

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Introduction

Cromwell Community College fully recognises the responsibility it has under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Through their day-to-day contact with pupils and direct work with families, staff at the College have a crucial role to play in noticing indicators of possible abuse or neglect and referring them to *Social Care via the Cambridgeshire Direct Contact Centre (Designated Person for Child Protection to refer)*.

This policy sets out how the College's Governing body discharges its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the College.

Designated person: Miss Hilary Roberts

There are four main elements to our policy:

PREVENTION through the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils and the creation and maintenance of a whole College protective ethos.

PROCEDURES for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.

SUPPORT TO VULNERABLE CHILDREN *those who may have been abused or witnessed violence towards others.*

PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE WORKING WITH CHILDREN

Our policy applies to all staff, paid and unpaid, working in the College including Governors. Teaching Assistants, Midday Supervisors, secretaries as well as teachers can be the first point of disclosure for a child. Concerned parents/carers may also contact the College and its governors.

1. PREVENTION

1.1 We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help to protect children.

1.2 The College will therefore:

1.2.1 *Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel safe in both the real and the virtual world and it is recognised that they can talk about their concerns and problems.*

1.2.2 Ensure children know that there are adults in the College whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty *and they will be listened to;*

1.2.3 Include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for PSHEE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse *in both the real and the virtual world* and information about who to turn to for help;

1.2.4 Include material in the curriculum material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to child care and parenting skills.

2. PROCEDURES

2.1 We will follow the procedures set out in the Cambridgeshire Local Safeguarding Children Board "Safeguarding Inter-Agency Procedures". A copy of these procedures can be found in "Q" Drive, General Admin – Policies and on the LSCB website /www.cambslscb.org.uk.

2.2 The Designated Senior Member of Staff for Child Protection is Miss Hilary Roberts. The other members of staff who have also received the Designated Person training are Mr. Jed Roberts and Mrs Sylvia Macfarlane.

The College will:

2.2.1 Ensure it has a designated senior member of staff, who has undertaken as a minimum, the 2 day child protection training course, *run by The Education Child Protection Service.*

2.2.2 Ensure this training is updated every two years in accordance with Government guidance;

2.2.3 Recognise the importance of the role of the designated teacher and ensure s/he has the time and training to undertake her/his duties;

2.2.4 Ensure there are contingency arrangements should the designated member of staff not be available;

2.2.5 Ensure that the designated member of staff will take advice from a child protection specialist when managing complex cases. The Designated Person has access to both Social Care and the Advice Line run by Education Child

Protection for “what if” conversations. The emergency duty team (out of hours) is also available.

2.3 The Role of Governors and College Staff

The College will:

2.3.1 Ensure every member of staff and every Governor knows:

- The name of the designated person and her/his role;
- How to pass on and record concerns about a pupil.
- That they have an individual responsibility for referring child protection concerns using the proper channels and within the timescales set out in the Inter-Agency Procedures;
- Where the Inter-Agency Procedure are located;

2.3.2 Provide training for **all** staff from the point of their induction, and updated every three years at a minimum, so that they know.

- Their personal responsibility
- The local procedures
- The need to be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse
- How to support and to respond to a child who tells of abuse

2.3.3 ensure that all staff, *paid and unpaid* recognise their duty and feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children and that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing policies.

2.4 Liaison with Other Agencies

The College will:

2.4.1 *Work to develop effective links with relevant agencies to promote the safety and health of all pupils.*

2.4.2 *Co-operate as required with key agencies in their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance and providing written reports at child protection conferences and core group meetings.*

2.4.3 Notify the local Social Care team if:

- It should have to exclude a pupil *who is subject to a child protection plan* (whether fixed term or permanently);
- There is an unexplained absence of a pupil *who is subject to a child protection plan* of more than two days duration from College (or one

day following a weekend); or as agreed as part of any child protection or core group plan.

