



**CHAVAGNES**  
INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE

**Child Protection**

**&**

**Safeguarding Policy**

**2020/21**

# 1. Overarching Statements

1.1 The Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team of Chavagnes International College fully recognise their responsibilities under the Acts, Regulations and Guidance to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements within the College to identify, assess and support those children who are at risk of suffering harm or who are suffering harm or in need of help. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. The College fosters a culture of safety, equality and protection which enables issues about safeguarding and child welfare to be addressed.

1.2 This policy aims to ensure that all staff are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect, and that they are familiar with the procedures as to how to report any concerns. It aims to raise awareness of individual responsibilities and to provide a means of monitoring, recording and reporting cases of abuse.

1.3 When concerned about the welfare of a child, the best interests of the child and the best possible outcome for the child will always be the priority. Children are listened to and their safety is the primary concern.

1.4 It is a key role of the College to support children and provide stability in the lives of children who may be at risk of harm. It is also recognised that students can be vulnerable and exploited by others. Staff will be alert to the signs of vulnerability and/or radicalisation and susceptibilities to extremist indoctrination

## 1.5 Key contacts:

Deputy Headmaster & DSL: Patrick Long [plong@chavagnes.org](mailto:plong@chavagnes.org)

Headmaster & second DSL: Ferdi McDermott [headmaster@chavagnes.org](mailto:headmaster@chavagnes.org)

1.6 All safeguarding matters must be ultimately directed to the Deputy Headmaster as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The Deputy Headmaster will take the lead role in all safeguarding matters throughout the College, working with the Headmaster. All the above persons and the Headmaster have undergone the appropriate training.

# 2. To whom and where does this Policy apply?

2.1 This policy applies to all staff in the College (which includes any person working at the College whether under a contract of employment or contract of services, governors and volunteers) and to all children enrolled at the College. Organisations working with children hiring the College's facilities may adopt this policy on school premises in preference to their own but must notify the College which policy they are following as per the hiring and lettings

policy.

2.2 All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment within which children can learn and reach their full potential, whilst identifying children who may be in need of early help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. All staff should cooperate with other services as needed by sharing concerns and taking prompt action.

2.3 With reference to the Teacher Standards, DfE, 2013, the College re-enforces that staff should ‘uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside College, by...having regard for the need to safeguard students’ wellbeing, in accordance with statutory provisions’. Chavagnes International College expects equally high standards of all employees and volunteers.

2.4 The legal definition of “children” includes everyone under the age of 18 years. At Chavagnes, this definition is extended to include all learners, irrespective of age, who are afforded the rights and protections afforded by this policy. In this policy, the term “child” and “student” are used interchangeably.

2.5 The College also recognises that some employees are under the age of 18 and also affords them the rights and protections set out in this policy. Employees also have the full rights afforded under current employment law and may seek recourse to these.

2.6 This policy applies wherever staff are working with students even if they are away from the College, for example on school trips. This policy also applies if an alleged incident has taken place between (two or more) students away from the school premises.

2.7 The College recognises that children may be particularly vulnerable in the boarding setting. Specific guidance which applies to boarding may be found at paragraph 20.3 below. The College is also alert to the fact that certain groups of children may be particularly vulnerable to bullying and peer on peer abuse – for example looked after children, previously looked after children, children with caring responsibilities or those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

2.8 This policy applies equally to all children, irrespective of race, colour, religion or belief, national, ethnic or social origin, disability or special educational needs.

2.9 It is recognised that the field of child protection is ever changing and new risks to children will present themselves, particularly given the pace at which technology evolves. The Deputy Headmaster has developed a set of rules governing internet access to address technological risks and it forms an integral part of the College’s suite of safeguarding materials. Child protection will always be a primary consideration when drafting any policy.

### 3. Safeguarding, Wellbeing and Child Protection

3.1 Safeguarding is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment;
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

3.1.1 The types, definitions and signs of harm that a child may suffer include all those recognised by the state.

3.2 Child protection is an element of safeguarding and promoting welfare and refers to the action that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or are likely to suffer harm.

3.3 The College plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children by providing good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection. Included within this is the emotional wellbeing of children and the role that the College plays in identifying those children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation or exposed to extremist views.

3.4 The College follows best practice for international schools as set out by COBIS (Council for British International Schools). The College has developed effective working relationships with all other agencies involved in safeguarding children in France. Timely, proactive, and open sharing of information between professionals and local agencies is essential for effective identification and assessment of issues and identification of the relevant services to provide support.

