SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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1. Introduction

1.1 Worcester College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the health, safety and welfare of its members and visitors. The College recognises that it is likely that children and/or adults at risk will enter College premises or interact with College members in a number of circumstances.

1.2 The College regards the welfare of children and vulnerable adults as of paramount importance and aims to safeguard their well-being, in particular by protecting them from abuse of any kind.

1.3 This policy should be read in conjunction with the University of Oxford’s Safeguarding code of practice (2015). A copy of this policy is available on the College website.

2. Scope

2.1 For the purposes of this policy, ‘child’ or ‘children’ refers to a person or persons under the age of 18 (as defined in the Children Act 2004). Particular care shall be afforded to a child under the age of 16.

2.2 For the purposes of this policy, an ‘adult at risk’ refers to the Department of Health definition. This refers to “those who are or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.”

2.3 For the purposes of this policy, a College member is anyone at Worcester College, working with children or adults at risk, whether fellow, employee, student or volunteer.

2.4 This policy applies to all activities involving children or adults at risk and to all College members.

2.5 The College recognises that it has a legal duty to safeguard the welfare of children who come onto its premises or come into contact with its members under the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, and the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974.

2.6 Where a College Member occupies a position of trust with regard to children or adults at risk, an improper relationship with a child or adult at risk constitutes an abuse of trust under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

2.7 The College has certain powers, under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, to enquire as to the criminal records history of Members to assess any risk to children or adults at risk.

3. Responsibilities

3.1 The College’s Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is the Welfare Officer. The College’s Designated Safeguarding Deputy (DSD) will be the Academic Administrator. The Designated
Safeguarding Officer (DSO) will depend on the specific event but in most cases will be the Admissions and Access Officer, Chaplain or the Director of Chapel Music. Contact details can be found in Appendix A’ of this Policy, or in the Safeguarding file, available in the Academic Office.

3.2 The staff named above will be required to undertake a DBS Disclosure relevant to their role.

3.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:

- Implementing and promoting this Policy
- Ensuring that the Policy is monitored and reviewed in accordance with changes in legislation and guidance on the protection of children and adults at risk
- Acting as the main contact within the college for the protection of children and adults at risk
- Ensuring that appropriate college members are provided with information, advice and training on the protection of children and adults at risk
- Establishing and maintaining contacts with the local Children’s Social Care Services departments and Police
- Maintaining confidential records of reported child abuse cases and action taken

3.4 The Safeguarding Officers are responsible for:

- Implementing and promoting this policy
- Acting as the main contact, for their designated activities, for the protection of children or adults at risk
- Ensuring that appropriate College members assisting with any designated activity are provided with information, advice and training where required
- Ensuring that confidential records of reported abuse cases are reported to the DSL or DSD

3.3 Where a role may require College members to have unsupervised contact with, regularly care for, train, supervise or be in sole charge of children or adults at risk, the College will require satisfactory completion of a Criminal Records Bureau (DBS) Disclosure at the appropriate level.

3.4 All College members involved with designated activities are expected to comply fully with the guidance and procedures set out in this policy. The DSO will ensure that members are fully briefed and/or trained (as appropriate) on the implications of this policy.

3.5 The Governing Body is responsible for undertaking an annual review of:

- College Safeguarding Policy & Procedures
- The efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged.

4. Training

4.1 Any member of the College who will be planning activities with children should have completed the on-line training provided by Oxford Safeguarding Children Board (http://www.oscb.org.uk/training/) An Introduction to Safeguarding, together with any additional training that may have been identified by the risk assessment process.
4.2 Anyone holding the role of Safeguarding Officer and their deputies will undergo detailed training in safeguarding issues on a regular basis.

