

Bexhill 6th Form College

# **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

**POLICY NUMBER: PG4**

Reviewed & Approved by Personnel Committee: October 2013

# CHILD PROTECTION POLICY



Bexhill 6th Form College

The College has key responsibilities to ensure the protection of the students in its care. In order to meet these responsibilities the College:

- Will nominate a designated person to take the lead responsibility for dealing with child protection issues. The designated person will be a member of the College's Senior Leadership Team. The designated person will act as one of the four Colleges nominated Child Protection Officers. One of the other Child Protection Officer will be a senior member of staff. The Child Protection Officers are responsible for procedures and liaison with other statutory bodies.

The Child Protection Officers in College are

- Linda Johnson – Vice Principal (Lead CP Officer)
  - Dave Brown – Vice Principal
  - Deborah Vockins – Director of Human Resources
  - Elisabeth Lawrence – Student Services Manager
- Will operate safe recruitment procedures and make sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers who will work with children (including Disclosure and Barring Service, List 99 checks).
  - Will operate clear procedures for dealing with child protection and ensure effective liaison with Social Services and other relevant agencies in cases of actual or potential abuse (all staff have a duty to refer concerns to one of the Child Protection Officers at the College).
  - Will invoke the Disciplinary Procedure when dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and in parallel with the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) and the Police.
  - Will review the Child Protection Policy and procedures annually through the Personnel Committee of the Governing Body and remedy any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to child protection arrangements that are brought to its attention without delay.
  - Make the 'Policy' available to parents and students upon request.
  - Will keep the Single Central Record of Recruitment and Checking database as required by DfES within Safeguarding Children.
  - Will make every effort to identify vulnerable groups including "Looked After Children" and ensure they are protected through appropriate risk assessments.

## PROCEDURE

Bexhill College reminds staff that it considers it to be a breach of trust and confidence for staff to develop an intimate and/or sexual relationship with a Bexhill College student and/or a student associated with the college or any individual under the age of 18. In addition, for students under 18, and/or under 24 for students with special needs, it is illegal.

Staff should not develop an intimate/and or sexual relationship with a Bexhill College student or student associated with the college who is 16-18 years or over and has left the college to avoid accusations of grooming.

Any breach of this policy may lead to the disciplinary procedure being evoked.

Bexhill College follows the Child Protection procedures as laid down by the East Sussex Local Safeguarding Children Board Area (LSCB) where it applies to post 16 students as well as guidance from the Department for Education and Skills. For any students who are under 16 the complete child protection procedure applies.

Where abuse or potential abuse is suspected notes must be kept of every meeting, interview or phone call with the student or informant. The notes must be recorded and kept on file by the Child Protection Officer(s). Records must be timed, dated and signed.

Confidentiality must be maintained at all times to protect the student, therefore only those staff involved with the procedure and/or the student's personal tutor are to be informed but only if the student gives consent to this information being passed on.

The College is not legally required to inform parents of the disclosed information unless this is what the student wishes. The student's permission should always be confirmed and recorded on file prior to contacting any family member. Staff need to ensure that in all circumstances the welfare of the student is paramount.

When the student concerned informs a member of staff of the alleged abuse, the student must be advised that a record will be made of the conversation and that the information will have to be passed on to the College Child Protection Officers who will need to talk to the student. The student needs to be asked if there is a relative or a friend they would like contacted to provide further support. Records should include date, time, name of the student, a brief description of events that the student is alleging and the signature of the member of staff.

These records then need to be passed on to the Child Protection Officers who will arrange an interview with the student where a full assessment can be made of the allegations before proceeding. It is advisable that the student has some support at this interview either from a member of staff, friend or relative.

Before proceeding the following points will need to be considered. Although not a legally responsible adult at 16, students are for most purposes regarded as adults. Before proceeding the following points need to be considered:

- Social Services will respond to cases of emotional abuse only if sexual abuse may also be suspected.
- The student (or their "friend") must want to make a formal report in respect of an incident of sexual abuse.
- Social Services have a legal obligation to advise students but cannot insist they go into foster care. However if required Social Services or Bexhill College Student Services may arrange a place of safety.
- Alleged physical abuse should be referred to Social Services and/or the Police if there is evidence of physical injury e.g. bruises.

- If abuse (either sexual and/or physical) has not occurred, or if there is insufficient evidence to proceed or the student wants help to come to terms with what has happened, they will be offered support by the College and the appropriate counselling for their needs.

Confidentiality – protection of students is strictly confidential amongst agencies in the LSCB and staff. This is for the protection of staff and cases which arise cannot be discussed outside College. It is imperative that procedures are followed and information is shared with Child Protection Officers at College. The East Sussex LSCB child protection procedures comment:

“If any member of College staff suspects that a student has been abused or is at risk of being abused she/he should immediately inform one of the designated Child Protection Officers. The Child Protection Officers will liaise with the appropriate agencies.”

If staff have any concerns/worries about Child Protection they should discuss the issue with the College Child Protection Officers.

The College will organise training in child protection for all at an appropriate level for all staff and ensure that staff training is updated on a regular basis (every three years for staff and every two years for senior staff with the designated responsibility for Child Protection).

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **SEXUAL OFFENCES ACT 2003**

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 re-enacts and extends the abuse of position of trust as set out in the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000.

The Act sets down specific positions of trust to which offences relate. People who are in these positions of trust will normally have power and authority in a child’s life and may have a key influence on their future. They will have regular contact with the child, and may be acting “in loco parentis.”

