



**HUNTERHOUSE COLLEGE**

**SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

**Date/Date Reviewed: September 2016**

**Previous: November 2014**

**Next Review due: September 2017**

This policy is available in pdf format from the Collegewebsite

[www.hunterhouseCollege.org.uk](http://www.hunterhouseCollege.org.uk)

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## **Hunterhouse College Safeguarding<sup>1</sup> Statement**

There are two aspects to safeguarding and promoting student welfare. They are:

- Arrangements to take reasonable measures to ensure that risks to children's welfare are minimised; and
- Arrangements to take all appropriate actions to address concerns about the welfare of a child, or children, working to agreed policies and procedures in full partnership with other agencies. (from *Safeguarding Children in Education*, 2004)

### **The Hunterhouse College Safeguarding Team - (meets at least once a term)**

- The Designated Teacher – Ms Sharon Greig
- The Deputy Designated Teacher – Mrs Stacey Winnington; Mr Nicky Goodall
- The Principal – Mr Andrew Gibson
- The Chair of the Board of Governors – Mr David McClay
- The Board of Governors member with delegated responsibility for Child Protection – Miss Barbara McNeill

### **Role of the Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teacher**

- To disseminate child protection training to all College staff
- To promote a child protection ethos within the College
- To provide a written report to Governors on child protection issues
- To notify the Chairperson of the Board of Governors, Principal, Education Authority Designated Officer, Social Services, PSNI as appropriate
- To take the lead in the development of the College's Child Protection Policy
- To participate in child protection training
- To maintain appropriate and required records

### **Role of the Chairperson of the Board of Governors**

The main role of the Chairperson will be in relation to handling complaints and allegations. This will involve:

- Establishing the facts (clarification process)
- Seeking advice from the Education Authority's Designated Officer and referring to Social Services where appropriate
- Seeking advice from the Education Authority's HR Manager and consider if disciplinary procedures apply
- To assess the appropriateness of precautionary suspension or removal of direct contact duties

### **Role of the Delegated Governor with responsibility for Safeguarding and Child Protection**

To ensure that:

- They have undertaken appropriate child protection training
- That there is a confidential child protection recording and storage system in place
- That there is a robust Code of Conduct for all adults working within the school
- That child protection features on the agenda of Board of Governors' meetings

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<sup>1</sup> Please note – The term safeguarding is used throughout to include child protection

## **The Role of the Principal**

- To ensure that s/he has a fundamental understanding of child protection in a College environment
- To promote a safeguarding ethos within the College
- To ensure that all roles and responsibilities are clearly identified
- To ensure that the College has relevant and up to date pastoral care policies that are agreed and ratified by the Board of Governors
- To ensure that the College has safe recruitment and selection practices
- To manage allegations and complaints against College staff
- To ensure that the Board of Governors is kept fully informed of all developments relating to safeguarding and child protection

## **Child Protection – The Legal Context**

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991)
- The Children (NI) Order 1995
- The Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Education and Libraries Order 2003 – Welfare and Protection of Students
- Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order 2003
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Order (NI) Order 2007
- Criminal Justice Order (NI) Order 2008
- DE Circulars 2006(06/07/08/09/25), 2007(01), 2008 (03)

## Principles

The College has a primary responsibility for the care, welfare, and safety of students. This duty will be carried out by implementation of the College's pastoral care policies (see Linked Documents) which aim to value individuals for their unique talents and abilities and to provide a caring, supportive and safe environment in which students can learn and develop to their full potential.

One way in which staff seek to protect students is by helping them learn about the risks of possible abuse, helping them to recognise unwelcome behaviour in others and by developing an ethos in which students feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, they are encouraged to talk and are listened to, and they develop the confidence and skills needed to keep themselves safe.

All our staff have been subject to appropriate background checks<sup>2</sup> and have adopted a *Code of Conduct* for behaviour towards students. This Code is set out in the **Appendices**.

The College will provide suitable support and guidance so that students have a range of appropriate adults whom they feel confident to approach.

## Purposes

Implementation of the procedures on Child Protection as set out in **Appendix 1** protects our students by ensuring that everyone who works in Hunterhouse College has clear guidance on the action which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected. The overriding concern of all caring adults must be the care, welfare and safety of the child, and the welfare of each child is our paramount consideration. The problem of child abuse will not be ignored by anyone who works in school, and we know that some forms of child abuse are also a criminal offence.