4.3 Training will be recorded in the Safeguarding folder. The DSL/ DSD will monitor training requirements

5. Forms of abuse

5.1 The UK Government guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015, defines four types of child abuse (which also apply to adults at risk):

5.2 Physical – physical hurting or injuring.

5.3 Emotional – persistent emotional maltreatment which results in severe or persistent adverse effects. Emotional abuse is often present in other categories of abuse, although it may occur independently.

5.4 Sexual – forcing or enticing to take part in sexual activities. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration or non-penetrative acts. They may also include non-contact activities such as looking at, or participating in the production of, pornographic material.

5.5 Neglect – the persistent failure to meet basic needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of health or development. Neglect can include failure to provide the following: adequate food, clothing and shelter; protection from physical and emotional harm or danger; adequate supervision; access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

5.6 This list is not exhaustive. Abuse can take a variety of forms. The Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board also refers to: domestic abuse, financial abuse, modern slavery, organisational abuse, radicalisation and extremism, or self-neglect.

6. Recognising abuse and dealing with suspicion of abuse/ allegations of abuse

6.1 The abuse of children or adults at risk can and does occur both within an individual’s family and in institutional or community settings. There is a list of possible signs of abuse in Appendix B

6.2 It is the responsibility of all College Members to act on concerns in order to safeguard the welfare of the child or adult at risk.

6.3 College members should address any concerns to the DSO responsible for that activity, in the first instance. If those concerns relate to the DSO, College members are expected to discuss the matter with the DSL/DSD or to contact Oxfordshire Social Services Department directly (contact details at end of document/ in Safeguarding file). If an individual feels that the DSO or DSL has not responded appropriately, then they are encouraged to contact Social Services without delay. Every effort should be made to maintain confidentiality. Suspicions or allegations of abuse must not be discussed with anyone other than those named in 3.1.
6.4 It is a responsibility of the DSO and DSL/DSD to act on behalf of the College in dealing with allegations or suspicion of abuse. It is the task of Social Services, not the College, to investigate the matter, under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989. Under no circumstances should a College member conduct their own investigation into suspicions or allegations of abuse, neither should they question persons closely, as to do so may distort any investigation that may be carried out subsequently by the police or Social Services.

6.5 If a child or adult at risk says something or acts in such a way that abuse is suspected, the person receiving the information should:

- react in a calm but concerned way
- listen carefully to clarify concerns
- offer reassurance about how s/he will be kept safe
- explain that information may need to be shared – do not promise confidentiality
- keep questions to an absolute minimum (only to clarify what the child is saying) and avoid leading questions
- tell the individual what will happen next and with whom the information will be shared;
- make a record of conversations (see template in Safeguarding file)

6.6 The record should include:

- the nature of the allegation or concern
- the child or adult at risk’s account of what has occurred
- any dates, times or places and any other potentially useful information
- a clear indication, whenever appropriate, that the author of the report is expressing an opinion
- a description of any visible physical injury (clothing should not be removed to inspect the child or adult at risk).

6.7 The record may be used later in a criminal trial and it is vital that what the child or adult at risk discloses is recorded as accurately as possible. The record must be drafted in the child or adult at risk’s words and should not include the assumptions or opinions of others.

6.8 The problem should be reported immediately to the DSO/DSL/DSD who will take the appropriate action. If the concern arises out of normal office hours (evenings and weekends) contact should be made with the Social Services Emergency Duty Team on 0800 833408. Advice can also be sought from the NSPCC 24 hour helpline on 0800 800 5000 or from the Police Child Protection team on 01865 335199. In an emergency, dial 999.

6.9 It is recognised that College members may need support after receiving a disclosure from a child and appropriate support will be offered by the College.

6.10 All College members (including those with obligations to particular codes of conduct/professional ethics that may be thought to constrain their actions) are required to report or act on any disclosures or allegations of abuse that involve a College member and that have taken place at the College or on College business. These will be reported to Oxfordshire Social Services, and if necessary, the police.

