Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

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1. **Policy Statement**

Barking and Dagenham College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all our learners. We are committed to ensuring that all learners have the right to be free from fear of harm and protected from mistreatment and abuse when at college.

All adults who come into contact with children and young people in their work have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare. The Stay Safe outcome of the Every Child Matters, places a duty on organisations to safeguard and promote the well-being of children and young people. This includes the need to ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of children and young people in these organisations are competent, confident and safe to do so.

All staff at the college are required to demonstrate high standards in their management of risk of and in the active protection of children and vulnerable adults from discrimination and avoidable harm by fulfilling our duties for learners under 18 in accordance with *Safeguarding Children in Education, DfES 2004*, *Safeguarding Children & Safer Recruitment in Education 2007*, *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010* and our duties to vulnerable adults in accordance with the *National Framework of Standards for Safeguarding Adults, ADSS 2005*.

All complaints, allegations or suspicions of abuse will be dealt with using the College Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy.

2. **Purpose**

The protection of children and the safeguarding of vulnerable adults are concerned with preventing emotional, physical or sexual abuse to learners whether that abuse is happening inside or outside college. (See Appendix 1)

This Policy sets out what the college is committed to do with regards to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

This Policy seeks to promote the welfare of children, vulnerable adults and any learners who may be a cause for concern by making clear the responsibilities of college staff and governors.

In addition, Appendix 3 sets out what is in place in the college to promote the well being of learners in line with the requirements of *Every Child Matters*.

3. **Scope**

All members of college staff have a duty to comply with this Policy.

This Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy covers:

- Learners aged 14, 15, 16 and 17.
- Learners who are eighteen years of age and over, and who either permanently or temporarily may be in need of community care services
by reasons of mental or other disability, age or illness and who are unable to take care of themselves, or protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

This could include people with learning disabilities, mental health problems, older people and people with a physical disability or impairment. Their need for additional support to protect themselves may be increased when complicated by additional factors, such as domestic violence, physical frailty or chronic illness, sensory impairment, challenging behaviour, drug or alcohol problems, social or emotional problems, poverty or homelessness.

(Learners under 16 years old who are at college but enrolled at Schools or other organisations are subject to the policy of the referring organisation).

3.1 College policies on bullying and harassment are set out in the Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy. Repeated incidents or a single serious incident of bullying or harassment may Principal to action in line with this Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy.

3.2 College policy on racist, sexist and incidents concerning discrimination against learners with disabilities is set out in a separate document, the Single Equality Policy. Repeated incidents or a single serious incident may Principal to action in line with this Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy.

4. Safeguarding and Protection Procedures

4.1 Members of Staff and Disclosures of Abuse by Learners

A learner may disclose abuse or fear of abuse to any member of staff at any time. When this happens, that staff member must follow the procedure set out below.

4.1.1 If a child/vulnerable adult learner say they have been abused, report this as soon as possible, and within 24 hours to one of the Safeguarding Officers who will keep a written record of this report.

The Safeguarding Officers are:

- Director PLSS (Principal Safeguarding Officer)
- Deputy Director HR
- Head of Sector: Care Health and Early Years
- Head of ALS and PSD
- WBL Manager
- College Counsellor

4.1.2 When a learner discloses abuse, talk to the learner with tact and sympathy. The learner has a right to expect their situation to be dealt with sensitively and sympathetically. Do not interrogate the
student, suggest interpretations of what they say, or ask for extra details. For guidance on types of abuse, please see Appendix 1.

4.1.3 Do not offer confidentiality. Make the child/vulnerable adult learner aware as early as possible that you will need to contact one of the Safeguarding Officers. Reassure them that only those who 'need to know' will be given the information. For guidance on how to conduct the conversation with the learner please see Appendix 2.

