

North Kent College Safeguarding Guidance

All staff, governors and volunteers have a duty to keep students safe and to protect them from all forms of abuse. This duty is, in part, exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between adults and students and behaviour by adults that demonstrate integrity, maturity and good judgment. Following guidelines will help to safeguard staff, governors and volunteers from being maliciously, falsely or mistakenly suspected or accused of professional misconduct in relation to students.

1. Confidentiality

- a) confidential or personal information about a student or her/his family must never be disclosed to anyone other than on a need to know basis; and
- b) confidential information about students must be held securely.

2. Propriety, Behaviour and Appearance

- a) staff should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their peers, students and the public in general. An individual's behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, should not compromise her/his position within the work setting or bring the College into disrepute;
- b) a person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However staff and volunteers must ensure they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake;
- c) staff and volunteers should be aware that conferring special attention and favour upon a student might be construed as being part of a "grooming" process, which is a criminal offence; and
- d) a relationship between a member of staff, a volunteer or a governor and a student cannot be a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of students and all adults have a responsibility to ensure that the unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

3. Infatuations and Crushes

- a) adults must recognise that a student may be strongly attracted to a member of staff or volunteer and/or develop an infatuation. A member of staff or volunteer, who becomes aware that a student may be infatuated with

him/herself or a colleague, should report this without delay to a senior colleague so that appropriate action can be taken. The situation will be taken seriously and the adult should be careful to ensure that no encouragement of any kind is given to the student.

4. Social Contact

Adults in the College should not establish or seek to establish social contact with students for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. Even if a student seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the adult should exercise her/his professional judgment in making a response and be aware that such social contact could be misconstrued.

- a) staff and volunteers must not give their personal details such as home/mobile phone number; home or personal e-mail address to students unless the need to do so is agreed with senior management;
- b) members of staff should not be “friends” with students via social networking sites for their own online safety; and
- c) staff must be aware that what they post online in social networks is public, and any posts must reflect the highest possible professional standard. Staff should not post comments or updates which might bring the College into disrepute (this includes photos).

5. Behaviour Management and Physical Intervention

All students have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. Corporal punishment is unlawful in all educational establishments. Staff and volunteers must not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a student. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards students is not acceptable in any situation. Shouting aggressively or hectoring is not acceptable in any situation. Deliberately intimidating students by overwhelming physical presence is not acceptable in any situation.

6. One to One Situations and Meetings with Students

Staff working in one-to-one situations with students are more vulnerable to allegations. Staff must recognise this possibility and plan and conduct such meetings accordingly. Where such a meeting is unavoidable, it is advisable to avoid remote or secluded areas of the College and to ensure that the door of the room is left open and/or visual/auditory contact with others is maintained.

7. Transporting Students

- a) staff must not transport students in private vehicles under any circumstances;
- b) if there is an emergency and a student needs to be sent home/hospital,

then contact reception who will use a taxi company we have a contract with.

8. Educational Visits

Staff and volunteers should take particular care when supervising students in the less formal atmosphere of an educational visit, particularly in a residential setting, or extra-curricular activities. Staff and volunteers remain in a position of trust and the same standards of conduct apply. Please refer to the Educational Visits Policy for further information.

9. Sharing Concerns and Recording Incidents

All staff, volunteers and governors must be aware of the College's safeguarding policy and procedures. Staff, volunteers and governors must be vigilant and share concerns and report incidents to the safeguarding team.

10. Visitors to College

- a) all visitors must report to the main reception to sign in and collect a visitor's badge. If a member of staff is meeting a visitor, it is their responsibility to make sure the visitor has followed this procedure; and
- b) if any visitor is going to be meeting or working with students in an unsupervised capacity, HR must be aware in advance so that they comply with the normal vetting procedures (checking ID, DBS etc.).

If you have questions or concerns related to safeguarding, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the College Safeguarding Team (all details are on the Safeguarding area of StaffNet).