



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

2019/20

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SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PERSONS AND VULNERABLE ADULT POLICY

1. Introduction & Aims of the Policy

- 1.1 Portsmouth College recognises that the Governors, members of staff and students have a statutory and moral duty to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and vulnerable adults receiving education, training and care at the College. The College's policy is that the safeguarding of all of its people will be central to all that it does. This covers all matters connected with learners and staff having a safe learning and/or working environment, ensuring that they know how to keep safe and that they feel safe. It is also concerned with the legal duty to report any instances in which there are grounds to suspect a child or vulnerable adult is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

The College Aims to:

- Provide a safe environment for all learners
- Promote safe practices and challenge poor and unsafe practices
- Identify instances in which there are grounds for concern about the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult and take appropriate action to keep them safe
- Aid the identification of children, young people and vulnerable adults at risk of significant harm and provide procedures for reporting concerns
- Prevent unsuitable people working with any of our learners through the Colleges' Safer Recruitment Policy and Procedure (See reference table)
- Train staff through induction and inset to safeguard all students
- Develop a culture in which both learners and staff are aware of the actions they need to take to become and remain safe
- Contribute to effective partnership working between all those providing services for children
- Inform parents and carers that the College has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and, that in order to do this, we may need to share information with other agencies
- Look for signs of potential radicalisation of young people; train staff appropriately and report as per the "Prevent" agenda

2. Statutory Requirements

- 2.1 This policy and its procedures apply to all staff at the College and to all learners. The Act applies with particular reference to young people and, with appropriate adaptations, to the protection of vulnerable adults. Underlying the policy and procedures are two HM Government documents- Working together to Safeguard Children, July 2018 and Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2019. The policy is updated annually to reflect developments in the field of safeguarding and changes to legislation.
- 2.2 The Children Act 1989 defines a child as a person under the age of 18. This is regardless of domicile, marital status or any legal order in force. The Children Act 2004 also includes young people under 21 who have a learning or other disability, or who have been looked after by a local authority after the age of 16. The College also recognises vulnerable adults who may not have sufficient mental capacity to make some decisions. For the purpose of this policy when reference is made to a young person, this is in place of the terms child and children. The College will follow the statutory requirements in full in respect of young people as children as defined in the Act. The policy has been drawn up in accordance with the principles of the Children Act 2004 and with regard to Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education in 2007, Working together to Safeguard Children July 2018, Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2019 and and Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges, May 2018. The College works closely with the Portsmouth Safeguarding Children' Partnership (PSCP) and with the regional 'Hampshire Safeguarding Partnership'<https://www.hampshirescp.org.uk/>
- 2.3 The Policy also takes into account the Sexual Offences Act 2003 which makes it an offence for a person over 18 (e.g. a member of staff) to have a relationship with a young person under 18 where the person is in a position of trust in respect of that individual, even if the relationship is consensual. This applies where the young person is in full-time education and the person works in the same establishment as the individual, even if she or he does not teach the young person.
- 2.4 Throughout the policy the College Prevent duty, under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, shall be treated as an integral part of the safeguarding duty.

3. Roles & Responsibilities

3.1 The responsibility for protecting young people and vulnerable adults does not rest with any one agency, as Education, Children's Services, NSPCC, Police, Health Service and Probation Services are all involved in child protection. Portsmouth College acknowledges that it is not the College's role to investigate whether abuse has taken place as only Children's Services, the Police and NSPCC have the statutory power.

The College recognises that young people and vulnerable adults have the right to be protected from harm and it is the duty of the College to act if there is a cause for concern, and to notify the appropriate agencies so that they can investigate and take necessary action. A failure by any member of staff not to act on any concerns and not to pass on information that might prevent any continuing harm and abuse will expose the College to criticism and potential legal action. Within the College there are a range of individuals and support services that are in place to ensure that safeguarding is effective. Each have specific roles and responsibilities. These are namely:

- Governing Body and Governor for Safeguarding
- SLT (Senior Leadership Team) & SMT (Senior Management Team)
- Teaching Staff & Support Staff

3.2 Governing Body and Governor for Safeguarding

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring the College's Safeguarding practices are compliant with statutory requirements. It should ensure that there are appropriate policies and procedures in place in order for action to be taken effectively and in a timely manner to safeguard children and promote welfare. This relates also to Safer Recruitment (See reference table) and a risk based approach to working with volunteers. In addition all Governors are subject to a section 128 as per guidelines of Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2019.

Governors should also put in place appropriate safeguarding responses in the case of young people who go missing whilst enrolled in the College. This is key in relation to repeated absences to help aid in the identification of potential risk of abuse, neglect, criminal and sexual exploitation and to prevent young people and vulnerable adults going missing in the future.

The Governing Body will have an identified Governor for Safeguarding who will attend a Safeguarding Board Meeting at least once per term.

