



**TRINITY COLLEGE**  
UNIVERSITY of OXFORD

## **Trinity College Child Safeguarding Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

Trinity College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the health, safety and welfare of its Members and visitors. The College recognises it is likely that children will enter College premises or interact with College Members in a number of circumstances. This Policy aims to ensure the welfare of children or young people and to safeguard their wellbeing, in particular by protecting them from abuse of any kind. This Policy has been produced in response to an increase in the College's provision of outreach activity for schools and should be read in conjunction with the University of Oxford's [Code of Practice on the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults](#). Trinity College has a separate safeguarding policy pertaining to adults at risk, and copies of both policies are available on the College website.

### **2. Scope**

- 2.1. For the purposes of this Policy, 'child' or 'children' or 'young person' refers to a person or persons under the age of 18 (as defined in the Children Act 2004).
- 2.2. For the purposes of this Policy, a College Member is anyone at Trinity College working with children, whether as a fellow, employee, student or volunteer.
- 2.3. This Policy applies to all activities involving children and young people and to all College Members.
- 2.4. The College recognises that it has a legal duty to safeguard the welfare of children and young people who are Members or come onto its premises or come into contact with its Members under the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, and the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
- 2.5. Where a College Member occupies a position of trust with regard to children, an improper relationship with a child constitutes an abuse of trust under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.
- 2.6. The College also has certain powers, under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, to enquire as to the criminal records history of Members to assess any risk to children.

### **3. Preventative Measures**

- 3.1. The College's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is the Head of Wellbeing. The College's Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) will depend on the specific event but in most cases will be the Head of Access. Contact details can be found in Section 13 of this Policy. The DSL and DSO have both completed a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. The University has two Safeguarding Officers, and their contact details are listed in Section 14.
- 3.2. The College Safeguarding Officers are responsible for:
  - Implementing and promoting this Policy;
  - Ensuring that the Policy is monitored and reviewed in accordance with changes in legislation and guidance on the protection of children;

- Acting as the main contacts within the College for the protection of children and young people;
  - Ensuring that appropriate College Members are provided with information, advice and training on the protection of children and young people;
  - Establishing and maintaining contact with the University Safeguarding Officer;
  - Maintaining confidential records of reported child abuse cases and action taken.
- 3.3. Where a role may require College Members to have unsupervised contact with, regularly care for, train, supervise, or be in sole charge of children, the College will require satisfactory completion of a DBS Disclosure at the appropriate level.
- 3.4. New College Members will receive a copy of this Policy as part of the induction process. All College Members are expected to comply fully with the guidance and procedures set out in this Policy. The College will ensure that Members are fully briefed and/or trained (as appropriate) on the implications of this Policy.
- 3.5. This Policy is reviewed on an annual basis.
- 3.6. A Safeguarding Trustee is always appointed to support the activities of the Safeguarding Officers and adherence to the terms of the Safeguarding Policy.

#### **4. Forms of Abuse**

- 4.1. The UK Government guidance, *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018* (pp. 106-8), defines four types of child abuse:
- 4.2. **Physical:** the physical hurting or injuring of a child.
- 4.3. **Emotional:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child which results in severe or persistent adverse effects. Emotional abuse is often present in other categories of abuse, although it may occur independently.
- 4.4. **Sexual:** the forcing or enticing of a child to take part in sexual activities. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration or non-penetrative acts. They may also include non-contact activities such as involving children looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material.
- 4.5. **Neglect:** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect can include failure to provide the following: adequate food, clothing and shelter; protection from physical and emotional harm or danger; adequate supervision; access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

#### **5. Recognising Abuse**

- 5.1. Child abuse can and does occur both within a child's family and in institutional or community settings. The following may indicate that a child or young person is being or has been abused:
- Unexplained or suspicious injuries, particularly if such an injury is unlikely to have occurred accidentally;
  - An injury for which the child or young person's explanation appears inconsistent;
  - The child or young person describes an abusive act or situation;
  - Unexplained changes in behaviour, such as the failure to respect personal boundaries;
  - Inappropriate sexual awareness or sexually explicit behaviour;
  - The child or young person appears distrustful of adults;

- The child or young person is not allowed to be involved in normal social activities;
- The child or young person becomes increasingly dirty or shabby.

5.2. It is the responsibility of all College Members to act on concerns in order to safeguard the welfare of the child at risk.