2.5 Record Keeping

The College will:

- 2.5.1 Keep clear detailed written records of concern about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to Social Care immediately;
- 2.5.2 Ensure all records are kept secure and in locked locations;
- 2.5.3 Ensure all relevant child protection records are sent to the receiving College or establishment when a pupil moves schools *in accordance with the Education Child Protection procedures*.

2.6 Confidentiality and Information Sharing

The College will:

- 2.6.1 *Ensure* confidentiality protocols are adhered to and information is shared appropriately. If in any doubt about confidentiality, staff will seek advice from a senior manager or outside agency as required*.
- 2.6.2 *Ensure that* the Principal or Designated Teacher will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.
- 2.6.3 *Make all* staff aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- 2.6.4 *Ensure staff are clear with children that they cannot promise to keep secrets.*

2.7 Communication with Parents

The College will:

- 2.7.1 Undertake appropriate discussion with parents prior to involvement of another agency unless the circumstances preclude this *action*. (Further guidance on this can be found in the Safeguarding Inter-agency Procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board);
- 2.7.2 Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the College and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the College Brochure.

*The Local Safeguarding Children's Board Guidance on the Sharing of Information on Children in Need and in Need of Protection can be accessed from the LSCB website at cambslscb.org.uk

3. **SUPPORTING VULNERABLE CHILDREN**

- 3.1 *We recognise that abuse or witnessing violence may have an adverse impact on these children which may last into adulthood without appropriate intervention and support.*
- 3.2 This College may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, when at College their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.
- 3.3 We recognise that some *vulnerable* children actually adopt abusive behaviours and that these children must be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.
- 3.4 The College will support the pupil through:
- 3.4.1 *Circular opportunities to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation*
- 3.4.2 *The College ethos that actively promotes a positive, supportive and safe environment and values people.*
- 3.4.3 The College's Behaviour Policy is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the College. All staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of the child but does not damage the pupil's sense of self worth. The College will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but s/he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred;
- 3.4.4 Liaison with other agencies which support the pupil such as Social Care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, and the Locality Teams.;
- 3.4.5 A commitment to develop productive and supportive relationships with parents/carers;
- 3.4.6 Recognition that children living in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse are vulnerable and in need of support and protection;
- 3.4.7 *Monitoring and supporting pupil's welfare, keeping records and notifying Social Care in accordance with the Cambridgeshire Local Safeguarding Children Board "safeguarding Inter-Agency Procedures".*
- 3.4.8 When a pupil *who is subject to a child protection plan* leaves, information will be transferred to the new school immediately. The Child Review Manager and Key Worker from Social Care will also be informed. We will follow the procedures for children that are "Missing Children".

3.5 Drug Use and Child Protection

3.5.1 The discovery that a young person is using illegal drugs or reported evidence of their drug use is not necessarily sufficient in itself to initiate child protection proceedings but the College will consider such action in the following situations:

Where the College is aware there is evidence or reasonable cause;

- To believe the young person's drug misuse may cause him or her to be vulnerable to other abuse such as sexual abuse;
- To believe the pupil's drug related behaviour is a result of abusing or endangering pressure or incentives from others, particularly adults;
- Where the misuse is suspected of being prompted by serious parent/carer drug misuse.

3.5.2 Children of Drug Using Parents

3.5.3 Further enquiries and/or further action will be taken when the College receives reliable information about drug and alcohol abuse by a child's parents/carers in the following circumstances;

- The parental misuse as problematic (i.e. multiple drug use including injection);
- A chaotic and unpredictable home environment exists which can be attributed to drug or alcohol misuse;
- Children are not being provided with acceptable or consistent levels of social and health care;
- Children are exposed to criminal behaviour.

4. PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE FROM WORKING WITH CHILDREN

4.1 The College will operate safe recruitment practices including ensuring appropriate CRB and reference checks are undertaken according to DCSF document Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2007).

