

Child Safeguarding Policy & Procedures

CONTACT DETAILS:

For contact details for the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and others, see the last page of this policy.

NOTICE TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

If you are a child or young person reading this policy, and anything or anyone worries you or makes you feel unsafe, please speak to your parents. But if for any reason you would rather not do this, you may contact any of the people listed on the last page and be assured that they are there to help you or point you to help.

1. Introduction

1.1 St Hugh's College is committed to ensuring a safe and supportive environment for its Members and visitors. The College recognises that it is likely that children will come onto College premises or interact with College Members in a number of circumstances.

1.2 This Policy places the welfare of children as paramount and aims to safeguard their well-being, in particular by protecting them from abuse of any kind. This Policy should be read in conjunction with the University of Oxford's *Safeguarding Code of Practice*.

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 1989*). 'Children' therefore means 'children and young people' throughout this policy.

2.2 For the purposes of this policy, a College Member is anyone who is part of St Hugh's College, working with children whether as a fellow, employee, student, or volunteer.

2.3 This Policy applies to all activities involving children and to all College Members.

2.4 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 *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006*, *'Working together to safeguard children' 2013*, the *Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974*, and *'Keeping children safe in education' (July 2015)* where contact comes through schools.

2.5 Where a College Member occupies a position of trust with regard to children, an improper relationship with a child constitutes, among other crimes, an abuse of trust under the *Sexual Offences Act 2003*.

2.6 The College also has certain powers and duties, under the *Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975* and *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006*, to enquire as to the criminal records history of Members to assess any risk to children.

3. Preventative Measures

3.1 St Hugh's College's Designated Safeguarding Lead ('DSL') is the Bursar. The DSL has the leadership responsibility for the College's safeguarding arrangements. The College's Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSOs) are the Outreach Officer, the Academic Registrar, and the Domestic Bursar. The DSOs have responsibility for the day-to-day administration of the College's

safeguarding arrangements. Contact details can be found on the last page of this Policy. The DSL and the DSOs have undergone a satisfactory DBS check at the Enhanced level.

3.2a The Safeguarding Lead and Safeguarding Officers are 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;
- Acting as the main contacts within the College for the protection of children;
- Ensuring that appropriate College Members are provided with information, advice and training on the protection of children.

3.2b The Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:

- 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.

3.3 The DSL and the DSOs must complete training in safeguarding. Their training is updated every year.

3.4 Students of the College who engage in paid or voluntary work for the College will not be required to undergo a DBS check. If they are deemed suitable for roles which entails working with children, students have a compulsory short induction for the role. This includes reminders concerning the importance of maintaining appropriate professional boundaries and the expectations of the College in relation to conduct.

3.5 The attention of new Members of the College will be drawn to this Policy as part of the induction process. All College Members are expected to comply fully with the guidance and procedures set out in this Policy. The College will ensure that Members are fully briefed and/or trained (as appropriate) on the implications of this Policy.

3.6 This Policy is reviewed on an annual basis. This is an opportunity for the DSL and the DSOs to reflect on their own practice and for the College to make changes in the light of experience.

4. Conduct around children

4.1 College Members should remember that inappropriate behaviour can occur via the telephone, internet and email, as well as during direct interaction with children.

4.2 Conduct to be avoided:

- Spending excessive amounts of time alone with children, away from others;
- Taking children to your home;
- Being alone in a vehicle with children;
- Giving personal gifts to children;
- Friendships conducted via social media, messaging, or personal email accounts

4.3 Conduct never to be sanctioned:

- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games with children;
- Giving children inappropriate 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).
- Allowing or engaging in any form of inappropriate touching;
- Making sexually suggestive comments to children, even in jest;
- Allowing allegations made by a child to go unreported;

- Doing things of an intimate nature for children that they can do for themselves.

4.4 College Members should:

- Treat everyone with fairness, equality and respect;
- Be sensitive to children's appearance, race, culture, religious belief, sexuality, gender or disability;
- Act as a good role model and challenge any unacceptable behaviour from children or from other College Members, including concerns over crossing professional boundaries;
- Report all allegations or suspicions of child abuse using the Procedures outlined in this Policy;
- Consider whether contact with an individual child should involve a colleague's being present;
- Be aware that physical contact with a child may be misinterpreted;
- Retain a professional approach to children, including avoiding physical contact with a child;
- Respect a child's right to privacy. In residential accommodation, only approved members of the housekeeping team should enter a child's bedroom, and for cleaning purposes only. Aside from emergencies, only with prior authorisation from the DSL or the DSOs, should any other member of staff enter a child's bedroom.