4.1.4 Do not ask the learner to make a written statement. (*The written statement can only be taken by a Safeguarding Officer and/or the police who have been trained in these matters*)

4.1.5 Make a full written record as soon as possible, including date, time, location of incident, full factual details of the cause for concern or disclosure from the learner and the action you have taken (using the form in Appendix 4). You should keep this record even if the Safeguarding Officer(s) does not decide to take further action.

4.1.6 A learner may disclose to you that another learner or other learners are being abused or that they have been abusing someone. In both cases, points 4.1.1 to 4.1.5 apply and the form attached as Appendix 4 must be filled in as instructed on the form.

4.1.7 Inform your line manager that a disclosure has been made. Further details are not to be communicated unless a member of staff is being accused (see section 5). The incident should not be discussed with other staff at this stage.

4.1.8 If you receive no feedback within a week following your referral, contact the Safeguarding Officer to find out what has been done.

4.2 Suspected abuse not disclosed by a learner

The college recognises that children, young people and vulnerable adults cannot always be expected to raise concerns.

If you have suspicions that a learner is being abused but they are keeping it to themselves, do not hesitate to disclose your suspicion to a Safeguarding Officer and follow the procedure above. It is advisable to talk with the learner yourself and/or use an Opportunities Coach but you can complete the form even if the learner does not disclose to you.

4.3 Safeguarding Officers and Disclosures of Abuse

4.3.1 On receiving a completed form (Appendix 4) reporting alleged abuse, the Safeguarding officer will discuss the report with the Principal Safeguarding Officer who will decide whether to refer the matter to the local Social Services Department, the Duty Social Worker or the Police. Usually for learners who are able to make choices and decisions, information will not be passed on
to external authorities unless the learner agrees unless there is a serious risk of harm to self or others. In the case in abuse situations, there is usually such a risk so the learner’s agreement is not required. If the Principal Safeguarding Officer is not available, it is not necessary to wait; any Safeguarding Officer may refer the matter to the local Social Services Department, the Duty Social Worker or the Police but the Principal Safeguarding Officer must be informed and copies of any paperwork must be forwarded.

4.3.2 The Safeguarding Officer should not hesitate to take advice from Social Services who are best equipped to assess the situation. Any telephone report must be confirmed in writing to the Local Authority Social Services Department within 48 hours. The confirmation may be handwritten, posted or faxed or it may be a standard Social Services referral form.

4.3.3 The Safeguarding Officer should discuss with the Social Services Department or the Police what action will be taken to inform the parents/guardian/carer of the learner and a note of that conversation should be made, together with confirmation of any steps the college has agreed to take regarding interviews or retaining control until the appropriate person arrives.

4.3.4 A written record of the date and time of the actions and communications must be made with a copy kept of any referral paperwork. The name and position of the person to whom the matter is reported should be recorded. All this should be passed to the Principal Safeguarding Officer for secure filing.

4.3.5 Social Services or the Police will decide if and how to take the matter further. However the referring Safeguarding Officer should find out what has been done if no feedback is given within a week.

4.3.6 The Safeguarding Officer may inform any learners that the Learner Support Services provide a counselling service. If the learner seeks counselling, the counsellor will meet with the learner to determine the appropriate level of support for that particular individual. The counsellor is a Safeguarding Officer.

4.3.7 Copies of reports, notes etc should be kept securely locked at all times, and retained for a period of 7 years.

5. **Suspicion, allegation or actual abuse of a learner/child/vulnerable adult by a member of staff**

Staff need to be prudent about their own conduct and vigilant about the conduct of others, so that their relationships with children and vulnerable adults remain, and are seen to remain, entirely proper and professional. It is recognised that staff can be vulnerable to the possible consequences of their close professional relationships with children and vulnerable adults and to the potential for malicious and misplaced allegations being made, whether deliberately or innocently, arising from
the normal and proper associations that staff may have with them. Social Networking presents special risks in respect of Safeguarding and it is not advisable to engage in this with any learners.

All staff should follow the guidelines about professional conduct in the Staff Induction and Staff Handbook.

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the unsafe practice of colleagues in regard to children and young people and vulnerable adults.

