

## SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

<b>Prepared by:</b>	<b>Head of Learner Services</b>		
<b>Policy Approved by:</b>	<b>Academic Board</b>	<b>06/05/03</b>	<b>Minute 226</b>
		<b>24/10/08</b>	<b>Minute 378</b>
	<b>Curriculum &amp; Quality Panel</b>	<b>23/10/09</b>	<b>Minute 400</b>
	<b>Strategic Management Team</b>	<b>07/05/03</b>	<b>Minute 768</b>
		<b>13/04/05</b>	<b>Minute 983</b>
		<b>22/09/08</b>	<b>Minute 1508</b>
		<b>20/10/09</b>	<b>Minute 1739</b>
	<b>Operational Management Team</b>	<b>09/05/03</b>	<b>Minute 23</b>
	<b>Curriculum and Quality Committee</b>	<b>19/05/03</b>	<b>Minute 68</b>
		<b>12/11/08</b>	<b>Minute 215</b>
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**AOS Aim 2**

**Policy Implemented: 2003**

**Last Reviewed September 2009**

**Review Date: September 2012**

## **Preamble to the Policy**

### **Equal Opportunities**

The College shall comply with all statutory duties in respect of equal opportunities in the areas of sex, race, age, disability, sexual orientation, transgender, religion, belief, pregnancy, maternity and paternity, marriage and civil partnership and the rehabilitation of offenders. The college shall also comply with the Human Rights Act 1998 and any subsequent enactments or modifications.

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This document covers the procedure for dealing with suspicions or allegations of Child Abuse.
- 1.2 These procedures are intended to work alongside the ‘All Wales Child Protection Procedures’. The College fully supports these procedures, copies of which are held by the College Child Protection officers.

#### **2. Scope**

- 2.1 This procedure will be followed by everyone associated with the College irrespective of site, and includes visitors attending College managed premises on official College business but excludes persons involved in approved “letting” activities. It includes Collaborative Provision.
- 2.2 “Staff” refers to all adults mentioned in paragraph 2.1 throughout this policy and procedure.
- 2.3 This procedure will be followed by any person, who has knowledge of, or suspicions of a child suffering significant harm or being at risk of significant harm.
- 2.4 Two members of staff are nominated by the College as Child Protection Officers. They are the Head of Learner Services and the Curriculum Director Care, Sport & Public Services.

#### **3. Procedure**

##### **3.1 Introduction**

- 3.1.1 In this procedure the term “child” applies to all persons who are under 18 years of age and who are either learners enrolled at the College or others attending specific activities arranged and managed by the College irrespective of site.

3.1.2 It is important that children are protected from abuse. As far as the College is concerned this will primarily involve learners between the ages of 14 to 18. Learners in this age range are becoming increasingly independent and not so obviously in need of protection. This may lead to their right to be protected from harm being overlooked. All complaints, allegations or suspicions must be taken seriously and referred to one of the nominated members of staff as noted in paragraph 2.4.

3.1.3 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.

3.1.4 The suspicion or allegation may involve other family members, guardians, learners at the College, employees of the College or other persons.

### **3.2 Reporting Allegations or Suspicions**

3.2.1 Information relating to allegations of abuse may be communicated directly to members of staff by the child him/herself or from other “third party” sources.

3.2.2 In any event staff who receive such reports should not give promises of confidentiality as the matter may develop in such a way that these cannot be honoured.

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

3.2.4 Staff who receive reports of alleged abuse should make a written record as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation and any other relevant information including:

- I. the date of the report and the alleged abuse
- II. the time of the report and the alleged abuse
- III. the place where the alleged abuse happened
- IV. his/her name and the names of any others present
- V. the name of the complainant and, where different, the name of the child who has allegedly been abuse
- VI. the nature of the alleged abuse
- VII. a description of any injuries observed
- VIII. the account, which has been given of the allegation

3.2.4 Some children with special educational needs may need different treatment to other children e.g. in the way their physical/mental condition might mask possible abuse.

- 3.2.6 Details of the suspicions or allegations of abuse should be reported to one of the nominated members of staff as noted in paragraph 2.4 as soon as possible.

### **3.3 The Nominated Members of Staff**

- 3.3.1 The nominated members of staff with responsibility for child protection are the Head of Learner Services and the Curriculum Director Services for People and Sport are the College Child Protection officers, who can be contacted on the direct telephone extension, through the Campus Services or via any College Reception point.

- 3.3.2 In the absence of the nominated members of staff, details of the suspicions or allegations of abuse should be reported to any member of the Strategic Management Team.

