



Harrison College Ltd

Child Protection / Anti Bullying Policy

Review Date: September 2023
BoD Approval: October 2023
Next Review: September 2024

Nothing is more important than children's welfare. Children who need help and protection deserve high quality and effective support as soon as a need is identified. An incident is deemed a Child Protection issue whenever inappropriate contact or relationship between a child and either an adult or another child places him or her at risk emotionally, physically or sexually, or when a child is suspected of intending self-harm.

No one person can have a full picture of the child's needs and all different practitioners and services that come into contact with that child and their family should pay due regard to the responsibilities on them to share information with each other within the statutory frameworks. In order that organisations, agencies and practitioners collaborate effectively, it is vital that everyone working with children and families, including those who work with parents/carers, understands the role they should play and the role of other practitioners.

The purpose of the Harrison College Child Protection Policy is to make all staff properly aware of the role they play and in recognising the risks to our students to be able to prevent, or at least detect, report and process, any such occurrence in the correct manner. Harrison College is aware of, and complies with, the published arrangements set out by the local safeguarding partners.

A further purpose of this policy is to raise awareness that students at Harrison College may be more at risk of harm from others, and also of suffering bullying due to their SEN need, medical diagnosis, communication barriers, mental health needs and peer group isolation. Staff are trained in this awareness and students are educated on this within their PSHE and tutorial entitlements as well as through 1:1 interventions and psychotherapy support processes.

This policy should be read alongside Harrison College's Safeguarding policy, SEND policy and behaviour policy. This policy takes account of the KCSIE (2021), Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018), Childrens Act (2004) and the Childrens and Families Act (2014) when dealing with students on an individual basis. Where there is a mental health issue alongside, then the vulnerability of the student will be considered, and the DSL will refer to the Mental Capacity Code of Practice if applicable.

1. The Nominated Person

- 1.1 It is fundamental to College policy and propriety that any accusations or suspicions in relation to Child Protection issues be referred **immediately** to the member of staff nominated as Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). This person is the Executive Director. If the DSL is not available, staff should not delay, and they should seek the Principal or another senior leader. Further details on procedures and contact information can be found in our Safeguarding policy.
- 1.2 After being made aware of the issue, the staff member should refer this to the DSL immediately and should not seek to further investigate such a matter in any way whatsoever, nor should they discuss the matter with any person other than the DSL.
- 1.3 The staff member and the DSL will, when speaking to the student(s) follow the basic principles for students disclosing abuse (see Section 7.2 in Harrison College Safeguarding Policy) and will also follow the guidelines set out in Section 5 of KCSIE 2021 for students disclosing sexual harassment or sexual violence and peer on peer abuse.
- 1.4 The DSL shall seek to have a third person present when hearing an accusation where possible, however circumstances and 'trust' considerations will be taken into account so that the student feels safe at all times.

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2. Staff Awareness

2.1 Awareness of Causes for Concern

Any student may be at risk from other adults and/or children, especially peer on peer abuse, sexual harassment and sexual violence. This can occur inside or outside of the college environment and staff must be vigilant to ensure the safety of all.

2.2 Staff training in the recognition of signs that should arouse concern is therefore vital.

It is part of the induction training of all new staff and whole staff training days.

Indicators of abuse are varied and there is not an exhaustive list. The main categories of abuse fall under sexual, physical, emotional and neglect. Staff are trained on these as part of the KCSIE 2021 updates and recognise indicators within each category. Please refer to the Harrison College Safeguarding policy for more detail on each of the above and further detail on peer-on-peer abuse, sexual harassment and sexual violence procedures as set out in Section 5.

This training is regularly updated using bulletins, emails, training sessions and attendance at INSET. Team meetings (TAC) are held weekly for all staff where CP issues will be raised and used as training and updates.

2.3 Awareness of Procedures

All staff must know how and to whom they should report any Cause for Concern, as outlined in 1.1 above. Staff must act immediately if they see the signs of abuse and pass these onto the DSL immediately and follow the college's referral process. They should also be fully aware of the processes and procedures that will follow the raising of any such concern, including those steps that involve any staff member named in any accusation. (see 3.5). It is vital that these steps are known by all and in advance of any allegations so that no misunderstandings can arise as to how accusations must be followed up. These are outlined in section 4 below for both current and newly appointed staff and are equally relevant to teaching and support staff.

2.4 Staff Code of Conduct

Staff should never put themselves in a position in which they might themselves be compromised or accused of improper behaviour. Staff should refer to the code of conduct and the safeguarding policy for more details.

2.5 All staff will receive a safeguarding presentation each year that will include child protection awareness, e-safety, peer on peer abuse, sexual violence and harassment, child sexual exploitation awareness and a range of other categories that are applicable to recognising indicators of harm (see Safeguarding policy and Part 1 update of KCSIE 2021).

2.6 Given that students may choose not to inform staff of their concerns, it is important that they are aware of other agencies available to them for advice. These are made available through the web site, in curriculum and PSHE sessions and are sign posted in the safeguarding policy, e-safety policy and the behaviour policy.

3. Due Process within the College

3.1 Staff may be alerted to concerns in a variety of ways including student allegation or confession, staff suspicion and alerts from a third party. Any such concern must be immediately brought to the attention of the DSL.

3.2 Once the DSL has been notified of an allegation or suspicion, they shall meet with the alleged victim immediately in the presence of another member of staff in order to clarify the seriousness of the allegation and to ascertain. **They shall not investigate the matter in any way which might compromise any future enquiry carried out by the authorities**, this rules out the use of leading questions. They shall clarify for the student that their foremost priority is his or her care, and that any allegation of serious harm will have to be passed to the authorities for their investigation who may see fit to inform parents.

