



## **SAFEGUARDING - POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Children's Act 1989 defines a child as a person under the age of 18. If a student is in full-time attendance at College, this definition extends to persons aged 18 or over. The Act places a duty on local authorities to take steps to protect children in appropriate circumstances and gives certain powers to the Police so they are able to protect children from abuse. Although Colleges have been separated from local authorities since the Act came into force, the DfEE Circular 10/95 point 63 states: "FE and 6th form colleges have a statutory duty to assist social services departments on child protection issues". In addition, the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 deals with Disclosure and lists those convictions which bar offenders from working with children in 'regulated positions'. Under Every Child Matters (ECM) and the Children Act 2004 colleges were required to work closely with a range of agencies involved with children's services and to assess how the ECM outcomes are met. Finally, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 will produce a single list of people barred from working with children, due to be available from October 2009, and will require all those employed in 'regulated activity' to be registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA), due to be compulsory from November 2010.

The College is fully committed to meeting its obligations under this legislation and, in doing so, understands that child abuse can involve any one or more of:

- Neglect - this is when the young person does not get the things that they require in order to live a normal, happy life, such as food and clothing. Young people who are being neglected may show signs of being unhappy or of being out of control.
- Physical Injury - this is when the young person is hit, squeezed or bitten or any other injuries are inflicted.
- Emotional Abuse – this is when young people are not given love and affection, or they are rejected by or threatened by their parents or carers.
- Sexual Abuse - this is when the young person is forced to take part in sexual activities by an adult or other young person. This may include showing them pornographic material.

### **POLICY**

The College's response to its child protection role in safeguarding the welfare of its young people is:

1. to work co-operatively with external agencies such as Social Services and Police.
2. to ensure that, in so far as is possible, young people are offered the support they require.
3. to refer any young person to external agencies such as Social Services when requested by the young person.
4. to offer all staff the opportunity to undertake awareness training in matters of child protection.

5. to ensure that all staff are inducted (through the formal induction programme for new members of staff) into how to respond to a student who discloses abuse.
6. to ensure that the Esher College Corporation is fully aware of its child protection responsibilities and that a nominated governor has oversight of child protection issues.
7. to raise student awareness of these matters and sources of help through the pastoral curriculum and activities that support it.
8. to monitor and review the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures periodically as part of its quality initiatives.
9. to implement the Recruitment and Selection of Staff Procedures to ensure that all staff are subject to Enhanced Disclosure on appointment.

It is important to note that “staff member”, “staff” etc within this document refers to any adult employed by the College.

## **PROCEDURES – RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION**

Esher College follows the Government guidelines issued in 2006 on ‘Safer Recruitment in Education’. These regulations require the College to undertake a range of specified checks on our staff, and to ensure that relevant supply staff have been properly checked. In addition the College adheres to the requirements originally stipulated by the DfES, with regard to the maintenance of an accurate central record of the checks we have carried out. It also follows SFCF guidance on personnel matters.

The following checks are carried out on new staff:

- An Enhanced Disclosure is carried out for all staff joining the College, whether they already have an existing CRB check or not. The relevant documents are checked by the Personnel Department and the form is then sent to the Sixth Form Colleges Forum (SFCF) which administers the CRB process on the College’s behalf. If a CRB check reveals a conviction, it is the Principal’s responsibility to decide what impact, if any, this should have on the individual’s potential employment at the College.
- The College encourages all applicants called for interview to provide details of any criminal record at an early stage in the application process. The nature of recruitment at Esher College allows questions to be asked about a candidate’s entire criminal record, including spent convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975. A Statement on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders is issued to all successful candidates together with the CRB application form.
- The College ensures that all those who are responsible for the recruitment process have been given suitable guidance to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences, including appropriate guidance on the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Following the appointment to a post at the College, the Personnel Department ensures that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matters that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.
- In addition to a CRB check, the College checks ‘Proof of Identity’ of all new staff appointed, their eligibility to work in the UK and ‘Evidence of their Qualifications’.

Details of all the above procedures, including the dates these were carried out and evidence seen, are kept on a central record as required by the government.

Any students on work placements that involve working with children will be required to have a CRB check before starting their placements. These will either be carried out by the College or the establishment employing the student on placement, where appropriate.

The College will monitor the work of the ISA and respond to new requirements as appropriate.

