**South Cheshire College**

**Policy for the Protection of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

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**A General Policy Statement**

South Cheshire College has a statutory and moral duty to ensure that it operates appropriately in respect of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and those adults deemed vulnerable receiving education and training at the College.

The College is committed to providing a safe learning environment that is based upon positive well-being, personal safety and security essential for all learners and all staff.

Throughout these policies and procedures, reference is made to:

“children and young people”. This term is used to mean “those under the age of 18”

“vulnerable adults” A vulnerable adult is defined as a person “who is 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 himself or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation”

The governing body is committed to ensuring that the College:

* provides a safe environment in which children, young people and vulnerable adults can learn
* identifies children, young people and vulnerable adults who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, and
* takes appropriate action to see that such children, young people and vulnerable adults are kept safe, both at home and at the College.

In pursuit of these aims, the governing body will approve and annually review policies and procedures with the aim of:

* raising awareness of issues relating to the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and the promotion of a safe environment for them to learn within the College
* aiding the identification of children, young people and vulnerable adults at risk of significant harm, and providing procedures for reporting concerns
* establishing procedures for reporting and dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff
* the safe recruitment of staff

In developing the policies and procedures, the governing body will consult with, and take account of, guidance issued by the Department of Health, the Department for Children, Schools and Families and other relevant bodies and groups. The College will refer concerns that a child, young person or vulnerable adult might be at risk of significant harm to Social Services and/or the appropriate agencies as agreed with the local Safeguarding Children Board.

The Principal and all staff working with children will receive training adequate to familiarise themselves with protection issues and responsibilities and the College procedures and policies, with refresher training at least every 3 years. There will be a senior member of the College management team with special responsibility for protection issues (the designated senior member of staff with lead responsibility for protection). S/heshall be assisted by other members of staff with responsibility for the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults*.*

The governing body will receive from the designated senior member of staff with lead responsibility for protection an annual report which reviews how the duties have been discharged.

The governing body recognises the following definition of abuse:

*Abuse is a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons.*

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a child, young person or vulnerable adult is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can happen in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

*The following 6 categories of abuse have been identified:*

***Physical abuse***

*Physical abuse may include hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions.*

*Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child, young person or vulnerable adult they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as factitious illness by proxy or Munchausen syndrome by proxy.*

*Some of the recognised signs of physical abuse are: unexplained burns, scratches, bruising and abrasions, drowsiness from misuse of medication and anxiety in the presence of the abuser.*

***Neglect and acts of omission***

*This may include ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate heating and nutrition.*

*Some of the recognised signs of neglect and acts of omission are: dehydration, infections, malnutrition and hypothermia.*

***Sexual Abuse***

*This may include rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the child, young person or vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting. It also includes forcing a person to look at pornographic materials.*

*Some of the recognised signs of sexual abuse are: changes in behaviour; torn, stained or bloody underclothing; bruising around the breasts or genital area; sexually transmitted diseases; difficulties in walking or sitting and sexualised behaviour.*

***Psychological/emotional abuse***

*Psychological abuse may include emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or support networks.*

*Some of the recognised signs of psychological or emotional abuse are: fear, passivity, confusion, apathy, lack of eye contact, low self-esteem, disturbed sleep patterns and reluctance to talk openly.*

***Financial or material abuse***

*This may include theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.*

*Some of the recognised signs of financial or material abuse are: loss of jewellery and personal property, lack of money to purchase basic items, a bill not being paid when money is entrusted to a third party, inadequate clothing, unexplained withdrawal of cash and loss of money from a wallet or purse.*

***Discriminatory abuse***

*This may include abuse, bullying and harassment based on the individual’s age, sex, disability, religion, race or ethnicity or sexual orientation.*

*Some of the recognised signs of discriminatory abuse might be very similar to psychological or emotional abuse.*

**B Designated Staff with Responsibility for the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults**

Senior Staff Member with Lead Responsibility

The designated senior member of staff with lead responsibility for protection issues is

Suzanne Wainwright, Vice Principal, who can be contacted at

South Cheshire College, Dane Bank Avenue, Crewe, Cheshire CW2 8AB

Tel 01270 654679; Fax 01270 500087; email: suzanne.wainwright@scc.ac.uk

The designated senior member of staff is a senior member of the College management team. She has a key duty to take lead responsibility for raising awareness within the staff of issues relating to the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and the promotion of a safe environment for learners within the College.

The designated senior member of staff is responsible for:

* Overseeing the referral of cases of suspected abuse or allegations
* Providing advice and support to other staff on issues relating to the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults
* Maintaining a proper record of any protection referral, complaint or concern (even where that concern does not lead to a referral)
* Ensuring that parents of children, young people and vulnerable adults within the College are aware of the College’s Policy for the Protection of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults
* Liaising with the Local Authority and the Local Safeguarding Children Board and other appropriate agencies
* Liaising with secondary schools which send pupils to the College to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for the pupils
* Liaising with employers and training organisations that receive children, young people and vulnerable adults from the College on long term placements to ensure that appropriate safeguards are put in place
* Ensuring that staff receive basic training in protection issues and are aware of the College protection procedures.