## 4. Management of Safeguarding

4.1 At Chavagnes, the Deputy Headmaster is ultimately responsible for all matters of Safeguarding and Child Protection. He works in collaboration with the Governing body and the Headmaster, who is the second DSL, for safeguarding and child protection. The Deputy Headmaster organises the resources, strategy, training and, where appropriate, support and direction of other staff. The Deputy Headmaster is the primary point of contact in safeguarding matters. The Headmaster supports him and must be informed of all actions taken.

4.2 The Headmaster may be contacted at any time (if the Deputy Headmaster is unavailable), and all staff have emergency contact numbers for the Headmaster and Deputy Headmaster.

4.3 If any person has a concern that a child has suffered harm or is in danger of harm, they should contact the Deputy Headmaster or, in his absence, the Headmaster to log the details of their concern. This should be submitted as soon as possible, often immediately, and always within 24 hours of becoming aware of the issue. This is also the way in which concerns of a less serious nature (but which relate to wellbeing or pastoral care) must be reported. Early intervention is key to address risks and prevent issues escalating. This includes allegations of abuse which may involve staff members. Staff should not assume that somebody else will take action and must share any information appropriately to ensure that a child is kept safe. Staff must familiarise themselves with the whistleblowing policy.

4.4 If any staff member is concerned about a child's welfare, health or development but no specific allegation of abuse has been made, they should always discuss their concerns with the Deputy Headmaster.

4.5 The Deputy Headmaster will decide whether to contact children's social care and/or the police, but a member of staff can also refer concerns directly to children's social care. Direct referrals should be reported to the Deputy Headmaster as soon as possible thereafter, unless the circumstances at paragraphs 11.4 and 11.5 apply (allegations against the Deputy Headmaster). If in exceptional circumstances the Headmaster or Deputy Headmaster is not available, staff should consider speaking to another member of the Senior Leadership Team. Any action taken must be shared with the Deputy Headmaster as soon as is possible.

4.6 Full written records of any concerns will be made and kept securely, in the case of prior written records, in paper or digital form by the Deputy Headmaster, and any paper documents will be printed.

4.7 Parents are welcome to approach the Deputy Headmaster if they have any concerns about the welfare of any

child in the College.

4.8 In the event that contact with social care is necessary, the Deputy Headmaster (or, in his absence, the Headmaster) will:

- Make records of any discussions with the child, staff or other agencies;
- Take advice from social care if the case does not otherwise appear straightforward in the Deputy Headmaster's mind. This advice may be to continue to monitor the situation or proceed to making a formal referral, in which case the College should follow such advice and maintain close contact with the authorities. This decision should be communicated to the individual raising the initial concern unless there is advice to the contrary from social care or another statutory agency.
- Recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential, and that personal information about a child will only be disclosed to other members of staff on a 'need to know' basis;
- Inform and liaise with the child's parents or guardian within 48hrs of any intention to inform social care and/or the police of concerns, unless it is suspected that this might place the child at greater risk or jeopardise a police enquiry. The Deputy Headmaster will take advice on this where appropriate.

4.9 In addition the Deputy Headmaster will:

- Lead on matters of digital safety;
- Maintain an overview of safeguarding within the College, adopting a contextual approach to safeguarding which takes account of wider environmental factors which are present in a child's life and which are a threat to their safety or welfare;
- Arrange for any cases where a person is dismissed, removed or has left due to risk of harm to a child to be reported to the appropriate service as required;
- Support and liaise with other staff as appropriate to keep them apprised of issues, for example the Headmaster, when allegations have been made against staff, and act as a source of support to staff who have made referrals or who are considering doing so;
- Recognise that staff working in the College who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm, may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- Offer support by providing an opportunity to talk through anxieties and organising further support as necessary. This could be provided by, for example, the House Master, Chaplain, Headmaster, or a teacher as appropriate;
- Monitor the effectiveness of the College's safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures.

4.10 The College has a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm and ensures that College staff contribute to assessments of need and support plans for those children. Any information is passed directly to the Deputy Headmaster. Vulnerable Students will be discussed on a weekly basis with key staff and appropriate support plans put in place.

4.11 The role of the Deputy Headmaster in assisting the governors to monitor the effectiveness of the child protection policy and systems is set out at paragraph 19 below.