The Governor for Safeguarding will report to the Curriculum and Students Committee in relation to statutory requirements and required actions as appropriate. This is the mechanism for Governors being made aware of compliance and issues that need to be addressed.

3.3 SLT (Senior Leadership Team) & SMT (Senior Management Team)

One member of the Senior Leadership Team, the Deputy Principal and one member of SMT the Director of Student Services, are identified as the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) whose role is to advise staff, liaise with appropriate external agencies and record and report cases for investigation. The designated persons are also responsible for ensuring that staff training on matters related to safeguarding takes place. These individuals will be the point of contact for staff.

3.4 Teaching Staff & Support Staff

All members of staff have a duty to ensure the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults is their primary consideration. It is essential they report suspected or alleged abuse to the DSL, directly or through other members of the safeguarding team. If members of the safeguarding team are not available and advice on procedures is required, a member of SLT should be consulted before action is taken.

Whilst all teaching staff must liaise with the DSL over concerns about incidents of and FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) it is the staffs legal responsibility to report any discovery of either, directly so the Police can be informed of the criminal offence.

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from college, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that students have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

All staff working at Portsmouth College must have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put students at risk of harm, and follow, the College's procedures for the safeguarding and welfare of young people and vulnerable adults in the College, and know who to contact to express any relevant concerns. They should also understand additional policies such as Health and Safety Policy, procedures for dealing with incidents, first aid arrangements and mechanisms for the protection of information and data.

All staff will have access to a guidance document for use on a day-to-day basis which highlights the key points and procedures relating to Safeguarding.

Staff with Pastoral responsibility of full time students should ensure that these students have an understanding of their rights under the Children Acts and of the College's position on issues of child protection and protecting vulnerable adults.

All teaching staff must embed safeguarding issues within the curriculum. Support staff must embed safeguarding in their support areas.

All Portsmouth College staff must understand, and alert to the signs of abuse which may give rise to concerns about child protection. Abuse or neglect can take place by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Signs may include changes in a person's behaviour or failure of that person to perform or develop as expected. Staff need to have a heightened level of alertness when working with LDD individuals as changes in behaviour, mood and injury may relate to possible abuse and not just their SEN or disability. In addition, staff need to be alert to the potential of higher rates of peer on peer abuse amongst students with SEN or a disability. Recognising abuse can be difficult; therefore staff need to take notice not only of major incidents but also signals which cause concerns.

They should record all such concerns and always discuss with the DSL /Safeguarding team to decide on appropriate actions to take i.e.

- report
- monitor
- take no further action at this stage

In terms of referral, only the DSL can make a decision to refer a complaint or allegation, having gathered and examined all relevant testimony and information.

All Portsmouth College staff must be aware of the potential dangers which are presented to students by adults who appear to be offering opportunities for work or personal development to students, including those initiated by the College itself. Care must be taken to ensure that appropriate DBS checks, references and safeguarding measures are in place before such links are encouraged and formalised.

In terms of work placements the College will:

- Ensure that procedures are in place to protect young people on work experience, work placements and supported internships
- Ensure that employers and training organisations are made aware of safeguarding issues, including the College's policies and procedures and asked to cooperate in putting appropriate safeguards in place
- Make arrangements to set and monitor work placements

4. Staff Recruitment

- 4.1 The College is committed to a policy of responsible recruitment which includes procedures for obtaining enhanced DBS for all new employees. Full details of policies and procedures can be seen in the College Recruitment and Selection Policy.

5. Staff Training

- 5.1 The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that members of staff are suitably trained and that internal procedures are current, adhered to and conform to Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Partnership (PSCP) procedures.
- 5.2 At the start of each academic year, all staff will be made aware of the College policy and procedures as well as the requirement to read section 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2019. At the initial staff induction new members of staff will be informed of the importance of safeguarding. Further induction training will take place and cover all aspects of the College policy, procedures and guidance documents.
- 5.3 DSLs and any identified Safeguarding team as indicated in the policy will have all completed Safeguarding Child Protection and Safeguarding Training as required by the local authority.
- 5.4 Training for staff will cover the full range of safeguarding duties and responsibilities but will also include:
- SEN and Disabilities
 - Looked After Children/Care Leavers
 - Peer on peer abuse
 - Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment
 - Contextualised Safeguarding
 - Prevent

6 Dealing with allegations against young people, vulnerable adults including peer-on-peer abuse

6.1

All young people and vulnerable adults have the right to learn in a supportive and mutually respectful environment. The College's Community Values covers these expectations. Allegations of abuse may arise between young people and vulnerable adults which need to be treated as a Safeguarding concern in line with this policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018. Allegations may arise between young people and vulnerable adults in the form of:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Sexual exploitation

When a young person or vulnerable adult makes an allegation against another student, staff should follow the procedures as outlined in section 7 - Procedures.