When possible, staff take part in In-Service training courses which can lead to a greater understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse, procedures for dealing with individual cases, roles and responsibilities of other agency staff with whom the College has to liaise and the use of the curriculum to build preventative approaches to child abuse.

At Hunterhouse College, we recognise that the following are forms of child abuse:

- **neglect**
- **physical abuse**
- **sexual abuse**
- **emotional abuse**
- **exploitation**

Definition of neglect

**Neglect is the failure to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter that is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development. Children who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse.**

Definition of Physical Abuse

**Physical abuse is deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of different forms, including hitting, biting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child.**

Definition of Sexual Abuse

**Sexual abuse occurs when others use and exploit children sexually for their own gratification or gain or the gratification of others. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing or touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via e-technology). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.**

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<sup>2</sup> Access NI Enhanced DBS Check

#### Definition of Emotional Abuse

**Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. Emotional abuse may involve bullying – including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones – by a child's peers.**

#### Definition of Exploitation (added March 2016)

**Exploitation is the intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person; to take selfish or unfair advantage of a child or young person or situation, for personal gain. It may manifest itself in many forms such as child labour, slavery, servitude, engagement in criminal activity, begging, benefit or other financial fraud or child trafficking. It extends to the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation can be sexual in nature.**

#### Anti-Bullying

Bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse and is not tolerated in Hunterhouse College. The College's policy and practice is stated in the stand-alone Anti-Bullying Policy which is available on the College website.

## **Linked Documents:**

- Appendix 1: Procedures for reporting suspected (or disclosed) child abuse
- Appendix 2: Code of Conduct for Employees of Hunterhouse College
- Appendix 3: Child Protection Guidelines for Visiting Music Tutors
- Appendix 4: Child Protection Guidelines for Support Staff

Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy

Behavioural Policy

Curriculum Policy (section on PSHE)

Educational Visits (residential and non-residential) Policy

Hunterhouse College Staff Guide: Child Protection Guidelines for Staff

Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy

Rewards & Sanctions Statement

DENI Circular 1999/10 Child protection policy and procedures

DENI Circular 2003/13 Welfare and Protection of Students Education and Libraries (NI )Order 2003

DENI Circular 2006/06 Safer recruitment practices for education authorities

DENI Circular 2006/07 Employment of substitute teachers

DENI Circular 2006/08 Requirement for child protection training in relation to interviewing and selection panels

DENI Circular 2006/09 Vetting of paid and unpaid staff

DENI Circular 2006/25 Vetting of College governors

DENI Circular 2007/01 Acceptable use of the internet and digital technologies in schools

DENI Circular 2008/03 Pre-employment checking of persons to work in schools – new arrangements

DENI Circular 2008/10 Requirement to book substitute teachers on line via NISTR

DENI Circular 2010/01 Relationships and sexuality education

DENI Circular 2010/18 Every School a Good School– the Governors' Role

DENI Circular 2011/22 Internet safety (addendum to 2007/01) preventing the accessing of inappropriate material on the internet, use of materials from blocked sites, provision of information to parents

DENI Circular 2012/18 Student attendance and absence recording by schools (replaces Circular 2010/07) new aspect: guidance on study leave

DENI Circular 2012/19 Disclosure and barring arrangements: changes to pre-employment vetting checks for volunteers

DENI Circular 2013/01 Disclosure and barring arrangements: pre-employment vetting checking and safer recruitment practices

DENI letter February 2009 Legislation changes to Age of Consent

DENI letter June 2009 Provision of free College meals on humanitarian grounds

DENI letter May 2012 Revised criterion for provision of free College meals on humanitarian grounds

DENI letter November 2013 Concussion and Sudden Impact Syndrome

DENI letter July 2014 Multi-agency practice guidelines on female genital mutilation

## Appendix 1: Procedures for reporting suspected (or disclosed) child abuse

**The Designated Teacher for Child Protection is Ms Sharon Greig, Vice Principal.** The Deputy Designated Teachers are **Mrs Stacey Winnington, Pastoral Care Co-ordinator and Mr Nicky Goodall, Acting Pastoral Care Co-ordinator.**

If a student makes a disclosure to a teacher or other member of staff which gives rise to concerns about possible abuse, or if a member of staff has concerns about a student, **the member of staff must act promptly. He/she should not investigate** - this is a matter for the Social Services or the PSNI – but should report these concerns immediately to the Designated Teacher, discuss the matter with her, and make full written notes.