4.2 *Any allegation of abuse made against a member of staff will be reported straight away to the Principal. In case where the Principal is the subject of an allegation, it will be reported to the Chair of Governors.*

4.3 The College will consult with named Senior Officer at the Local Authority (LA) in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff and adhere to the relevant procedures set out in the Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education, the Education Child Protection Procedures and the College's Personnel Manual from EPM Ltd.

- 4.4 *The named Senior Officer will advise on all further action to be taken. Please note that the Principal or Chair of Governors should not seek to interview the child/ren involved until advice has been sought. Doing so may compromise any police interviews that may be necessary.*
- 4.5 *The College will ensure that any disciplinary proceedings against staff relating to child protection matters are concluded in full even when the member of staff is no longer employed at the College and that notification of any concerns is made to the relevant authorities and professional bodies and included in references where applicable.*
- 4.6 *The College will ensure that staff, paid and unpaid are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with pupils and parents/carers as advised within the Local Authority's Code of Conduct. As part of the induction process, all staff will receive guidance about how to create appropriate professional boundaries with all children, especially those with a disability or who are deemed vulnerable. All staff will have read and signed a copy of the Local Authority's Code of Conduct, Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings (March 2009 DCSF).*
- 4.7 *The College will ensure that staff and volunteers are aware that sexual relationships with pupils aged under 18 are unlawful and could result in legal proceedings taken against them under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Abuse of Trust). The College will also ensure that Staff and volunteers are aware that any relationships deemed inappropriate whether sexual or non-sexual with any students enrolled would be considered gross misconduct. Staff will also be made aware as part of induction about how to report inappropriate sexualised behaviours to the Principal or Designated Person to follow up with Social Care teams. Staff who work within the College have a duty of care to model appropriate social behaviours and to ensure that the professional role of trust is not abused.*

5. OTHER RELATED POLICIES

5.1 Physical Intervention

Our policy on physical intervention by staff is set out in a separate document and is reviewed regularly by the Governing Body. We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimum force necessary to prevent injury themselves, another person or property.

5.2 **Bullying**

Our Anti-Bullying Charter is set out in a separate document and is reviewed regularly by the Governing Body. We acknowledge that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

5.3 **Racist Incidents**

Our policy on racist incidents is set out in a separate document and is reviewed regularly by the Governing Body. *The College records racist incidents online as part of LA monitoring.* We acknowledge that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

5.4 **Health and Safety**

Our Health and Safety policy, set out in a separate document, is reviewed regularly by the Governing Body. It reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both within the College environment and when away from the College when undertaking College trips and visits.

5.5 ***E-Safety and Acceptable Use***

Our policies on e-safety and acceptable use, set out in a separate document, are reviewed regularly by the Governing Body. They reflect the balance needed between the exciting opportunities offered by the Internet and other technologies and the need for pupils and staff to keep themselves safe and deal sensibly with risk.

5.6 **Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs**

We recognise that statistically children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. College staff who deal with children with complex and multiple disabilities and/or emotional and behavioural problems should be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

The College may have pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties or challenging behaviours. The College will support staff to decide appropriate strategies that will reduce anxiety for the individual child and raise self-esteem as part of an overall behaviour support plan agreed with parents.

The College has pupils who may have communication difficulties and we are aware that they are vulnerable to abuse because they are unable to express themselves to others. Instead such children will often exhibit changes in behaviours or signs and symptoms of abuse recognised by staff with a good knowledge of the child.

Where necessary the College will provide additional training to staff to use Makaton, PECS or other communication systems. Supervision by Senior Managers will be vigilant to create a protective ethos around the child.

We promote high standards of practice, including ensuring that disabled children know how to raise concerns and have access to a range of adults with whom they can communicate.

6. GOVERNING BODY CHILD PROTECTION RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 The Governing Body fully recognises its responsibilities with regard to child protection and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

It will:

- Designate a Governor for child protection who will *monitor the College's compliance with child protection policy and practice and champion child protection issues*;
- Ensure an annual report is made to the Governing Body and copied to the Education Child Protection Service, on child protection matters to include changes affecting child protection policy and procedures, child protection training received, the number of incidents/cases (no names) and child protection in the curriculum.
- Ensure that this policy is annually reviewed and updated.

