



## **Safeguarding Policy 2024**

### **Safeguarding Policy**

The College is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and vulnerable adults, and affirms that the needs of all vulnerable persons are paramount. Promotion of safeguarding is recognised to include undertaking those tasks which enable all God's people to reach their full potential. The College recognises that we need to show particular care for those whose vulnerability is increased by situations, by disabilities or by reduction in capacities. It is recognised that this increased vulnerability may be temporary or permanent and may be visible or invisible.

This policy addresses the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults. It is intended to be a dynamic policy. It is intended to support the College in being a safe, supportive and caring community for children, young people, vulnerable adults, and those affected by abuse. The College recognises that abuse may take the form of physical, emotional, sexual or domestic abuse or neglect. We appreciate that harm can be psychological, emotional and spiritual, as well as physical. The College commits itself to respond without delay to any allegation or cause for concern that any vulnerable person who is in any way connected to the College may have been harmed, or put at risk of harm, whether in the College or in another context.

The College recognises its duty of care to protect every student, member of staff and individual who is connected with Cliff College and its provision, and that this includes the duty to ensure that no member of the Cliff College community, nor any visiting speaker or group of people making use of the premises, is likely to present extremist views or behaviour that will compromise our commitment to mutual respect and tolerance.

### **Purpose of the policy**

The purpose of this safeguarding policy is to ensure that appropriate procedures are in place, and that people are clear about roles and responsibilities for children, young people and vulnerable adults in our care and/or using our premises.

### **Definition of vulnerable adult**

The term 'vulnerable adult' has a number of definitions. The definition which will be used in this policy is the following: 'A vulnerable adult is any person aged 18 or over who, by reason of mental or other disability, age, illness or other situation, is permanently, or for the time being, unable to take care of her or himself, or to protect her or himself from significant harm or exploitation'.

## **Good practice**

We believe good practice to mean that:

- All people are treated with respect and dignity.
- Those who act on behalf of the College should not meet or work alone with a child, young person or vulnerable adult where the activity cannot be seen, unless this is necessary for pastoral reasons, in which case a written note of this will be made and kept, noting purpose, date, time and place.
- The College premises will be regularly assessed for safety for children, young people and vulnerable adults.

## **Cliff College Safeguarding Team**

The Safeguarding Team is comprised of:

The Principal (Ashley Cooper)

The Sheffield District Safeguarding Officer (Alison Hill)

Ali Mackenzie (Student Welfare Manager)

Michelle Foulkes (Principal's PA)

Carole Marsden (Community Warden)

## **Acting on concerns**

You must report concerns as soon as possible to a member of the Safeguarding Team. In the absence of a member of the team, the matter should be brought to the attention of the Vice Principal Academic who will act as a Deputy Safeguarding Officer. These colleagues will carry out an urgent initial assessment and decide whether to refer the matter to an external agency, noting the reasons for that decision.

If the suspicions, or allegations, in any way involve the members of the team (or Vice Principal Academic as Deputy Safeguarding Officer), your report should be made either to the Local Authority or to the Safeguarding Office of the Methodist Church of Britain.

### *Local Authority*

'Call Derbyshire' 01629 533190 (24/7) or text 86555

This line is for sharing concerns about adults or children.

'Starting Point' 01629 533190 (Mon – Fri, 8am – 6pm).

[www.derbyshire.gov.uk/startingpoint](http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/startingpoint)

This is an advice line particularly for concerns about children.

*Methodist Church of Britain*

Safeguarding Office 020 7467 5189

This is a dedicated telephone number.

[safeguarding@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@methodistchurch.org.uk)

Because of the sensitive nature of this whole matter, every effort must be made to contact a member of the Safeguarding Team (or Vice Principal Academic as Deputy Safeguarding Officer). However, if, for any reason, none are available, it is the right of any individual to make direct referrals to, or to seek advice from, these other agencies.

**NB:** suspicions and allegations should not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above.

### **Low-Level Concerns**

A culture encouraging reporting of low-level concerns enables staff to share any concerns they may have, no matter how small, about someone's behaviour.

Concerns should not be limited to safeguarding but could relate to behaviour which does not meet professional standards or a concern around someone's welfare.

A **low-level concern** is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than a 'nagging doubt' – that a person may have acted in a manner which:

- is not consistent with an organisation's code of conduct or safeguarding policy and/or
- relates to their conduct outside of work which, even if not linked to a particular act or omission, has caused a sense of unease about that person's suitability to work with children or vulnerable adults.

It is crucial that any such concerns are shared responsibly and with a member of the Safeguarding Team and recorded and dealt with appropriately.

If the concern in any way involves the member of the Safeguarding Team, then it should be reported to a member of the College Senior Leadership Team.

### **The Prevent Duty**

Please refer to the Prevent Duty Action Plan

### **Appointment and training of staff**

Staff will only be appointed after a satisfactory DBS disclosure (where appropriate). Where appropriate, each member of staff will be required to undergo the Methodist Church's basic safeguarding training the first year of appointment. They will then need to undergo regular training during the period of employment.

All staff with pastoral responsibility in the College will also be required to complete the Methodist Church's advanced safeguarding course within the first year of appointment.

The College acknowledges that being convicted, cautioned, or bound over for a criminal offence does not automatically prevent an individual from working with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

### **What to do if a child, young person or vulnerable adult has discussed abuse with you**

When any disclosure is made, you should listen carefully to what is being communicated, and do so without asking leading questions. You should record, in writing, and as clearly as possible, the contents of the disclosure. This should be written without expressing opinion and should be dated and signed. This record should be sent / given to a member of the Safeguarding Team (or Vice Principal Academic acting as Deputy Safeguarding Officer), or, if they are implicated, either to the Safeguarding Office of the Methodist Church of Britain (details as above), or the Local Authority (details as above).

An adult will be presumed to have capacity to make decisions for him/herself. Therefore, if an adult requests confidentiality in respect of an issue, this should be honoured. However, a written note of the matter should nevertheless be retained.

The exceptions to maintaining confidentiality are circumstances where:

- the disclosure relates to harm to another person
- the disclosure relates to a risk of harm to a child, young person or vulnerable adult
- the disclosure is by an adult who does not have the capacity to make a decision as to whether the matter should be dealt with through an adult safeguarding route
- the harm being disclosed is clearly significant or likely to continue.

Once someone has talked about abuse, you (or the appropriate person) should consider whether it is safe for that person to return to a potentially abusive situation.

**NB:** suspicions and allegations should not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above.

### **Placements**

When a disclosure is made – or you have concerns – when on placement or mission, you should report this to the Local Safeguarding Officer, in liaison with the Team Leader. The Local Safeguarding Officer then will deal with suspicions / allegations according to their policy. The Local Safeguarding Officer and the Team Leader should both also inform the Principal. Incidents need to be recorded at Cliff College, and will be reported to the Director of Safeguarding of the Methodist Church of Britain by the Principal.

**NB:** suspicions should not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above.

### **Record retention and security**

Any safeguarding case files, whether electronic or paper, must be stored securely by the Principal and the Sheffield District Safeguarding Officer. This should include identifying who should have access to them. If the Principal moves on from the College, the records should be passed to the new Principal.

### **Review**

The Principal reviewed this Policy on the 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024. It will be reviewed annually by the Principal and the Safeguarding Team, then amended as necessary and appropriate.