5.1.1 Any allegation or suspicion of abuse by a member of staff must be reported to the Deputy Principal Curriculum Skills and Learner Experience as soon as possible by the Safeguarding Officers and within 2 hours of receiving the written report using Appendix 4, completed by the person who reported the original concern.

If the allegation meets any of the criteria set out in paragraph 5.1 of 'Safeguarding Children & Safer Recruitment in Education' Jan 2007, the Principal shall report it to the Local Authority on the same day.

5.1.2 If the allegation concerns a vulnerable adult learner the Principal must report the matter to the Police or local Social Services Department Safeguarding Adults Coordinator where the vulnerable adult is considered to be suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.

5.1.3 It is not necessary to make a referral to Social Services where an allegation can be shown beyond doubt to be demonstrably false. It is also not necessary to make a referral to Social Services where the allegation is judged to be of a trivial nature.

5.1.4 In any case, the Principal must take such steps that s/he considers necessary to ensure the safety of the learner who has made the allegation and any other vulnerable adult or child or learner who might be at risk. The Deputy Director HR is a Safeguarding Officer and can advise. These steps may include suspending the accused member of staff.

**Staff Suspension**

Suspension is deemed a neutral act - safeguarding both the child/vulnerable adult making the allegation and the member of staff.

- Suspension is recommended in the following circumstances:
  - a person would be at risk
  - the allegation is so serious that summary dismissal for gross misconduct is possible
  - it is necessary to allow unimpeded investigation.
• If suspension is to take place, this should be in line with college disciplinary procedures.

5.1.5 At an early stage, staff subject to an allegation should seek advice and support from their professional association or trade union. The matter should remain confidential and information should be disclosed on a need to know basis only. Members of staff may seek guidance from Human Resources, if required.

5.2. Suspected Abuse

A member of staff may make an allegation of suspected abuse of a learner by a member of staff, even if the learner does not disclose this abuse. The member of staff who suspects the abuse should complete the form in Appendix 4 and discuss their suspicions with one of the Safeguarding Officers.

A decision will then be made after consultation with the Principal Safeguarding Officer and Deputy Director HR as to how the matter is to be investigated and the most appropriate action to be taken during the period of investigation. This may include: observation, allocating different duties, supervision, administrative duties or suspension. The Deputy Principal Curriculum Skills and Learner Experience must be informed as soon as possible.

5.3 Managing the aftermath of unfounded and unsubstantiated allegations

5.3.1 Where it is subsequently found that an allegation was made with malice and aforethought, the college will determine an appropriate course of action. This may include disciplinary action against the accuser, acceptance of a written apology [subject to agreement about future behaviour] or other such sanctions the college may deem appropriate.

5.3.2 Despite the distress caused, children/vulnerable adults who make false allegations may still be entitled to continue to receive full access to the curriculum. The circumstances of each case will be reviewed on an individual basis.

5.3.3 Where remaining in the same organisation as the falsely accused member of staff would be prejudicial either to that member of staff or the vulnerable child/adult consideration should be given to the child/vulnerable adult studying elsewhere. Permanent exclusion should be considered only as a last resort.

5.3.4 Staff who have been subject to false or unsubstantiated allegations will require either personal or professional support or both.

5.3.5 If investigations have revealed any competency issues then, following disciplinary or capability procedures, support mechanisms or other professional support may be offered e.g. training.
5.3.6 Support and reassurance may also be necessary for other staff and learners. If needed this will be arranged via the Deputy Director of Human Resources with the Director PLSS.

6. Causes for Concern other than abuse

A member of staff may become concerned for a learners health, mental health or general well being and know, after talking to the learner, that they must pass on their concerns to a Safeguarding officer. In these cases there is no alleged abuse of any kind involving a third party.

