



## Safeguarding Code of Practice

### 1. Aim

- 1.1 The College is committed to providing a safe environment for all children and vulnerable adults.
- 1.2 A '*child*' is any person under the age of 18; '*children*' are to be construed accordingly. Particular care shall be afforded to a child under the age of 16.
- 1.3 A '*vulnerable adult*' is defined by the Department of Health as "those who are or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation." The University and the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board refers to 'vulnerable adults' as 'adults at risk'.
- 1.4 The College may encounter vulnerable adults and children through its teaching, research, outreach, admissions, access, ministerial or other activities.
- 1.5 The College cannot act 'in loco parentis' and ultimate responsibility for children rests with those who have parental responsibility.
- 1.6 This Code of Practice seeks to support activities involving vulnerable adults and children and to offer assurances to staff, students, volunteers and visitors that safeguarding will be dealt with effectively and in a timely manner.
- 1.7 The College has nominated safeguarding officers who will work with other agencies where appropriate to achieve its aims. These roles include:
  - A Safeguarding Lead, a fellow of the College, who leads and coordinates safeguarding responsibilities within the College.
  - Two safeguarding officers, administrative staff – typically the Admissions Officer and the Access and Outreach Officer – who lead on activities that primarily involve children.
  - The Director of Ministerial Formation, who takes the lead on any safeguarding issues disclosed by ministerial students.
- 1.8 This Code of Practice should be read in conjunction with the College's policies referred to within this Code of Practice, or listed below.
- 1.9 This Code of Practice does not routinely cover ministerial activities, which are the responsibility of churches and their associations. However, where a student discloses safeguarding information to a member of the Pastoral Team, the Director of Ministerial Formation will take responsibility for reporting, where necessary, to denominations and statutory bodies after consulting with the Safeguarding lead at the Baptist Union of Great Britain. Further information on Safeguarding in the Baptist Union can be found at

<https://www.baptist.org.uk/Groups/220183/Safeguarding.aspx>. The College will cooperate and work alongside the associations in any safeguarding allegations or suspicions.

## **2. Planning an Activity**

2.1 Any member of the College who has responsibility for organising an activity involving children must nominate an individual to act as the designated safeguarding lead for the activity.

2.2 Activities should:

- be designed so that appropriate training and supervision is available to those working with vulnerable adults or children;
- minimise occasions on which members of the College will need to work alone in an unsupervised way with vulnerable adults or children; and
- be appropriately risk assessed.

2.3 Every activity which involves children or vulnerable adults should be risk assessed and the assessment should consider how the risks identified can be minimised and should also outline the local processes for reporting concerns, as well as taking account of Health and Safety considerations. Training requirements and records of training undertaken should be recorded in the risk assessment.

2.4 It may be difficult to identify vulnerable adults within the context of the College's usual operations. The Academic Administrator will coordinate with the University's admissions teams and the Disability Advisory Service, so as to identify students who may have care and support needs. The College will also liaise with relevant local authorities in supporting students leaving care.

2.5 Completed risk assessments should then be made available to all staff or volunteers involved in the activity, and a copy provided to the Safeguarding Lead.

2.6 Guidance on health and safety for young people can be obtained from the College's Health and Safety Officer, currently the Director of Operations.

2.7 Children and vulnerable adults who are participating in a College activity must, as part of their induction to the activity, be given clear information about how, and to whom, they can report concerns about any member of the College with whom they will be interacting. More than one point of contact should always be given and the details of the College's Safeguarding Officers included.

## **3. Training**

3.1 Any member of the College who will be planning activities with children should have completed the on-line training provided by Oxford Safeguarding Children Board<sup>1</sup>, *An Introduction to Safeguarding*, together with any additional training that may have been identified by the risk assessment process.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.oscb.org.uk/training/>

- 3.2 Anyone holding the role of Safeguarding Lead or Officer will undergo detailed training in safeguarding issues on a regular basis. The Director of Ministerial Formation will undergo appropriate training as set out the Baptist Union of Great Britain.
- 3.3 Activity organisers (for example, involving residential courses for young people) may wish to arrange additional training.
- 3.4 Training records are kept by the HR Officer, currently the PA to the Principal.
- 3.5 Training for ministerial students is provided, and monitored, by the Baptist Union and their associations. Where College activities involve ministerial students coming into contact with children or vulnerable adults, the Director of Ministerial Formation will liaise with the relevant Baptist associations to ensure that adequate training is provided.
- 3.6 Staff and student helpers involved in Admissions and Access & Outreach activities will receive context-specific training appropriate to their involvement in these activities.