The Designated Teacher will discuss the matter with the Principal as a matter of urgency to plan a course of action, and ensure that a written record is made.

The Principal, in consultation with the Designated Teacher, will decide whether, in the best interests of the child, the matter needs to be referred to Social Services. **If there are concerns that the child may be at risk, the College is obliged to make a referral.** Unless there are concerns that informing the parent/carer may put the child at greater risk; that a parent/carer may be the possible abuser or that the parent/carer may be complicit in any alleged abuse, the parent/carer will be informed immediately.

The Designated Teacher/Principal may seek clarification or advice and consult with the Education Authority's Designated Officer or the Senior Social Worker before a referral is made. **The safety of the child is our first priority.**

Where there are concerns about possible abuse, the Principal will ensure that the following have been informed:

1. the Social Services
2. Education Authority's Designated Officer for Child Protection

The College is obliged to refer to the appropriate agencies any student about whom there is significant concern. Parents do not have to be present for this to be done.

If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff, the Principal (or the Designated Teacher, if the Principal is not available) must be informed immediately. The above procedures will apply (unless the complaint is about the Designated Teacher). Where the matter is referred to Social Services, the member of staff will be removed from duties involving direct contact with students, and may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigation by Social Services. The Chairman of the Board of Governors will be informed immediately.

If a complaint is made against the Principal, the Designated Teacher must be informed immediately. The Designated Teacher will inform the Chairman of the Board of Governors and together they will ensure that the necessary action is taken.

**If any member of staff feels unsure about what to do if there are concerns about a child, or unsure about being able to recognise the signs or symptoms of possible abuse, he/she should speak to the Designated Teacher.**

It should be noted that information given to members of staff about possible child abuse cannot be held 'in confidence'. In the interests of the child, staff may need to share this information with other professionals. **However, only those who need to know will be told.**

## Appendix 2: Code of Conduct for Employees of Hunterhouse College and for Visiting Teaching Staff or Learning Support Staff<sup>3</sup>

### Introduction

All actions concerning children and young people must uphold the best interests of the young person as a primary consideration. Staff must always be mindful of the fact that they hold a position of trust, and that their behaviour towards the children and young people in their charge must be above reproach. This Code of Conduct is not intended to detract from the enriching experiences children and young people gain from positive interaction with staff within the College. It is intended to assist staff in respect of the complex issue of child abuse, by drawing attention to the areas of risk for staff and by offering guidance on prudent conduct.

### 1. Individual Meetings with Students

- a. Staff should be aware of the dangers which may arise from private interviews with individual students. It is recognised that there will be occasions when confidential interviews must take place. As far as possible, staff should conduct such interviews in a room with visual access, or with the door open.
- b. Where such conditions cannot apply, staff are advised to ensure that another adult knows that the interview is taking place. It may be necessary to use a sign indicating that the room is in use, but it is not advisable to use signs prohibiting entry to the room.
- c. Where possible another student or (preferably) another adult should be present or nearby during the interview, and the College should take active measures to facilitate this.

### 2. Physical Contact with Students

- a. As a general principle, staff are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with students.
- b. It is unrealistic and unnecessary, however, to suggest that staff should touch students only in emergencies. In particular, a distressed child, especially a younger child, may need reassurance involving physical comforting, as a caring parent would provide. Staff should not feel inhibited from providing this.
- c. Staff should never touch a child who has clearly indicated that they are, or would be, uncomfortable with such contact, unless it is necessary to protect the child, others or property from harm. (DENI Circular 1999/9, on the use of reasonable force, gives guidance on Article 4 of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 (*Power of member of staff to restrain students*)).
- d. Physical punishment is illegal, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour, unless it is by way of necessary restraint.
- e. Departments may, in particular circumstances, such as use of certain areas, draw up their own guidelines for these circumstances. These guidelines must be agreed by the Principal.
- f. Staff who have to administer first-aid to a student should ensure wherever possible that this is done in the presence of other children or another adult. However, no member of staff should hesitate to provide first-aid in an emergency simply because another person is not present.
- g. Any physical contact which would be likely to be misinterpreted by the student, parent or other casual observer should be avoided.
- h. Following any incident where a member of staff feels that his/her actions have been, or may be, misconstrued, a written report of the incident should be submitted immediately to his/her line manager and to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection.
- i. Staff should be particularly careful when supervising students in a residential setting, or in approved out of College activities, where more informal relationships tend to be usual, and where staff may be in proximity to students in circumstances very different from the normal school/work environment.

