

CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS PROTECTION POLICY

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**1. Policy Statement**

* 1. Leeds Arts University has a statutory and moral duty to ensure that the University functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children/young people and vulnerable adults receiving education and training at the University.
	2. Throughout these policies and procedures, reference is made to “children and young people”. The term is used to mean “those under the age of 18”.
	3. It is also recognised that some adults are vulnerable to abuse. Accordingly, the procedures are also applied to allegations of abuse and the protection of vulnerable adults. Guidance on who is a ‘vulnerable adult’ is taken from ‘No Secrets’ (Department of Health 2000), which defines vulnerable adults as: ‘those adults who are or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness’.
	4. The definition of vulnerable adults includes (but is not exclusive to) individuals with any of the following:
* Learning difficulties
* Physical impairments
* Sensory impairments
* Mental health needs
* Age related frailty
* Dementia
* Brain injuries
* Drug or alcohol problems
	1. The University will refer concerns that a child, young person or vulnerable adult might be at risk of significant harm to the City Council’s Department of Children and Young People’s Services, the City Council Adult Social Care Service, the police, or in cases of radicalisation to the Channel programme as appropriate.
	2. The senior member of the University Leadership Team with special responsibility for protection issues and all staff working with children/young people and vulnerable adults will receive training adequate to familiarise them with child/vulnerable protection issues and their responsibilities and the University’s procedures and policies, with refresher training at least every three years.
	3. The senior member of the University Leadership Team with special responsibility for protection issues is the Pro-Vice-Chancellor Student Experience & Resources. He shall be assisted by 2 deputies with responsibility for child/vulnerable adult protection. These are known as the Deputy Safeguarding Leads (DSL) and their names and titles are set out in section 2 of this policy.
	4. The University recognises the following as definitions of abuse:

**a. Physical abuse** may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or otherwise causing physical harm. Physical injury may occur as a result of injury inflicted by a family member, including a brother or sister, or by another person, or an injury sustained accidentally but as a result of neglect. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as fabricated or induced illness by proxy, or Munchausen syndrome by proxy.

 Bullying can also be a form of physical and emotional abuse. However, it is more often between peers and needs to be dealt with locally by personal tutors with the assistance of the Student Welfare team, with cases reported as per the University Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy.

**b. Psychological/Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child or person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on his or her emotional development. It may involve conveying to that child or person that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on the child or person concerned. It may involve causing that child or person to feel frightened or in danger, or be exploited or corrupted. Emotional and other forms of abuse may occur as a result of domestic violence. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment or abuse, though it may occur alone.

**c. Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activity such as involving children or vulnerable adults in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Sexual abuse may also take place through the inappropriate use of cameras and phone images.

**d. Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child or vulnerable adult’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of his or her health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also involve the neglect of basic emotional needs.

* 1. In respect to vulnerable adults, Leeds City Council guidelines identify seven forms of abuse. In addition to the four above they also identify:
1. **Financial abuse** is defined as the misappropriation of money or assets; transactions to which the person could not consent or which were invalidated by intimidation or deception; or, the misuse of assets. Examples include misuse of benefits, denying access to money, not spending allowances on the individual, and unreasonable restriction on a person’s right to control over their lives to the best of their ability.
2. **Discriminatory abuse** is defined as any form of abuse based on discrimination because of a person’s race, culture, belief, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation etc.
3. **Institutional abuse** is defined as repeated incidents of poor professional practice or neglect, and inflexible services based on the needs of the providers rather than the person requiring the service.
	1. In respect of safeguarding individuals from radicalisation, the University works to the Prevent element of the Government’s Counter Terrorism Strategy, and where deemed appropriate seeks external support for learners through referrals to the Channel programme. This programme aims to work with the individual to address their specific vulnerabilities, prevent them becoming further radicalised and possibly entering the criminal justice system because of their actions. It is recognised that radicalisation can occur to any individual from any section of society and is not particular to any racial, ethnic or social group. It is further recognised that in many instances the process of radicalisation is one of grooming by others.

