • Visual timetables • Pastoral resilience programme • Meet and greet • Lego Therapy • Positive behaviour plans • School nurse • SEMH support (Social Emotional and Mental Health) • Targeted and Inclusive Character Time Sessions • Staff training in SEMH and SEND as appropriate • Team teach/positive handling training • Specialist team support • Referrals for Social care support • Family Support Worker to encourage parental engagement. • Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) • Draw and Talk Therapy • Learning and Behaviour Mentoring sessions	• Scholar learning data shows improvement • Reduction in number of behaviour incidents • Increase in scholars self-help skills

Staying safe	
What we offer	Measurable Outcomes
• Support from local PCSO • Advice point via Children's Centre • Anti-bullying activities • Assemblies • Trained DSLs • Data protection procedures • Early Help response • E-safety • External advice • Link Police Community Support Officer • Monitoring of leave or absence requests • PEP/LAC meetings • PHSE curriculum • New starter buddies • Internet safety week • Prevent issues awareness and training for concerns around radicalisation • Staff Safeguarding Training including FGM (Female Genital Mutilation), CSE (Child Sexual exploitation) • Forced marriages awareness and training • Road safety awareness • Safer recruitment procedures • Referrals to School Nurse • Referrals to Counsellor	• Scholar achievement data shows improvement • Increase in turn-over of families accessing support • Welfare and neglect issues on Social Services caseload reduced • An increasing percentage of parental engagement.

• Early Help Referrals • Sex and Relationship Education • Nurture group support for anxious scholars • Tracking of incidents e.g. CPOMS • Whole school safeguarding training.	

Supporting Families	
What we offer	Measurable Outcomes
• Referrals to Advice Point via Children's Centre • Parents' Evenings • Pastoral support • Referrals to Positive Parenting programme • Referrals to Living with Teenagers programme • SENCo • SENDIASS (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice Support Service) • Signposting to charitable organisations • Signposting to external agencies • Signposting to training • Signposting to Food Banks • Early Help referrals • Family Support Worker • Family advice and guidance sessions on e.g., safer internet usage, sleep etc	• Scholar achievement data shows improvement • Uptake of support services increases. • An increasing percentage of parental engagement

The local community	
What we offer	Measurable Outcomes
• Support of local PCSO • Community clubs after school • Governors • Links between schools – school to school support / collaboration • Religious visits • Supporting charities • Academy Councillors	• Families have a better understanding of the wider community