- 3.3.3 If, for whatever reason, none of those staff mentioned in paragraph 2.4 above are available, the individual staff member must retain a personal responsibility to ensure that suspicions of child abuse are reported to Social Services, police or NSPCC.

### **3.4 Responding to an Allegation**

- 3.4.1 Any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse must be reported to one of the nominated members of staff with responsibility for child protection (see paragraph 2.4) as soon as possible with a view to these concerns being passed on to Social Services within 24 hours.

- 3.4.2 On receiving a report of suspicion about abuse or an allegation of abuse, the nominated member of staff will inform the Social Services team relevant to the area in which the young person lives. If outside of office hours the nominated member of staff should speak to the relevant Social Services out of Hours or Emergency Duty Team.

- 3.4.3 Before contacting the Social Services the nominated member of staff should have at their disposal basic details concerning: the young person's full name, their date of birth, their address, details of any other family members, any other names the young person or family members may have been known by and clear details of the concern.

- 3.4.4 If, for whatever reason, Social Services cannot be contacted then concerns should be forwarded to other agencies with statutory powers to investigate and intervene for example, the police or NSPCC.

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- 3.4.5 The nominated member of staff will discuss with the relevant statutory agency what action should be taken. The nominated member of staff will act on the recommendations of the Social Services duty social worker.
- 3.4.6 The nominated member of staff will also inform the Principal of the action taken as soon as practicable and in any event within 24 hours of the initial concern arising. In the absence of the Principal and the Deputy Principal another member of the Strategic Management Team will be informed.
- 3.5 Allegations against a College Employee – NB: Employee includes volunteers working for the College**
- 3.5.1 Where an allegation or suspicion of abuse is made against a College employee then this must be reported to one of the nominated members of staff as soon as possible. In their absence details of the allegation or suspicion should be reported to the Principal.
- 3.5.2 On being notified of such a concern the nominated member of staff shall:
- I. notify the Principal or in his/her absence to the Deputy Principal;
  - II. take any steps, as they consider necessary, to ensure the safety of the child in question or any other child who may be at risk;
  - III. report the matter to the appropriate statutory agency as set out in 3.4.2 above;
  - IV. ensure that a report of the matter as set out in 3.3.4 is completed by the person reporting the original concern;
  - V. report the matter to the Head of Human Resources (HR), in confidence, who will consider appropriate HR policies in relation to any employees alleged to be involved.
- 3.5.3 If one of the nominated members of staff is the subject of the allegation or complaint then the matter must be reported to the Principal and in their absence to a member of the Strategic Management Team, and not to one of the nominated members of staff.
- 3.5.4 The substantive decision on whether to investigate under child protection procedures will remain with the appropriate child protection agency. However, it is likely that the nominated member of staff and the Principal or another member of the Strategic Management Team will be involved in consultation with the relevant agency as to the substance of the allegation.
- 3.5.5 Following such consultation there will be four possible outcomes:
- I. an immediate referral under the child protection procedure;
  - II. there is reason to suppose abuse could have occurred and that referral under the Child Protection Procedure or under internal disciplinary procedures may be necessary;

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- III. that the allegation was prompted by inappropriate behaviour, which needs to be dealt with under internal disciplinary procedures;
- IV. that the allegation is apparently without foundation.

### **3.6 Written Records**

- 3.6.1 For all reported cases of allegations or suspicions of abuse the nominated member of staff shall retain copies of any child protection procedure report, any notes, memoranda or correspondence dealing with the matter and any other relevant material. Copies of reports, notes etc. will be kept securely locked at all times.
- 3.6.2 Evidence of child abuse can manifest itself in many different ways and over a period of time and information relating to suspicion or allegation of abuse can come from many sources including learner, parents, staff or others.

### **4. Further Reference Material**

Further information can be obtained from:-

- 4.1 All Wales Child Protection Procedures.
- 4.2 Section 25 of the Children Act 2004
- 4.3 The Children and Young People's Plan (Wales) regulation 2007
- 4.4 Safeguarding Children Working Together under the Children Act 2004 guidance published by WAG March 2007.
- 4.5 The Children Act 1989
- 4.6 Section 175 of the Education Act 2002
- 4.7 Welsh Assembly Government Circular No: 005/2008 (April 2008)  
South Wales Adult Protection Forum internet –  
<http://www.neath-porttalbot.gov.uk/swapforum/>
- 4.8 *The NSPCC*
- 4.9 *Coleg Morgannwg Personal Relationships Policy*

### **5. Review and Monitoring of the Policy**

- 5.1 The Head of Learner Services will review the policy every three years but monitor its application annually.