



## Policy for

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### CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING

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## Responsibility

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### Designated Safeguarding Leads:

**Senior Lead:** Patrick Sullivan

**Deputy Safeguarding Leads:** Alastair Duncan, Sindy Dobinson, Tim Kay, Neil McCarthy, Director of Finance & Administration

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Everyone in our organisation who comes into contact with children, their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. All professionals should ensure that their approach is child centred: this means considering at all times what is in the best interests of the child. We also recognise that abuse and neglect are complex issues and rarely stand-alone events and therefore require a culture of vigilance, professional curiosity and respectful challenge and effective recording and monitoring systems.

## Aims

To support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.

To provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and feel confident, and know how to, approach adults if they are in difficulties believing they will be effectively listened to.

To raise awareness with all college staff of the need to safeguard children whilst they are in our care. We will also ensure they keep in mind their broader responsibility for student well-being (in relation to abuse, bullying, criminality or extremism).

To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure we, the college, contribute to assessments of need and support packages for those children.

To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.

To develop a structured procedure within the college, to be followed by all members of the college community in cases of suspected abuse.

To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police and Social Services.

To ensure that all adults within our college who have substantial access to children have been checked as to their suitability.

## Guidelines

Our college procedures for safeguarding children are in line with the recommendations of the Borough's Safeguarding Children Board. We will ensure that:

All members of the governing body understand and fulfil their responsibilities.

We have five members of our staff as Designated Safeguarding Leads (each of whom has undertaken the required training provided by the borough).

All members of staff, volunteers, and governors know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse through delivery of Child Protection Safeguarding Training.

Our lettings policy will seek to ensure the suitability of adults working with children on school sites at any time.

Community users organising activities for children are aware of guidelines and procedures.

We will ensure that our Principal and Governor with responsibility for Child Protection and Safeguarding have completed "Safe recruitment Training".

We will ensure that our selection and recruitment of staff includes checks for their suitability with the Enhanced DBS Check.

We will ensure that any member of staff found not suitable to work with children will be notified to the appropriate bodies (Independent Safeguarding Authority Children's Services List).

Our procedures will be reviewed and kept updated.

The names of the DSLs will be clearly available in the college and publicised on our website.

Procedures for referral and monitoring will be easily available to staff.

All visiting organisations and outside speakers who use our premises will be vetted.

## **Implementation**

### **The DSLs are responsible for:**

Referring a child if there are concerns about possible abuse, to relevant authorities, usually the multi-agency safeguarding hub in their home borough MASH, and acting as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns. A written record of referral will be faxed to the relevant team on the same day as making a referral by telephone. There is a specific responsibility to refer any suspected cases of female genital mutilation to the police.

Keeping written records of concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.

Chairing a weekly Wellbeing Panel which reviews interventions which are in place for vulnerable students.

Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from pupil records.

Ensuring that relevant key staff are aware of child protection issues.

Liaising with other agencies and professionals.

Ensuring that either they or a suitably trained colleague, attends conferences, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings, contributes to assessments, and provides a report which has been shared with the parents. Maintaining working relationships with external agencies including MASH, Children's Specialist Services, School Nurse, The Police and others.

Ensuring that any pupil currently or recently associated with child protection concerns register who is absent without explanation is referred to their key workers social car team, or EWO.

Ensuring that they attend training and receive relevant updates every year and that all staff are provided with training during their induction and thereafter on a regular basis including safeguarding briefings and updates at least annually.

Providing, with the Principal, an annual report for the governing body, detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by the CPLO, and by all staff and governors; number and type of incidents/cases, and number of children who are involved within the college community.

## **Supporting Children**

### **Our college will support all pupils by:**

Always working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.

Ensuring that any of our staff who have serious concerns about immediate risk to a child or that a child has suffered significant harm and continues to be at risk, will contact Wandsworth Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) immediately - wherever possible with the support of the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy lead. If a child is in immediate danger the police should also be contacted.

