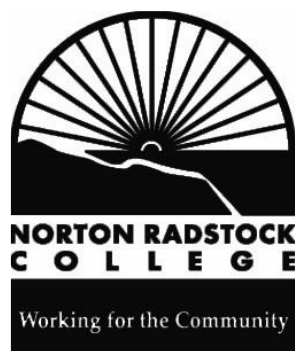


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Policy and Procedure for Safeguarding Children and Young People

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1. Introduction

Norton Radstock College recognises that members of staff and students have a role to play in safeguarding the welfare of children and preventing their abuse. The College has appointed a designated person for the Safeguarding of Children and Young People who coordinates the Colleges' approach to such matters. The College acknowledges that for the procedure to be effective it is important that staff receive adequate training and supervision to ensure that the needs and welfare of children are paramount.

This document is designed to provide a basic procedure which should be followed in every case. The Education Act 2002 section 175 (2) imposes a duty on schools (and all sectors of education including Further Education Colleges) and states that:

“The governing body of a maintained school [or further education institution] shall make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.”

There are two aspects to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children imposed by key guidance “Safeguarding Children in Education” produced by DfES (Department for Education and Skills) in 2004.

They are,

- That arrangements are in place to take all reasonable measures to ensure that risks of harm to children's welfare are minimised and;
- Appropriate actions to address concerns about the welfare of the child, or children, working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other local agencies.

In terms of this policy, “child, children and young people” mean those under the age of 19 as defined by The Children Act 1989. This policy applies to students in this age group attending a further education course; children aged 14 –16 who attend College as part of a School Links course. The College's provision for protection of students aged 18+ is dealt with in the Colleges' Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and Procedure.

2. Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

This Policy applies to all staff employed by the College including temporary and hourly paid, agency staff, governors and volunteers. All have a legal responsibility to take seriously any child protection concerns that come to their attention and follow the procedures given.

Students who have concerns about other students or the behaviour of adults towards them can use this Policy to ensure they are taken seriously. It recognises that the College has a responsibility towards children attending or visiting the College to safeguard and promote their welfare and to take appropriate decisions about how this can be achieved.

It is not the College's responsibility to investigate abuse. Nevertheless, it has a duty to act if there is a cause for concern and to notify the appropriate agencies so that they can investigate and take any necessary action.

The College has nominated persons with responsibility for safeguarding children, they are referred to as the Designated Person in this Policy and procedure, these people are detailed in appendix 1.

2.1. Prevention

The College takes seriously its duty of pastoral care and will be proactive in seeking to prevent children and young persons becoming the victims of abuse or neglect.

The College will do this in a number of ways:

- Through the creation of an open culture which respects all individuals' rights and discourages bullying and discrimination of all kinds;
- By identifying members of staff, who have overall responsibility for "The Safeguarding of Children and Young People Scheme" and other staff who perform the role of Designated Person as defined by this policy and its supporting procedure. They have received training in this field and act as a source of advice and support to other College staff;
- By informing children and young people of their rights to be free from harm and encouraging them to talk to College staff if they have any concerns;
- Through the tutorial programme and an ongoing programme of support, at an appropriate level, to promote self-esteem and social inclusion and address the issue of safeguarding children and young people in the wider context.

2.2. Responsibilities

The College has identified a designated person and deputies for Safeguarding Children and Young People, these people are listed in appendix 1 of this document.

In addition, all Staff are responsible for the identification of abuse and referral to the appropriate authorities via the College designated person.

The College shall operate safe recruitment procedures and ensure that appropriate checks are carried out on all new staff, governors and volunteers.

2.3. What is Abuse?

Abuse is behaviour towards a person that either deliberately or unknowingly causes a child or young 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.

It can be active, e.g. hitting, stealing or doing something that causes harm. Abuse can be a one-off or something that is repeated.

Appendix 2 sets of definitions of abuse but it can be,

- physical
- neglectful
- sexual
- financial
- psychological/emotional
- institutional or
- discriminatory in nature

3. Procedure for Safeguarding Children and Young People

3.1. Responsibilities

The designated person or if in their absence the nominated deputies will lead in all such cases.

All members are responsible to follow this policy and procedure.

3.2. Procedure

Any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse must be reported to the designated person as soon as possible and within a maximum 2 hours. If this is not possible, a nominated deputy shall be notified.

The designated person must immediately discuss the matter with the Local Authority Children and Families Help Desk to determine whether it is a safeguarding children matter. (NB: The Local Authority Children and Young People's Directorate is responsible for coordinating action in child abuse cases, including liaison with police). If it is agreed to be a Safeguarding Children matter, a written record of the date and time of the report shall be made and the report must include the name and position of the person to whom the matter was reported. The telephone report must be confirmed in writing to the local authority Children & Young People's Directorate within 24 hours.

If the consent has not been gained from the young person/parent, the designated person should discuss with the Local Authority Children and Young People's Directorate what action will be taken to inform the parents of the child and a note of that conversation should be made.

The designated person must notify the Principal of the College or their nominated deputy as soon as practicable and in within 2 hours maximum of the initial concern arising.

