

What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding is the protection of the health, well-being and human rights of individuals; enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect. This integral element of our institutional culture is a collective responsibility.

Safeguarding

Whilst there is a specific legal duty and framework of safeguarding, it is important that safeguarding is seen in broad terms that extend beyond abuse-related concerns. As such, safeguarding can be understood as 'acting in ways that mitigate any risk of harm'. There may be concerns about the safety and wellbeing of an individual which are not linked to abuse by another but are still on the safeguarding continuum. This might be to do with personal conditions or contextual circumstances; for example, poor mental health, homelessness and rough sleeping, suicidal thoughts, dementia and poverty. It is important to remember that safeguarding is as much about prevention as reaction, and so also covers risk assessment of environments and activities, anything that will help contribute to keeping people safe.

Safeguarding Children

Safeguarding children means:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

"Child protection" refers to the acute end of the safeguarding continuum. It focuses on protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This includes child protection procedures operated by local authority children's services and other statutory agencies which detail how to respond to concerns about a child.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

Under the Care Act 2014, "adult safeguarding" is working with adults with care and support needs to keep them safe from abuse or neglect. All statutory organisations have a duty to ensure that the welfare of all adults is ensured. As part of this, they need to understand when to implement their safeguarding adults reporting procedures. Safeguarding duties apply to an "adult at risk", defined as one who:

- “has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and;
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and;
- as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it”.

Safeguarding Students (and other members of College)

Human beings are, by their very nature, subject to the chances and changes of this world. Each one has strengths and weaknesses, capacities and restrictions. At some time everyone will be vulnerable to a wide range of pressures, concerns or dangers. No one is ‘invulnerable’; some people may consider themselves to be strong but, when circumstances change, strengths can quickly disappear. Some people by reason of their physical or social circumstances have higher levels of vulnerability than others.

Most members of College may not meet the criteria of the stricter definitions of “vulnerable” or “at-risk” adults. However, any member of College may from time to time be “vulnerable”. Some of the factors that increase vulnerability include:

- a physical illness;
- mental ill health (including dementia), chronic or acute;
- temporary intoxication with alcohol/drugs
- a permanent or temporary reduction in physical, mental or emotional capacity brought about by life events, for example relationship issues, bereavement, or previous abuse

Whilst such temporary vulnerability is not, strictly, covered by the legislation, nonetheless College would expect the provisions of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy ([link below](#)) to be applied and the guidance followed. This is particularly important where one party is in a position of trust or responsibility.

Promoting a Safe Culture for All

In the College context, safeguarding is the action the College takes to positively promote a safe culture and encourage safe behaviours.

This means the College will:

- Promote a safe environment and culture.
- Safely recruit and support all those with any responsibility related to children, young people or vulnerable adults within the College.
- Respond promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
- Care pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons.

- Care pastorally for those who are the Respondent of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons.
- Respond to those that may pose a present risk to others.

Code of Conduct

All College members should adhere to the principles contained below in the code of conduct and should familiarise themselves with the appropriate behaviours and approach for working with children, vulnerable adults and students. College members should ensure that they work toward the creation of a safe environment.

College members should:

- ✓ Treat everyone with respect;
- ✓ Be sensitive to other people's appearance, race, culture, religious beliefs, sexuality, gender, or disability;
- ✓ Provide an example others should follow, acting as an appropriate role model;
- ✓ Remember that actions may be misinterpreted, no matter how well intentioned;
- ✓ Consider finding a chaperone, or locate activities within physical sight of others;
- ✓ Provide an environment where everyone feels comfortable enough to point out attitudes and behaviours they do not like, and to provide a caring, safe atmosphere;
- ✓ Be cautious about physical contact and avoid gratuitous physical contact with another;
- ✓ Question any unknown adult who enters College premises;

College members should not:

- ⊗ Engage in sexually provocative or rough physical games with others;
- ⊗ Allow others to use inappropriate language unchallenged e.g. racist, sexist, homophobic language;
- ⊗ Make any sexually suggestive comments in front of, or to, or about another person, even in jest;
- ⊗ Let allegations go unaddressed or unrecorded;
- ⊗ Deter people from making allegations through fear of not being believed;
- ⊗ Jump to conclusions without checking facts first;
- ⊗ Rely on your own good name for protection;
- ⊗ Fail to report any incidents of harm or potential harm;
- ⊗ Promise absolute confidentiality;

- ⊗ Use physical force against another person, unless it constitutes reasonable restraint to protect him/her or another person. Incidents should be reported and recorded in writing with a witness statement (where possible) immediately afterwards;
- ⊗ Undertake things of a personal nature which others can do for themselves;
- ⊗ Be inappropriately familiar with another person.

Responding to a Disclosure

If someone discloses to you that they, or someone else is being abused or treated inappropriately:

DO

- ✓ Remain calm, approachable and receptive
- ✓ Take it seriously
- ✓ Listen carefully, without interrupting
- ✓ Acknowledge you understand how difficult this may be
- ✓ Offer reassurance – it's the right thing to tell someone
- ✓ Tell them what will happen next
- ✓ Make a written record of exactly what has been said and when
- ✓ Report the disclosure

DON'T

- ⊗ Promise complete confidentiality
- ⊗ Ask leading or probing questions
- ⊗ Investigate
- ⊗ Discuss with people who do not need to know
- ⊗ Delay in reporting the disclosure

The College's full Safeguarding Policies are available here:

[220114-Safeguarding-complete.pdf \(stchads.ac.uk\)](#)