

Safeguarding and Online Safety Policy

Introduction

Safeguarding means:

- Protection from abuse and neglect, including protection from radicalisation
- Promotion of health and development
- Ensuring safety and care

Northern College recognises that members of staff and students have a role to play in safeguarding the welfare of vulnerable adults, and preventing their abuse.

Aim of Policy

The aim of this policy is to ensure the safety of vulnerable adults by outlining clear procedures and ensuring that all staff members are clear about their responsibilities.

The policy falls into two sections, section one covers safeguarding vulnerable adults and section two covers online safety.

Section One – Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

Definitions

Vulnerable Adults

For the purposes of this policy the main categories of people covered by the definition of vulnerable adult include people:

- who have a learning disability
- who have physical or sensory impairments
- who have a mental illness including dementia
- who are elderly and frail
- who are considered vulnerable and who may experience abuse due to problems with alcohol or drugs (or be vulnerable due to other circumstances such as being an asylum seeker, or being homeless)

It should be recognised that there are other factors leading to vulnerability and that this is not an exhaustive list.

Abuse

Abuse is behaviour towards a person that either deliberately or unknowingly causes a person harm, or endangers their life or their human or civil rights. It can be passive, e.g. failing to take action to care for someone, or failing to raise the alert about abuse; or active, e.g. hitting, stealing or doing something that causes harm. Abuse can be a one-off or something that is repeated.

Abuse falls into a number of categories:-

Physical Abuse such as pushing, shaking, inappropriate restraint, force-feeding, forcible administration of medication, neglect or abandonment;

Neglect or acts of omission e.g. being left in wet or soiled clothing, or malnutrition;

Sexual Abuse;

Financial Abuse such as exerting improper pressure to sign over money from pensions or savings etc;

Psychological/emotional Abuse (including the use of text, social networks and email);

Violation of rights e.g. preventing an individual speaking his/her thoughts and opinions;

Exploitation of a person's vulnerability in order to lead them to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism;

Institutional Abuse e.g. failure to provide a choice of meals or failure to ensure privacy or dignity;

Discriminatory in nature e.g. racial, sexual or religious harassment.

Online Abuse

The college recognises that all the above forms of abuse can be undertaken using digital technology particularly through Social network sites, tablets and mobile phones.

Responding to an allegation

Any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse must be reported to a College Designated Person with responsibility for safeguarding as soon as possible. If after careful assessment the Designated Person considers that there is reasonable cause to suspect abuse of a vulnerable adult they must, as a matter of urgency, discuss the matter with the relevant Social Services Manager, Safeguarding Adults Team, police PREVENT contact, Channel Co-ordinator or Duty Social Worker to determine whether it is a safeguarding matter.

If it is agreed to be a Safeguarding matter a written record of the date and time of the report should be made and the report must include the name and position of the person to whom the matter is reported. The Designated Person should discuss with the relevant department what action should be taken if any, on the part of the College. A note of that conversation should be made.

Written records

The relevant College Designated Person will retain a copy of the report; any notes, memoranda or correspondence dealing with the matter; and any other relevant material. Copies of reports, notes etc. should be kept secure at all times.

The member of staff who has cause for concern should make a full record as soon as possible. The record should include the nature of the allegation and any other relevant information including:

- Date, time and place where the alleged abuse occurred;
- Names of others present;
- Name of the complainant and, where different, the name of the person who has allegedly been abused; nature of the alleged abuse;
- Description of any injuries/incidents observed; and the account which has been given of the allegation

A copy of all documentation is to be held centrally.

Guidelines for Staff

This procedure must be followed whenever any member of College staff hears an allegation from a vulnerable adult that abuse has, or may have, occurred or where there is a significant concern that there may be such abuse.

- Listen to what is said;
- Accept what you are told – you do not need to decide whether or not it is true; and
- Listen without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Reassure the person reporting their concern;
- Do not promise confidentiality;
- Do not promise that “everything will be alright now” (it might not be).
- Respond to the person reporting but do not interrogate;
- Avoid leading questions but ask open ended ones;
- Clarify anything you do not understand;
- Explain what you will do next, i.e. inform a Designated Person
- Make notes as soon as possible – during the interview if you can
- Use the person’s own words – do not assume – ask, e.g. “Please tell me what xxxxx means”.
- Include: time date place.

- Describe observable behaviour and appearance
- Cross out mistakes – do not use correction fluid
- Do not destroy your original notes – they may be needed later on and must be given to the Designated Person.
- Consider what support is needed for the student– you may need to give them a lot of your time or they may need to be referred to student services for counselling;
- Ensure you are supported – such interviews can be extremely stressful and time consuming;
- Once reported to them the Designated Person will take responsibility for the matter and will take all of the necessary actions. However if you have questions or need additional support then ask.

Responsibilities

All members of staff have a responsibility to be aware of this policy and to report any suspicions that they might have concerning vulnerable adult abuse.

The Designated People in the College's safeguarding team are:

Denise Pozorski (SLT Designated person), Dave Pedley and Joanne Bell.

