

Wakefield College

Safeguarding Children And Vulnerable Adults Guidance And Procedures

1. Principles

- 1.1 The College has a statutory and moral duty to ensure that it functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults receiving education and training at the College. These procedures are produced in accordance with the College Policy on Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults and shall be implemented in respect of all instances where concerns exist that abuse may be occurring.
- 1.2 The designated persons with responsibility for safeguarding children and vulnerable adult matters in the College are the Student Services Manager and Human Resources Manager.
- 1.3 Some children may be in need because they are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interest of the children. Throughout these procedures the phrase "significant harm" means ill treatment or the impairment of health or development.
- 1.4 These procedures must be followed in respect of young persons under the age of 18 years or those over 18 considered to be "vulnerable" due to any learning difficulty and/or disability.
- 1.5 The welfare of the child/student is of paramount importance at all times, irrespective of where the harm takes place.

2 Categories of Abuse

2.1 Children

- **Physical Abuse**

This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

- **Emotional Abuse**

This is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless and unloved, inadequate, or valued only so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed in children. These may include interactions which are beyond the child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

- **Sexual Abuse**

This involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (eg rape) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic materials or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

- **Neglect**

This is the persistent failure to meet the child's basic physical and/ or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failure to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

2.2 Adults

- **Physical abuse**

This includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, rough handling or unnecessary physical force either deliberate or unintentional, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions.

- **Sexual Abuse**

This includes rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent to, or was pressured into consenting. Sexual abuse can occur between people of the same sex and it can also occur within a marriage or any long-term relationship. A relationship of trust should exist between a member of staff or a volunteer and the person for whom they are caring, it would be seen as a betrayal of that trust, and therefore abusive, for that member of staff or volunteer to have a sexual relationship with the person they are caring for.

- **Psychological Abuse**

This includes emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

- **Financial or Material Abuse**

This includes theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property, enduring power of attorney, or inheritance or financial transactions, or the inappropriate use, misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

- **Neglect and Acts of Omission**

This includes ignoring or withholding medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition, clothing and heating.

- **Discriminatory Abuse**

This includes racist, sexist, or other forms that are based on a person's disability and other forms of harassment, or similar treatment.

- **Self Neglect**

This is not a direct form of abuse but staff need to be aware of it in the general context of risk assessment/ risk management and to be aware that they may owe a duty of care to a vulnerable individual who places him/herself at risk in this way.

3 Receiving an allegation of abuse

Staff in the College are well placed to detect when children/students in their care are suffering from or at risk of significant harm. This may be through observation of injuries or behaviour or through the child /student making an allegation. It is essential that any suspicions of risk of significant harm are acted on.

If a child/student makes an allegation of abuse, staff should listen carefully, using the following guidelines:

- be honest – do not promise absolute confidentiality. If the child/student is at risk of significant harm you will need to tell someone else but only the people who really need to know.
- allow the child/student to speak without interruption
- never trivialise or exaggerate the issue
- never make suggestions or lead the child/student in any way
- only ask enough questions to clarify your understanding, do not probe or interrogate as this may jeopardise future investigation
- reassure the child/student, let them know you are glad they have spoken up and that they are right to do so
- try to remain calm – remember this is not an easy thing for them to do.
- do not show your emotions – if you show anger, disgust or disbelief, they may stop talking. This may be because they feel they are upsetting you or they may feel your negative feelings are directed towards them
- let the child/student know that you are taking the matter very seriously
- make the child/student feel secure and safe without causing them any further anxiety.

4 Reporting Procedure

- 4.1 Any member of staff who has knowledge of, or a suspicion that a child/student is or has been suffering significant harm, or is at risk of significant harm, should discuss their concern with the Student Services Manager or their line manager. There should be no delay in communication once suspicion arises. The sharing of relevant information at the earliest opportunity within an environment of strict confidentiality is essential. All information from parents, members of the public and any of an anonymous nature must be acted upon.
- 4.2 Any member of staff concerned that a child/student may be at risk should record and date any observations or disclosures which may indicate abuse, using the report form at Appendix 1. The report may be discussed with the Student Services Manager, the line manager and/or others involved in the care of the child/student.
- 4.4 Whenever possible the issue should be discussed with parents/carers except where to do so would jeopardise future enquiry or would not be conducive to the child/student's welfare.