3.2.1. Responding to an Allegation

A full record shall be made as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation and any other relevant information including:

- The date.
- The time.
- The place where the disclosure of information took place.
- The place where the alleged abuse happened.
- Your name and the names of others present.
- The name of the complainant and, where different, the name of the child who has allegedly been abused.
- The nature of the alleged abuse.
- A description of any injuries observed.
- The account which has been given of the allegation.

3.2.2. Responding to an allegations about a member of staff

Any suspicions, allegations of actual abuse of a child or young person by a member of staff must be reported to the designated person and the Principal or their nominated Deputy immediately.

On being notified of any such matter, the designated person shall:

- Notify the Principal, who will initiate an investigation of this incident in line with the disciplinary procedure,
- Take such steps as he/she considers necessary to ensure the safety of the person in question and any other person who might be at risk.
- Report the matter to the Children and Young People's Directorate in accordance with the procedure set out in the previous paragraph.
- Ensure that a report of the matter is completed by the person who reported the original concern.

If the complaint is made against a member of the Senior Management Team or the designated person (or a nominated deputy), then the Principal, or a member of the Executive Team shall deal with the complaint. If the complaint is made against the Principal then the Chair of the Governors should be immediately notified and they shall deal with the complaint.

3.3. Records

The designated person will securely maintain central records of all allegations and actions taken. All information will be collated on a case by case basis. Records will be retained for 25 years. After this period they will be securely destroyed.

Records will include:

- Formal report.
- Any notes, memoranda or correspondence dealing with the matter.
- Any other relevant material.
- Copies of reports, notes etc will be kept securely locked at all times, but will be shared in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

3.4. Training – Staff Development

All College staff will undergo training so that they are fully aware of this policy and their responsibilities.

Designated person and their nominated deputies will receive additional training so that they can effectively fulfil their safety guarding responsibilities.

3.5. Review and Monitoring of this Policy and Procedure

The Senior Manager Student Support Services will review and monitor this policy and procedure on an annual basis and will recommend and implement approved changes where necessary. If required, a revised version of this document will be submitted to the Governing Body to enable them to identify any deficiencies or weaknesses, which will be the subject of timely action.

4. Guidance for staff

All children and young people under the age of 19 have an absolute right to a childhood free from abuse, neglect or exploitation. All members of staff involved with children and young people (teaching and non-teaching) have a responsibility to be mindful of issues related to young people's safety and welfare and a duty to report and refer any concerns however "minor" they appear to be.

IT IS NOT THE JOB OF COLLEGE STAFF TO INVESTIGATE THESE CONCERNS

This procedure must be followed whenever an allegation is made that a child has been abused or when there is a suspicion that a child has been abused. Promises of confidentiality cannot be given as situations of child prosecution will need to be shared. The matter may develop in such a way that these cannot be honoured. If you suspect that a student is going to discuss abuse, either towards themselves or another child or young person, establish **GROUND RULES CONCERNING CONFIDENTIALITY**. This information must be shared with a designated person for safeguarding children and possibly with a counsellor. The designated person will then contact the Local Authority Children and Young People's Directorate in order to discuss appropriate action.

Note: It is important to convey that the Children and Young People's Directorate will need to assess the situation and would want to work with the young person in determining what could/should happen next. They would wish to respect the young person's wishes and feelings provided no one is at immediate risk of harm. If the student is fully aware of what could happen, they can choose whether they

- want to speak now or have time to think about it;
- be as informed as possible regarding the implications of passing on this information.

If the complainant is the child him/herself, questions should be kept to the minimum necessary to understand what is being alleged. Leading questions must be avoided as the use of leading questions can cause problems for the subsequent investigation and any court proceedings.

5. APPENDIX 1

5.1. The designated Person

The designated person with responsibility for safeguarding children within the College is,

Penny Routledge – SMT Student Services

In her absence the following deputies will act as the Designated Person,

- David Grant - SMT
- Jackie Brangwyn – College Counsellor

5.2. SUMMARY – Safeguarding Children and Young People

This procedure must be followed whenever any member of College staff hears an allegation from a child (student aged up to the age of 19) that abuse has, or may have, occurred or where there is a significant concern that a child may be abused:

RECEIVE

- What is said;
- Accept what you are told – you do not need to decide whether or not it is true;
- Listen without displaying shock or disbelief.

REASSURE

- The student;
- Acknowledge their courage in telling;
- Do not promise confidentiality;
- Remind them they are not to blame – avoid criticising the alleged perpetrator;
- Do not promise that “everything will be alright now” (it might not be).

REACT

- Respond to the student 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 the Designated Person,

RECORD

Make notes as soon as possible – during the interview (if you can) - include:

- Time
- Date
- Place
- The student’s own words – do not assume – ask, e.g. “Please tell me what xxxxx means”.
- Describe observable behaviour and appearance

- Cross out mistakes – do not use correction fluid, E.G. “Tippex”.
- Do not destroy your original notes – they may be needed later on and must be given to the Designated Person.