Examples are:

- A child under eighteen living alone and undergoing considerable stress because of loneliness, poverty or mental health issues.
- A single parent finding it difficult to cope with a pregnancy resulting in mounting stress and changed behaviour.
7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 The Role and Responsibilities of the Corporation

The Corporation will:

7.1.1 Be briefed regularly in respect of its duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

7.1.2 Ensure any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to safeguarding arrangements that are brought to its attention are addressed effectively without delay.

7.1.3 Review annually its policies and procedures, and the discharge of its duties, in respect of promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

7.1.4 Receive an annual report on the number and type of cases dealt with by the College with recommendations for improving policy and practice.

7.1.5 The Corporation, and individual Governors, will not deal with or receive details of individual cases, except when exercising their disciplinary functions under the Staff Disciplinary Code, in respect of allegations against a member of staff.

7.2 The Role and Responsibilities of the Principal

The Principal will:

7.2.1 Be made aware of any reports of abuse by the Deputy Principal Curriculum Skills and Learner Experience as soon as possible and certainly within 24 hours of the abuse being reported.

7.2.2 Receive notification of any member of staff accused of abusing children and vulnerable adults by the Deputy Principal Curriculum Skills and Learner Experience, this will be done within two hours of the Deputy Principal Curriculum Skills and Learner Experience being notified. On receiving the written report or at an earlier stage if judged necessary the Principal will:

- Ensure that the individual is immediately moved from their normal work place and from any area where an incident is alleged to have occurred. This reduces any opportunity for accusations that the individual has tampered with evidence that might be required for a police investigation.
- Consider immediate suspension under the College Disciplinary Procedure for staff.
- Take such steps as he considers necessary to ensure the safety of the child/vulnerable adult in question and any other learner/child who might be at risk by reporting the matter to the Social Services Department or the Police.
7.2.3 If the accusation of abuse is against the Principal, a Deputy Principal will carry out the above actions.

7.2.4 It is the duty of the Principal to inform the Independent Safeguarding Authority of any individual (paid employee, volunteer or other) who poses a threat to children or vulnerable adults

7.3 The Role and Responsibilities of the Deputy Principal Curriculum Skills and Learner Experience

The Vice Principal Curriculum and Learner Experience will:

7.3.1 Ensure the college policy is reviewed annually or more frequently if required in response to an identified internal issue or an external requirement including legislative changes.

7.3.2 Ensure the Principal Safeguarding Officer undertakes the duties identified in the policy, co-ordinates the work of the other Safeguarding Officers and compiles an annual report.

7.3.3 Report all incidents to the Principal as soon as they occur whenever possible and within the timescales identified in this Policy.

7.4 The Role and Responsibilities of the Principal Safeguarding Officer and Safeguarding Officers

The Principal Safeguarding Officer will:

7.4.1 Ensure the college meets its statutory duties defined within the 1989 Children Act, Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and the DfES and Safeguarding Guidance and the National Framework of Standards for Safeguarding Adults, ADSS 2005, by:

- Working with internal college services to draft procedures and guidelines, which support staff, learners and nursery children.
- Providing professional advice, support and guidance to staff regarding any suspicion of abuse, if a young person or vulnerable adult makes a disclosure or in relation to the possible abuse of trust.
- Providing professional advice, support and guidance to staff regarding causes for concern other than abuse with regard to children and vulnerable adults
- Making decisions, in consultation with the Deputy Principal Curriculum Skills and Learner Experience, regarding appropriate action.
- Sharing information and making referrals with Children’s Social Care or the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adult Coordinator at Social Services, where appropriate, to support child protection enquiries and children in need
assessments as well as safeguarding vulnerable learner enquiries.

- Producing an annual report, that reviews how the duties have been discharged.
- Ensuring appropriate training is in place and attended by all staff
- Liaising with the Local Safeguarding Children Boards and the London Safeguarding Board
- Liaising with the Director of Human Resources in cases of abuse of trust
- Receiving all report on bullying and harassment and making appropriate interventions in line with the Anti bullying and Harassment Policy

7.4.2 Ensure that everyone with substantial access to vulnerable adults and children will have training on indicators of abuse, good practice, practices never to be sanctioned and any changes in legislation.