- 4.5 If it is agreed that the issue puts the child/student at risk of significant harm it must be reported to Social Care Direct or in the case of an emergency to the Police. This referral would normally be made by the Student Services Manager but in their absence the referral must be made by another manager.
- 4.6 The child/student should be kept informed of actions taken at all stages of the procedure and maximum support offered/provided to them. Where the child/student is competent to give consent, their agreement to the referral should be sought. If consent is refused the referral should still be made if it is considered necessary to protect the child/student from significant harm.
- 4.7 Whenever possible, as in 4.4, parents/carers will be notified that an issue is going to be reported.
- 4.8 A written report of all discussions and action taken must be made and will be retained securely by the Student Services Manager.

5 Confidentiality

Confidentiality and trust should be maintained as far as possible, but staff must act on the basis that the safety of the child/student is the overriding concern. The degree of confidentiality will be governed by the need to protect the child/student. The child/student must be informed at the earliest possible stage of the disclosure that the information will be passed on. Discussion of the case must only be with appropriate staff and should always be held in private.

The College complies with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998, which allows for disclosure of personal data where this is necessary to protect the vital interests of a child/student.

6 Allegations against a student

Allegations against a student may involve another student or may involve an external party eg a child in a nursery placement.

When an allegation of abuse is made by a student against another student, an investigation will take place led by the Student Services Manager.

When an allegation is made by an external party against a student the Student Services Manager will liaise with the external party regarding investigating and reporting the incident.

In either case, the College Student Disciplinary Procedures may be invoked as well as reporting the case to Social Care Direct and/or the Police. The outcome of a Student Disciplinary Hearing may be exclusion from the College. That decision may not necessarily be bound by the outcome of a Police investigation.

7 Allegations against Wakefield College Staff

When an allegation is made against a member of College staff, an investigation will take place led by the Human Resources Manager in line with DfES guidance. The College Disciplinary Procedures for staff may be invoked as well as reporting the case to the appropriate authorities. If an allegation is made against the Principal the Human Resources Manager will liaise with the Chair of Governors. If an allegation is made about a member of agency staff the Human Resources Manager will liaise with the third party to undertake the investigation.

8 Records

- 8.1 All records of observations, discussions and action taken in relation to students will be kept securely by the Student Services Manager for 6 years following the child's 18th birthday.
- 8.2 Where necessary, child protection records relating to current College students will be requested from the student's previous school if a child protection issue arises.
- 8.3 All records relating to allegations against staff will be kept securely by the Human Resources Manager including records of investigations into allegations that are found to be without substance. A record that an allegation was made, a summary of that allegation, that it was investigated and the out come of the investigation will be kept.

9 Legislation and Guidance

These procedures are driven by the following legislation and guidance available from the Student Services Manager:

Child Protection

- Children Act 1989
- Protection of Children Act 1999
- Education Act 2002
- Children Act 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006
- Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education DfES 2006
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- West Yorkshire Consortium Child Protection Procedures 2007
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People Allegations Management Advisors 2007

Adult Protection

- No Secrets: Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse DoH 2000
- Wakefield & District Safeguarding Adults Board Adult Protection Policy and Procedures 2008

Appendix 1

Wakefield College
Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Procedures
Report Form

Name of staff reporting concern
Date

Student Details	
Name	Date of Birth
Student ID No	
Programme of study	

Details of concern, please describe the issue fully including dates, names, reported allegations, observations of behaviour, injuries etc

Action taken:

Discussed with Student Services Manager Yes/No
Agreed action

Discussed with Line Manager Yes/No
Agreed Action

Signature of staff completing form

Date

To be completed by Student Services Manager or Line Manager

Action taken:
Referred to Social Care Direct Yes/No

Signed

Date