## 5. All Staff Members are expected to:

- Adopt a child-centred approach at all times, considering what is in the best interests of the child;
- Maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned;
- Be familiar with, and understand, the content of this policy and the types and signs of abuse and neglect identified in section 10 below, so that they are able to identify children who are in need of help or protection. It is essential that staff act on and refer at the earliest signs of abuse and neglect;
- Be aware of the systems within the College to support safeguarding, including the response to children who

- go missing from education;
- Attend Continued Professional Development (CPD) where safeguarding and child protection procedures will be explained;
- Know the names of the key staff involved;
- Understand the basic principles of information sharing where relevant and as appropriate;
- Attend regular appropriate training and undertake relevant training as required, at least annually (see paragraph 18);
- Be aware that behaviours linked to activities like drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put children in danger;
- Uphold the premise that the College will not tolerate sexual violence or sexual harassment, nor dismiss it simply as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up".
- Be aware of the options available for Early Help in appropriate cases (see paragraph 7 below).

## 6. Information Sharing

6.1 Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. College staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children to prevent concerns from escalating. The College and its staff form part of the wider safeguarding system of children.

6.2 Care will be taken to ensure that information concerning child protection is given only to the appropriate people on a 'need to know' basis. All staff must be aware of issues relating to confidentiality and the status of information they may hold.

6.3 The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. If in doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the Deputy Headmaster.

6.4 The Deputy Headmaster will nevertheless take a lead role in determining whether information should be shared on a case-by case basis using his professional judgement, supported by other agencies such as children's social care. Please see flowchart on page 8 below.

6.5 In cases where there are allegations of either sexual violence or sexual harassment between students, the Deputy Headmaster will determine the appropriate course of action be it:

- Internal management
- Early Help
- Reporting to the police.

## ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN IN THE CASE OF AN INCIDENT

Staff have concerns about a child & a report is made. Immediate action must be taken. Staff follow their child protection policy and speak to the Deputy Headmaster or, in his absence, the Headmaster.

Within 24 hours an initial decision has to be made by the Deputy Headmaster about the seriousness of any incident.

Police involvement not required/college takes relevant action - suspension of the teacher during the investigation and pastoral intervention for the child.

Referral made to the police if the concerns are serious/illegal

DSL, in his absence, the second DSL, investigate and take the lead in controlling the situation to ensure the safety of the students

If necessary, the teacher is removed from the main college building.

If less serious, the teacher remains in place with a reduced timetable.

All parties involved – students, staff and any other person – will be interviewed at the earliest possible moment and a written, verbatim transcript of the discussions will be recorded.

If a student feels in danger, has been harmed or is in a state of panic the parents will be informed immediately

If the situation is deemed to be less grave and no physical, emotional or sexual harm has been caused, parental notification will be held off until the investigation is complete.

Within 24 hours an initial decision has to be made by the Deputy Headmaster about the seriousness of any incident and the next actions to be taken.

Within 3 days a thorough investigation should be completed, a report submitted, and a decision made about the pastoral provision of the students and the professional implications on the adult.

Within 1 week a personal update should be sent to the parents, the staff should be informed, and a plan made to assess current Child Protection and Safeguarding provision.

6.7 Parental consent is not required to contact and liaise with social care or other external agencies. It is, however, the usual practice for the Deputy Headmaster to inform parents, unless this would put the child at risk of suffering further harm or would jeopardise a police investigation.

6.8 If there are concerns about children who are not formally enrolled at the College but attend a holiday or sports or other club and these concerns do not meet the threshold for reporting, the College will consider if it is appropriate to share the concerns with the student's usual school or other agency, and parents where appropriate, on the grounds of safeguarding.

## 7. Early Help

7.1 In cases of children who have not suffered harm, but are in need of additional support, appropriate steps will be taken internally. Any child may benefit from early help, but all staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for any child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs or disabilities (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan);
- is at risk of online abuse, grooming, modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse;
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- has returned home to their family from care;
- is a privately fostered child.

7.2 The aim of Early Help is to provide support as soon as a problem emerges at any time during a child's life and to work with parents with their consent.

## 8. Where children are at risk

8.1 If, at any point, there is a risk of serious harm to a child, a complaint should be made immediately. Any member of staff may do this and, if the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the staff member must press for re-consideration to ensure that the concerns lead to help for the child.

8.2 As soon as there is an allegation of abuse, there should be no further investigation of the incident prior to immediate consultation within the appropriate statutory agencies – normally social care and the police.

8.3 Direct referrals should be reported to the Deputy Headmaster (or the Headmaster) as soon as possible thereafter, unless the referral relates to an allegation against the Deputy Headmaster in which case it should be referred to the Headmaster, or in his absence a member of the Governing Board.