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<sup>3</sup> This includes volunteers

### 3. Choice and Use of Teaching Materials

- a. Teachers should avoid teaching materials, the choice of which might be misinterpreted and reflect upon the motives for the choice.
- b. When using teaching materials of a sensitive nature a teacher should be aware of the danger that their application, either by students or by the teacher, might after the event be criticised. The College has received advice on the value of consulting parents and Governors when proposing to use materials such as the AIDS education for schools and in connection with sex education programmes.
- c. If in doubt about the appropriateness of a particular teaching material, the teacher should consult with the Principal before using it.

### 4. Relationships and Attitudes

Within the Pastoral Care Policies of the Hunterhouse College, staff should ensure that their relationships with students are appropriate to the age and maturity of the students, taking care that their conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. **Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought, particularly in dealing with adolescent students.**

### 5. Use of Mobile and Online Technologies

The development of new technologies, whilst bringing many opportunities for enhancing learning, also brings potential areas of risk for schools, their staff and their students. It is vital that staff take the following steps to ensure there that there are no potential opportunities for their actions or intentions to be misconstrued.

- a. Members of staff should not give out their mobile phone number to any student. There is a College mobile phone available from the General Office for use on trips and residentials where staff need to be contactable by students.
- b. On no occasion should a member of staff disclose their network log in or password to a student or allow a student to work on a computer on which they are logged on.
- c. Staff should be mindful of their online presence in light of their profession and avoid posting anything on social media which could call their professionalism or their position as a role model for young people into question.
- d. Staff should ensure that the privacy settings on any social media site they use are set to a level which precludes access from members of the public.
- e. Staff should consider amending key identifying factors on social media sites which make them easy to find e.g. using a generic image rather than a photo of themselves or amending their name so that their profile is not readily accessible via a basic search
- f. No member of staff should be in contact with any current student on any social media site e.g. being friends on facebook.
- g. Staff should be mindful of the continuing need for professionalism when in contact with previous students and should carefully consider the appropriateness of social media sites as media for this type of communication.

### Conclusion

It would be impossible and inappropriate to lay down hard and fast rules to cover all the circumstances in which staff interrelate with students, or where opportunities for their conduct to be misconstrued might occur.

In all circumstances, employees' professional judgement will be exercised and for the vast majority of employees this Code of Conduct will serve only to confirm what has always been their practice. **If employees have any doubts about points in the Code, or how they should act in particular circumstances, they should consult one of the following:**

- **the Designated Teacher for Child Protection**
- **their line manager**
- **a representative of their professional association.**

From time to time, however, it is prudent for all staff to reappraise their teaching styles, relationships with students and their manner and approach to individual young people, to ensure that they give no grounds for doubt about their intentions, in the minds of colleagues, of young people or of parent/carers.

**These guidelines are to be used in conjunction with the College's Safeguarding Policy, a copy of which is available to each member of teaching staff, visiting teaching staff, or learning support staff.**

December 2016

### **APPENDIX 3: SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION GUIDELINES FOR VISITING MUSIC TUTORS**

1. Tutors should teach in a room with a glazed door and window looking into the room.
2. No obstructions (e.g. instrument cases or music stands) should be placed between the student and the exit door.
3. There should be a “walk-in” culture where other staff or students can walk in at any stage during a lesson.
4. Physical contact should be avoided. Tutors should endeavour to find ways of congratulating and encouraging students without giving them a friendly tap on the shoulder or arm.
5. Tutors should refrain from tapping the pulse of the music on any part of a student’s body.
6. When teaching breathing exercises, tutors must never touch any part of the student’s body.
7. When changing a student’s playing position, tutors should announce their intention very clearly. If a tutor wishes to correct a playing position he/she must ask the student if she is happy for the tutor to touch her. If the student agrees, the tutor may proceed. If, however, the student does not consent, the tutor should record exactly what was said and report the matter as soon as possible to Mrs Christine Cairns (Head of Music).
8. There may be occasions when a distressed student needs comfort and reassurance, e.g. after an examination or a solo performance. Such reassurance should be given verbally. A tutor should never touch a student when comforting them.
9. Tutors should never physically restrain a child UNLESS it is to prevent physical injury to another child, a member of staff or themselves.
10. Tutors should never make insensitive or personal comments to any individual, especially in group situations such as rehearsals or shared lessons, where an individual might feel humiliated or degraded in the presence of others. Raised voices or comments which might cause embarrassment or emotional hurt are unacceptable and could be construed, in terms of a formal complaint, as abusive.
11. Tutors must make a written note of any allegations a child makes and report it immediately to the College’s Designated Teacher (Ms Sharon Greig) or the Deputy Designated Teacher (Mrs Stacey Winnington/Mr Nicky Goodall). However, if a visiting tutor is unable to locate either Officer, they should report the allegation to Mrs Christine Cairns (Head of Music), who will inform one of the designated teachers. In the unlikely event of none of the above being available, they should report to the Principal or his P.A.