## **6. Dealing with suspicion of abuse/allegations of abuse**

- 6.1. College Members should address any concerns to the DSL or DSO. If those concerns relate to the DSO, College Members are expected to discuss the matter with the DSL or to contact the University Safeguarding Officer directly. If an individual feels that the DSO or DSL has not responded appropriately, they are encouraged to contact the University Safeguarding Officer without delay. Every effort should be made to maintain confidentiality. Suspicions or allegations of abuse must not be discussed with anyone else other than those named in 3.1.
- 6.2. It is the Officer's responsibility to act on behalf of the College in dealing with allegations or suspicion of abuse. It is the task of Social Services, not the College, to investigate the matter, under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989. Under no circumstances should a College Member conduct their own investigation into suspicions or allegations of abuse, neither should they question children closely, as to do so may distort any investigation that may be carried out subsequently by the Police or Social Services.
- 6.3. If a child says something or acts in such a way that abuse is suspected, the person receiving the information should:
- React in a calm but concerned way;
  - Tell the individual that s/he is right to share what has happened, and that s/he is not responsible for what has happened;
  - Find an early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared;
  - Take what the individual says seriously and allow them to continue at their own pace;
  - Keep questions to an absolute minimum (only clarify what the individual is saying) and not ask a question that suggests a particular answer;
  - Not interrupt the individual when they are recalling significant events;
  - Reassure the individual that the problem can be dealt with;
  - Tell the individual what will happen next and with whom the information will be shared;
  - Not promise to keep anything secret and explain that you may need to pass key information to other professionals to ensure the individual can be appropriately protected;
  - Make a full record of what is said and done, though this should not result in a delay in reporting the problem. The record should include:
    - The individual's account of what has occurred;
    - Any dates, times or places and any other potentially useful information;
    - The nature of the allegation or concern;
    - A description of any visible physical injury (clothing should not be removed to inspect the child).

- 6.4. The record may be used later in a criminal trial and it is vital that what the individual discloses is recorded as accurately as possible. The record must be drafted in the individual's words and should not include the assumption or opinions of others.
- 6.5. The problem should be reported immediately to the DSL or DSO who will take the appropriate action. If the concern arises out of normal office hours (evenings and weekends) contact should be made with the Social Services Emergency Duty Team on 0800 833408. Advice can also be sought from the NSPCC 24 hour helpline on 0800 800 5000 or from the Police Child Protection team on 101. In an emergency, i.e. an immediate threat to life or limb, dial 999.
- 6.6. In the event of a suspicion or allegation of abuse the DSL will convene a meeting to ensure appropriate information sharing and forward planning. This will normally consist of the Senior Tutor, Domestic Bursar and the Head of Wellbeing/DSL. Other members of staff may be included if necessary however information sharing should be kept to the minimum level required for all actions to be taken. Depending on the nature and should the allegation involve a member of safeguarding staff or a College Officer, the President would be included.
- 6.7. It is recognised that College Members may need support after a child or young person discloses abuse to them and appropriate support will be offered by the College. It is also recognised that it is important not to presume accused persons are guilty and to offer them appropriate support.
- 6.8. All College Members (including those with obligations to particular codes of conduct/professional ethics that may be thought to constrain their actions) are required to report or act on any disclosures or allegations of abuse that involve a College Member and that have taken place at the College or on College business. College Members do not investigate serious allegations of abuse themselves as serious allegations will be reported to Oxfordshire Social Services and, if necessary, the police.

## **7. Procedure for dealing with allegations or suspicions about a College Member**

- 7.1. It can be difficult to accept that a colleague may deliberately harm a child or young person. When a concern arises, there are three processes that may need to take place:
  - a child protection investigation;
  - a criminal investigation;
  - potential College disciplinary action following an external investigation.
- 7.2. Any suspicions or allegations should be addressed to the DSL or DSO, as outlined in 6.1 above, who will inform the University Safeguarding Officer.
- 7.3. The President will be informed and will convene a meeting with appropriate members when possible to decide next steps.

## **8. Candidates for admissions interviews**

- 8.1. Should candidates for admission to Trinity be invited to stay at the College for a period of days during the interview selection process, the College recognises that it is likely that most candidates will be under the age of 18.
- 8.2. The College has established procedures for the interview process, designed to ensure safeguarding of candidates whilst also fulfilling selection requirements, including but not limited to:
  - All student volunteers are appropriately trained and given specific information about how to respond to reports of neglect or abuse;
  - Any members of College who may be alone with candidates for significant time are DBS checked. This does not include interviewers or

all housekeeping staff.