7.4.3 The Safeguarding Officer will:

- Provide professional advice, support and guidance to staff regarding any suspicion of abuse, if a young person or vulnerable adult makes a disclosure or in relation to the possible abuse of trust.
- Provide professional advice, support and guidance to staff regarding causes for concern other than abuse with regard to children and vulnerable adults
- Gather statements and information regarding child and vulnerable adult safeguarding issues and ensure that records are kept safely and securely.
- Monitor learners after a referral is made and ensure that the college is adhering to any work agreed with Social Services or other agencies
- Undertake annual training on Safeguarding
- Contact the Director of Human Resources in cases of abuse of trust

7.5 The Role and Responsibilities of staff

Staff will:

7.5.1 Accept and recognise their responsibilities in relation to good practice and the reporting of suspected poor practice and allegations or concerns about abuse.

7.5.2 Be ready and receptive to learners who wish to make a disclosure of abuse and to comply with this procedure.

7.5.3 Be vigilant in identifying any causes for concern other than abuse

7.5.4 Disclose to the Safeguarding Officer all relevant information.
7.5.5 Provide clearly written statements of the concern or disclosure on the same day as the referral to the Safeguarding Officer.

7.5.6 Attend meetings as required.

7.5.7 Undertake training on Safeguarding as part of induction and as required for updating.

7.6 The Role and Responsibilities of the Director of Human Resources

The Director of Human Resources will:

7.6.1 Ensure that all staff appointments are made subject to satisfactory references and enhanced CRB checks and list 99 checks and that until these reports have been received new staff will not work with learners unsupervised.

7.6.2 Ensure that when conditions apply, work place providers have CRB procedures in place to vet staff coming into prolonged one to one contact with children or vulnerable adults.

7.6.3 Ensure that all new employees are informed about the college Induction Programme that will include the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy.

7.6.4 If suspension of a member of staff is to take place because of allegations of abuse, this should be in line with College procedures. The Director of Human Resources will ensure that the correct procedures are adhered to.

7.6.5 The Director of Human Resources will arrange support and reassurance for staff who have been wrongly accused and for other members of staff who have been affected.

8. CONFIDENTIALITY

The child or vulnerable adult should be informed at the earliest possible stage of the disclosure that the information will be passed on. Staff must not discuss the case with anyone other than those involved in the case.

The College complies with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998, which allows for disclosure of personal data where this is necessary to protect the vital interests of a child or vulnerable adult.
APPENDIX 1  Definitions of Abuse

**Physical abuse** is usually the use of force to cause pain and injury and signs might include burns, bruising, scratches, or accidents that cannot be explained. Also included is misuse of medication or when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child or vulnerable adult.

**Emotional abuse** is persistent emotional ill treatment such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on emotional development.

**Psychological Abuse**: such as threats of harm or abandonment, humiliation, blaming or controlling behaviour, verbal insults, enforced isolation, intimidation and coercion.

**Discriminatory Abuse**: this includes any sort of abuse based on a vulnerable adult's or child's race, gender or impairment such as their mental or physical health

**Sexual abuse** includes rape and sexual assaults to which the vulnerable adult or child/vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent, or was pressurised into. Signs can include changes in behaviour, using sexual language or physical discomfort. It may also include encouraging children and vulnerable adults to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

**Neglect and Acts of Omission** are when a vulnerable adult or child does not have their basic needs met, such as adequate food or warmth or help with personal hygiene. It may also include inadequate shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate carers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. Signs might include deteriorating health, appearance or mood.

**Institutional Abuse**: this is poor professional practice in an institution designed to safeguard both children and adults, including neglect, and can take the form of isolated incidents right through to ill treatment or gross misconduct.