**These guidelines are to be used in conjunction with the College’s Safeguarding Policy, a copy of which has been supplied to each Visiting Music Tutor.**

Reviewed  
December 2016

**Appendix 4: SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORT STAFF  
(WHOSE RESPONSIBILITIES DO NOT USUALLY REQUIRE THEM TO HAVE DIRECT CONTACT WITH STUDENTS  
e.g. MAINTENANCE & CLEANING)**

1. Staff should ensure that they are never working in an area where they are on their own with a student.
2. If a member of staff encounters an injured student they should report this immediately to a member of the Hunterhouse College staff or to their Line Manager, or **contact Emergency Services by dialling 999**.
3. If a member of staff encounters a distressed student they should report this immediately to a member of the Hunterhouse College staff or to their Line Manager who will assess the situation and contact a member of the Hunterhouse College staff.
4. If a member of staff becomes aware of any evidence of behaviour which could be harmful to a young person they must report this immediately to their Line Manager who will submit a written report to Hunterhouse College or, in an emergency, contact a member of the Hunterhouse College staff. (Examples include: graffiti; cigarette butts; evidence of substance abuse; damaged property; food or property disposed of inappropriately.)
5. Never make any physical contact with a student and do not physically restrain a student UNLESS it is to prevent physical injury to another child, a member of staff or themselves.
6. The College's Designated Teacher is Ms Sharon Greig and the Deputy Designated Teachers are Mrs Stacey Winnington and Mr Nicky Goodall.

**These guidelines are to be used in conjunction with the College's Safeguarding Policy, a copy of which is available to the company employing the staff via the College website. The company employing the staff is responsible for providing to the Bursar an annual written statement of staff training which gives content, date, and names of staff trained.**

Reviewed  
December 2016

## **Appendix 5: Contractors on Site**

### **Procedures:**

The contractor will be given a copy of the Hunterhouse College Child Protection Policy and the contractor will be asked to supply a copy of the Code of Conduct/Method Statement which he issues to his workers. (The contractor may wish to use the version below which was used in Education Authority's training of building contractors.) In addition the contractor would be expected to inform his workers that:

- Hunterhouse College is a no-smoking campus
- noise should be kept to a minimum
- there must be no swearing
- there should be no communication with students.

Hunterhouse College will remind students of their expected conduct and, for extended work by a contractor on site during College hours, a letter with an acknowledgement slip will be sent out to parent/carers.

November 2014

### **Code of Conduct for College Building Site Workers**

Please note that in Northern Ireland, in law, a child is defined as anyone under the age of 18 years (This also applies to vulnerable adults, many of whom attend our special schools and units until the end of the term of their 19th birthday)

Your site manager will know what to do if there are concerns about any of the following situations:

- Avoid any form of communication with College students on site, even if they are known to you
- Never ask students to run a message for you
- Never offer students sweets, cigarettes, etc., on site or within the College vicinity
- Do not text message or photograph any of the College students
- Report any concerns you might have about a student to the site manager
- If a student in distress approaches you, bring them to the site manager – do not deal with it yourself
- If any student tries to talk or behave inappropriately with you, report this to the site manager so that the College can be informed



Hunterhouse College

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF SAFEGUARDING INFORMATION

Title:	
First Name:	
Surname:	
Date:	

Capacity	Tick
Full time member of staff	
Visiting Tutor	
Volunteer	
Contractor	

**I acknowledge receipt of:**

Document	Signature
Hunterhouse College Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy	
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