2. **Designated staff with responsibility for child protection/vulnerable adults**

 **Senior staff members with lead responsibility for safeguarding.**

2.1 The designated senior member of staff with lead responsibility for child/vulnerable adult

 protection issues is the Pro-Vice-Chancellor Student Experience & Resources.

 2.2 The person is a senior member of the University Senior Management Team. They have a key duty to take lead responsibility for raising awareness within the staff of issues relating to the welfare of children and young people, and the promotion of safe environment for the children, young people and vulnerable adults learning within the University.

 2.3 The designated Safeguarding Lead has received training in child/vulnerable adult protection issues and inter-agency working, as required by the Local Safeguarding Children Board, and will receive updates annually along with refresher training at least every two years.

 2.4 The Head of Student Support (a deputy Safeguarding Lead) will provide an annual report to the governing body of the University setting out how the University has discharged its duties. They are responsible for reporting deficiencies in procedure or policy identified by the Local Safeguarding Children’s Board (LSCB) (or others) to the governing body at the earliest opportunity.

 2.5 The Head of Student Support and Deputy Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible for overseeing the operation of procedures. This involves:

1. Overseeing the referral of cases of suspected abuse/radicalisation or allegations to the City Council’s Department of Children and Young People’s Services, or other agencies (such as the police, Channel) as appropriate.
2. Providing advice and support to other staff on issues relating to child/vulnerable adult protection.
3. Maintaining a proper record of any child/vulnerable adult protection referral, complaint or concern (even where that concern does not lead to a referral).
4. Ensuring that parents/carers of children and young people/vulnerable adults within the University are aware of the University’s Child/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy.
5. Liaising with the Children and Young People’s Services Department of the Local Authority, the Local Safeguarding Children Board and other appropriate agencies.
6. Liaising with secondary schools which send pupils to the University to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for the pupils.
7. Liaising with any employers and training organisations that receive children or young people/vulnerable adults from the University on long term placements to ensure that appropriate safeguards are put in place.
8. Ensuring that all staff receive basic training in child protection/vulnerable adult issues and are aware of the University’s Child/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy.
9. Convening and chairing meetings of the designated safeguarding staff.

 **Designated staff members**

2.6 Designated members of staff with particular responsibility for child protection/vulnerable adult issues are.

* Head of Student Support (and DSL)
* Head of Further Education (and DSL)
* Student Support and Welfare Manager University Welfare Advisor
* University Welfare Advisors

 2.7 These designated staff members:

1. Report to the Head of Student Support on child/vulnerable adult protection issues.
2. Are trained and able to receive and make an appropriate child/vulnerable adult protection referral to external agencies.
3. Will be available to provide advice and support to other staff on issues relating to child/vulnerable adults studying at the University.
4. Have particular responsibility to be available to listen to children, young people and vulnerable adults studying at the University.
5. Will deal with individual cases, including attending case conferences and review meetings as appropriate.
6. Have received training in child protection/vulnerable adult issues and inter-agency working, as required by the LSCB, will receive updates annually and refresher training at least every two years.

 **Designated Governor**

2.8 There is a designated member of the Board of Governors with responsibility for child protection issues, including Prevent Duty issues.

 The designated governor is responsible for liaising with the Vice-Chancellor and Designated staff over matters regarding child protection, including:

1. Ensuring that the University has child protection procedures and policies.
2. Ensuring that each year the Board of Governors is informed of how the University and its staff have complied with the policy through an annual report from the University, including but not limited to a report on the training that staff have undertaken.

2.9 The designated governor is responsible for overseeing the liaison between agencies such as the police, social services etc. (as defined by the LSCB) in connection with allegations against the Vice-Chancellor. This will not involve undertaking any form of investigation, but will ensure good communication between the parties and provide information to assist enquiries.

