
CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

- Please also refer to the related **Safeguarding Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and the Prevent Policy.**

Xaverian, in line with its Mission Statement and legal requirements, has a duty of care to all members of its community with the overarching aim of providing a safe environment in which all can realise their full potential.

BACKGROUND

The Police and Local Authority Safeguarding Boards have the primary responsibility in the field of Child Protection. The Children Act (2004) 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). Reference: Working Together to Safeguard Children (February 2019), Keeping Children Safe in Education (updated September 2022) and Regulated Activity in Relation to Children: Scope (2012)

RESPONSIBILITIES

Xaverian College is committed to working together with Local Authority Safeguarding Boards and Young Person's Social Care and consulting with 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. The Child Protection policy (together with the Safeguarding Policy) will set out procedures and responsibilities for keeping children safe, including reporting allegations.

It is not the College's 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 (including peer-on-peer abuse), changes in behaviour or failure to develop (Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE (updated September 2022), Protecting Children from Abuse: The Role of the Education Service, Circular 10/95)

The responsibilities of schools and colleges with regards to protecting children are laid down under Section 175 of the Education Act (2002) and in the recently published statutory guidelines Keeping Children Safe in Education DfE (updated September 2022). This legislation and guidance places responsibilities on colleges to ensure the wellbeing of students. Child Protection issues are an important aspect of student welfare.

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Xaverian recognises its responsibilities about 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 and procedures that should be adopted should any member of staff, both teaching and non-teaching including temporary and volunteer staff, have cause to be concerned that a child is being neglected or subject to physical, emotional or sexual abuse. We also have a duty of care to protect a young person who is in danger of harming themselves. The college's underlying principle is that the welfare of the young person is paramount.

OBJECTIVES

Designated Person for Child Protection

In accordance with the statutory guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education" DfE (updated 2022), our College has a Designated Person for child protection. This person is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). In their absence, the Safeguarding Manager (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)) will assume responsibility. The Designated Person and Deputy, acts as a Co-ordinator and will liaise on cases with Heads of Year, Pastoral Managers, the Head of ALS (who is the lead for Female Welfare), College Counsellors or the reporting member of staff.

The responsibilities of the Designated Person and Deputy are:-

1. To liaise with the Local Authority Safeguarding Boards and other agencies when there is a concern about a young person attending the college.
2. To give support and provide advice, information and guidance for 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.
5. Whilst the activities of the DSL can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, as set out above, remains with the designated safeguarding lead. This responsibility should not be delegated.

The designation of a co-ordinating person should not be diminishing the role of all teachers in being alert to signs of abuse as part of their pastoral responsibilities. It is the responsibility of all members of staff to undertake Safeguarding training as directed, so that they are aware of these signs of abuse.

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CHILD PROTECTION GUIDELINES

- (a) If there is a risk of immediate serious harm, a referral should be made to children’s social care or the appropriate agency immediately. The child may be a member of the college or a younger sibling or a friend.
- (b) This should be done in consultation with and through the Designated Person, who will take the responsibility of contacting children’s social care or the relevant agency
- (c) If the child’s situation does not appear to be improving, the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration, raising it with the Designated Person through MyConcern or verbally in person.
- (d) Other safeguarding concerns should be reported through MyConcern to the relevant Pastoral Manager or Head of Year who will pass the information on to the Designated Person, depending on the level of risk.
- (e) If any members of staff, either teaching or non-teaching, has evidence that a child is suffering or is in danger of suffering significant harm, they need to inform the Designated Person as soon as possible (at least within 2 hours) and accurately record the event or events giving rise to the concern on MyConcern.
- (f) If the Designated Person is not available, the Deputy (Safeguarding Manager) must be informed in (a)-(e) above.
- (g) Keeping Children Safe in Education (updated September 2022), states that any member of staff can make a referral. However, the college policy and procedures regarding Child Protection ensures that there is a consistent and informed approach to Child Protection issues.
- (h) **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 in cases of Child Protection 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 named people who need to know.
- (i) **Records** are kept on MyConcern – including noting the date, events leading to the allegation or concern and action taken in cases of:-
 - (i) Suspected child abuse
 - (ii) When a young person at College has their name on the Child Protection Register and is the subject of a multi-agency Child Protection plan.

Any child protection records that are written down on paper are kept securely locked. However, MyConcern is the platform that must be used to record any concerns or referrals. This is fully compliant with the regulations outlined in the General Data Protection Regulation (2018), and are exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act 1988. For manual records, the Education (School Records) Regulations (1989) exempts information relating to child abuse from the requirement of disclosure. However, in cases of alleged child abuse which go to court, the court may require the college to provide its child protection records.

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- (j) **Reports** – Reports prepared for Child Protection Conferences 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 are objective and based on evidence. They 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.

- (k) **College Transfers** – when an individual about whom there are child protection concerns leaves the College, we will inform Social Services as soon as possible and endeavour to transfer the information to the individual’s new college if known.
- (l) **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.
- (m) **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 and given whatever support is necessary.
- (n) **Allegation of Abuse by Professionals** – where there are concerns about abuse by a member of staff, the Principal will be informed immediately. The Designated Person will also be informed. Where the allegation is made against the Principal, the Head of Governors will be informed. The procedure of investigating allegations against staff complies with the statutory guidelines, “Dealing with allegations of abuse” DfE (Oct 2012).
- (o) **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 based on their professional judgement and the level of any potential / actual risk to the individual or any other children in the household.

- (p) **Staff Support** – the stress on staff involved in any aspects of child protection work is considerable and the college ensures that such staff are properly supported. The Principal, Vice Principal of Student Support and the Designated Person are

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responsible for supporting the staff concerned and, where necessary, seeking help from outside the College.

- (q) **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 and Pastoral programmes which raise issues relating to child protection issues in a sensitive and reflective way.

Through these programmes, students are taught about the risks of different kinds of 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:-

- Pastoral Studies lessons
- raising awareness of support within college, and national and local helpline telephone numbers and other support organisations
- Students are reminded that if they are studying online, whether at college or at home, they must adhere to the IT/Social Media principles outlined in the Student Code of Conduct and College Behaviour for Learning policy.
- Students are educated in how to keep safe online via Pastoral Studies lessons.
- Students are informed and educated on a wide variety of Child Protection issues such as sexual abuse and harassment, radicalisation and extremism, anti-psychoactive substances, county lines, FGM, CSE and mental health.

- (r) **Sexual Violence and Harassment-** The new KCSIE(2022) makes it explicit that schools and colleges should prevent sexual violence and harassment and also should have clear systems in place to report abuse and children are confident that their concerns will be treated seriously.

Our college aims to do this in the following ways:

- Making clear through the Pastoral Curriculum, that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, that it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated at college. It should never be passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “a part of growing up” or “boys being boys.
- We understand the local processes that are in place and what support can be accessed when sexual violence or sexual harassment has occurred.
- Working with local authority children’s social care and the police will be important partners where a crime might have been committed. Referrals to the police will often be a natural progression of making a referral to local authority children’s social care. The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will lead the college response and is aware of the local process for referrals to children’s social care and making referrals to the police.
- Seeking advice and support from the NSPCC, Child Exploitation and Online Protection, The Survivor’s Trust, SARC.
- Training all staff on sexual abuse and violence and reporting disclosures.

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- Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis.
 - The college has an understanding that sexual violence and sexual abuse can happen anywhere, and all staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'. The college is aware of and will respond appropriately to all reports and concerns about sexual violence and/or sexual harassment both online and offline, including those that have happened outside of the college.

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