



Safeguarding Policy*

1. Aims

1.1 University College is committed to providing a safe environment for all and to safeguarding any child who enters its premises, or who interacts with College Members through its teaching, research, outreach, access or other activities.

1.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with the University's Safeguarding Code of Practice.

2. Scope and definitions

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).

2.2 For the purposes of this policy, a College Member is anyone at University College working or interacting 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 Children Acts 1989 and 2004, and the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974.

2.5 The College has certain powers, under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, to carry out Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks on its Members in order to assess any risk to children. The College reserves the right to carry out Enhanced DBS checks on any College Member whose role fulfils the eligibility criteria for such a check.

2.6 This policy is reviewed on an annual basis.

3. Safeguarding roles and responsibilities

* v1.0, promulgated 15 August 2017. This Policy has the force and import of a Regulation of the College: see OCM HT3(2017)U, item 11, by which the Policy was adopted as a Regulation.

3.1 The College's Safeguarding Lead is the Senior Tutor. The College has three Safeguarding Officers: the Welfare Fellow, the Schools Liaison and Access Officer and the Domestic Bursar. Contact details for the Safeguarding Lead and Officers can be found in Section 15 of this policy.

3.2 The Safeguarding Lead and Safeguarding Officers are required to undertake Enhanced DBS checks and to complete training with the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board. Their training is updated annually.

3.3 The Safeguarding Lead and 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 safeguarding of children;
- Acting as the main contacts within the College for the safeguarding of children;
- Ensuring that appropriate College Members are provided with information, advice and training on the safeguarding of children;
- Establishing and maintaining contacts with the local Children's Social Care Services departments and Police where appropriate;
- Maintaining confidential records of reported child abuse cases and action taken.

3.4 A Safeguarding Officer will be designated to every activity which involves a child or children entering College premises or interacting with College Members. The Welfare Fellow will assume primary responsibility for students and staff under the age of 18. The Schools Liaison and Access Officer will assume primary responsibility for school access visits and admissions interviews. The Domestic Bursar will assume primary responsibility for hospitality and B&B visitors and guests under the age of 18.

3.5 The Governing Body is responsible for undertaking an annual review of the College's Safeguarding policy and procedures and for assessing the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged.

3.6 New College Members will receive a copy of 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 Safeguarding Lead will ensure that Members are fully briefed and/or trained (as appropriate) on the implications of this policy.

4. Guidance on conduct around children

4.1 Conduct to be avoided:

- Spending excessive amounts of time alone with a child or children, away from others;

- Taking a child or children to your home;
- Being alone in a vehicle with a child or children;
- Giving personal gifts to a child or children;
- Friendships conducted via social media and/or text messaging;
- Humour that could be interpreted as offensive or suggestive.

4.2 College Members are advised to:

- Avoid one-to-one situations with children whenever possible;
- Operate an open door policy whenever reasonable to do so;
- Retain a professional approach to children, including avoiding physical contact with a child;
- If a child does try to hug you, quickly disengage from physical contact;
- Respect a child's right to privacy, particularly in residential accommodation;
- Be alert to and tackle inappropriate behaviour in others, including peer-to-peer behaviours. Abusive behaviour such as bullying (including cyber-bullying), ridiculing or aggression must not be allowed to go unchallenged;
- If you have to give feedback, take care that it is not unnecessarily negative;
- Report any suspicions promptly and confidentially to the designated Safeguarding Officer, or in the event that the suspicions/allegations involve that person, to the Safeguarding Lead;
- Deal with information sensitively.

5. Recognising abuse

5.1 The UK Government guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010 (1.33-1.36), defines four types of child abuse:

5.2 Physical – the physical hurting or injuring of a child.

5.3 Emotional – the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child 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 – 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, pornographic material.

5.5 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.

5.6 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.

5.7 It is the responsibility of all College Members to act on concerns in order to safeguard the welfare of a 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 designated Safeguarding Officer, who will liaise with the Safeguarding Lead. The Safeguarding Officer and Safeguarding Lead 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 Safeguarding Officers, 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 Safeguarding Lead, College Members are expected to discuss the matter with one of the Safeguarding Officers 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 Safeguarding Officers, 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).

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.

6.11 The allegation or suspicion of abuse should be reported immediately to the designated Safeguarding Officer who will take the appropriate action. If the concern arises out of office hours and the Safeguarding Lead and Officers cannot be contacted, contact should be made with the Social Services Emergency Duty Team. Advice can also be sought from the NSPCC 24 hour helpline or from the Police Child Protection team. Contact details for all agencies can be found in Section 15 of this policy.