#### **4. Dealing with suspicions or allegations of abuse**

- 4.1 Those working with children and vulnerable adults may:
- have alleged abuse disclosed to them;
  - suspect abuse is being carried out, or has been carried out in the past; or
  - be accused of abusing those in their charge.
- 4.2 Whilst these issues may require very different courses of action (further guidance is given in annex A), it is essential that the safety and welfare of the child or vulnerable adult is prioritised.
- 4.3 The risk assessment for any activity involving vulnerable adults or children should identify at least one individual who will act as the key contact point to deal with such matters. The nominated safeguarding contact for the activity is responsible for ensuring that concerns and allegations are escalated to the Safeguarding Lead without delay.
- Allegations against, or suspicions about, a member of staff, non-student volunteers or academic visitors, should be reported to the Safeguarding Lead. The Safeguarding Lead will liaise with the Principal, as appropriate.
  - Allegations against, or suspicions about, a student, should be reported to the Safeguarding Lead. The Safeguarding Lead will liaise with the Principal and the Fellow for Welfare, as appropriate.
  - Should the allegation concern the Safeguarding Lead, one of the safeguarding officers will carry out their reporting and liaison duties.
  - Should the allegation concern the Principal, the Safeguarding Lead will liaise with the Chair of the Governing Body.
- 4.4 Where allegations relate to one of the Safeguarding Officers or the Safeguarding Lead, one of the other Safeguarding Lead/Officers should be contacted.
- 4.5 Any allegations or suspicions of abuse must be reported without delay to a relevant person, as listed below, who must then take prompt action.

- Where a child or vulnerable adult discloses alleged abuse, this should be referred to the Safeguarding Lead who will contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub.
  - Where a member of the College suspects current or historic abuse, this should be referred to the Safeguarding Lead, who will assess and, where appropriate, contact the relevant statutory agency for advice.
  - In the event an allegation is made against College staff, students, volunteers or academic visitors this must be referred to the Safeguarding Lead who will refer the matter to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub. This referral must be made within one working day of the allegations being made. The Local Area Designated Officer will advise on the appropriate action to be taken. In cases involving vulnerable adults of harm, referral will be made to Oxfordshire County Council.
  - In the event there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child or a vulnerable adult the emergency services should be contacted via 999 or the police via the 101 service. Anybody can make a referral in these circumstances. The relevant Safeguarding Lead should then be notified of the case, and they will liaise with the Local Area Designated Officer.
  - The Safeguarding Lead may contact their counterparts at partner institutions with which the child or vulnerable adult has a relationship.
- 4.6 Safeguarding 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. Examples include the Disclosure and Barring Service, sending schools' Safeguarding Leads, the University of Oxford, and the Baptist Union of Great Britain.
- 4.7 Appropriate records will be retained in accordance with the College's Data Protection Policy.

## 5. Useful links

### External agencies

Oxfordshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub: [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/safeguarding-hub](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/safeguarding-hub)

For children: Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board: [www.oscb.org.uk](http://www.oscb.org.uk)

For vulnerable adults: Oxfordshire Safe from Harm: [www.safefromharm.org.uk](http://www.safefromharm.org.uk)

### Relevant Regent's Park policy statements

A list of the College's key policies can be found at <http://www.rpc.ox.ac.uk/about-regents/governance-and-compliance/>. The following are of particular relevance:

- Harassment
- Data Protection
- Equality

- Confidentiality
- Health and Safety

**Baptist Union links:**

Safeguarding homepage: <https://www.baptist.org.uk/Groups/220183/Safeguarding.aspx>

**List of University of Oxford policy statements and codes of practice**

A list of the University's key policies can be found at: [www.admin.ox.ac.uk/iso/statutes/](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/iso/statutes/). The following are of particular relevance:

- University Harassment Policy and Procedure [www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/harassmentadvice/](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/harassmentadvice/)
- University Equality policy [www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/universityofoxfordequalitypolicy/](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/universityofoxfordequalitypolicy/)
- University Data Protection Policy  
[www.admin.ox.ac.uk/councilsec/compliance/dataprotection/](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/councilsec/compliance/dataprotection/)
- University Public Interest Disclosure ('whistleblowing') policy:  
[www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/cops/pid/](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/cops/pid/)
- Safety Office: Health and Safety of young people and children :  
[www.admin.ox.ac.uk/safety/policy-statements/upss113/](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/safety/policy-statements/upss113/)
- Policy on the ethical conduct of research involving human participants and personal data  
[www.admin.ox.ac.uk/curec/about/policy/](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/curec/about/policy/)
- Staff-student relationships: [www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/during/relationship/](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/during/relationship/)
- IT guidelines on handling illegal material [www.it.ox.ac.uk/policies-and-guidelines/handlingillegal-material](http://www.it.ox.ac.uk/policies-and-guidelines/handlingillegal-material)

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## **Annex A – Guidance for College members carrying out activities involving vulnerable adults or children**

*This guidance should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Code of Practice.*

### **1. General considerations**

- 1.1 If you are acting in a position of trust with children or vulnerable adults, you are expected to be mindful that you are acting as a role model and therefore should demonstrate exemplary behaviour.
- 1.2 Care should be taken to ensure conduct is appropriate to each circumstance and environment.
- 1.3 All activities should have undergone a risk assessment, and you should have a copy of the risk assessment which will identify a key contact to whom any concerns should be addressed promptly.
- 1.4 In your role:
  - you may become aware of, or suspect another person of abusing an at risk person, or an at risk person may disclose an allegation of abuse to you, and you will need to take action in such circumstances;
  - allegations of inappropriate behaviour may be made against you, and such allegations will need to be investigated, and may result in referral to external agencies.