4.5 The *Sexual Offences Act 2003* provides that intimate contact between an adult and a child, where that adult was in a 'position of trust' to the child is a criminal offence. Those in a 'position of trust' include those who have regular unsupervised contact with a child, or where an adult looks after a child at an educational institution at which the adult is not also receiving education.

4.6 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 2018*. Where images are stored in a way that makes the data subject identifiable, or where the images are used for publication (online and print), written consent should be obtained before the images are created. If the data subject is over 13 and 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.

5. Recognising Abuse

5.1 The UK Government guidance, *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013*, defines four types of child abuse:

- Physical – the physical hurting or injuring of a child.
- Emotional – the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child which results in severe or persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Some level of emotional abuse is present in all other categories of abuse, although it may occur independently.
- Sexual – the forcing or enticing of a child 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 involving children looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).
- Neglect – the persistent failure to meet a child's basic needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's 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.

5.2 Child abuse can and does occur both within a child's family and in institutional or community settings. The following may indicate that a child 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 child's or adult's explanation appears inconsistent;
- The child describes an abusive act or situation;
- Unexplained changes in behaviour;
- Inappropriate sexual awareness or sexually explicit behaviour;
- The child appears distrustful of adults;
- The child is not allowed to be involved in normal social activities;
- The child becomes increasingly dirty or shabby.

5.3 It is the responsibility of all College Members to act on concerns in order to safeguard the welfare of the child.

6. Responding to allegations and suspicions of abuse

6.1 An allegation may relate to a person who works with children who 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 s/he may pose a risk of harm to children.

6.2 College Members should address any concerns to the relevant DSO, who will liaise with the DSL. The DSOs and DSL will decide on the appropriate course of action and will, if required, report the concern to the relevant authorities.

6.3 If the concern relates to a child's home life or contact with an adult who is not a College Member, the Safeguarding Officer should report this to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). If the concern relates to a College Member, the Safeguarding Officer should report this to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) at the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board. Contact details for the MASH and LADO can be found in Section 15 of this policy.

6.4 If the concern relates to one of the DSOs, College Members are expected to discuss the matter with the Safeguarding Lead or to contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) at the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board directly.

6.5 If the concern relates to the DSL, College Members are expected to discuss the matter with one of the DSOs or to contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) at the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board directly.

6.6 If an individual feels that the Safeguarding Officer or Safeguarding Lead has not responded appropriately, then they are encouraged to contact the LADO without delay. The LADO should provide advice and guidance, liaising with the police and other agencies to ensure that concerns are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process.

6.7 Every effort should be made to maintain confidentiality. College Members should not discuss suspicions or allegations of abuse with anyone other than the Designated Safeguarding Officers, Designated Safeguarding Lead and / or LADO.

6.8 It is the Safeguarding Officers' responsibility 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 children closely, as to do so may distort any investigation that may be carried out subsequently by the Police or Social Services.

6.9 If a child 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;
- Tell the child that s/he is right to share what has happened, and that s/he is not responsible for what has happened;
- Find an early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared;
- Take what the child says seriously and allow the child to continue at his/her own pace;
- Keep questions to an absolute minimum (only clarify what the child is saying) and not ask a question that suggests a particular answer;
- Not interrupt the child when they are recalling significant events;
- Reassure the child that the problem can be dealt with;
- Tell the child what will happen next and with whom the information will be shared;
- Do not promise to keep secrets;
- Make a full record of what is said and done, though this should not result in a delay in reporting the problem.

6.10 The record should include:

- The child's account of what has occurred;
- Any dates, times or places and any other potentially useful information;
- The nature of the allegation or concern;
- A description of any visible physical injury (clothing should not be removed to inspect the child).

If handwritten, contemporaneous notes are typed up, the original notes must be retained.

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

6.12 The allegation or suspicion should be reported immediately to the DSO who will take the appropriate action, including informing the DSL. The DSL will inform the LADO within one working day of all allegations that come to the College's attention or that are made directly to the police. 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.

6.13 The DSL and DSOs will share information, as appropriate with relevant colleagues to ensure that the relevant authorities both within and outside of the College are involved and that any necessary processes can be followed (for example, depending on the nature of the allegations, it may be necessary to make a disclosure to the Disclosure and Barring Service). Appropriate records will be retained in accordance with the University's Data Protection Policy. Where the matter may relate to both staff and students, the DSL and DSOs will agree on where the file will be kept.

6.14 It is recognised that College Members may need support after receiving a disclosure from a child, and information about appropriate support will be offered by the College.

