

Our Safeguarding Policy

Bright Science Academy takes its duty to protect children and young people very seriously. We recognise our responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation.

Bright Science Academy employees and volunteers will have close contact with children and young people and are in a good position to observe signs of possible abuse, changes in behaviour or to perform or develop as expected. They may also receive disclosure from a student that she/he has been abused. Bright Science Academy recognises that the following principles play a significant role in the effective protection from abuse:

- Children and young people have the right to be protected from harm.
- The welfare and protection of children and young people who are students of the Bright Science Academy must be the first consideration of all associates.
- All associates must understand their moral obligation to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and exploitation.
- All associates have a responsibility to be aware of the procedures to follow should a disclosure of abuse or abuse of trust be made to them or they have concerns that a student is being abused.
- Any delay is harmful. Intervention must happen in a timely manner without unnecessary delays.
- Abuse occurs in all cultures, racial and religious groups. Associates have a responsibility to be sensitive to and respectful of ethnic and cultural backgrounds – however, these factors must not be used as a reason for non-intervention.
- As an organisation we must follow best practice in relation to the recruitment of staff and assistants.
- As an organisation we must endeavour to keep up-to-date with national developments relating to the care and protection of children and young people.

Procedures

1. General Policy Statement

Bright Science Academy has a moral duty to ensure that we function with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children studying at Bright Science Academy. The purpose of these procedures is to ensure that all concerns about the care and protection of children and young people are effectively managed.

All children, irrespective of their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.

All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

All Associates have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate member of staff.

Throughout these policies and procedures, reference is made to “children and young people”. This term is used to mean “those under the age of 18”.

2. Our Commitment

Bright Science Academy is committed to ensuring that all activities:

- Provide a safe environment for children and young people to learn in.
- Identify children and young adults who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, and
- Take appropriate action to see that such children and young people are kept safe, both at home and at the study courses as far as practically possible.

In pursuit of these aims we will maintain and review, with appropriate frequency, policies and procedures with the aim of:

- Raising awareness of issues relating to the welfare of children and young people and the promotion of a safe environment for children and young people to learn at Bright Science Academy events.
- Developing best practice for the safe recruitment of Associates.
- Aiding the identification of children and young people at risk of significant harm, and providing procedures for reporting concerns
- Establishing procedures for reporting and dealing with allegations of abuse against Associates.

3. Recruitment Policy

Bright Science Academy has a zero tolerance towards employing a member of staff or volunteers before a DBS is obtained.

4. Types of Abuse and a Summary of the Signs and Indicators

Definitions of Abuse

Bright Science Academy recognises the following as definitions of abuse:

- Physical Abuse - Actual or likely physical injury to a child or failure to prevent physical injury (or suffering) to a child,
- Neglect - Persistent or severe neglect of a child, or a failure to protect the child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child’s health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

- Sexual Abuse - Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent. The child may be dependent or developmentally immature.
- Emotional Abuse - Actual or likely severe adverse side effects on the emotional and behavioural development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment. This category should be used where it is the main or sole form of abuse.

Awareness of actual or likely occurrence of abuse

There are a number of ways in which abuse becomes apparent:

- A child discloses abuse.
- Someone else discloses that a child has told him/her or that he/she strongly believes a child has been or is being abused.
- A child may show signs of physical injury for which there appears to be no satisfactory explanation.
- A child's behaviour may indicate that it is likely that he/she is being abused.
- An associates' behaviour or the way in which he/she relates to a child causes concern.

5. Procedures for Responding to Concerns about Abuse/ Neglect.

If anyone has any concerns they should contact the manager immediately.

If a member of staff has reason to suspect abuse or allegations they will need to complete an Incident Form (see Appendix I) and send it to the manager.

Upon receipt of the Incident Form the manager will check its content and refer back to the originator to clarify and further discuss the situation. The manager will then contact the police.

If a child or young person tells an associate about possible abuse they are advised to:

- Listen carefully and stay calm.
- Do not interview the child, but question normally and without pressure, in order to be sure that you understand what the child is telling you.
- Do not put words into the child's mouth.
- Reassure the child that, by telling you, they have done the right thing.
- Inform the child that you must pass the information on to "someone who can help".
- Make a detailed note of the date, time, place, what the child said and did, your questions etc. This should not normally be done in the presence of the child as it may be intimidating for them.

Associates should not investigate concerns or allegations themselves, but should report them immediately to the manager.

6. Reporting and Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Associates.

Bright Science Academy recognises that the welfare of the child is the paramount concern. These procedures apply to all associates, whether they are staff or volunteers.

In cases of allegations against staff at Bright Science Academy, normal disciplinary procedures for investigating allegations will apply. All cases will be referred to the police.

It is recognised that hastily or ill-informed decisions in connection with an alleged child protection issue can irreparably damage an individual's reputation, confidence and career. Therefore, those dealing with such allegations within Bright Science Academy will do so with sensitivity and will act in a careful and measured way.

Referral Process

Bright Science Academy will refer names to the appropriate government official in the following circumstances:

- Where a member of staff at Bright Science Academy has dismissed an individual on the grounds of misconduct (whether or not in the course of employment) which harmed a child or placed a child at risk of harm.
- The individual has resigned or retired in circumstances such that Bright Science Academy would have dismissed him/her, or would have considered dismissing him/her, on such grounds if he/she had not resigned or retired.

Note: The referral of a name does not lead to automatic inclusion on a list.

It is important that the referral process is as short as possible and involves as few individuals as possible.

Staff under referral must never attempt to investigate any child protection concern.

Protection of Those Reporting Care and Protection Concerns

The law protects those who report care and protection concerns from actions by those individuals who have been implicated in the abuse, harm and/or neglect of a child or young person as long as the report was not malicious or vexatious.

7. Data Protection and Management of Confidential Information

Bright Science Academy is committed to managing confidential information in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Children and young people have a right to confidentiality unless staff at Bright Science Academy considers that they could be at risk of abuse and/or harm.

Appendix I

Incident Report Form

Date, time and place of disclosure, suspicion, allegation or actual incident of abuse	
Name and position of person about whom report, complaint or allegation is made	
Name and age of child involved	
Nature of incident, complaint or allegation (continue on a separate sheet if necessary)	
What questions did you ask the child (continue on a separate sheet if necessary)?	
What did the child do/say (continue on a separate sheet if necessary)?	
Action taken (continue on a separate sheet if necessary)	

If Police or Children’s Social Care Services contacted, name, position and telephone number of person handling the case and date and time referred	
Name and position of person completing the form	
Contact telephone number	
If the decision was taken not to consult with a relevant statutory agency, why was this decision taken?	
Signature of person completing the form	
Date and time completed	

Notes

1. *No matter what happens to a suspicion, allegation or actual incident of abuse (that is whether or not it is processed through a statutory agency or not) all details must be recorded.*
2. *If for any reason it is decided not to consult with a relevant statutory agency, a full explanation of why must be documented.*
3. *Recording should be factual that is no reference made to your own subjective opinions.*
4. *Records should be kept completely confidential and secure (always locked away) and only shared with those who need to know about the suspicion, allegation or actual incident of abuse.*
5. *This form is available to all staff at Bright Science Academy in employee folders.*