6.12 In the event there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, the emergency services should be contacted via 999 or the police via the 101 service. The designated Safeguarding Officer should then be notified of the case.

6.13 The Safeguarding Lead and Officers 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 Safeguarding Lead and Officers 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 appropriate support will be offered by the College.

7. Confidentiality

7.1 The College has an obligation to respect the privacy of all individuals. However, 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 Lead, 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 access visits

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

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

8.3 School access groups are required to have a teacher or student ambassador with them at all times. Group leaders are required to have the telephone number of the College’s Schools Liaison and Access Officer (SLAO) and the telephone number for the College Lodge. Group leaders should report any incident or concern to the SLAO and/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 access visitors.

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

9. Admissions interviews

9.1 Candidates for admission to University College 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.

9.2 Students of the College who apply to be engaged in outreach work as “interview shepherds” for the College will not be required to undergo an Enhanced DBS check. If they are deemed suitable for this post which entails working with children, these students have a compulsory short induction for the role. This includes specific information about how to respond to reports of neglect or abuse, reminders concerning the importance of maintaining appropriate professional boundaries and the expectations of the College in relation to conduct.

9.3 The College’s SLAO is the designated Safeguarding Officer for admissions interviews.

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, 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.

10.2 The Safeguarding Lead is responsible for ensuring that the Safeguarding Officers, Domestic Bursar, Dean, Junior Deans and relevant tutors are informed of the admission of any students under the age of 18.

10.3 The Safeguarding Lead is responsible for ensuring that the hall, bar and lodge have the names of any students under the age of 18.

10.4 The Safeguarding Lead is responsible for gaining written agreement from the parent(s) or guardian(s) of students under the age of 18 that they accept the provisions put in place.

10.5 The College strongly recommends that any student who commences their studies before their 18th birthday and whose parent or guardian is not resident in the UK should nominate a guardian who is resident in the UK and provide the contact details of their UK guardian to the College.

10.6 For any event organised by the JCR or college societies, and for which college office or decanal approval is required, safeguarding issues for students under the age of 18 should be considered at the sign-off stage with the JCR/student organisers.

10.7 The College's Welfare Fellow is the designated Safeguarding Officer for students under the age of 18.

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 College's Welfare Fellow is the designated Safeguarding Officer for staff under the age of 18.

12. Visitors and guests 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. Some of these visitors and guests may be under the age of 18.

12.2 All bookings of College accommodation that fall within the hospitality and Bed & Breakfast operations of the College must be made by a responsible adult over the age of 18.

12.3 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.

12.4 The College's Domestic Bursar is the designated Safeguarding Officer for visitors and guests under the age of 18.

13. Risk assessments

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 must be approved by the designated Safeguarding Officer before the activity is undertaken.

14. Training

14.1 The Safeguarding Lead and Safeguarding Officers will complete relevant training with the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board. This training will be updated annually.

14.2 The Safeguarding Lead is responsible for providing an annual reminder of the Safeguarding Policy for all College Members.

14.3 Student ambassadors and interview shepherds will receive training and updates from the College's Schools Liaison and Access Officer.

14.4 Safeguarding training will be provided for all College Members who may interact with children as part of their normal duties.

15. Useful links and contacts

Safeguarding Lead:

Dr Andrew Bell (Senior Tutor)

andrew.bell@univ.ox.ac.uk

Tel. 01865 276673

Safeguarding Officers:

Dr Andrew Gregory (Welfare Fellow)

andrew.gregory@univ.ox.ac.uk

Tel. 01865 276663

Eleanor Chamings (Schools Liaison and Access Officer)

eleanor.chamings@univ.ox.ac.uk

Tel. 01865 286565

Angela Unsworth (Domestic Bursar)

angela.unsworth@univ.ox.ac.uk

Tel. 01865 276619

Oxfordshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

mash-childrens@oxfordshire.gcsx.gov.uk

Tel. 0345 0507666

Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board:

Alison Beasley, Interim Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

lado.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Tel. 01865 810603

Oxfordshire Children's Social Care:

Tel. 01865 323048 (Office Hours)

Tel. 0800 833408 (Out of Hours)

NSPCC Helpline (24 hours):

Tel. 0808 800 5000

Police Child Protection Unit:

Tel. 01865 335199

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.

University Safeguarding homepage

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/cops/safeguarding/>

University Safeguarding Code of Practice

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/cops/safeguarding/safeguardingcop/>

University Guidance for those Carrying out Activities involving Adults at Risk or Children

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/cops/safeguarding/safeguide/>