8.4 The best practice in child protection indicates that the DSL will determine whether:

- The child requires immediate protection and urgent action is required;
- The child is in need, and should be assessed professionally;
- There is reasonable cause to suspect that the child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, and whether enquiries must be made, and the child assessed professionally;
- Any services are required by the child and family and what type of services;
- Further specialist assessments are required in order to help the Deputy Headmaster to decide what further action to take.

## 9. Working with Other Agencies

9.1 College staff will be called upon to participate in meetings organised and chaired by the Deputy Headmaster. These might be in relation to:

- Strategy discussions;
- Child protection reviews and conferences.

9.2 At any such meetings, staff should be ready and prepared to report providing information about:

- The child's attendance and punctuality;
- The child's behaviour and attitude;
- The child's relationships with their peer group and social skills generally;
- The child's academic achievement;
- The child's appearance and readiness for school;
- Contact with parents or carers;
- Any specific incidents that need reporting.

9.3 Prior to a meeting, class teachers and other adults working closely with the child should be asked for their comments. Following the meeting, feedback should be given, and staff brought up to date with any actions that are needed, maintaining due regard to confidentiality.

9.4 The College may be asked to provide statements pursuant to requests from relevant agencies and provide a witness/witnesses to attend court in some cases.

9.5 In the event that social care wishes to meet with a child to discuss any allegation, the College will provide an appropriate venue.

9.6 In the case of children who are seen to be at risk of radicalisation, discussion will need to take place with the referring teacher(s) / staff member(s) and the Deputy Headmaster, and other staff as appropriate, as to the most appropriate body to which a referral may be made.

## 10. Allegation of possible abuse

10.1 Appropriately dealing with allegations of possible abuse is crucial in terms of ensuring that an accurate assessment can be subsequently carried out by the statutory agencies where appropriate and that appropriate child safety measures can be taken.

10.2 If a child discusses anything that could indicate the possibility of abuse, the person receiving such information should follow the procedure below in 10.4.

10.3 Remember that a child might offer information about their own experiences or information about a friend (which could turn out to be the child himself).

10.4 Procedure for dealing with an allegation of abuse made by a child:

- Listen carefully to the child, be non-judgemental, remain calm and offer reassurance and support;
- Reassure the child that they are doing the right thing and that you recognise how hard it must be for them. The child **must not** feel that they are creating a problem or feel ashamed;
- Accept what the child has to say without challenge;
- **DO NOT** promise confidentiality, but let the child know that only those who need to know will be

informed and that they will be people who have to know in order to help them;

- Listen, but do not investigate or ask leading questions. Do not ask further questions as soon as the child has disclosed that he believes that something abusive has happened;
- Observe bruises or other signs of injury, but do not ask the child to remove or adjust clothing to investigate further;
- Do not lay blame or criticise the child or the perpetrator. Be non-judgemental;
- Time should be taken to reassure the child and confirm at the conclusion of the conversation that information will be treated seriously and sensitively;
- Ask the informing child what steps they would like taken to protect them now that they have made an allegation and advise that, whilst the College will try to follow their wishes, there can be no guarantee of confidentiality if it is necessary to inform statutory agencies, for example if they or another child are (at risk of) suffering significant harm etc. If a child requests it, contact will always be made with parents.

#### 10.5. Procedures for monitoring, recording and reporting:

##### 10.5.1 At the time, or as soon as possible, a detailed record should be written about the allegation including:

- The name(s) of the child(ren) making the allegations, and the names of any others mentioned;
- The time and date of the conversation;
- The place and context of the disclosure;
- A detailed account of the conversation, circumstances and any other relevant factors. This should be factual and not contain any assumptions or interpretation. The child's own language should be quoted, rather than translating into own terms. Be aware that this report may be used at a later date to support a referral to an external agency;
- The name of the person reporting the disclosure, the date and signature.
- If making notes during any disclosure, staff must be very conscious of the need to remain engaged with the child and not appear distracted by the note-taking;
- If at all possible, disclosures should be managed with two members of staff present - if this is not possible a voice recording may be made for the purposes of noting the conversation in order to protect the child.

10.5.2 Any original notes (include jottings) of the original disclosure, text messages and any potential material which could become evidence in any subsequent investigation must be retained and given to the Deputy Headmaster for safe storage.

10.5.3 If injuries such as bruises have been observed these should be marked on a body map.

10.5.4 It is not the staff member's role to investigate the allegation – but rather to listen to the child, record the information accurately and pass it on immediately.

10.5.5 Staff should not assume that someone else is already dealing with the alleged incident and should report it.

10.5.6 This report should be given to the Deputy Headmaster as soon as possible (or Headmaster if the Deputy Headmaster is not available). The Deputy Headmaster will then follow the procedure outlined above in terms of liaising with the relevant authorities.

