



JESUS COLLEGE  
CAMBRIDGE

# Policy on Working with Children and Vulnerable Adults

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## 1. Introduction and scope of this policy

1.1 Jesus College carries out activities which bring its staff, Fellows and others working on behalf of the College into contact with children and vulnerable adults. This can include contact with students, work experience students, young conference guests and choristers.

1.2 The College is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for these people, as well as for its staff, and all reasonable steps will be taken to prevent all parties from harm. In order to achieve this, the College will ensure its staff and volunteers are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised. Furthermore the College will endeavour to keep up-to-date with national developments relating to the care and protection of children and vulnerable adults.

1.3 This policy outlines the way in which the College intends to deal with such matters and applies to all members of the College community whose duties bring them into contact with children and/or vulnerable adults.

1.4 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

Staff policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders

Choir Risk Assessment Form.

Legal Affairs and Employment Sub-Committee report on the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

## **2. Definitions**

2.1 A “child” is anyone under the age of 18.

2.2 A “vulnerable adult” is a person aged 18 years or over who is:

in residential accommodation provided in connection with care or nursing or receiving care or nursing at home;

receiving health care;

in lawful custody or under the supervision of a probation officer;

receiving a welfare service of a prescribed description or direct payments from a social services authority;

receiving services, or taking part in activities, aimed at people with disabilities or special needs because of his/her age or state of health.

It may be a person who is unable to take care of him/herself, or unable to protect him/herself against significant harm or exploitation. He/she may be elderly or frail, have learning disabilities, suffer from mental illness, have a physical disability, be a substance misuser, be homeless or in an abusive relationship

## **3. Special Provisions**

### **3.1 Application of these Provisions**

The provisions for special recruitment and training procedures and for the conduct of Disclosure and Barring Service checks are applied only at the present time to staff working with children or vulnerable adults. Council review the application of these provisions from time to time, to take account of any changed arrangements in College, new risks and new legislation.

### **3.2 Recruitment and Training of staff**

3.2.1 The following procedures will be used for all candidates to whom the College offers a position which will bring them into regular unsupervised contact with children or vulnerable adults:

Applicants will be asked to complete an application form.

Identity will be carefully checked and applicants will be required to provide photographic documentation to confirm identity.

Applicants will be asked to provide original documentation to provide proof of qualifications.

Professional and character references will be sought, preferably including someone who can comment on the applicant’s experience of working with children.

Previous employment history will be verified through references.

Applicants will be required to undergo an appropriate level of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

All appointed staff will be required to complete an agreed probationary period.

All staff will be issued with the College's Policy on working with children and vulnerable adults.

### **3.3 Disclosure and Barring Service Disclosures.**

3.3.1 Those who are involved in work situations where they have sustained or prolonged unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Legislation. This means that prospective staff, workers or volunteers must declare all criminal convictions, however long ago; and these will be taken into account when deciding on their suitability for working with children or vulnerable adults. No-one will be permitted to undertake a role which involves regular contact with children or vulnerable adults without a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

3.3.2 However, a criminal record may not prevent a person from working for Jesus College in any other capacity (see Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders). If that person is then asked to undertake tasks which will bring him/her into unsupervised contact with children or vulnerable adults, such as work experience placements, any record must be declared to the HR Manager who will take appropriate advice where necessary and will decide whether this task should be allocated to another member of staff.

3.3.3 In line with the DBS recommendations, the College will seek disclosures every three years.

## **4. Code of Conduct**

Those working with children or vulnerable adults must follow the below Code of Conduct which is based upon the Child Protection Policy of the Diocese of Ely.

If you work with children or vulnerable adults you must:

Treat all children and vulnerable adults with respect.

Provide an example of good conduct you wish others to follow.

Ensure that, whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities with children or vulnerable adults, or at least that they are within sight or hearing of others.

Respect a child or vulnerable adult's right to personal privacy.

Encourage children or vulnerable adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like.

Remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned.

Be aware that even caring physical contact with a child or vulnerable adult may be misinterpreted.

Recognise that special caution is required in moments when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or vulnerable adults.

You must not:

Have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children or vulnerable adults.

Allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour.

Make suggestive/derogatory remarks or gestures.

Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts.

Exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues.

Show favouritism to any individual.

Rely on the good name of the College to protect you.

Believe that allegations of inappropriate behaviour "could never happen to me".

Take a chance when common sense, policy and practice suggest a more prudent approach.

## **5. General Guidance**

### **5.1 Planning and supervision**

5.1.1 All activities or assignments involving children or vulnerable adults should be planned in advance to ensure they take into account the age range and ability of the participants. Staff supervising activities or assignments involving children or vulnerable adults should be competent and trained to do so. Where appropriate, a risk assessment will be undertaken and documented.

