

# Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Mander Portman Woodward (MPW)  
Cambridge

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## **INTRODUCTION**

MPW fully recognises its responsibilities under section 157 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 students 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, the telephone numbers for which are:

- During office hours: 0845 045 0180
- Out of hours: 01733 234724

This policy sets out how MPW discharges its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are students at the college.

There are four main elements to our policy:

**PREVENTION** through the teaching and pastoral support offered to students and the creation and maintenance of a whole college protective ethos.

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

**SUPPORTING VULNERABLE CHILDREN** 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 members of the MPW Board. Administrative and ancillary staff as well as teachers can be the first point of disclosure for a child. Concerned parents/carers may also contact the college and its governing body.

## **PREVENTION**

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

- 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;
- 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;
- include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for PSHE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse both in the real and the virtual world and information about who to turn to for help;

- include 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.

## PROCEDURES

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 on the LSCB website: [www.cambslscb.org.uk](http://www.cambslscb.org.uk).

The college will:

- 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;
- ensure this training is updated every two years in accordance with government guidance;
- recognise the importance of the role of the designated person and ensure s/he has the time and training to undertake her/his duties;
- ensure there are contingency arrangements should the designated member of staff not be available.
- ensure that the designated member of staff will take advice from a child protection specialist when managing complex cases, for example by contacting the Cambridgeshire Direct Contact Centre for ‘what if’ conversations.

Within the college the designated personnel for child protection are **Nick Marriott (Principal)** and **Sally Guyer (Accommodation and Welfare Officer)**. Both have received the designated person training in order to ensure that potential incidents are appropriately managed if one or other of them is unavailable.

## The Role of MPW Board Members and College Staff

The college will:

ensure every member of staff and every Board member knows:

- the name of the designated person and her/his role;
- how to pass on and record concerns about a student;
- 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 Procedures are located.

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 respond to a child who tells of abuse.

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.

## **Liaison with Other Agencies**

The college will:

work to develop effective links with relevant services to promote the safety and health of all students.

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 groups.

notify the local Social Care team if:

- it should have to exclude a student who is subject to a child protection plan (whether fixed term or permanently);
- there is an unexplained absence of a student 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 plan or core group plan.

## **Record Keeping**

The college will:

keep clear detailed written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to Social Care immediately;

ensure all records are kept secure and in locked locations;

ensure all relevant child protection records are sent to the receiving establishment when a student moves on from the college, in accordance with the Education Child Protection procedures.

## **Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

The college will:

ensure that the Principal or Designated Officer will only disclose any information about a student to other members of staff on a need to know basis;

make all staff aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children;

ensure staff are clear with children that they cannot promise to keep secrets.

## **Communication with Parents/Carers**

The college will:

undertake appropriate discussion with parents/carers prior to involvement of another agency unless the circumstances preclude this action;

ensure that parents/carers have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the college and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in communications to parents/carers.

## **SUPPORTING VULNERABLE CHILDREN**

We recognise that abuse or witnessing violence may have an adverse impact on those children which may last into adulthood without appropriate intervention and support. We also recognise that the college may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk, but when at college their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. We further recognise that some vulnerable children may develop abusive behaviours and that these children may need to be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.

The college will support a vulnerable child through:

- curricular opportunities to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation;
- the college ethos that actively promotes a positive, supportive and safe environment and values people;
- the college's behaviour policy that is aimed at supporting vulnerable students in the college. All staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of the child but does not damage the student's sense of self worth. The college will ensure that the student knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but s/he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred;
- liaison with other agencies which support the student such as Social Care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and the Locality Teams;
- a commitment to develop productive and supportive relationships with parents/carers;
- 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;
- monitoring and supporting the student's welfare, keeping records and notifying Social Care in accordance with the Cambridgeshire Local Safeguarding Children Board "Safeguarding Inter-Agency Procedures".
- Immediately transferring all relevant information to a new established when a student who is subject to a child protection plan leaves the college, whilst also informing the Child Protection Review Manager and the Key Worker from Social Care (in accordance with the procedures for 'Children Missing from Education'.

## **Drug Use and Child Protection**

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. However, the college will consider such action if there is evidence or reasonable cause to (a) believe the young person's drug misuse may cause him or her to be vulnerable to other abuse such as sexual abuse; (b) believe the student's drug related behaviour is a result of abusing or endangering pressure or incentives from others, particularly adults; or (c) where the misuse is suspected of being prompted by serious parent/carer drug misuse.

### ***Children of Drug Using Parents/carers***

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 is regarded 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.

## **Domestic Violence**

Where there is domestic violence in a family, the children/young people will always be affected; the longer the violence continues, the greater the risk of significant and enduring harm, which they may carry with them into their adult life and relationships.

The Principal will be notified of any domestic violence incidents involving children and young people on the college's roll, and will take appropriate action to ensure children and young people are kept safe in accordance with the Domestic Violence Protocol for Schools.

## **PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE FROM WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

The college will operate safer recruitment practices including ensuring appropriate CRB and reference checks are undertaken according to the DfES (now DCSF) document 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' (2007). All appointments made by the college are made under the direction of the Principal, Nick Marriott, who has been trained in safe recruitment procedures.

Any allegation of abuse made against a member of staff will be reported straight away to the Principal. In cases where the Principal is the subject of an allegation, it will be reported to the Managing Director of MPW.

The college will consult with the Named Senior Officer for Education in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff and adhere to the relevant procedures set out in Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education.

The Named Senior Officer will advise on all further action to be taken. Please note that the Principal or Managing Director 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.

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.

The college will ensure that all staff, paid and unpaid, are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with students 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.

The college will ensure that staff and volunteers are aware that sexual relationships with students aged under 18 are unlawful and could result in legal proceedings taken against them under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Abuse of trust). Staff will also be made aware as part of their 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 a college have a duty of care to model appropriate social behaviours and to ensure that the professional role of trust is not abused.

## **OTHER RELATED POLICIES**

### **Physical Intervention**

Our policy on physical intervention by staff is reviewed annually by the MPW Board. 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 to themselves, another person or property.

### **Anti-Bullying**

Our policy on anti-bullying is reviewed annually by the MPW Board. We expect staff to acknowledge that to allow or condone bullying constitutes a lack of duty of care may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

### **Racist Incidents**

Our policy on racist incidents is reviewed annually by the MPW Board. 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.

## **Health and Safety**

Our policy on health and safety policy is reviewed annually by the MPW Board. 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.

## **E-Safety and Acceptable Use**

Our policies on e-safety and acceptable use are reviewed annually by the MPW Board. They reflect the balance needed between the exciting opportunities offered by the internet and other technologies and the need for students and staff to keep themselves safe and deal sensibly with risk.

## **Children with Special Educational Needs**

We recognise that, statistically, children with emotional and 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 has students 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/carers.

The college has students 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.

## **THE MPW BOARD'S CHILD PROTECTION RESPONSIBILITIES**

The MPW Board recognises its responsibilities with regard to child protection and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. It will:

- designate a Board member for child protection who will monitor the college's compliance with child protection policy and practice;
- ensure an annual report is made to the MPW Board at its March meeting, and copied to the Education Child Protection Service, on child protection matters to include changes affecting CP 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.

## **Extended Facilities or Before/After College Activities**

If the MPW Board provides extended college facilities or before/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.

Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, the MPW Board 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.

## **THE FOUR CATEGORIES OF ABUSE**

Staff at the college recognise that abuse falls into four categories:

**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 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