2.10 To assist in these duties, the designated governor shall receive appropriate training.

3**. Dealing with disclosure of abuse**

* 1. Early help: Is an umbrella term to describe activity that is undertaken to provide support to families as early as possible. Providing early help is most effective in promoting the welfare of children and young people. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges and can also prevent further problems arising.
	2. Immediate Protection: Where there is a risk to the life of a child or young person or a likelihood of serious immediate harm, a referral should be made to an agency with statutory child protection powers such as local authority social workers, the police or NSPCC should use their statutory child protection powers to act immediately to secure the safety of the child. Emergency action might be necessary as soon as a referral is received. Immediate protection referrals include:
* When it is felt a child or young person is at immediate risk of harm.
* When a child protection investigation is needed (because of physical sexual and emotional abuse or chronic neglect).
* When a child or young person needs an immediate mental health assessment

3.3 The University has published procedures for reporting cases of suspected abuse of young people or vulnerable adults (see Appendix 1). These procedures are issued to all members of staff and all new recruits to the College during their induction and have been endorsed by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

1. **Online Safety.**
	1. University Internet access is filtered for safeguarding and Prevent purposes for known sites using a third party provider, nevertheless all staff should be proactively attentive to attempts by children and young people to access inappropriate or harmful content online. Such instances should be noted as a cause for concern and referred to a designated staff member as in 2.6 above. Online safety and safeguarding are both integrated into teaching and learning activities on courses involving children and young people and reviewed as part of annual self-assessment. Students are taught about E-Safety, including the risk of being exposed to harmful material, the risk of harmful interaction with others and the risk of on-line behaviour that causes or increases the likelihood of harm. They are taught about the dangers of sexting. All members of staff are required to have read and to follow the University’s Social Media Policy and JANET policy.
2. **Missing Child**

5.1 A student going missing from an education setting is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect. Prolonged or repeated absences, or particular patterns of absence (with no satisfactory explanation) are treated by the University as a potential safeguarding issue and action is taken accordingly.

6. **Recruitment and selection procedures**

6.1 The University’s policy and procedures for the selection of and recruitment of staff are designed with the aim of providing a safe environment for children/young people and vulnerable adults to learn in. Key aspects of the procedures and processes are as follows:

* Job descriptions are available for all roles. All jobs contain explicit responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of learners having due regard to the University’s Child & Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy.
* A person specification setting out the key selection criteria for all roles. The person specification includes demonstrating commitment to safeguarding policies and the suitability to work with children and young adults.
* A standard application form that provides for the collection of information on applicants that enables the University to recruit safely.
* Advertising of posts externally as appropriate.
* A requirement for those appointed to produce documentary evidence of academic/vocational qualifications.
* Standard interview questions for lecturer appointments and other key staff who work with children and young adults exploring their suitability in this respect. Interviewers are advised to follow up on any gaps or discrepancies in the employment history of applicants.
* Two satisfactory references are obtained for each successful applicant as a condition of their employment. The first reference should be the applicant’s existing or most recent employer. The second reference should also be from an employer. Character references are only used where an applicant has little or no previous work experience e.g. young persons. Where appropriate referees are asked specific questions about an applicant and their role in safeguarding children.
* A policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders
* A policy on obtaining a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosure and ‘barred list’ check for appropriate positions as a condition of employment at the University.

**7. Staff training**

 7.1 All staff who work with children and young people receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training on induction to the University and are required to read and the governments guidance ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education (2015) Part 1: Information for all school and University staff, September 2016’. Staff in this category are required to sign to confirm their acceptance and understanding of the guidance.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550499/Keepingchildren_safe_in_education_Part_1.pdf>

Staff development training will also include training on online safety and on Prevent awareness. The University will make an assessment of the appropriate level and focus for staff training to specific safeguarding concerns such as radicalisation, child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, cyberbullying and mental health. All new members of staff receive formal child protection training as part of the induction process.

All staff who work with children and young people will also receive safeguarding and child protection updates annually via email, bulletin or meeting to provide them with the necessary skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. Refresher training is carried out every three years.

**8. Whistleblowing**

 8.1 Whistle blowing is the mechanism by which adults can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. Leeds Arts University has a clear and accessible Whistle Blowing Policy that meets the terms of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. Those who use whistleblowing procedures are made aware that their employment rights are protected.

 All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the University’s safeguarding practices and that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior management team.

 The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally.

**Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday**

**Or Email:** **help@nspcc.org.uk****.**

**APPENDIX ONE**

1. **The Duty to Report**
	1. Leeds Arts University and all its members of staff have a legal duty to report cases of suspected abuse. If you, as a member of staff, have concerns that a child/young person or vulnerable adult has been mistreated or abused, you MUST report this.
2. **What to do if you notice abuse**
	1. You may become aware of potential abuse in two main ways:
3. You may observe signs in a student that lead you to suspect that they have been physically, emotionally, or sexually abused, or suffer severe neglect, or are becoming radicalised; or in addition in the case of a vulnerable adult they may be experiencing financial, discriminatory or institutional abuse.
4. The tables below gives examples that may indicate that an individual is being abused. In addition to these a person may be being abused by virtue of their race, gender, age, disability or sexual orientation which would indicate discriminatory abuse. Similarly, any of the examples listed may be an indication of institutional abuse if the individual is in receipt of organised care.
5. The students themselves may disclose to you that they have been abused.
6. Staff should be alert to the potential need for *early help* for an individual who:
	* is disabled and has specific additional needs;
	* has special educational needs;
	* is a young carer;
	* is showing signs of engaging in anti-social or criminal behaviour;
	* is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems and domestic violence;
	* has returned home to their family from care;
	* and/or is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect.
7. Possible signs of abuse

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Possible signs of physical abuse include:** |  |
| * Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent
 | * Fear of medical help
 |
| * Refusal to discuss injuries
 | * Aggression/bullying
 |
| * Improbable explanations for injuries
 | * Over compliant behaviour or a ‘watchful’ attitude
 |
| * Untreated injuries or lingering illness not attended to
 | * Running away
 |
| * Admission of punishment which appears excessive
 | * Significant change in behaviour without explanation
 |
| * Shrinking from physical contact
 | * Deterioration of work
 |
| * Fear of returning home or of parents being contacted
 | * Unexplained pattern of absence which may service to hide bruises or other physical injuries
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| **Possible signs of emotional abuse include:** |  |
| * Continual self-depreciation
 | * ‘Neurotic’ behaviour – obsessive rocking, thumb-sucking, and so on
 |
| * Fear of new situations
 | * Air of detachment – don’t care attitude
 |
| * Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
 | * Social isolation – does not join in and has few friends
 |
| * Self-harm or mutilation
 | * Desperate attention – seeking behaviour
 |
| * Compulsive stealing/scrounging
* Drug/Solvent abuse
 | * Eating problems, including overeating and lack of appetite
 |
|  | * Depression, withdrawal
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|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Possible signs of sexual abuse include:** |  |
| * Bruises, scratches, burns or bite marks on the body
 | * Promiscuity, prostitution, provocative sexual behaviour
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| * Scratches, abrasions or persistent infections in the anal or genital regions
 | * Self-injury, self-destructive behaviour, suicide attempts
 |
| * Sexual awareness inappropriate to the person’s age – shown, for example, in drawings, vocabulary, games and so on
 | * Pregnancy – particularly in the case of young adolescents who are evasive concerning the identity of the father
* Recoiling from physical contact
 |
|  | * Eating disorders
 |
| * Attempts to teach others about sexual activity
 | * Tiredness, lethargy, listlessness
* Over-compliant behaviour
 |
| * Refusing to stay with certain people or go to certain places
 | * Genital discharge/irritation
* Sleep disturbance
 |
| * Aggressiveness, anger, anxiety, tearfulness
* Withdrawal from friends
 | * Unexplained gifts for money
* Depression
* Changes in behaviour
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| **Possible signs of neglect include:** |  |
| * Constant hunger
* Poor personal hygiene
 | * Low self-esteem
* Poor social relationships
 |
| * Inappropriate clothing
 | * Compulsive stealing or scrounging
 |
| * Frequent lateness or non-attendance at University
 | * Constant tiredness
 |
| * Untreated medical problems
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| **Possible signs of financial abuse include:** |  |
| * Loss of jewellery and personal property
 | * Lack of money to purchase basic items
* Misuse of benefits
 |
| * A bill not being paid when money is entrusted to a third party
 | * Inadequate clothing
* Theft of property
 |
| * Unexplained withdrawal of cash
 | * Over protection of money or property
 |
|  | * Loss of money from wallet or purse
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| **Possible signs of radicalisation include:** |  |
| * The individual’s views become increasingly extreme regarding another section of society or government policy
 | * They are observed downloading, viewing or sharing extremist propaganda from the web.
* They become withdrawn and focussed on one ideology
 |
| * The individual becomes increasingly intolerant of more moderate views
* The individual expresses a desire/intent to take part in or support extremist activity
 | * The individual may change their appearance, their health may suffer (including mental health) and they may become isolated from family, friends, peers or social groups
 |

