

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

BACKGROUND

The Police and Social Services have the primary responsibility in the field of Child Protection. The Children Act 1989 places a duty on local authorities to take steps to protect children in appropriate circumstances and gives certain powers to the police so that they can take action to protect children. (N.B. for the purpose of this policy the definition of 'child' or 'young person' relates to a young person under the age of 18).

RESPONSIBILITIES

Xaverian College is committed to working together with Social Services and consulting them on appropriate procedures. It recognises that it has a responsibility towards children attending or visiting the college to safeguard their welfare and to take decisions as to how this can best be achieved. ***It is not the College responsibility to investigate abuse but it does have a duty to act if there is cause for concern and to notify the appropriate agencies so that they can investigate and take any necessary action.***

AIMS

Because of their day to day contact with individual students, teachers and other staff in the Education Service are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour or failure to develop ("Protecting Children from Abuse: The role of the Education Service", Circular 10/95, "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education" DFCSF 2010)

The responsibilities of schools and colleges with regard to protecting children are laid down in "Working Together Under the Children Act 1989: A Guide to Arrangements for inter-agency Co-operation for the Protection of Children from Abuse", DFEE Circular 10/95, the Children Act 1989, 2004 and "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education" DFCSF 2010. This legislation and guidance places responsibilities on colleges to ensure the wellbeing of students. Child Protection issues are an important aspect of student welfare.

Xaverian recognises its responsibilities with regard to the protection of children from abuse and from inappropriate and inadequate care and is committed to acting in all cases where there is concern.

The main purpose of this document is to outline the policy procedures that should be adopted, should any member of staff, both teaching and non-teaching have cause to be concerned that a child is being neglected or subject to physical emotional or sexual abuse. For further information also refer to the Safeguarding Policy and Manual.

OBJECTIVES

Designated Person for Child Protection

In accordance with Circular 10/95 our College has a designated person for child protection. This person is currently the:- Assistant Principal Student Services, in their absence the Vice Principal or Deputy Safeguarding Manager will assume responsibility. The designated person acts as a Co-ordinator and will liaise on cases with the College Counsellor, Senior Pastoral Managers and Senior Teacher with responsibility for female welfare.

The responsibilities of the designated person are:-

1. To liaise with the Social Services Department (SSD) and other agencies when there is a concern about a young person attending the college.
2. To support and advise staff when dealing with child protection issues
3. To liaise with relevant staff over teaching in the curriculum regarding child protection issues.
4. To keep up to date with developments in child protection through appropriate in service training and to disseminate such information to members of staff.

The designation of a co-ordinating person should not be seen as diminishing the role of all teachers in being alert to signs of abuse as part of their pastoral responsibilities.

PROCEDURES

- (a) If any members of staff, either teaching or non-teaching, has a child protection concern about a young person at the college he / she will **immediately** inform the designated person and accurately record the event or events giving rise to the concern on the Incident Referral Form. These records will be hand written to preserve confidentiality.
- (b) **Confidentiality** – Staff have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals. If a ‘young person’ confides in a member of staff and asks that the information is to be kept secret, **it is important to tell the individual that they have a legal responsibility to share the information with someone who can help.** This needs to be done with care and sensitivity and the individual needs to be reassured that the matter will only be discussed with people who need to know.
- (c) **Records** – Good practice for keeping child protection records include noting the date, event and action taken in cases of:-
 - (i) Suspected child abuse (Incident Referral Form)
 - (ii) When a young person at College has their name on the Child Protection Register and is the subject of an inter-agency child protection plan (Monitoring Sheet - Social Services)

Child protection records should be kept securely locked. They can be kept on computer and are exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act 1984). For manual records, the Education (School Records) Regulations 1989 exempt information relating to child abuse from the requirement of disclosure. However, in cases of alleged child abuse which comes to court, the court may require the college to provide its child protection records.

- (d) **Reports** – Reports prepared for Child Protection Conferences should focus on the young person’s educational progress, attendance, behaviour, and relations with other students and staff, and where appropriate, the individual’s appearance. If relevant, reports should also include what is known about the individual’s relations with his or her family and the family structure.

Reports should be objective and based on evidence. They should distinguish between fact, observation, allegation and opinion. It should be noted that the college’s report would normally be made available to the individual’s parents at the Child Protection Conference. Child protection records and reports will be kept separate from the individual’s personal file.

- (e) **College Transfers** – when an individual about whom there are child protection concerns leave the College, we will endeavour to transfer the information to the individual’s new college as soon as possible.

- (f) **Child Protection Conference** – the College will endeavour to be represented at all Child Protection Conferences and will inform the member of staff who attends as fully as possible about the College’s concerns.

- (g) **Core Groups and Child Protection Plans** – If a young person’s name is placed on the Child Protection Register and becomes the subject of a child protection plan, it is more than likely that a member of the college staff will become a member of the Core Group set up to implement the plan. The appropriate person to be on the Core Group will be chosen by the designated person / Principal and given whatever support is necessary.

- (h) **Abuse by Professionals** – where there are concerns about abuse by a member of staff, the Principal must be informed immediately. Where the allegation is made against the Principal, the Vice Principal must be informed. Refer to the Safeguarding Manual for more information on the procedures to follow.

- (i) **Domestic Violence** – where staff are aware of incidents of violence between adults in households where there are young persons attending college, they will share these concerns with the designated person.

The designated person will consider the need for a formal referral to the SSD on the basis of their professional judgement and the level of any potential / actual risk to the individual.

- (j) **Staff Support** – the stress on staff involved in any aspects of child protection work is considerable and the college will ensure that such staff are properly supported. The Principal and the designated person will be responsible for supporting the staff concerned and, where necessary, seeking help from outside the College.

(k) Child Protection and the Curriculum

We believe that the College can play a part in the prevention of child abuse through the curriculum. The College offers RE, Tutorials and Assembly programmes which raise issues relating to child protection issues in a sensitive and reflective way.

Through the curriculum students are taught about the risks of different kinds of abuse (including sexual abuse) and are taught skills they need to help keep them safe and to feel that they can speak to members of staff should they have concerns of this nature.

Our College makes this information available to students in the following ways:-

- assemblies
- tutorial work
- raising awareness of national and local helpline telephone numbers and other support organisations

MONITORING QUALITY

Assistant Principal Student Services is responsible for monitoring the quality of this area through consultations with the Pastoral Team. Evaluation of the Child Protection Policy is contained in the annual Safeguarding Self Assessment Report. The policy is reviewed as part of this process.