## 11. Allegation of peer abuse

11.1 All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (peer on peer abuse). This is most likely to

include, but may not be limited to, the following, which in some cases may constitute criminal offences:

- Bullying (including cyber- bullying);
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, biting, hair pulling
- Sexual violence
- Sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes, unwanted touching, and online sexual harassment which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- Sexting (youth produced sexual imagery)
- Initiation / hazing type violence and rituals.

11.2 A student against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be suspended from the College during the investigation and the College's policy on behaviour, discipline and sanctions will apply.

11.3 The College will take advice from children's social care on the investigation of such allegations and will take all appropriate action to ensure the safety and welfare of all students involved, including the student or students accused of abuse.

11.4 If it is necessary for a student to be interviewed by the police in relation to allegations of abuse, the College will ensure that parents are informed as soon as possible, and that the student is supported during the interview by an appropriate adult.

11.5 Where an allegation has been made against a student, all of those involved, including witnesses, will be treated as being at risk of significant harm. It is recognised that those with special educational needs or disabilities are at particular risk of peer abuse and teachers are alert to this.<sup>14</sup>

11.6 A bullying concern will be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm which may warrant referral to an external agency. A risk-based approach will be adopted where there are concerns of an ongoing risk of significant harm; for example, a risk assessment must be carried out with a view to ensuring the safety of all students and that all children involved, including witnesses, receive appropriate support.

11.7 Responses to the alleged behaviour will be considered on a case by-case basis and will take into account the circumstances of all of those children concerned. It is understood that harmful behaviour can progress on a continuum and that addressing inappropriate behaviour can be an important intervention in preventing future harm. Children who abuse may themselves have suffered abuse and an assessment of the child shall take into account wider environmental factors which threaten their safety or welfare. The Deputy Headmaster will take such matters into account when considering the appropriate approach.

11.9 It is acknowledged that sexual violence and harassment may be driven by wider societal factors such as stereotypes and sexist language. The Deputy Headmaster will consider the context of any abuse (contextual safeguarding). The College works hard to challenge such behaviours through its curriculum and extra-curricular activities and to promote mutual respect. The College will not dismiss certain behaviour simply as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up". Unwanted touching and associated behaviours are not tolerated.

11.10 The College will liaise with the respective parents appropriately considering what information should be provided about any other child, taking into account the views of other agencies. Any measures taken to protect a child will be discussed with their parents unless the law or external agencies dictate otherwise.

## 12. Handling allegations of abuse

12.1 The College procedures aim to strike a balance between the need to protect children from abuse, and the

need to protect staff from false or unfounded allegations. These procedures will be used where the member of staff has been alleged to (or may) have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm.

12.2 If an allegation is made against a member of staff, the matter will be dealt with by the Deputy Headmaster or in his absence the Headmaster will oversee the process as the 'Case Manager' and will keep the Deputy Headmaster informed.

12.3 Where an allegation or complaint is made against the Deputy Headmaster, the matter should be reported immediately to the Headmaster.

12.4 If the Headmaster is not available, the matter should be reported to a member of the Governing Board.

12.5 All allegations that come to the College's attention, including those discussed directly with the police, will be discussed with the Deputy Headmaster immediately where possible, and certainly within one working day. It will be more usual practice to discuss any course of action, including referral to the police, with the Headmaster prior to embarking on any course of action.

12.6 Allegations against a member of staff who is no longer employed by the College will be referred to the police along with allegations that may amount to a criminal offence

12.7 No member of staff may investigate an allegation of abuse made against themselves.

12.8 The initial sharing of information and evaluation may lead to a decision that no further action is to be taken in regard to the individual facing the allegation or concern. In this situation, the decision and a justification for it should be recorded by both the Case Manager and the Deputy Headmaster, and agreement reached on what information should be put in writing to the individual concerned and by whom. The Case Manager should then consider with the Headmaster what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation.

12.9 If the allegation concerns physical contact, the strategy discussion or initial evaluation with the police should take into account that teachers and other school staff are entitled to use reasonable force to control or restrain children in certain circumstances, including dealing with disruptive behaviour.

12.10 The Case Manager will usually inform the accused person of the allegation as soon as possible after the Headmaster has been consulted, unless it would place a child at further risk of significant harm or jeopardise a police investigation. The parents or carers of the student(s) involved will be informed of the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know of it.