7. Procedure for dealing with allegations or suspicions about a College member
7.1 It can be difficult to accept that a colleague may deliberately harm a child or adult at risk. When a concern arises, there are three processes that may need to take place:

- a child protection investigation (in the case of children)
- a criminal investigation
- action by the College/University to discipline or remove the member.

7.2 Any suspicions or allegations should be addressed to the Safeguarding team, as outlined in the safeguarding folder, or Appendix A.

8. Confidentiality

8.1 The College has an obligation to respect the privacy and confidentiality of all individuals. However, it is not possible to ensure confidentiality in circumstances of alleged abuse. The College owes a duty of care to its students or visitors that overrides the requirement to keep information confidential. Anyone making an allegation of abuse should be assured that:

- Information will only be shared on a ‘need to know’ basis to ensure that the proper action is taken.
- the College will take steps to protect the informant from any retaliation or unnecessary stress after a disclosure of alleged abuse has been made.

8.2 There will be circumstances in which it is necessary for a Safeguarding Officer or other College member to share information with third parties such as the local authority, the police or the child’s parents or guardians.

9. Conduct around children or adults at risk

9.1 College members should note that inappropriate behaviour can occur via the telephone, internet and email, as well as during direct interaction with children or adults at risk.

9.2 College members’ conduct should adhere to the advice listed in Appendix C.

9.3 The Sexual Offences Act 2003 provides that intimate contact between an adult and a child, where that adult is in a ‘position of trust’ with respect to the child, is a criminal offence. Those in a ‘position of trust’ include those who have regular unsupervised contact with a child, or adults who look after a child at an educational institution at which they are not also receiving education.

9.4 It may be necessary for College members to take photographs or make videos of children for educational research, teaching purposes, or publication. An image of a child is personal data for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 2008. Where images are stored in a way that makes the data subject identifiable, or where the images are used for publication (online or print), written consent should be obtained before the images are created. If the data subject is capable of comprehending the implications of consenting to the data use, then their consent should be sought; otherwise, the consent of the parent or legal guardian should be obtained. Whenever an image of a child or vulnerable adult is published, the data subject should, as far as is practicable, be unidentifiable.
RESTRICTED ACTIVITIES & MANAGEMENT

10. Planning an activity for children/ adults at risk

10.1 Any college member who has responsibility for organising an activity involving children and/or adults at risk must nominate an appropriate individual to act as the DSO for the activity. The DSL/DSD and other relevant parties e.g. staff members/ porters should be informed who the DSO for a particular event or activity is.

10.2 Activities should:

• be designed so that appropriate training and supervision is available to those working with children or adults at risk
• minimise occasions on which members of the University will need to work alone in an unsupervised way with children or adults at risk
• be appropriately risk assessed.

10.3 Every activity that involves children and/or adults at risk should be risk assessed, and the assessment should consider how the risks identified can be minimized. It should also outline the local processes for reporting concerns, as well as taking account of Health and Safety considerations. The risk assessment should be checked by the appropriate DSL/DSD and a copy will be filed with the DSL, before the activity is undertaken. The risk assessment for any activity involving adults at risk or children should identify at least one individual who will act as the key contact point to deal with such matters. The nominated safeguarding contact for the activity is responsible for ensuring that concerns and allegations are escalated to the DSO.

10.4 Completed risk assessments should be made available to all staff or volunteers involved in the activity.

10.5 It is expected that for visits by schools where members of staff of that school are in attendance, the school will complete its own risk assessment and take its own child protection steps in accordance with local education authority guidelines.

10.6 Any pre-employment or pre-activity checks should be carried out in accordance with the University’s guidance published at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/recruit/preempcheck/.

10.7 Children and adults at risk who are participating in a College activity must, as part of their induction to the activity, be given clear information about how, and to whom, they can report concerns about any member of the College with whom they will be interacting. Information regarding the DSL/DSD/DSO’s must be clearly accessible on the College website.