The position of trust offences in the new Act cover all children under 18. They are mainly designed to protect young people aged 16 and 17, who, even though they are over the age of consent, are potentially vulnerable to sexual abuse from people in positions of trust or authority.

The Act sets out a series of occupations to which abuse of position of trust laws apply. Educational Institutions are included in the Acts definitions. The Act also introduced new occupations to which positions of trust apply. These cover people who look after young people under 18 in the following ways.

Looking after young people on an individual basis

The abuse of trust offences for those working in positions of trust cover the same kinds of behaviour as offences which apply to the general public – except that, where positions of trust are concerned, the offences apply where the young person is under 18, instead of under 16.

Offences include:

- Sexual activity with a child.

- Causing or inciting a child to engage in sexual activity.
- Engaging in sexual activity in the presence of a child.
- Causing a child to watch a sexual act.

Positions of trust exceptions occur where a person is legally married to a young person or where a lawful sexual relationship existed before the position of trust arose.

Given the terms of the Act any sexual relationship with a student will be regarded a serious breach of the staff code of conduct and will result in disciplinary action against that member of staff. Any alleged sexual relationship with a child or young person under the age of 18, either inside or outside of College, will be reported to the Police.

## **APPENDIX 2**

Education and Training for pupils under 16 years of age (who are on the roll of secondary schools).

- The designated person responsible for child protection will liaise with the schools concerned and ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to safeguard the children.
- An agreement with the secondary school will be entered into based on the model partnership agreement; "Model Partnership Agreement between Colleges and Schools/LEAs – supporting the 14 – 19 Agenda" published by the Learning and Skills Council and AOC August 2003.

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **STUDENTS IN WORKPLACE PLACEMENTS**

New guidelines, Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education came into force in January 2007. The College will adopt these procedures.

The following procedure reflects this policy.

Traditional work placements of one day per term in an institution are covered by current procedures and arrangements governed by "work experience and the Law".

More recently long term placements for students undertaking vocational training or studying for vocational qualifications have become increasingly common, and students can be in a workplace for the equivalent of several weeks or longer. Therefore the potential for abuse is greater in these types of placements and therefore child protection arrangements are a relevant concern for longer term placements. If the College is organising long term placements it will need to ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect students from harm. Employers and training organisations will need to be made aware of safeguarding issues and asked to co-operate in putting appropriate safeguards in place.

Therefore if a work experience placement for a student is greater than one day per week for a term additional safeguards may have to be applied if any of the following conditions were operative.

- Placements were for more than one day per week.
- For longer than one term in any academic year.

- Aimed at children who may be vulnerable e.g. those who have special needs or are young (aged under 16).
- One where the workplace supervisor or a colleague will have substantial unsupervised access to the child because of the nature of the business.
- Has a residential component.

If any of the above applies the College will need to have the following safeguards in place.

Staff who arrange, vet or monitor work placements will be trained in child protection. Training organisations or employers taking responsibility for a child, children or students on a long term placement will be asked to make a commitment to safeguarding their welfare by endorsing an agreed child protection policy.

Any person whose normal duties will include regularly caring for, training looking after or supervising, or being in sole charge of a student in the workplace should be vetted and subjected to Criminal Record Bureau checks to ensure she/he is not disqualified from working with children or otherwise unsuitable to be responsible for them. Checks should be arranged by the college and the person, i.e. those who are specifically designated to have responsibility for looking after, supervising or directly training a child, children or students throughout the year, should be regarded as a volunteer for the purposes of a check.

That person should also be given basic child protection training to be aware of their responsibilities. They should be given details of a person to contact in the event that there are any concerns about the child for whom they are responsible.

Students in these placements will be given clear advice about who to contact if they are worried or uncomfortable about their surroundings or if they suffer abuse. This is likely to be their college tutor.

The College Child Protection policy and procedures should be followed if abuse is suspected in the placement.

(Child, children or students are defined as young people under the age of eighteen. College students aged eighteen or over should be advised of the child protection procedures although they may not be strictly applicable in some cases).

Please refer to Safeguarding procedures and this should be read in conjunction with this policy.

#### Appendix 4a

Staff should not use personal mobile phones, personal home phones and personal email with current students or students who have left within the last 3 years.

Staff who chose to do this should be aware that they do this at their own professional risk.

Inappropriate use of SNS may lead to disciplinary action being taken.

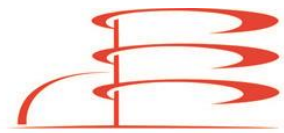
#### Appendix 4b

Staff use of Social Networking Sites (SNS) for Academic use (see attached appendix at end of the policy)

- all staff wishing to use a SNS to contact students must use the College Facebook.
- Staff must use the correct procedure to set up the site which will be monitored.
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STAFF ARE STRONGLY ADVISED NOT TO BE IN CONTACT WITH ANY STUDENT OR STUDENT WHO HAS LEFT WITHIN THE LAST 3 YEARS VIA A PRIVATE SNS.

Staff who chose to do this should be aware that they do this at their own professional risk.



### Application to Set Up a Subject Social Networking Site

Name of Staff Member responsible for site	
Section	
Subject / Area for Site	
Time frame for site	
Reason for setting up site including how it will be used	
Who will be invited to join	
How will you monitor the site	

Please tick ✓

I wish to set up the following social networking site on the College Facebook for academic purposes

I appreciate that I have to take full responsibility for the context and of this site

I understand I have to bring any relevant issue to the immediate attention of a Senior Manager

I understand approval is only given once I receive this form back approved by VP

Signed Staff Member:..... Date:.....

HoS:..... Date:.....

Approved: VP..... Date:.....