7. Confidentiality

7.1 The College has an obligation to respect the privacy and confidentiality of all individuals. Nevertheless, complete confidentiality to informants in circumstances of alleged abuse cannot and should not be promised.

7.2 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.

8. School outreach visits

8.1 The College has a risk assessment in place for school outreach visits. This risk assessment is made available to schools on request.

8.2 Students of the College who apply to be engaged as helpers for College outreach activities will not be required to undergo an Enhanced DBS check. Student helpers receive training and are briefed in child protection matters, verbally and with an information sheet including a summary of appropriate conduct. Student helpers are given advice on managing risk and appropriate behaviour.

8.3 Visiting school groups are required to have a teacher with them at all times. Group leaders are required to have the telephone number of the College's Outreach Officer and the telephone number for the College Lodge. Group leaders should report any incident or concern to the Outreach Officer or Lodge as appropriate.

8.4 College Members are advised not to give out personal details, including email addresses, Facebook friend requests and mobile phone numbers (except official numbers) to school visitors.

8.5 The College's Outreach Officer is the designated Safeguarding Officer for school visits, and will brief College Members, students and participants as appropriate.

9. Candidates for admission interviews

Candidates for undergraduate admission to St Hugh's are invited to stay at the College for a period of days during the December interview selection process. The College recognises that it is likely that most candidates will be under the age of 18. The College's interview processes are designed to ensure safeguarding of candidates whilst also fulfilling selection requirements.

10. Students under the age of 18

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

- Anyone under the age of 18 is a child as a matter of law;
- The College has special duties of care towards a child;
- The College is not *in loco parentis*, except in the case of a medical emergency where written permission has been previously obtained from the parent or guardian of the child.

10.2 The Academic Registrar is responsible for ensuring that the DSOs, the DSL, and the Dean, and the Domestic Bursar are informed of the admission of any students who will commence their studies before their 18th birthday.

11. Staff under the age of 18

11.1 The College may employ members of staff who commence their employment before their 18th birthday. This includes employment as a permanent or temporary member of staff, as an apprentice, or through a work experience placement. 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*, except in the case of a medical emergency where written permission has been previously obtained from the parent or guardian of the child.

11.2 The Human Resources Manager is responsible for ensuring that the Safeguarding Lead, Safeguarding Officers, Domestic Bursar and relevant line manager are informed of the employment of any member of staff under the age of 18.

11.3 The Domestic Bursar is the designated Safeguarding Officer for staff under the age of 18.

12. Visitors and guests who are vulnerable adults or under the age of 18

12.1 The College may accommodate visitors and guests on its premises overnight through its hospitality and Bed & Breakfast operations, or for dinners and events organized by the College for its staff, alumni, friends, and retired staff. Some of these visitors and guests may be vulnerable adults, or under the age of 18.

12.2 All bookings of College accommodation that fall within the Conferences and Bed & Breakfast operations of the College must be made by a responsible adult over the age of 18. The College requires all guests and visitors under the age of 18 who stay overnight on its premises to be accompanied by a responsible adult. It is expected that those under 12 will share a room with their parents.

12.3 The College's Domestic Bursar is the designated Safeguarding Officer for visitors and guests.

13. Risk Assessment

13.1 A risk assessment must be completed by the organisers of any activity specifically intended for children and which brings children onto College premises or into contact with College Members. Once completed, the risk assessment pro forma must be approved by a Safeguarding Officer before a new activity is undertaken.

13.2 It is expected that for visits by schools where school staff of that 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.

13. Contact Information

Designated Safeguarding Lead	Vicki Stott, Bursar vicki.stott@st-hughs.ox.ac.uk 01865 274913
Designated Safeguarding Officers	Elena Sorochina, Outreach Officer outreach@st-hughs.ox.ac.uk Tel. 01865 274989
	Thea Crapper, Academic Registrar thea.crapper@st-hughs.ox.ac.uk Tel. 01865 274918
	Rahele Mirnateghi rahele.mirnateghi@st-hughs.ox.ac.uk Tel. 01865 274908
Oxfordshire Children's Social Care	Tel. 01865 323048 (Office Hours) Tel. 0800 833408 (Out of Hours)
Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board	Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) LADO.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk Tel. 01865 810603
Oxfordshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	mash-childrens@oxfordshire.gcsx.gov.uk Tel. 0345 0507666
Police Child Protection Unit	Tel. 01865 335199
NSPCC Helpline	Tel. 0800 800 5000 (24 hours)

If there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, call the emergency services on 999

For out-of-hours non-emergency or general advice, call the police on 101