## **9. Students under the age of 18**

- 9.1. The College may admit students who commence their studies before their 18th birthday. The College recognises that:
- Anyone under the age of 18, as a matter of law is a child;
  - The College has special duties of care towards a child or young person;
  - The College does not act in loco parentis.
- 9.2. The Senior Tutor is responsible for ensuring that the DSO, DSL, relevant tutors and other key members of staff are informed of the admission of any students under the age of 18.
- 9.3. The Senior Tutor is responsible for ensuring that the Hall, Bar, Lodge, Housekeeping and Maintenance, including IT manager have the names of any students under the age of 18.
- 9.4. Where college tutors (including lecturers) will have a student under 18 in any tutorial or class, they are required to undertake an enhanced DBS check. They will also be required to complete safeguarding training. The Senior Tutor is responsible for ensuring that the DBS check and required training are carried out.

## **10. Confidentiality**

- 10.1. The College has an obligation to respect the privacy and confidentiality of all individuals, in line with the University confidentiality guidance and Policy on Data Protection. Nevertheless, it is not always appropriate or sensible to promise complete confidentiality to informants in circumstances of alleged abuse. In some circumstances the College owes a duty of care to its students or visitors that cannot be fulfilled unless the College takes action on the basis of information that might have been provided in confidence. Anyone making an allegation of abuse should be assured that:
- i. The adult will only pass on information to the minimum number of people who must be told in order to ensure that the proper action is taken
  - ii. The adult will never tell anyone who does not have a clear 'need to know.'
  - iii. The adult will take whatever steps they can to protect the informing child or young person from any retaliation or unnecessary stress that might be feared after a disclosure of alleged abuse has been made.
- 10.2. There will be circumstances in which it is necessary for a Safeguarding Officer or other College Member to share information with third parties such as the local authority, the police or a child's parents or guardians.

## **11. Conduct around children and young people**

- 11.1. College Members should remember that inappropriate behaviour can occur via the telephone, internet and e-mail, as well as during direct interaction with children and young people.
- 11.2. Conduct to be avoided:
- Spending excessive amounts of time alone with children and young people, away from others;
  - Taking children and young people to your home;
  - Being alone in a vehicle with children and young people.
  - Using personal devices/social media to communicate with children and

young people – contact should be made through University software

11.3. Conduct never to be sanctioned:

- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, or which could be interpreted as such;
- Giving children non-prescribed drugs or other inappropriate substances, including alcohol (please note that one of the four key objectives of the Licensing Act 2003 is the 'protection of children from harm' and that it is also an offence for a child or young person to be supplied with or knowingly to consume alcohol on a licensed premises). Members should be aware that the College holds a Premises License and that the Bar does serve alcohol;
- Allowing or engaging in any form of inappropriate touching;
- Making sexually suggestive comments to children and young people, even in jest;
- Allowing allegations made by a child or young person to go unreported;
- Doing things of an intimate nature for children or young people that they can do for themselves. This is only likely to arise with very young children and the possibility should be discussed with their parent or carer to avoid possible misunderstanding.

11.4. College Members should:

- Treat everyone with fairness, equality and respect;
- Be sensitive to children and young people's appearance, race, culture, religious belief, sexuality, gender or disability;
- Act as a good role model and challenge any unacceptable behaviour from children or from other College Members;
- Report all allegations or suspicions of abuse of children or young people using the Procedures outlined in this Policy;
- Consider whether conduct with an individual child or young person should involve a colleague being present;
- Be aware that physical contact with a child or young person may be misinterpreted;
- Retain a professional approach to children, including avoiding physical contact with a child;
- Respect a child or young person's right to privacy and, in residential accommodation, not enter a child or young person's bedroom without prior authorisation except in the case of an emergency.

11.5. The Sexual Offences Act 2003 provides that intimate contact between an adult and a child, where that adult was in a 'position of trust' to the child or young person is a criminal offence. Those in a 'position of trust' include those who have regular unsupervised contact with a child, or where an adult looks after a child or young person at an educational institution at which the adult is not also receiving education. These provisions specifically apply to members of staff and students under the age of 18 years.

11.6. It may be necessary for College Members to take photographs or make videos of children or young people for educational research, teaching purposes, or publication. An image of a child or young person is personal data for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 2008. Where images are stored in a way that makes the data subject identifiable, or where the images are used for publication (online and print), written

consent should be obtained before the images are created. If the data subject is capable of comprehending the implications of consenting to the data use, then their consent should be sought; otherwise, the consent of the parent or legal guardian should be obtained. Whenever an image of a child or young person is published, the data subject should, as far as possible, be unidentifiable.