5.1.2 All staff are required to ensure that, whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities with children or vulnerable adults, or at least that they are in sight or hearing of others. Workers or volunteers should avoid working alone with a child or vulnerable adult wherever possible. If it is not avoidable they should plan their work so that at least two adults are present at any time, including where possible a College staff member

## **5.2 Physical Contact**

5.2.1 On no account should any member of staff, worker or volunteer have any physical contact with a child or vulnerable adult unless it is to prevent an accident or injury to themselves or anyone else (e.g. to prevent a fall) or in the case of medical assistance being needed (e.g. to administer first aid), in which case the prior consent of the affected person should be requested where possible. Where appropriate, consent from parents or those with parental or caring responsibility should be obtained.

5.2.2 If a child or vulnerable adult is hurt or distressed, the staff member, worker or volunteer should do his/her best to comfort or reassure the affected person without compromising his/her dignity or doing anything to discredit the person's own behaviour.

## **5.3 Communication**

5.3.1 Communication with children or vulnerable adults is vital in establishing relationships built on trust. Those working with children or vulnerable adults should listen to what they are saying, and respond appropriately. Children and vulnerable adults are entitled to the same respect as any member of staff, worker or volunteer. It should also be made clear to them what standards of behaviour and mutual respect are expected from them. It is important to remember that behaviours and intentions can easily be misinterpreted, no matter how well intentioned.

5.3.2 Those working with children or vulnerable adults should behave appropriately, ensure that language is moderated in their presence and should refrain from adult jokes or comments which are clearly unsuitable.

## **5.4 Suspicions of Abuse**

5.4.1 Any worker who witnesses or suspects abusive behaviour towards a child or vulnerable adult should record the details and report it to the Bursar. It is NOT the Colleges responsibility to investigate any suspicions. This requires expertise which the College does not have, and the responsibility is to report it only.

5.4.2 The Senior Bursar will appropriately record an allegation or reported incident. He/she will be responsible for contacting the statutory child protection agency such as the Local Safeguarding Children Board or the Police if necessary. The Senior Bursar will consult with the Master, Senior Tutor and HR Manager about any decision to contact the appropriate authority. During an investigation into allegations of abuse, it may be appropriate to suspend a worker or remove them from having any contact with children or vulnerable adults until an investigation has been carried out.

5.4.3 Any allegations of abuse made against any worker will be thoroughly investigated and dealt with through the disciplinary procedure. Serious breaches may lead to dismissal.

## **5.5 Safety**

5.5.1 The safety of people at work is paramount and the College is therefore committed to providing a safe environment within which to work. Those working with children or vulnerable adults should ensure that all appropriate risk assessments and security checks have been carried out prior to any activity or assignment. This could include first aid cover and accident reporting.

5.5.2 If transporting children or vulnerable adults, the transport should be checked to ensure it is roadworthy and adequate for the purpose. Any equipment used must be safe and only used for the purpose for which it is intended. Users should be adequately trained. Appropriate insurance should be up to date and adequate to cover such assignments and should cover the children/ vulnerable adults.

## **5.6 Confidentiality**

5.6.1 All information regarding children/ vulnerable adults is highly confidential and should only be shared with appropriate parties on a need to know basis.

5.6.2 Anyone who is likely to have access to confidential material regarding children or vulnerable adults will be required to sign a non-disclosure agreement. The requirement for confidentiality is emphasised.

## **5.7 Contact**

5.7.1 Contact should not be made with any of the children or vulnerable adults for any other reason unrelated to the particular work. In particular, staff are required to do everything to maintain the College's reputation for integrity and responsibility in dealing with such people, and should not enter into any social or other non-work related arrangements with them.

## **5.8 Gifts and inducements**

5.8.1 On no account should anyone from the College give a child or vulnerable adult a gift or do anything which could be in any way considered a bribe or inducement to enter into a relationship or give rise to any false allegations or improper conduct against the individual.

## **6. Implementation, monitoring and review**

6.1. All staff, workers and volunteers at the College will be made aware of this policy and a copy will be available on JNet and from the HR Manager.

Furthermore, a copy of this policy will be given to all relevant bodies with whom the College works and will be made available to parents and carers of children or vulnerable adults with whom the College plans to work.

6.2 Failure to follow the guidelines in this policy is considered a serious offence and will be investigated thoroughly and dealt with through the College's disciplinary procedure. Serious breaches may lead to dismissal.

6.3 This policy will take effect from 11th March 2013. The HR Manager has responsibility for implementing and monitoring this policy, which will be reviewed by Staff Committee on a regular basis (at least annually) following is implementation and additionally whenever there are relevant changes to legislation or current working practices.