12.11 The College has a duty of care towards its employees and as such, it must ensure that effective support is provided for anyone facing an allegation. The procedures for dealing with allegations need to be applied with common sense and judgement. Individuals should be informed of concerns or allegations as soon as possible and given an explanation of the likely course of action, unless external agencies object to this. A representative will be appointed by the Case Manager to keep him or her informed of the progress of the case and to consider what other support is available for the individual, as appropriate. Social contact with colleagues and friends should not be prevented, unless there is evidence to suggest that such contact is likely to be prejudicial to the gathering and presentation of evidence.

#### **12.12 Action Against the Accused**

12.12.1 The following definitions should be used when determining the outcome of allegation investigations:

- Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation;
- Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive;
- False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation;
- Unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence;
- Unfounded – there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made and there may be evidence which supports the account of the staff member (for example, an allegation that a teacher was in a certain place in a certain time, and there is evidence to show that the teacher was in fact elsewhere).

12.12.2 Where an investigation by the police is unnecessary, the Deputy Headmaster will discuss the steps to be taken with the Case Manager. The appropriate action will depend on the nature and circumstances of the allegation and will range from taking no further action to summary dismissal, or a decision not to use the person's services in the future.

12.12.3 It may be necessary to undertake a further investigation to determine the appropriate action. If so, the Deputy Headmaster will discuss with the Headmaster as appropriate, as to how and by whom the investigation will be undertaken. The appropriate person will usually be a senior member of staff.

12.12.4 If an allegation is made against a member of resident staff, consideration will be given as to whether the member of staff is required to move off-site. The cost of this may need to be funded by the staff member concerned depending on the circumstances of the case.

12.12.5 In the event of a child protection allegation against a member of staff, the timing of the process outlined above will take precedence over the disciplinary policy. However, the provisions of the disciplinary process may be invoked irrespective of whether the child protection concern is substantiated (for example the staff member's conduct may not have amounted to a child protection concern, however it may fall short of the standard required).

12.12.6 If there has been a substantiated allegation against a member of staff, the Deputy Headmaster will work with the Case Manager to determine whether there are any improvements to either policy or practice which would prevent the recurrence of a similar matter. This includes issues arising from the decision to suspend the staff member, the duration of the suspension and whether or not suspension was justified.

### **12.13 Suspension**

12.13.1 Suspension must not be an automatic response to an allegation and all options to avoid suspension should be considered prior to taking that step. Suspension will only be considered in a case where:

- There is cause to suspect student (s) at the College is, or are, at risk of significant harm; or
- It is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal.

12.13.2 The damage to professional reputation that can arise from suspension where an allegation is later found to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious must be considered. Alternative arrangements to suspension must be considered, for example, redeployment. If there is no reasonable alternative to suspension and suspension is deemed appropriate, the reasons and justification for this will be recorded and the individual notified of the reasons.

12.13.3 Where it has been deemed appropriate to suspend the person, written confirmation will be dispatched within one working day, giving as much detail as appropriate for the reasons for the suspension. They will be regularly updated as to the progress of the investigation unless it would prejudice the investigation process, and any work-related issues.

## **12.14 Sharing Information with Parents**

12.14.1 Unless there is clear evidence of abuse, the parents or carers of a child or children involved shall be informed about the allegation as soon as the investigation has been concluded. Where a strategy discussion is required, or police need to be involved, the Case Manager shall not do so until those agencies have been consulted and have agreed what information can be disclosed to the parents or carers. Parents or carers should also be informed of the outcome when a criminal prosecution does not ensue, including the outcome of any disciplinary process. The deliberations of a disciplinary hearing, and the information taken into account in reaching a decision, cannot normally be disclosed, but the parents or carers of the child should be told the outcome in confidence.

## **12.15 Criminal Proceedings**

12.15.1 The College will consult with the Deputy Headmaster following the conclusion of a criminal investigation or prosecution as to whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed. The options will depend on the circumstances of the case, including the result of the police investigation or trial and the standards of proof applicable.

## **12.16 Return to Work**

12.16.1 If it is decided that the person who has been suspended can return to work, the College shall consider how to facilitate this. For example, a phased return may be appropriate and / or the provision of a mentor to provide assistance in the short term. The College shall also consider how to manage their contact with the student(s) who made the allegation.

## **12.17 Ceasing to Use Staff**

12.17.1 If the College ceases to use the services of a member of staff (or a governor or volunteer) because they are unsuitable to work with children, there will be a prompt and detailed report to the state authorities irrespective of whether the individual has been deployed to an area of work not within the scope of regulated activity.

12.17.2 The College has a legal duty to refer promptly to the authorities any person (including a student):

- who has seriously harmed, or poses a risk of harm to a child, or
- if there is reason to believe a member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences,
- and/or if they have received a written warning or would have been dismissed had they not left.