11. Candidates for admissions interviews
11.1 Candidates for admission to Worcester are invited to stay at the College for a period of days during the interview selection process. The College recognises that it is likely that most candidates will be under the age of 18.

11.2 The College has established procedures for the interview process, designed to ensure safeguarding of candidates whilst also fulfilling selection requirements, including the requirements that:

- all student volunteers are appropriately trained and given specific information about how to respond to reports of neglect or abuse.
- interviews always have two members of staff in attendance
- members of the College who may be alone with candidates for significant time are DBS checked.

12. Students under the age of 18

12.1 The College may admit students who commence their studies before their 18th birthday. The College recognises that:

- anyone under the age of 18, as a matter of law, is a child
- the College has special duties of care towards a child
- the College is not in loco parentis

12.2 The Admissions and Access Officer is responsible for ensuring that the DSL/DSD, Dean and all relevant College tutors and staff members are informed of the admission of any students under the age of 18.

12.3 The Admissions and Access Officer is responsible for ensuring that the hall, bar and lodge have the names of any students under the age of 18.

12.4 The Admissions and Access Officer is responsible for gaining written agreement from parents and students under the age of 18 that they accept the provisions put in place.

13. Choir

13.1 The Chapel Choir has a separate policy (see Safeguarding folder) for the Choristers managed by the Christ Church Cathedral School.

13.2 The Director of Chapel Music (a DSO) will liaise with the host school to ensure policy and training are up to date.
APPENDIX

1 Appendix A

Contact Information

Designated Safeguarding Lead
Jo Elliott – Welfare Officer
Tel. 01865 610465

Designated Safeguarding Deputy
Phillipa Tarver – Academic Administrator
Tel. 01865 278342

Designated Safeguarding Officers
Thomas Allery – Director of Chapel Music
Tel. 01865 214409

Allison Attwell – Admissions & Access Officer
Tel: 01865 78391

Oxfordshire MASH (Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub)
Tel. 03450507666 mash-childrens@oxfordshire.gcsx.gov.uk

Oxfordshire Social Services Emergency Duty Team
Tel: 0800 833408

II Appendix B

The following may indicate that a child or adult at risk is being or has been abused:

- unexplained or suspicious injuries, particularly if such an injury is unlikely to have occurred accidentally
- an injury for which the explanation appears inconsistent
- the child describes an abusive act or situation
- unexplained changes in behaviour
- inappropriate sexual awareness or sexually explicit behaviour
- the person appears distrustful of adults
- the person is not allowed to be involved in normal social activities
• the person becomes increasingly dirty or dishevelled in appearance

This list is not exhaustive. It is important to report all concerns, however seemingly insignificant.

Appendix C

Conduct to be avoided:

• spending excessive amounts of time alone with children or adults at risk, away from others;
• taking children or adults at risk to your home;
• being alone in a vehicle with children or adults at risk.

Conduct never to be sanctioned:

• engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games
• giving drugs or other inappropriate substances, including alcohol (please note that one of the four key objectives of the Licensing Act 2003 is the ‘protection of children from harm’ and that it is also an offence for a child to be supplied with or knowingly to consume alcohol on a licensed premises). Members should be aware that the College holds a Premises Licence
• allowing or engaging in any form of inappropriate touching
• making sexually suggestive comments to children or adults at risk, even in jest
• allowing allegations made by a child or adult at risk to go unreported
• doing things of an intimate nature for children or adults at risk that they can do for themselves.

College members should:

• treat everyone with fairness, equality and respect;
• be sensitive to appearance, race, culture, religious belief, sexuality, gender or disability;
• act as a good role model and challenge any unacceptable behaviour
• report all allegations or suspicions of abuse using the procedures outlined in this policy
• consider whether contact with an individual should involve a colleague’s presence
• be aware that physical contact may be misinterpreted
• retain a professional approach at all times
• respect a right to privacy and, in residential accommodation, not enter a bedroom without prior authorisation except in the case of an emergency.