**3. Other categories of abuse and considerations affecting young people**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Peer to Peer abuse:* Staff should recognise that young people are capable of abusing their peers and be vigilant and aware of potential peer on peer abuse.
* All allegations of peer on peer abuse will be investigated and dealt with; abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”

Peer on peer abuse can manifest itself in many ways. * Sending threatening or disturbing text messages
* Homophobia, racism or sexism
* Making silent, hoax or abusive calls
 | Cyber bullying is a growing problem and includes: • Creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos • ' Trolling', the sending of menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games • Excluding peers from online games, activities or friendship groups • Setting up hate sites or groups about a particular young person • Encouraging young people to self-harm • Voting for someone in an abusive poll • Hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name • Sending 'sexts' to pressure a child or young person into sending images or other activity (Sexting) |

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| Honour Based Violence:Honour-based violence (HBV) encompasses crimes, which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community this can include:* Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)\*
* Forced marriage,
* Other abusive practices
* Domestic violence
 | * All forms of HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubt, staff should speak to the DSL.
* Domestic Violence and abuse is a term used to describe a wide range of intentional behaviours used by one to control and dominate another with whom they have had, wished to have, or are currently in a close intimate, family or other type relationship. It does not only relate to marriage or cohabiting couples and frequently continues after a relationship has ended.
 |

 \*Safeguarding Leads are aware of the issues surrounding FGM and Forced Marriage;

Advice and signposting is available for accessing additional help, e.g. the NSPCC’s helpline, ChildLine services, Forced Marriage Unit; Concerns are raised to children’s social care, who will inform the police. If a student has disclosed that they are at risk in this way, the case will still be referred to social care even if it is against the student’s wishes. Where a staff member discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl who is aged under 18, there will be a statutory duty for it to be reported to the police. Not to consult or discuss with the pupil’s parents or family, or others within the community. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girls being at risk from FGM, or already having suffered from FGM. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. If a member of staff, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 they must report this to the DSL who will report it to the police. For further information see Annex A in Keeping Children Safe in Education, Sept 2016.

|  |  |
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| **Disability:** Disabled children and young people may be especially vulnerable to abuse, because they may have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse. They may have speech, language and communication needs, which may make it difficult to tell others what is happening. Heightened vulnerability lined to:  | * Communications skills
* Maturity (Lower cognitive ability)
* Perceptions of intent from others
* Lower self-esteem/confidence
* Potential to trust unreservedly
* A need to have “friends” or find a partner
* Differing boundaries
* Online safety – digital technology understanding
* A combination of these factors can make young people with disabilities more susceptible to risks.
 |

3.1 Dealing with a disclosure:

If a student discloses to you that they (or indeed another child/young person or vulnerable adult) have been, or are being abused/radicalised

**Do**

* **Do** listen very carefully to what they tell you.
* **Do** take what is said seriously and accept what you are told.
* **Do** stay calm and reassure the student that they have done the right thing in talking to you.
* **Do** write down as soon as you can exactly what you have been told.
* **Do** tell them that you must pass this information on but that only those that need to know will be told. Tell them to whom you will report the matter.

 **Do not**

* **Do not** panic.
* **Do not** promise to keep things secret. You have a duty to refer a child/young

 person or vulnerable adult who is at risk.

* **Do not** lie or say that everything will be fine now that they have told.
* **Do not** criticise the abuser, especially if it is a parent/carer.
* **Do not** ask lots of detailed or leading questions such as: ‘What did he do next?

 Instead, ask open questions such as: ‘Anything else to tell me? ‘Yes’ or ‘And…?’ Do not

 press for answers the student is unwilling to give.