Procedures

7. Procedures where a child protection issue is identified (for cases not involving allegations against a member of staff)

Promises of confidentiality should not be given as the matter may develop in such a way that these cannot be honoured. If the complaint is the student him/herself, questions should be kept to the minimum necessary to understand what is being alleged and leading questions should be avoided. The focus must be on active listening and in a completely non-judgemental manner. Care must be taken in asking or interpreting responses to questions about indications of abuse as this could have an effect on the evidence which is put forward where there are any subsequent legal proceedings. Copies of reports, information etc should be kept securely locked at all times.

7.1 If any member of staff has any concerns no matter how small, regarding a student safeguarding issue then they should complete a "Room 15 Alert". This is available on the staff intranet, via link: <https://hermes.tpc.ac.uk/forms/safeguarding-notification/>

The "Room 15 Alert" emails the DSL and safeguarding team, who will deal with the "alert" in line with this policy.

Staff can also refer directly to the Room 15 safeguarding team in person if they think a student requires urgent safeguarding intervention. The safeguarding team will take action (in accordance with Safeguarding Policy and procedure), which could include referring to an appropriate external agency.

7.2 If the decision is taken to report the matter to Multi Agency Services Hub (MASH) the DSL shall:

- Contact the local MASH team or Police by telephone, keeping a written record of the date and time of the report and of the name/position of the person to whom the report was made
- If safe to do so for the student the DSL has to inform the Parents of the intended referral to the relevant external agency

- Confirm the telephone report in writing to the MASH within 24 hours
- Make a note of the conversation, sign and date
- Where appropriate maintain communications with the external to agency to ascertain what steps they will be taking and keep the student and staff member informed
- Ensure that the student and member of staff are offered counselling
- Notify the Principal immediately that a suspected child protection case has been reported to the Police or MASH
- Retain a copy of the report and any other relevant material for a period of seven years.

8 For Cases Involving Allegations Against a Member of Staff

8.1

All staff must abide by the College's Code of Conduct. Any suspicion, allegation or actual abuse of a young person or vulnerable adult by a member of staff or any other member of an external agency contracted by the College, must be reported to the DSL immediately when the critical concern has arisen. If a DSL is not contactable, or is the subject of the allegation or complaint, the matter must be reported directly to the member of the Senior Leadership Team on duty.

8.2

On being notified of any such matter the Designated Person must:

- Notify the Principal
- Take such steps as s/he considers necessary to ensure the safety of the student in question and any other student at risk
- Report the matter to the local Children's Services Department/Police in accordance with the procedure above
- In addition to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) by completing a referral form found on the PSCB website and send to the LADO within 24 hours of notification
- Contact must be made to the LADO to verify referral on 02392 882500 or email LADO@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

On being notified of the allegation the Principal will take into account:

- The seriousness of the allegation
- The risk of harm to the student concerned or to other students
- The possibility of tampering with evidence
- The interests of the member of staff concerned and the College

8.3

The Principal will then decide on the appropriate actions from the following options:

- To take no action and exonerating the member(ss) of staff making it clear that no further action will be taken and undertaking to remove any record of the allegation when this is found to be malicious
- If there is sufficient evidence to warrant an investigation, to conduct such an investigation in accordance with the procedures in the College Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- To suspend the member of staff immediately if the nature of the allegation and supporting evidence are sufficient to make this necessary in the interest of the protection of students and/or staff. To initiate this action in line with the College's staff Disciplinary Procedure
- In all cases of allegations against staff, the member of staff will be offered access to an external counsellor
- In the event of a police investigation being undertaken, the member of staff will be suspended and any internal investigation and/or disciplinary action may be postponed pending the outcome of the external investigation.

8.4

Record Keeping

- Details of allegation that are found out to have been malicious should be removed from personnel records
- For all other allegations, a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation, follow up action and how the allegation was resolved or action and decisions reached, must be kept on the personnel file. A copy of which should be provided to the individual concerned

9 Informing ESFA about Serious Safeguarding Incidents

9.1 ESFA has included new safeguarding clauses in the funding agreements and contracts for 2017 to 2018

- The ESFA require to be made aware when an institution is itself the subject of an investigation by the local authority or the police
- This is equally applicable to the College's subcontractors
- In any such circumstances, the Chair of Governors, Principal or DSL must inform the ESFA via email Enquiries.EFA@education.gov.uk
- The detail to be reported must follow the format of:
 1. Name of the College
 2. Nature of the incident
 3. Confirmation that it is or is scheduled to be investigated by the local authority and/or the police

10 Reference

<u>Associated College Documents</u>	
Name of Document	Author
Behaviour Policy	Deputy Principal (Students and Operations)
Health and Safety Policy	Director of Health, Safety and Compliance
Safer Recruitment Policy	HR Director
Volunteering Policy and Procedure	HR Director