- 11.7. Whilst unlikely to arise in the context of photographs or videos of children or young people made for educational research, teaching purposes, or publication, it is also important to be aware of the legislation relating to the making or publication of indecent images of children. In this context indecent is not defined, but is “based on a recognised standard of propriety.” Legally the test is objective and the circumstances in which the photograph came to be taken and the motive of the taker are not relevant; it is the photograph of the child or young person which must be indecent, not the accused person’s conduct.
- 11.8. Whilst it may not be intended to commit such an offence, it is important to be aware of the limits of what is legally acceptable, particularly if an image is forwarded to someone else, even for the purposes of raising a concern or reporting it to the authorities. It is also helpful to draw this to the attention of anyone who may have an image which could be regarded as such (e.g. in the context of ‘sexting’.)

## **12. Risk Assessment**

- 12.1. A risk assessment must be completed by the organisers of any activity specifically intended for children and which brings children onto College premises or into contact with College Members. Once completed, the risk assessment must be approved by a Safeguarding Officer before the activity is undertaken.
- 12.2. It is expected that for visits by any organisations, including schools, involving under 18s, where members of staff are in attendance, the organisation will complete its own risk assessment and take its own child protection steps in accordance with Local Education Authority and/or Children’s Safeguarding Board guidelines. This would include naming a Nominated Child Protection Lead for the duration of that visit.
- 12.3. An annual safeguarding risk assessment undertaken by the DSL will note any staff and/or students under the age of 18.

## **13. People with specific responsibility for child protection and their roles**

13.1. The DSL is responsible for:

- Procedure;
- Holding and being conversant with current University, local and national Child Protection procedures;
- Keeping up to date through recognised training, preferably provided by the Local Safeguarding Children Board/Partnership or equivalent. It is a requirement that this takes place at least every two years.
- Reviewing and updating the College’s Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies and University policies and procedures. Any deficiencies or weaknesses in the policies and procedures must be remedied without delay;
- Liaison over safeguarding matters with the University Safeguarding Officer;
- Briefing and guiding those in regular contact with children and young people in College on Safeguarding matters. This includes the briefing of new staff as part of their induction;
- Ensuring that, through the usual processes of induction, each College Staff has access to the Safeguarding Procedures and has read them within 3 months of being appointed;

- Receiving reports of alleged or suspected abuse of children within the College, or reported by a child relating to incidents at home or outside the College, contacting the University Safeguarding Officer and taking any other action in response, as set out below;
- Keeping records;
- Liaising with the staff.
- Coordination of regular training to College staff in Safer Recruitment (with regard to safeguarding) and Child Protection as appropriate.

13.2. The DSO is responsible for:

- Ensuring that Safeguarding procedures are available to parents and teachers of children working with the College on request.
- Ensuring that all outreach staff and student ambassadors are appropriately trained, understand and implement safeguarding procedures (including those also laid out in the Lost Child Policy and Procedure) when supporting events with under-18-year-old participants.
- Ensuring that activities involving under 18s are appropriately risk assessed and steps are taken to mitigate those risks wherever possible, with particular attention paid to residential programmes of activity.
- Ensuring that the lost child policy and procedure is reviewed in the context of the Access Departments programme of activities including under 18-year-olds.
- Escalating any safeguarding concerns or incidents to the DSL as needed.

13.3. The Safeguarding Trustee will support the activities of the DSL and DSO.

13.4. The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Undertaking an annual review of the College's Safeguarding Policy and procedures;
- Receiving the College's annual safeguarding risk assessment and action plan.

#### **14. Contact Information**

Trinity College Designated Safeguarding Lead, Lizzie Shine; [lizzie.shine@trinity.ox.ac.uk](mailto:lizzie.shine@trinity.ox.ac.uk) 01865 279895.

Trinity College Designated Safeguarding Officer: Head of Access, Hannah Rolley; [hannah.rolley@trinity.ox.ac.uk](mailto:hannah.rolley@trinity.ox.ac.uk) 01865 279860.

University Safeguarding Officers: Director of HR, 01865 270152 and Director of Student Welfare and Support Services, 01865 280444.

Oxfordshire Children's Social Care: Office hours 01865 323048/ out of hours 0800 833408.

Oxfordshire Local Authority Designated Officer [lado.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:lado.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk), 01865 810603.

Police telephone 101.

NSPCC Helpline. 0800 800 5000 (24h).

**Approved by GB 6<sup>th</sup> November 2024**