Having due regard to the need to prevent pupils from being drawn into terrorism or being radicalised. We will ensure that staff are provided with appropriate training and information to enable them to assess the risk of children being drawn into extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology and identify any child who may be at risk and how to support them. We will also ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in school. Concerns will be discussed with the child's parents whenever possible and with the Local Authority Prevent co-ordinator and referrals made to the Channel programme when appropriate.

Being aware of any of our children who are Missing from Education: we recognise this situation is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. We will follow the required procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who go missing from education, including appropriate notification to the Local Authority. We will also ensure our staff are alert to the potential risks of poor or non-attendance and cessation of attendance, including the signs to look out for and triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential concerns such as travelling to war zones, FGM and forced marriage and notifying the assessment team as soon as there is a significant concern.

Recognising that children are capable of abusing their peers. As a school we work to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse and will investigate and deal with any allegations robustly. Where needed risk assessments will be carried out and strategies put in place to protect the child who has suffered abuse and to offer them support. Concerns raised will be treated seriously and followed up in a timely and sensitive fashion.

Providing continuing support to a pupil about whom there have been concerns who leaves the college by ensuring that appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to the pupil's new school and ensuring the college medical records are forwarded as a matter of priority.

Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness, through the SMSC and PSHE, the curriculum as well as our relationships, whilst not condoning aggression or bullying

Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the college, so that students feel safe in confiding in us.

Maintaining a high degree of awareness around exploitative risks such as gangs and criminality, extremism, e-safety and abuse.

Being especially aware of the safeguarding issues surrounding children with SEN/D ensuring that assumptions are not made that indicators of abuse (such as behaviour, mood and injury) relate to the child's disability or special need without further investigation.

Being especially aware of the safeguarding issues surrounding children who are looked after •ensuring that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They will also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her, as well as the details of the child's social worker and the virtual school head in the LA.

Working with the Virtual School Head Teachers to discuss how the pupil premium plus funding can be best used to support the progress of Looked After Children in the school.

## **Confidentiality**

### **We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.**

The Principal or DSL will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.

We will always undertake to gain the consent of relevant adults before a referral to MASH unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will consult with the Duty Manager at the Social Services on this point.

### **Supporting Staff**

We recognise that staff working in the college who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.

We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties (aka supervision) with the DSL, mental health lead or Principal and to seek further support as appropriate.

### **Allegations against staff**

All college staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults.

All staff should be aware of the college's own Code of Conduct and other advice on pupil-management which is included in the Staff Handbook.

We understand that a pupil may make an allegation against a member of staff.

If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Principal.

The Principal on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Designated Officer at the LA known as LADO.

If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Principal, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will consult the LA without notifying the Principal first. The college will follow the council's procedures for managing allegations against staff

Suspension of the member of staff, excluding the Principal, against whom the allegation has been made, needs careful consideration, and the Principal will seek the advice of the LADO in making this decision.

In the event of an allegation against either the Principal, the decision to suspend will be made by the Chair of Governors with advice as outlined above.

We have a procedure for managing the suspension of a contract for a community user in the event of an allegation arising in that context.

### **Whistle Blowing**

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

A staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of child protection and safeguarding, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues. If necessary, they should speak in the first instance to the Principal.

We have fully adopted the Local Authority's policy in this area and the text of this policy is contained in the Staff Handbook.

### **Physical Intervention**

Staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, when a child is endangering him/herself or

others, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person. Such events should be recorded and signed by a witness where possible.

We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

## **Equality and bullying harassment**

The college makes its stance on equality clear in our Equality policy and bullying in our Discipline Bullying and Harassment policy.

## **Prevention**

We recognise that the college plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing pupils with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

## **The college community will therefore:**

Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.

Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the college whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.

Include across the curriculum, including PSHE / SMSC opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm (such as e-safety, gangs and criminality, extremism, sex and relationships and broader safety) and to know to whom they should turn for help.

Our approach to Health & Safety issues reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both physically with in the college environment, and for example in relation to internet use, and when away from the college when undertaking trips and visits.

## **Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed annually and in line with new legislation.