**Financial or Material Abuse**: this is when a child/vulnerable adult is exploited for financial gain. It includes theft, fraud, exploitation, misuse or misappropriation of property/finance etc.
APPENDIX 2

Guidelines for staff on dealing with disclosures of abuse.

Do
✓ Be ready to listen to what the person is saying. Reassure the person; acknowledge that they have been brave to tell you.
✓ Make sure the person is comfortable in a secure environment where they cannot be overhead or interrupted.
✓ Take what they say seriously.
✓ Offer practical help i.e. glass of water or tissues.
✓ Remind the child, young person or vulnerable adult that you have a duty to follow college procedure in order to safeguard and support them and that you will inform one of the college’s Safeguarding Officers. Assure them that you will only share the information with the Safeguarding Officer.
✓ Tell them what the next steps will be after you have spoken to a Safeguarding Officer.
✓ Refer the matter to a Safeguarding Officer immediately.
✓ Confirm the details of the disclosure in writing using the form in Appendix 4 as soon as possible, as accurately as possible and ensure that the time, place and date are noted and that the account is signed.
✓ Avoid any delay in reporting the cause for concern or disclosure to a Safeguarding Officer as this could increase the risk to the learner and to other family members or other learners.
✓ Where abuse is suspected but not disclosed by the learner, the member of staff should report their concerns to one of the Safeguarding Officers.

If the disclosure involves another learner or a member of staff consider carefully how to deal with this. If it is a serious allegation you may need to ensure this person is seen immediately by another staff member.

Don’t
 o Promise confidentiality or to keep what you are being told secret.
 o Appear to be shocked or upset by what the child, young person or vulnerable adult is telling you, even if what they are saying is distressing.
 o Touch the person to comfort or reassure them.
 o Question the person about the alleged abuse, beyond the minimum necessary to understand what is being alleged
 o Give false reassurances in order to comfort the person.
 o Take the person back home
APPENDIX 3

Promoting the well-being of children and vulnerable adults

Every Child Matters

The college has in place arrangements aimed at ensuring the following outcomes for children and vulnerable adults, when studying at the college in line with Ofsted requirements

Children and vulnerable adults will:

1. enjoy their learning and make progress
2. improve their economic and social well being
3. feel safe
4. make informed choices about their own health and well being
5. make a positive contribution to the community

This Policy for Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children and Vulnerable Adults contributes to outcomes 3 and 4.

(The Common Inspection Framework for Further Education and Skills 2009)

Other arrangements to promote the five outcomes include:

- A tutorial service for all learners, liaising with parents/guardians/carers/support workers as appropriate, and tutoring processes aimed at ensuring children and vulnerable adults are successful in achieving and progressing.
- A comprehensive Learner Disciplinary procedure, which tackles issues of bullying and include zero tolerance of drugs on campus.
- A wide range of professional and well-resourced specialist support services for learners.
- An Enrichment programme, with a wide range of sports, fitness, health and cultural activities.
- A framework for hearing the learner voice and strategies for learner involvement.
- Close working with local agencies, the police and Social Services.
- Comprehensive health and safety procedures, including arrangements for first aid and for meeting the medical needs of learners with medical conditions.
- Comprehensive security arrangements and informed through a good working relationship with the police.
- Positive commitment to ensuring equal opportunities and community cohesion through a Single Equality Policy.
- Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy (attached)
Appendix 4

LEARNER DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE FORM

Details of learner who is possible victim of abuse.
First name ______________________ Family Name ______________________
College I.D. Number: ____________________________________________

Details of disclosing learner (if different from above).
First name____________________ Family Name ______________________
College I.D. Number: ____________________________________________

Details of Abuse Incident(s)
When? (date and time) ___________________________________________
Where? (location of incident) ______________________________________
Who? (details of the accused person(s)) _____________________________
What? (what did the learner actually state had occurred?)
_______________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________

Details of the action you have taken
_______________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________

Name of person completing this form ______________________________
Date of Disclosure _____________
Name of Safeguarding Officer who you have told ____________________