12.17.3 A compromise agreement will not be used to prevent a referral to the authorities, nor can an individual's lack of co-operation. The College will also notify the police promptly if a crime has been committed or is suspected.

12.17.4 The Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team of Chavagnes International College recognise the requirement to report any serious incidents, such as suspicions, allegations or incidents of abuse of vulnerable beneficiaries, to the authorities.

12.17.5 Any such incidents will be followed by a review of the safeguarding procedures within the College, with a report being presented to the Governing Body without delay.

## **12.18 Resignation**

12.18.1 If a member of staff (or a governor or volunteer) tenders their resignation, or ceases to provide their services, any child protection allegations will still be followed up by the College. Resignation will not prevent a prompt and detailed report being made to the authorities in appropriate circumstances. Compromise agreements will not be used in such circumstances.

## **12.19 Timescales**

12.19.1 All allegations must be dealt with as a priority to avoid any delay. Where it is immediately clear that the

allegation is unfounded, false, or malicious, the case should be resolved within one week. It is expected that most cases of allegations of abuse against staff will be resolved within one month with exceptional cases being completed within 12 months. If the nature of the allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, the Deputy Headmaster should institute appropriate action within three working days. If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, it should be held within 15 working days in term time.

### **12.20 Confidentiality**

12.20.1 The College will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. It will also protect the individuals involved, staff and pupils, by not discussing erroneous details with any person, until an outcome has been reached - this includes with parents.

12.20.2 The Case Manager will take advice from the police and children's social care services to agree the following:

- Who needs to know and, importantly, exactly what information can be shared;
- How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip;
- What, if any information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation; and
- How to manage press interest if and when it should arise.

### **12.21 Existing Staff**

12.21.1 If the College has concerns about an existing staff member's suitability to work with children, all relevant checks may be made as if the person were a new member of staff. If a new member of staff joins the school, beyond references and background checks in their country of origin, they must obtain a Casier Judiciaire (bulletin n°3) and present it to the Headmaster within 1 term of working at the College.

12.21.2 All staff are required to notify the College immediately if there are any reasons why they should not be working with children - this will include notification of convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands or warnings. This includes any staff member who has been disqualified from working with children.

12.21.3 The College will ask relevant staff members annually if there has been a change to the circumstances which would mean that they may be disqualified from working with children under this provision.

### **12.22 Providing references**

12.22.1 Only line managers may provide a reference for a member of staff, and they must adhere to the providing references policy. Failure to do so is likely to constitute a disciplinary matter.

### **12.23 Malicious Allegations**

12.23.1 Where an allegation by a student is shown to have been deliberately invented, malicious or unfounded, the Headmaster will consider whether to take disciplinary action in accordance with the College's behaviour and discipline policy.

12.23.2 Where a parent has made a deliberately invented or malicious allegation, the Headmaster will consider whether to require that parent to withdraw their child or children from the College on the basis that they have treated the College or a member of staff unreasonably.

12.23.3 Whether or not the person making the allegation is a student or a parent (or other member of the public), the College reserves the right to contact the police to determine whether any other action might be appropriate.

12.23.4 Allegations that are not substantiated, are false, unfounded or malicious will not be referred to in employer references.

### **12.24 Support for a Student Making an Allegation**

12.24.1 In cases where a child may have suffered significant harm, or there may be a criminal prosecution,

children's social care services, or the police as appropriate, should consider what support the child or children involved may need.

12.24.2 Where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system, schools and colleges should be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process so they can offer support and act appropriately. The College is particularly aware of the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spread of rumours and exposing the identity of someone who is understood to have suffered abuse.

12.24.3 An immediate risk assessment will be undertaken in accordance with the risk assessment policy to consider all of those involved. The risk assessment will not wait for the outcome of a police investigation but may be informed by it subsequently.

### **12.25 Record Keeping**

12.25.1 Details of allegations that are found to have been false or malicious should be removed from personnel records but will be retained as part of a separate safeguarding record.

12.25.2 Such allegations as above will not be referred to in any reference. However, for all other allegations, it is important that a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, and a note of any action taken, and decisions reached, is kept on the confidential personnel file of the accused, and a copy provided to the person concerned. The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference, where appropriate.

## **13. Absenteeism**

13.1 If a child goes missing from College or a dormitory, staff shall report this to the Deputy Headmaster and the Headmaster and be vigilant for signs that this might indicate abuse or neglect.