SUPPORT

- 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 Support Services;
- Ensure you are supported – such interviews can be extremely stressful and time consuming;
- Once reported to the Designated Person, they will take responsibility for the matter and will take all of the necessary actions, however if you have questions or need additional support then do ask.

Action to be taken if there is an Incident, (Concern or Suspicion, or Disclosure or Third Party Allegation).

- Where required call emergency services (999).
- Do not disturb scene and contact Designated Person.
- Listen, reassure and record.
- If you have not already done so contact the Designated Person (this must be as soon as possible and within 2 hours).
- Pass on all notes.
- The Designated person will take appropriate action, e.g. referral to police or Children and Young Persons Department.
- Record signs/symptoms, add time, date and sign.
- Keep information confidential.
- Do not ask leading questions or ‘interrogate’.
- **DO NOT PROMISE CONFIDENTIALITY.**
- Explain what you will do next.
- The Designated person will inform the School Designated Person (if on School link programme)
- The Designated person to arrange support for the vulnerable adult and others as necessary.

6. APPENDIX 2

Definitions of Abuse (Children)

A person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.

Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocation, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Psychological and Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse affects on the child's emotional development.

Psychological abuse may involve the use of harassment, bullying, intimidation, indifference, hostility, rejection, threats, humiliation, name-calling, other degrading behaviours, shouting, swearing, discrimination or the use of oppressive language, mobile phone texting abuse, email, emotional abuse and all forms of cyber abuse. It can result in feelings of low self-worth. Some level of psychological or emotional abuse is present in all forms of abuse.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves a child or young person participating in, or watching, sexual activity to which they have not consented or were pressured into consenting, or to which they cannot give informed consent. It is not necessary for the individual to be aware that the activity is sexual. The activities may include: physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts, e.g. rape, buggery, indecent assault or inappropriate touch, incest, and situations where the perpetrator touches the abused person's body (e.g. breasts, buttocks, genital area).

Non-contact activities, e.g. exposing genitals to the abused person, or coercing the abused person into participating in or watching pornographic videos or photographs.

Neglect

Neglect is the deliberate withholding or unintentional failure to provide help or support, which is necessary for the child or young person to carry out activities of daily living. It also includes a failure to intervene in situations that are dangerous to the person concerned or to others, particularly when the person lacks the mental capacity to assess risk. Neglect may involve: failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing; failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment; neglect of basic emotional needs.

Discriminatory Abuse

Repeated, ongoing or widespread discrimination on the grounds of age, race, disability, religion, sexual preference or gender, slurs, harassment, name-calling, breaches in civil liberties, unequal health or social care.

Significant Harm

Sometimes, a single traumatic event may constitute significant harm, e.g. violent assault, suffocation or poisoning. More often, significant harm is a compilation of significant events, both acute and long-standing, which interrupt, change or damage the child or young person's physical and psychological development.

7. Appendix 3

Guidance for Parents and Carers

Safeguarding Children and Young People

Introduction

Norton Radstock College is concerned that all students remain safe, free from harm and is committed to playing a full and active part in the multi-agency response to safeguarding children concerns.

Additionally, the College has a legal duty to safeguard and promote the welfare young people (those aged up to 19) and to have a safeguarding children policy as required by legislation.

The College has appointed a designated person for the Safeguarding of Children and Young People who coordinates the Colleges' approach to such matters.

Through their day-to-day contact with students, and direct work with families, education staff have a crucial role to play in noticing indicators of possible abuse or neglect. Parents, Carers or Guardians should be aware therefore that where it appears to a member of staff that a student may have been abused, the College is required, as part of the local safeguarding children procedures to report their concern to Police/Children's Services immediately.

Principles

The College is committed to principles of Safeguarding Children and Young People. It recognises that it has a responsibility towards children attending or visiting the College to safeguard and promote their welfare and to take appropriate decisions about how this can be achieved.

It is not the College's responsibility to investigate abuse. Nevertheless, it has a duty to act if there is a cause for concern and to notify the appropriate agencies so that they can investigate and take any necessary action. Students have a right to be safe. Students are best protected when parents and College can work together.

Partnership

Norton Radstock College will inform parents, carers and guardians of any concerns (providing it does not compromise the student's safety) and will help and support them as necessary.

Prevention

Norton Radstock College will take positive action to prevent child or young person from suffering abuse and neglect through the development of an open culture that informs students of their rights and encourages them to speak about any concerns.

The College will also address the issue of students' safety through the curriculum.

Responding to Concerns

Norton Radstock College will refer all allegations or concerns that a young person has been or is likely to be abused or neglected to the appropriate services.

The College will consult with other agencies when it has concerns that a student may have been abused or neglected.

Physical and emotional abuse of students by other students will be dealt with through the College's Bullying and Harassment Policy.

Confidentiality

The College's policy and procedure for the Safeguarding of Children and Young People outlines principles for confidentiality and details of concerns and allegations are only communicated on a "need to know basis" to those with defined responsibilities under the policy and procedure.

If parents/carers have concerns about the young person in their care, they should contact the Principal who will put appropriate action in place.