## **PROCEDURES – DEALING WITH STUDENT DISCLOSURE**

1. The Principal has appointed the Assistant Principal (Student Services) to act as the Child Protection Liaison Officer (CPLO).
2. If a young person (defined in law as a person under 18 years of age, but also including all students 18 years and over if they are in full-time attendance at the College) discloses abuse to any member of staff and indicates that s/he wishes to take action the member of staff must refer the student to the CPLO or, alternatively, the Counselling Co-ordinator.
3. If a young person discloses abuse to any member of staff but indicates that s/he does not wish to take action, the member of staff must tell the student that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. The member of staff must take advice in the first instance from the Counselling Co-ordinator, who will then involve the CPLO as appropriate.
4. If any member of staff suspects that a young person is being abused they should discuss this in the first instance with the Counselling Co-ordinator who can advise on how best to manage a referral.
5. All College counsellors will work to the British Association of Counsellors Code of Ethics, and whilst respecting confidentiality they will work toward disclosure to an appropriate agency and/or towards the student removing themselves from the abusive situation.
6. In all cases of alleged sexual or physical abuse the Counselling Co-ordinator will inform the CPLO of the details of the case. The Counselling Co-ordinator and the CPLO will then discuss the case and decide whether to involve the Social Services. The wishes of the student as regards to disclosure will be respected where possible, but if the student alleging sexual or physical abuse has younger siblings the usual policy will be to involve the Social Services. In these types of case the Counselling Co-ordinator will inform the student at an appropriate point of this College policy. Any information relating to the case will be stored confidentially by the Principal's PA.
7. The CPLO or the Counselling Co-ordinator will record any incidents or concerns about abuse that are raised. These records will be kept confidential (in the PA to the Principal's office) and separate from other student records but may be used for case conferences within a multi-disciplinary team.
8. The Safeguarding Policy can be accessed by all parents/guardians through the College website. A hard copy will be available on request.
9. All new members of staff are referred to the Safeguarding Policy, the full text of which is available on the Staff Portal and the College Website.
10. The College recognises that staff working in the College who become involved with a student who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find this stressful and upsetting. The College will support such staff by informing them that they can talk through these anxieties and concerns with the CPLO or the Counselling Co-ordinator.

## **KEEPING STUDENTS SAFE THROUGH DIRECT AND INDIRECT EDUCATION**

The College is committed to the Every Child Matters agenda, and in particular for this Safeguarding Policy: Outcome 2: "Stay Safe". The College works to ensure that all the sub-outcomes are achieved as follows:

*2.1 Young people and their carers are informed about key risks to their safety and how to deal with them.*

The PDP/Tutorial Programme includes activities which ensure students think about their personal safety.

Adult education courses are marketed to parents including "Keeping your child safe on the Internet".

College Nurse promotes safety through campaigns aimed at students, for example a Christmas campaign on responsible drinking and the Drive2survive campaign.

The student magazine regularly includes articles on staying safe.

*2.2 Young people are provided with a safe environment.*

The College has appointed a Security officer and installed a CCTV system to protect students.

The Health and Safety policy is enforced and discussed with all students before they start their programmes.

Behaviour policies are used effectively to ensure a safe environment: policies are always supportive in the first instance.

Students have access to high quality counselling.

Regular emergency evacuation drills are undertaken.

Safety rules in classrooms, labs and workshops are publicised and enforced.

*2.3 The incidence of child abuse and neglect is minimised.*

There is a detailed Safeguarding Policy and governor involvement in case conferences where possible.

*2.4 Agencies collaborate to safeguard young people according to the requirements of the current government guidance.*

The College collaborates with outside agencies as appropriate to ensure student safety, particularly social services, health services and police for case conferences.

*2.5 Action is taken to avoid young people having to be looked after.*

The Looked After Children Policy has an explicit objective to keep children with their parents where at all possible.

*2.6 Looked After Children live in safe environments and are protected from abuse and exploitation.*

Looked After Children are identified and followed up as detailed in the Looked After Children Policy. In 2008 there was a formal new agreement between Surrey Social Services and Esher College to liaise re Looked After Children.

*2.7 Young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities live in safe environments and are protected from abuse and exploitation.*

The Learning Support Department reports on vulnerable students re their safety.

Case conferences take place with social services re students with learning support.

## **ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF OF ABUSE OF A STUDENT OR STUDENTS**

### **Sexual or emotional**

Any form of sexual relationship between staff and students is expressly forbidden in the College employment contract and the procedures for dealing with allegations of this nature are set out in the conditions of service.

All College staff should also take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a student, or through inaction allow a student to become too emotionally dependent on them. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual students or parents to be conducted in view, or potentially in view, of other adults wherever possible. All staff are informed of this.

If a student makes an allegation of sexual abuse against a member of staff the member of staff will, without prejudice, be suspended on full pay whilst the normal College Disciplinary Procedures are followed. The Principal will also inform the police of the allegation and co-operate fully with them in any enquiries they may wish to follow.

### **Physical**

In terms of physical abuse all staff are informed that they must use physical intervention as a last resort, when a student is endangering him/herself or other students, and at all times the minimal force must be used.

1. Any such event should be recorded and signed by a witness.
2. Any staff who are likely to need to use physical intervention (e.g. the Security Officer) must be properly trained, as a condition of taking up employment with the College. For more information see the "Using force to restrain students and search for weapons" Policy.

### **PROCEDURE FOR MONITORING AND REVIEWING POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

1. The Counselling Co-ordinator reports to the Assistant Principal (Student Services) at least once a term. Each year during the self-assessment cycle the Safeguarding Policies and Procedures will be discussed and any recommendations for change will be made to the College Steering Group. Reporting on Safeguarding Policies and issues occurs annually in the Counselling SAR.
2. The Governors are actively involved in Safeguarding: there is a nominated governor who liaises with the CPLO. They review cases where appropriate and have annual oversight of the Counselling, Student Support and Student Services SAR.

***Approved by the Corporation July 2009***