 It is important that the person to whom disclosure is made **does not investigate** or question

 the person concerned except to clarify what they have heard. This is particularly important

 in cases of sexual abuse.

 3.2 It is very important to record, as accurately as possible, what was said to you when you received the disclosure of abuse. Clearly all written records should be handled confidentially.

3.3 ***If a child/young person or vulnerable adult discloses to you that they or another child have been abused/radicalised, or if you suspect from what you observe that they are being abused, you MUST REPORT THIS.***

 3.4 The Safeguarding Lead role is to deal with cases of suspected abuse. **You must inform any one of these staff immediately if you have concerns that a child/young person or vulnerable adult has been, or is, being abused.** They should be informed in person, or by telephone or (in extreme circumstances) by email.

 3.5 There are three routes to refer concern about abuse.

1. Contact the University’s Safeguarding Leads. Members of this team are always on duty between the hours of 9.00-5.00, Mon-Fri during term time. These members of staff can be contacted by telephoning either of these numbers:

**Katrina Welsh - Head of Student Support - 8054**

**Jackie Groves - Student Support and Welfare Manager - 8259**

1. If the disclosure/concern involves a member of University staff, contact the Vice-Chancellor or Pro-Vice-Chancellor Student Experience & Resources and Student Support in which case the procedures detailed in appendix 2 will be followed.
2. If, for any reason, you are unable to contact a Safeguarding Lead (for example in the evening or on a residential trip) and the matter is urgent, then contact the Local Authority or the police directly and report the matter to the Head of Student Services at the next available opportunity.

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| **Practitioners involved with a child or family can phone the Duty and Advice Team on:** **0113 376 0336 between 8.00am to 6.00pm. If your enquiry needs a response from Children’s Social Work Service outside normal office hours, phone the out of hours Emergency Duty team on 0113 240 9536.  If you feel that a child is immediately at risk please contact the emergency services on 999.** |

 **In all cases, if you are concerned, the role is to pass this on quickly** and to seek help and further support, rather than to worry alone or do nothing.

**4. The Operation of Safeguarding Leads**

 4.1 When a member of staff refers a case of suspected abuse to a Safeguarding Lead, they decide whether or not the situation should be referred to the Local Authority or the police, or whether some other course of action is more appropriate (see flow chart). In coming to a decision about what action to take the member of the Safeguarding Lead may confer with other members of the team. They may also take advice from the University’s contacts in the Local Authority. If they consider that abuse may have taken place, or that a child/young person or vulnerable adult is at risk of abuse, they will formally notify the Local Authority or police about this.

 4.2 At this point the Local Authority take over responsibility for the issue. If they decide that there are serious concerns, they will initiate a formal assessment and, where circumstances warrant it, involve the police.

 4.3 Involvement in cases of suspected abuse can be personally disturbing and distressing. Although the individuals involved in taking the disclosure may feel a need to talk about it with someone – a colleague, a friend, a partner – they should avoid this in order to respect the confidentiality of the student concerned. The University’s OPTIMA staff assistance programme can offer support and advice.

 4.4 Disclosure of, or being the subject of abuse is obviously a very difficult and distressing time for the student, who needs to be offered continuing support in the University. They should be made aware of the support available to them (the University counselling service for example) and helped to initiate contact with this support if so desired.

 4.5 A confidential record will be kept of all cases referred to Safeguarding Leads, including details of cases referred to the Local Authority or the police.

 4.6 The Head of Student Services and Pro-Vice-Chancellor Student Experience & Resources will be informed where a case has arisen which has been referred to the Local Authority or the police.

**Child Protection/Vulnerable Adult Reporting Procedure**

Refer to relevant internal/external team/agency for support – complete CAF if appropriate.

No immediate danger but support intervention required

Complete relevant paperwork and

Report to Children & Young People’s Service or Police

Confer with colleague on CP & VA Team

No immediate action required

Immediate action required

Safeguarding Lead who received allegation assesses the situation before taking appropriate action

Member of staff reports incident/concern to a Safeguarding Lead

Learner reports abuse to a member of University staff or member of staff becomes concerned about learner’s welfare and considers it a possible CP/VA issue