6.2 Extended Colleges and Before and After College Activities

6.2.1 If the Governing Body provides extended College facilities or before or after College activities directly under the supervision or management of College staff, the College's arrangements for child protection as written in this policy shall apply.

6.2.2 Where services or activities are provided separately by another body the Governing Body will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place for safeguarding children and child protection and there are arrangements to liaise with the College on these matters where appropriate.

Four Categories of Abuse

Physical Abuse – includes hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning/scalding, drowning, suffocating and factitious or induced illness (fabricating the symptoms of ill health or deliberately inducing illness in a child).

Neglect – persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

It may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse.

It may involve the neglect of or lack of responsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

It also includes parents/carers or carers failing to:

- *Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment).*
- *Protect from physical and emotional harm*
- *Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers).*
- *Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.*

Emotional Abuse – is the persistent emotional ill treatment so as to cause severe and adverse effects on a child's emotional development.

It may involve conveying to a child that they are:

- *Worthless*
- *Unloved*
- *Inadequate*
- *Loved only insofar as they meet another persons needs*

(Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment although it may occur alone).

It may also feature:

- *Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations (including interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capacity, overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing participation in normal social interaction).*
- *Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another (including domestic violence).*
- *Serious bullying causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger.*
- *The exploitation or corruption of children.*

Sexual Abuse – involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

This may involve:

- *Physical contact including penetrative acts*
 - *Rape*
 - *Buggery*
 - *Oral sex*

- *Non-penetrative acts*
 - *Looking at/or producing pornographic material*
 - *Watching sexual activity*
 - *Encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways*

Appendix A

Standards for Effective Child Protection Practice in Colleges

Child protection matters are receiving an increased priority in OFSTED inspections. The following standards may assist schools in evaluating their practice.

In best practice, Colleges:

1. have an ethos in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, and they are encouraged to talk and are listened to;
2. provide suitable support and guidance so that pupils have a range of appropriate adults to whom they can turn if they are worried or in difficulties;
3. work with parents to build an understanding of the College's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children to be referred to investigative agencies as a constructive and helpful measure.
4. are vigilant in cases of suspected child abuse, recognising the signs and symptoms, have clear procedures whereby teachers report such cases to senior staff and are aware of local procedures so that information is effectively passed on to the relevant professionals;
5. monitor children who have been identified as at risk, keeping, in a secure place, clear records of pupils' progress, maintaining sound policies on confidentiality, providing information to other professionals, submitting reports to case conferences and attending case conferences;
6. provide and support child protection training regularly to College staff every three years and in particular to designated teachers every two years to ensure their skills and expertise are up to date, and ensure that targeted funding for this work is used solely for this purpose;
7. contribute to an inter-agency approach to child protection by developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies;
8. use the curriculum to raise pupils' awareness and build confidence to that pupils have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others, taking into account of the guidance for Governors on sex and relationship education in circular 5/94;
9. provide clear policy statements for parents, staff and children and young people on this and on both positive behaviour policies and the Colleges approach to bullying;

10. have a clear understanding of the various types of bullying – physical, verbal, indirect, *and cyber-bullying* -act promptly and firmly to combat it, making sure that pupils are aware of the College's position on this issue and who they can contact for support;
11. take particular care that pupils with SEN in mainstream and special Colleges, who may be especially vulnerable to abuse, are supported effectively Particular attention should be paid to ensure that those with communication difficulties are enabled to express themselves to a member of staff with appropriate communicative skills e.g. Makaton or PECS;
12. have a clear policy about the handling of allegations of abuse by members of staff, ensuring that all staff are fully aware of the procedures and that they are followed correctly at all times, using the guidance set out in the DCSF document "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education".
13. have a written whole College *Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, which is regularly reviewed and made available to all College staff;*
14. the College will ensure that specified information is passed on in a timely manner to the LA for monitoring purposes.

