Policy and Procedure: Allegations Against Other Pupils

Date of Board Approval: April 2018
Review date: February 2019

Introduction

At Khalsa Science Academy, we believe that children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm by adults in the school and other pupils.

We recognise that some pupils will sometimes negatively affect the learning and well-being of others and their behaviour will be dealt with under the school's Behaviour Policy.

Safeguarding Allegations

Occasionally, allegations may be made against a pupil by others in the school, which are of a safeguarding nature. Safeguarding issues raised in this way may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. It is likely that to be considered a safeguarding allegation against a pupil, some of the following features will be found.

The allegation:

- Is made against an older pupil and refers to their behaviour towards a younger pupil or a more vulnerable pupil.
- Is of a serious nature, possibly including a criminal offence.
- Raises risk factors for other pupils in the school.
- Indicates that other pupils may have been affected by this pupil.
- Indicates that young people outside the school may be affected by this pupil.

Examples of Safeguarding issues against a pupil could include:

Physical Abuse

- Violence, particularly pre-planned.
- Forcing others to use drugs or alcohol.

Emotional Abuse

- Blackmail or extortion.
- Threats and intimidation.

Sexual Abuse

- Encouraging other children to attend inappropriate parties.
- Photographing or videoing other children performing indecent acts.

In areas where gangs are prevalent, older pupils may attempt to recruit younger pupils using any or all of the above methods. Young people suffering from sexual exploitation themselves may be forced to recruit other young people under the threat of violence.

Minimising the risk of safeguarding concerns towards pupils from other pupils.

These pupils will need an individual risk management plan to ensure that other pupils are kept safe and they themselves are not laid open to malicious allegations. There is a need to balance the tension between privacy and safeguarding.

What to do.

When an allegation is made by a pupil against another pupil, members of staff should consider whether the complaint raises a safeguarding concern. If there is a safeguarding concern, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) should be informed. A factual record should be made of the allegation, but no attempt at this stage should be made to investigate the circumstances. The DSL should contact Social Services to discuss the case. It is possible that Social Services are already aware of safeguarding concerns around this young person. The DSL will follow through the outcomes of the discussion and make a Social Services referral where appropriate. The DSL will made a record of the concern, the discussion and any outcome and keep a copy in both pupils' files. If the allegations indicates a potential criminal offence has taken place, the police should be contacted at the earliest opportunity and parents informed (of both the pupil being complained about and the alleged victim). It may be appropriate to exclude the pupil being complained about for a period of time according to the school's Behaviour Policy and procedures. Where neither Social Services nor the police accept the complaint, a thorough school investigation should take place into the matter, using the school's usual disciplinary procedures. In situations where the school considers a safeguarding risk is present, a risk assessment should be prepared along with a preventative, supervision plan. The plan should be monitored and a date set for a follow-up evaluation with everyone concerned.

After the case:

No matter what the outcome is of an allegation of abuse against another pupil, the school will review the case to see if there are any improvements that can be made in its practice or policy that may help to prevent similar cases in the future.