13.2 Staff will notify the relevant authorities immediately if there is an unexplained absence of any student who is subject to child protection procedures, or an absence which has been explained, but where the College is concerned.

## **14. Staff Code of Conduct**

14.1 The College's expectations of staff are a very clear to safeguard both students' welfare, and staff from putting themselves in vulnerable situations when allegations can be made, for example, in one-to-one tuition, coaching, travelling by car, and so on.

14.2 All staff are required to discuss the code of conduct annually, be familiar with it and adopt it.

## **15. Whistleblowing Procedures**

15.1 All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the College's safeguarding regime. All concerns are taken seriously by the Senior Leadership Team.

15.2 In the event that a staff member is concerned about poor or unsafe practices in the safeguarding regime, they should raise the matter with the Deputy Headmaster. Staff should be aware that they may make a referral direct to social care about the safety of any child / children.

## **16. Recruitment Procedures**

16.1 The College has a culture of safe recruitment and, as part of that, has adopted recruitment procedures that

help to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children.

## 17. Supervision of Visitors and Contractors

17.1 Visitors (including visiting speakers) will be admitted by the College secretary and will remain supervised by a member of staff at all times.

17.2 Contractors coming on site will have their identity checked, be risk assessed, have the appropriate checks undertaken and be appropriately supervised.

## 18. Training

18.1 The College will continue to:

- Provide the funding, training, resources and support to enable the staff to address safeguarding matters;
- Ensure that the Deputy Headmaster undertakes appropriate training;
- Ensure that there is always a nominated Governor with responsibility for safeguarding who meets at least once a term with the Headmaster and who has undergone appropriate training every two years;
- All existing staff will receive training regarding any updates to child protection legislation and practice as required and at least annually. Informal updates (for example staff briefings and emails) will be provided as required;
- Every new member of staff, including part-timers working in the School, receives appropriate training on their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse, bullying, sexting and on the procedures for recording and referring any concerns.

## 19. The College's Arrangements

19.1 Raising Awareness - the College will continue to raise awareness of child protection issues by:

- Ensuring that every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff, Governors and volunteers) has the contact details for the Deputy Headmaster;
- Ensuring that staff are aware of all duties and how to act;
- Ensuring that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the College and staff for safeguarding and child protection by setting out its obligations on the school website;
- Ensuring that other policies which contribute towards safeguarding children and young people are reviewed and updated regularly and appropriate advice sought.
- The College will keep staff aware of emerging safeguarding and child protection themes as they arise – sexting for example.
- Staff are given the opportunity to contribute to and shape the child protection policies.
- Ensuring that lessons are learned if appropriate from any incidents where allegations are substantiated or improvements to procedures deemed justified.

## 20. Equipping Students with the Skills Needed

20.1 The College recognises that because of the day-to-day contact with students, staff in schools are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse and that all staff have a full and active part to play in protecting our students from harm.

20.2 The College will therefore:

- Ensure that students know that there are adults in the College who they can approach if they are worried and in whom they can confide;
- Have regard to the need to ensure the safety of children whilst on-line and to prevent students from being drawn into terrorism, including through awareness of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism.
- Take care in regard to the discussion of sensitive issues – seeking advice where there are concerns. Within the curriculum, there will also be opportunities to discuss issues which some students might find sensitive and/or disturbing.
- Take care in relation to discussion about members of families and family make up.

### 20.3 Supporting Students

20.3.1 The College will:

- Recognise that a child who is abused or harmed, sexually or otherwise, who witnesses violence or who lives in an abusive or violent environment may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame himself, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth. Such children may struggle to maintain a full-time table and may express a wish to withdraw from some lessons and activities.
- Further recognise that the College may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm;
- Accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn;
- Ensure that children who have been abused are particularly closely monitored and supported and any concerns are recorded and reported to agencies Support may be necessary to protect and support students for a long time. Regardless of whether the police take action, the College will continue to support any child who feels that they have suffered abuse.
- Do all that is reasonable to protect children from bullying and harassment as a result of making a report.
- Provide continuing support to a child (about whom there have been concerns) who leaves the College by ensuring that such concerns and records are forwarded under secure confidential cover to the new school as a matter of urgency, and in any event within 10 working days;
- Establish a safe environment in which all children feel safe, secure, valued and respected, feel confident and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties or feel threatened.

### 21. Monitoring and Evaluation of this Policy

21.1 The College and its governors monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures through the following activities:

- Annual review of the policy
- Governor visits to the College;
- Logs of bullying / racist behaviour incidents are reviewed regularly by the senior leadership

team and the governing body

- Regular review of parental concerns.