3.3 The DSL will consider the options available based on the evidence presented and the risk of harm, whether they are in need, or if they are likely to suffer harm. Options may include 1)

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- managing any support for the child internally via the college's own pastoral support processes; 2) undertaking an early help assessment; or 3) making a referral to statutory services.
- 3.4 If at any time the DSL is unsure, then they will seek advice immediately from CYPS Children's Services, Early Help, Referral & Response team, MASH, DCST or the Local Authority nominated Child Protection officer.
 - 3.5 In the case of students who are over 19 and classed as adults, the DSL will refer to the Adult South Yorkshire Safeguarding services. The DSL will consider the vulnerable status of the student in deciding what and how the information may or may not be shared with others and take into account their living situation and reliance on support services already part of their provision. The DSL will consider the Mental Care Act and the Care Act 2008. Provisions will also come under Part 3 of the Children Act 1989 by sections 96 and 97 of the Children and Families Act 2014.
 - 3.6 The DSL / Executive Director is an Early Help Lead Practitioner and fully aware of the procedures for liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate.
 - 3.7 Where the student is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to children's social care (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately.
 - 3.8 The DSL shall then contact the Child and Family Unit of the relevant Social Services office and cooperate fully with their advice and actions. This is likely to involve additional contact with other external agencies such as the police or a local hospital. In all cases, the DSL shall also inform the Principal and the Directors.
 - 3.9 Where a student may be considered as a Child in Need (CIN) under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. (Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children provides details of the assessment process)
 - 3.10 Where the student is deemed to be suffering harm a referral will be made to the LA. Local authorities, with the help of other organisations as appropriate, have a duty to make enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. (Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children provides details of the assessment process)
 - 3.11 The college will consider their responsibilities for sharing information with regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR). DPA and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare.
 - 3.12 In the case of proven allegations of *student-to-student* harm, the DSL shall decide how to discipline the student in the light of College Policy and Practice. Students who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school or college. Section 5 below will also be considered in case the perpetrator themselves is a victim and in need of support or likelihood of harm.
 - 3.13 Bullying is not acceptable. It is important to recognise that the college will do everything it can to protect students from bullying. Bullying may take many forms including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying. In this policy we are referring specifically to peer on peer abuse, sexual harassment, sexual violence, cyber bullying and any bullying that may come from victims reporting incidents or from any consequences that the perpetrators may experience.

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- 3.14 Should allegations be proven to have been malicious, the DSL or Principal shall deal with the disciplining of the student making those allegations, in light of the individual situation and following college policy.
- 3.15 In the case of proven allegations of *staff-to student* harm, the matter will be dealt with by the Principal in line with the College Staff Employment Handbook and in considering LADO referrals if applicable. If the allegations are proven to have been malicious, the Principal shall decide whether or not to recommend to the Board of Directors that the guilty party be expelled or disciplined in line with other college policy. Their needs and vulnerability will be taken into account.
- 3.16 In cases involving sexual abuse, violence or harassment within the college, the DSL will carry out a risk and needs assessment which includes the victim(s), the perpetrator, other students, staff and adults at the college. The wishes of the student will be paramount to hear, but this will be balanced with the College's duty to keep the student from harm and their duty of Care.

4. Record Keeping:

- 4.1 All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. Concerns and referrals will be kept in a separate 'concerns file' (see safeguarding policy for more detail section 6 and 8).
- 4.2 Records should include: 1) a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern; 2) details of how the concern was followed up and resolved; 3) a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).
- 4.3 DSL and staff will follow the good practice guidelines for recording disclosures as set out in the Safeguarding policy (section 7.2) and the KCSIE section 5 guidance.

5. Support for the perpetrator:

Children can be exploited by adult males or females, as individuals or in groups. They may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, it is important that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim

In cases where there is an allegation of the perpetrator being a student at the college then they will also be supported as a potential victim and a further investigation may need to be instigated.

Students at Harrison college may be more vulnerable due to their SEN need; cognitive ability, learning difficulties, communication ability and SEMH concerns. Harrison College will look at each case individually.

The DSL will refer to the applicable government statutory guidance which provides further information for those working with victims and perpetrators of sexual violence or harassment.

Further advice and detail considered within our Child Protection Policy: and dealing with behaviour within the college:

6. Peer on peer concerns:

Peer on peer/ child on child abuse - Children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse) and it can take many forms. It can happen both inside and outside of school/college and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of peer on peer abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports. This can include (but is not limited to): bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying); abuse within intimate partner relationships; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexual violence and sexual harassment; consensual

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and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos; causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party; upskirting and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals. Addressing inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

7. Sexual violence and harassment within College:

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between students of any age at college. It can also occur online. It can also occur through a group of students sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single student or group of students. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and LGBT children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of: 1) challenging inappropriate behaviours; 2) making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up; 3) not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; 4) challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

Sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;

Sexual “jokes” or taunting;

Physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone’s clothes (schools and colleges should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature;

Online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include: consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos. Taking and sharing nude photographs of U18s is a criminal offence

Sharing of unwanted explicit content;

Upskirting (is a criminal offence);

Sexualised online bullying;

Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media;

Sexual exploitation; coercion and threats

- 8.** The DfE has published advice and guidance on Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools. Harrison College takes account of this guidance and helps to prevent mental health problems by promoting resilience as part of an integrated, whole college approach to social and emotional wellbeing, which is tailored to the needs of our students. This is provided within our curriculum offer to all Harrison College students

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