

Statement of Policy on

CHILD PROTECTION

[Reviewed and agreed at Governors' Curriculum Committee meeting held on 25th January 2006, Community Committee on 25th November 2008, Full Governors on 20th January 2009 and Management and Resources Committee on 17th March 2010]

City of Ely Community College fully recognises the responsibility it has under section 175 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 the appropriate agency, normally the appropriate Child and Family Team (Social Services).

This policy sets out how the College's governing body 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.

SUPPORT TO STUDENTS who may have been abused.

PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE WORKING WITH CHILDREN

Our policy applies to all staff and volunteers working in the College including community education staff and governors. Teaching assistants, mid-day supervisors, support and administrative staff as well as teachers can be the first point of disclosure for a child. Concerned parents may also contact College governors.

1 PREVENTION

- 1.1 We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help to protect children.
- 1.2 The College will therefore:
 - 1.2.1 establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to;
 - 1.2.2 ensure children know that there are adults in the College whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;
 - 1.2.3 include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for PSHE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and information about who to turn for help;
 - 1.2.4 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.

2 PROCEDURES

2.1 We will follow the procedures set out in Interagency Procedures produced by the Cambridgeshire Area Child Protection Committee "Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children in Need in Cambridgeshire", also known as the "Blue Book" and also the Education Child Protection Procedures which is the companion document to the Blue Book for all education staff.

2.2 **The Designated Senior Member of Staff for Child Protection is Mr J Brooks (Assistant Principal). Other Designated Members of Staff are Mr R Baker (Vice Principal), Mrs L Lindsay and Mrs L Riches (Senior Heads of Year). The Designated Child Protection Governor is Mr W Harrison.**

The College will:

2.2.1 ensure it has a designated senior member of staff, who has undertaken as a minimum, the 2 day child protection training course, accredited by the Area Child Protection Committee;

2.2.2 ensure this training is updated every two years in accordance with government guidance;

2.2.3 recognise the importance of the role of the designated member of staff and ensure s/he has the time and training to undertake her/his duties;

2.2.4 ensure there are contingency arrangements should the designated member of staff not be available;

2.2.5 ensure that the designated member of staff will take advice from a child protection specialist when managing complex cases.

2.3 The Role of Governors and College Staff

The College will:

2.3.1 ensure every member of staff and every governor 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 Blue Book;
- where the Blue book containing Education Child Protection Procedures is located;

2.3.2 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 Blue Book procedures,
- the need to be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse
- how to support and to respond to a child who tells of abuse

2.3.3 ensure that all staff and volunteers 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.

2.4 Liaison with Other Agencies

The College will:

2.4.1 work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance and written reports at initial case conferences, core groups and child protection review conferences;

- 2.4.2 notify the local Social Care Team if:
- it should have to exclude a student on the child protection register (whether fixed term or permanently);
 - there is an unexplained absence of a student on the child protection register of more than two days duration from College (or one day following a weekend); or as agreed as part of any child protection or core group plan.

2.5 **Record Keeping**

The College will:

- 2.5.1 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 Services immediately;
- 2.5.2 ensure all records are kept secure and in locked locations;
- 2.5.3 ensure all relevant child protection records are sent to the receiving College or establishment when a student moves Colleges.

2.6 **Confidentiality and information sharing**

- 2.6.1 Staff will ensure confidentiality protocols* are adhered to and information is shared appropriately. If in any doubt about confidentiality, staff will seek advice from a senior manager or Social Care Team as required.
- 2.6.2 The Principal or Designated Member of Staff will disclose any information about a student to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.
- 2.6.3 All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- 2.6.4 All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets.

2.7 **Communication with Parents**

The College will:

- 2.7.1 undertake appropriate discussion with parents prior to involvement of another agency unless the circumstances preclude this. (Further guidance on this can be found in the Education Child Protection Procedures and in the Safeguarding Inter-agency Procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board)
- 2.7.2 ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the College and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the College brochure (See the Education Portal for a model wording of text).

3 **SUPPORTING THE STUDENT AT RISK**

- 3.1 We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth and to view the world as benevolent and meaningful. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of self-blame.
- 3.2 This College may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, when at College their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.
- 3.3 We recognise that some children actually adopt abusive behaviours and that these children must be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.

* The Local Safeguarding Children's Board Guidance on the Sharing of Information on Children in Need and in Need of Protection can be accessed from the LSCB website at cambisiscb.org.uk

- 3.4 The College will endeavour to support the student through:
- 3.4.1 the content of the curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation (see section 2);
 - 3.4.2 the College ethos which (i) promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment (ii) gives students a sense of being valued (see section 2);
 - 3.4.3 the College's behaviour policy is aimed at supporting vulnerable students in the College. All staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of the offence committed by 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;
 - 3.4.4 liaison with other agencies which support the student such as the Locality Team, Social Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, the Educational Psychology Service, Behaviour Support Services and the Education Welfare Service;
 - 3.4.5 a commitment to develop productive and supportive relationships with parents whenever it is in a student's best interest to do so;
 - 3.4.6 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;
 - 3.4.7 vigilantly monitoring children's welfare, keeping records and notifying Social Services **as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern.**
- 3.5 When a student on the child protection register leaves, information will be transferred to the new College immediately. The Child Review Manager will also be informed. We will follow the procedures for children that are 'Missing Children'.
- 3.6 **Drug Use and Child Protection**
- 3.6.1 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 but the College will consider such action in the following situations:
- When there is evidence or reasonable cause;
- to believe the young person's drug misuse may cause him or her to be vulnerable to other abuse such as sexual abuse;
 - to believe the student's drug related behaviour is a result of abusing or endangering pressure or incentives from others, particularly adults;
 - where the misuse is suspected of being prompted by serious parent/ carer drug misuse.
- 3.7 **Children of Drug Using Parents**
- 3.7.1 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.