### **2. Types of abuse**

- 2.1 The Government publication [Keeping children safe in education](#) defines abuse as: “a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children”
- 2.2 The same principles apply for at risk adults: abuse may be physical, emotional, sexual or neglect.

### **3. Expectations of those working with vulnerable adults or children**

- 3.1 *You should:*
  - Ensure you have completed the training requirements set out by the Safeguarding Team and that you know what you should do if an at risk person makes a disclosure to you;
  - Ensure you are familiar with the risk assessment and understand who the key contact is for the activity you are engaged in;
  - Give due regard to cultural difference;
  - 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;
  - Take care that language is not open to sexual connotation;

- Report any suspicions promptly and confidentially to the designated safeguarding lead for the activity, or in the event that the suspicions/allegations involve that person, to the College's Safeguarding Lead or Officers.
- Deal with information sensitively.

### 3.2 *You should not:*

- Engage in, or allow, any form of inappropriate touching. This would include doing personal things for a child or an vulnerable adult that they can do for themselves. Where the person is disabled tasks should only be carried out with the full consent of the individual, or their parent;
- Use inappropriate language, or allow others to use it without challenging it;
- Engage in any sexual relationship with a person to whom you are in a position of trust, even if they give their consent;
- Give your personal contact details (such as personal phone number, home address, email, Skype address or other communication routes) to a child or an vulnerable adult, or use any such route to communicate with a child or vulnerable adult other than regarding the activity (for example through the official website for the activity);
- Interact in a personal capacity with children or vulnerable adults outside of the activity, including through any form of social media, for example, by becoming 'friends' on Facebook;
- Allow allegations of inappropriate behaviour to go unchallenged, recorded or acted on;
- Take photographs, or make other recordings of children without specific written consent of the individual, or someone with parental responsibility for the individual.

### 3.3 *You should seek advice from the designated safeguarding lead for the activity if:*

- You suspect a relationship is developing which may be an abuse of trust;
- You are worried that a child or vulnerable adult is becoming attracted to you or a colleague who works with them;
- You think a child or vulnerable adult has misinterpreted something you have done or said;
- You have had to physically restrain a child or vulnerable adult to prevent them from harming themselves, another person or causing significant damage to property;
- A child or vulnerable adult tells you that they are being abused, or describes experiences that you consider may be abuse;
- You see suspicious or unexplained marks on a child or vulnerable adult or witness behaviours which are unusual or inappropriate.

## **4. Dealing with allegations, or suspicions, of inappropriate behaviour**

- Consider the urgency of the situation: in the event there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child or an vulnerable adult the emergency services should be contacted via 999 or the police via the 101 service. Anybody can make a referral in these circumstances. The Safeguarding Lead, or an Officer, should then be notified of the case

and will need to determine whether to refer serious cases to the relevant authorities within one working day;

- Remain calm, and ensure that the person knows you are taking them seriously. Reassure them that they are right to have told someone, but do not touch them (for example by putting an arm round them);
- DO NOT try to investigate or act on the matter yourself: doing so may seriously compromise investigation by the relevant authorities. You need only clarify what is being said to you (in order to establish that there is a suspicion of harm), and then refer the matter to the appropriate individual as set out in the Code of Practice;
- Be supportive, but DO NOT promise confidentiality. Explain that, in order that the allegation can be addressed you will have to talk to other people about it. Explain who you will talk to;
- Avoid 'leading' questions, or expressing a view about what you have been told;
- Use clear language, appropriate to the person you are dealing with;
- Do not talk to anyone else about the matter. If you need to seek support for yourself you should speak to the designated safeguarding lead for the activity or the College's Safeguarding Lead or Officers.
- Write down what you have been told as soon as possible. In all events this must be done on the same day but this should not delay prompt action. Write down exactly what was said *in the person's own words* as far as possible, include the time, place, and as much detail as you can remember, but ensure that the note is as factual as possible and avoid assumption, speculation or opinion. Sign and date the note. Bear in mind that the note will be disclosable to both internal and external agencies.



## **Annex B – Role of Safeguarding Lead and Officers**

*This guidance should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Code of Practice.*

The role of the Safeguarding Lead and Officers is as follows.

**1. To raise awareness by:**

- acting as a senior strategic figurehead for Safeguarding issues at the College;
- ensuring that the Code of Practice is implemented, and promulgated; and
- ensuring regular review of the Code of Practice.

**2. To manage referrals by:**

- advising and taking appropriate action in the event that allegations of abuse are made in the contexts set out in the Code of Practice;
- liaising with external agencies where appropriate (such as the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board, Oxfordshire Social & Community Services, the Disclosure and Barring Service, the Police); and
- ensuring that those involved in any case are appropriately supported.

**3. To promote appropriate training by:**

- ensuring that appropriate information and training are available to members of the College who will come into contact with vulnerable adults and children; and
- engaging in training themselves.