The college has membership of and is committed to working closely with the local Adult Safeguarding Board and referring where necessary to regional adult safeguarding teams. The college also works with the local PREVENT network and is represented at Silver and Bronze level, referring where necessary through the police PREVENT contacts and/or the appropriate Channel panel.

DBS Checks

An Enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check is only required for those roles which involve the individual working with vulnerable groups. An individual whose role meets the definition of undertaking a 'Regulated Activity,' either through employment or as a volunteer, an application will be made for an Enhanced DBS check and a relevant Barred List check. All staff whose posts require a DBS check will be required to renew their application every three years. For further information please refer to the College's DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Policy.

Training

All employees of the College are required to undertake training in safeguarding – this includes a module on "Safeguarding in the Learning and Skills Sector" for all employees and a further module on "Safeguarding and Safer Recruitment" for those employees involved in the recruitment of staff or students. Employees are also required to undertake training on PREVENT. All staff will receive initial training as part of the overall induction process; training is then repeated on a three year cycle. This training may be undertaken online or through facilitated seminars.

Contacts

Safeguarding Customer Access Team Barnsley
01226 773300

Adult Social Care Leeds
0113 222 4401

Adult Social Care Sheffield
0114 273 4908

Rotherham Safeguarding Adults
01709 822330

Doncaster Safeguarding Adult Service
01302 737391

Kirklees Safeguarding Adults
01484 414933

Section Two – Online Safety

A wide range of technologies are now used in education. Safeguarding learners against the risks involved in using such technologies, often referred to as online safety, is an important part of an overall safeguarding strategy.

The College recognises that safeguarding learners, and providing them with the skills to safeguard themselves when using this technology, is a key aspect of the College educational offer and the key focus of the College online safety Policy.

The College also recognises that banning, blocking and filtering approaches, though useful, cannot be regarded as sufficient protection for learners and it does not relieve the College of a duty of care with regard to safeguarding learners and employees.

Through a combination of effective policies and practice, a robust and secure technological infrastructure and education and training for learners and staff, the College will develop an effective online safety strategy across all learning provision.

The strategy will:

- Provide a safe environment for all learners and employees
- Adhere to legal responsibilities
- Ensure that technologies are used responsibly in order to support innovative and effective learning and teaching
- Educate learners to identify the risks technology can present, and help them develop the skills they need to safeguard themselves
- Assess the risks presented by technology and develop appropriate policies and guidance to mitigate against those risks

- Involve managers, staff and learners in developing acceptable use policies and establishing reporting procedures for unacceptable use.
- Promote a culture of online safety within the College

Online safety risks can be broadly mapped across four areas:

Contact:

Which may be unwelcome or inappropriate, including grooming or sexual contact

Commerce:

Illegal activity such as phishing or identity theft

Content:

This could include inappropriate or illegal content, material that incites racial hatred, condones and encourages support for terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism or criminally obscene content. It also includes the inappropriate public posting of material. This may apply to employees equally as to learners, and may include the inappropriate and potentially unsafe posting of personal data, or the posting of material that brings the individual or the provider into disrepute or impacts upon their business.

Conduct:

Includes activities carried out against the learner and also those carried out by the learner. This category includes anti-social or illegal behaviour, and the ranges of behaviours and activities that make up cyber bullying

Learner Involvement and Consultation

Learners are often on the cutting edge of technological development. The College recognises that by inviting them to shape the online safety policy, we can better understand their concerns, cater for their learning and social needs, and maximise the benefit technology can offer. Through the College Student Council, learners will be fully involved in the policy development process.

Infrastructure

Technological tools will be used effectively to manage and monitor the use of ICT provision, to filter content, and to track and manage the use of systems, software and internet access.

Monitoring Procedures

Emerging online safety incidents will be reported to the designated person in line with the College safeguarding policy. Termly incident reports will be presented to the Safeguarding Committee.

Staff Roles and Responsibilities

All teaching staff have the responsibility of educating students in their care about safe internet practice, including the reporting of any unsuitable material that finds its way through the College's web safety filter.

Through continuous and appropriate staff development, the College will seek to ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding required to both assess and mitigate against risks, and help learners develop the skills necessary to operate safely in a digital environment

Online safety Induction

Online safety is featured in all formal library induction sessions and introductory ICT session of the Diploma Learning for Life Programme. Electronic copyright and plagiarism is featured in bespoke copyright induction sessions. A direct link to online safety information, support and guidance (including video tutorials) is provided via the College website and virtual learning environment and staff are encouraged to promote the resource in all internet based teaching and support sessions. Online safety is also covered as part of the staff induction procedure.

Children

The College provides 'minor' user accounts for children. This is a safe, highly restricted user area which permits limited connectivity to web content and no access to social networking or instant messaging services.

Related Policies:

General Regulations

Safeguarding Children Policy

Information Technology User Policy

Staff Code of Conduct

The Monitoring and Use of Electronic and Voice Communication Policy

Area	Student Services
Sub Area	Safeguarding
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Approved By	Policy and Finance
Document Manager	Vice Principal
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