4 PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE FROM WORKING WITH CHILDREN

- 4.1 The College will operate safe recruitment practices including ensuring appropriate CRB and reference checks are undertaken according to Circular DfES/0278/2002 Child Protection: Preventing Unsuitable People from Working with Children and Young People in the Education Service.
- 4.2 The College will consult with the designated LA Officer for Child Protection in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff and adhere to the relevant procedures set out in the Education Child Protection Procedures, Blue Book and the College's Personnel Manual (i.e. the Manual produced by EPM Ltd).
- 4.3 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.
- 4.4 The College will ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with students and parents as advised by the Local Authority's Code of Conduct. The staff will receive guidance as part of Induction about how to communicate and create appropriate professional boundaries with disabled and vulnerable children. In particular staff will receive appropriate training in relation to Intimate Care and the College's guidance, as the use of this policy and procedure protects both children and staff.
- 4.5 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 position of trust). Staff will also be made aware as part of Induction about how to report inappropriate sexualised behaviours to the Principal or Designated Member of Staff to follow up with Social Care teams. Staff who work within the College have a duty of care to model appropriate social behaviours and to ensure that the professional role of trust is not abused.
- 4.6 There is an obligation on the Principal to inform the DCSF of anyone who has been dismissed for any offence that involves the protection of children.

5 OTHER RELATED POLICIES

5.1 Physical Intervention

Our policy on physical intervention by staff is set out in a separate document and is reviewed annually by the Governing Body. 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. Staff will be provided with training on the Physical Intervention policy during induction.

5.2 Bullying

Our policy on bullying is set out in a separate document and is reviewed annually by the governing body. We acknowledge that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

5.3 Racist Incidents

Our policy on racist incidents is set out in a separate document and is reviewed annually by the governing body. We acknowledge that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

5.4 **Health and Safety**

Our Health and Safety policy, set out in a separate document, is reviewed annually by the governing body. 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 sponsored trips and visits.

5.5 **Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs**

We recognise that statistically children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. College staff who deal with children with profound and multiple disabilities, cerebral palsy, sensory impairment and or emotional and behavioural problems are particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

5.6 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.

5.7 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.

6 GOVERNING BODY CHILD PROTECTION RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 The governing body fully recognises its responsibilities with regard to child protection and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

It will:

- designate a governor for child protection who will oversee the College's child protection policy and practice and champion child protection issues;
- ensure an annual report is made to the Full Governing Body, 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, updated and copied to the Education Child Protection Service.

6.2 **Extended Colleges and Before and After College Activities**

6.2.1 If the Governing Body provides extended College facilities or before or 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.

6.2.2 Where services or activities are provided separately by another body the governing body 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.

APPENDIX A

Standards for Effective Child Protection Practice in Colleges

In best practice, Colleges:

- 1 have an ethos in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, and they are encouraged to talk and are listened to;
- 2 provide suitable support and guidance so that students have a range of appropriate adults to whom they can turn if they are worried or in difficulties;
- 3 work with parents to build an understanding of the College's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children and a recognition that this may occasionally require children to be referred to investigative agencies as a constructive and helpful measure;
- 4 are vigilant in cases of suspected child abuse, recognising the signs and symptoms, have clear procedures whereby teachers report such cases to senior staff and are aware of local procedures so that information is effectively passed on to the relevant professionals;
- 5 monitor children who have been identified as at risk, keeping, *in a secure place*, clear records of students' progress, maintaining sound policies on confidentiality, providing information to other professionals, submitting reports to case conferences and attending case conferences;
- 6 provide and support child protection training regularly to College staff every three years and in particular to designated teachers every two years to ensure their skills and expertise are up to date, and ensure that targeted funding for this work is used solely for this purpose;
- 7 contribute to an inter-agency approach to child protection by developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies;
- 8 use the curriculum to raise students' awareness and build confidence so that students have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others, taking into account of the guidance for Governors on sex and relationship education in circular 5/94;
- 9 provide clear policy statements for parents, staff and children and young people on this and on both positive behaviour policies and the Colleges approach to bullying;
- 10 have a clear understanding of the various types of bullying - physical, verbal and indirect, and act promptly and firmly to combat it, making sure that students are aware of the Colleges position on this issue and who they can contact for support;
- 11 take particular care that students with SEN in mainstream and special Colleges, who may be especially vulnerable to abuse, are supported effectively with particular attention paid to ensuring that those with communication difficulties are enabled to express themselves to a member of staff with appropriate communicative skills;
- 12 have a clear policy about the handling of allegations of abuse by members of staff, ensuring that all staff are fully aware of the procedures and that they are followed correctly at all times, using the guidance set down in circular DFES/0027/2004 Safeguarding Children in Education;
- 13 have a written whole College policy, produced, owned and regularly reviewed by Colleges staff and which clearly outlines the College's position and positive action in respect of the aforementioned standards;
- 14 the College will ensure that specified information is passed on in a timely manner to the LA for monitoring purposes.