The designated senior member of staff will provide an annual report to the governing body of the College setting out how the College has discharged its duties. She is responsible for reporting deficiencies in procedure or policy identified by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (or others) to the governing body at the earliest opportunity.

Designated Staff Members

Other designated members of staff with responsibility for child protection issues are:

Michele Walker, Health, Safety and Welfare Manager

Sara Duncalf, HR Manager

Dulcie Knifton, Head of Support, Advice and Guidance

Chris Baggs, Head of Learner Services

Nursery Manager

Julie Titley, Deputy Nursery Manager

These designated staff members:

* Report to the senior member of staff with lead responsibility on safeguarding issues
* Will know how to make an appropriate referral
* Will be available to provide advice and support to other staff on issues relating to the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults
* Have particular responsibility to be available to listen to children, young people and vulnerable adults studying at the College
* Will deal with individual cases, including attending case conferences and review meetings as appropriate
* Have received training in child protection issues and inter-agency working, as required by the Local Safeguarding Children Board, and will receive refresher training at least every 2 years

The above staff can be contacted at, besafe@scc.ac.uk

and on Tel 07879 412301.

In the event that the designated staff members are unavailable, the college counsellors Cath Vyse and Sharon Gallagher should be contacted on 01270 654654.

**C Dealing with Disclosure of Abuse and Procedure for Reporting Concerns**

If a child, young person or vulnerable adult tells a member of staff about possible abuse:

* Listen carefully and stay calm
* Do not interview them, but question normally and without pressure, in order to be sure that you understand what they are telling you
* Do not put words into their mouth
* Reassure them that by telling you, they have done the right thing
* Inform them that you must pass the information on, but that only those that need to know about it will be told. Inform them of to whom you will report the matter
* Note the main points carefully
* Make a detailed note of the date, time, place, what they said, did and your questions etc

Staff should not investigate concerns or allegations themselves, but should report them immediately to the designated senior member of staff with lead responsibility for protection issues or a designated staff member or a college counsellor.

**D Allegations against members of staff**

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, this should be reported immediately to the senior staff member with lead responsibility for protection issues.

Actions will be taken both to protect children, young people or vulnerable adults and the accused member of staff. These may include ensuring that the member of staff is not placed in a vulnerable situation while investigations take place, giving the staff member leave of absence on full pay or ensuring they are not working alone.

**E Associated policies**

The Policy for the Protection of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults should be read in conjunction with other College policies and procedures, including:

The Vision

The Mission

Organisational Values

Health and Safety Policy

Student Harassment and Bullying

Substance Misuse Policy

Disciplinary Procedure (staff)

Recruitment and Selection (staff)

Code of Conduct for College Staff

Equal Opportunities for Students

Race Equality

Age Discrimination Policy

Religion or Belief Guidelines

Sexual Orientation Guidelines

**F Starting Point Childcare Centre – Additional Child Protection Procedures**

All parents/carers will be requested to report any injury, e.g. bruising, cuts etc sustained by the child to the staff on arrival at the nursery.

Staff will record the injury in the incident book and parents/carers will be asked to sign the incident book.

Nursery staff will respect the right to confidentiality at all times.

Starting Point Child Care Centre acknowledges the four categories of abuse:

1. Physical abuse
2. Emotional abuse
3. Sexual abuse
4. Neglect

Any member of staff concerned about an injury or other evidence of abuse will report it to the practitioner who has lead responsibility for safeguarding children (SoCCo).

* A written record will then be made of the observations or the information received
* This will completed between the staff member and the SoCCo
* The record will be signed and dated
* Details will be completed on the pro forma included in the Staying Safe-Safeguarding children pack (the pack is kept in the manager’s office)

**Procedure to be followed if there are any concerns relating to child protection**

* If we have any concerns in the setting over a child relating to child protection and it is **appropriate** we will contact the child’s parents/carers.
* However we have a duty to protect children and report our concerns or seek advice from the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
* All members of staff understand the safeguarding policy and procedures and have a duty to report their concerns to the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
* Reporting of any concerns to the Local Safeguarding Children Board may be necessary without first speaking to the parents. However, should the concerns be reported, parents will be informed when they come to collect their child from the setting.

**Allegations made against a member of staff or other whilst the child is in our care**

* The allegation will be immediately reported to the local Safeguarding Children Board and Ofsted
* If the allegation is made against a member of staff, that staff member will be suspended for a period of time whilst an investigation is carried out and completed
* Confidentiality will be maintained at all times

Children’s Assessment Team telephone number: 0300 123 5012

Emergency duty Team (out of hours) telephone no: 0300 123 5022

Ofsted telephone number: 0300 123 4666

**It is NOT the role of Starting Point Childcare Centre to decide whether a child has been abused or not.**

**It is NOT the role of Starting Point Childcare Centre to investigate any allegation of child abuse.**