

# The University of Buckingham

## Safeguarding Young & Vulnerable People Policy

### 1. Statement of Intent

The University of Buckingham believes that it is unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of children and young people within the University community. For the purposes of this policy the definition of this group is anyone under the age of 18.

The University of Buckingham is, further, committed to safeguarding the welfare of all vulnerable members of the University community.

A vulnerable adult has been defined by the Law Commission as:

"a person aged 18 years or over who is, or may be, in need of community care services or is resident in a continuing care facility by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness or *who is, or may be, unable to take care of him or herself or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.*" The words that we have put in italics are those most likely to apply to the University of Buckingham.

With regard to Prevent the University has a responsibility to protect all members of its community.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child or young person is paramount
- All children and young people, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.
- Persons over 18 may be vulnerable, for example owing to a disability or illness, and that support should be offered to those we believe may fall into this category.

The purpose of the policy is:

- To provide protection for children and young people, and vulnerable adults who come into contact with the University of Buckingham
- To provide appropriate staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or young person, or vulnerable adult may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.

We will endeavour to safeguard children and young people, and vulnerable adults by:

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- Adopting appropriate child protection guidelines through procedures for appropriate staff and volunteers
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made as appropriate
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers as appropriate
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately

- Providing effective management for appropriate staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.

## **2 Introduction**

This document sets out the arrangements the University has put in place to safeguard children, and young people, and vulnerable adults within the University community. The University's approach reflects the legislative context and also takes account of relevant guidance and good practice relating to the education sector. As such it is anticipated that this policy will be reviewed at least annually and as appropriate at other times. The following issues and activities are within the scope of this policy:

- Outreach and recruitment activities involving children
- Work placements involving children (including in academic departments)
- The admission of students under the age of 18 (or over 18 but considered vulnerable)
- Accommodation for students under the age of 18 (or over 18 but considered vulnerable)
- Student support and services (including catering, bars and events)
- Sports facilities
- Activities in academic departments
- Staff employment issues
- Prevent

The University's policy is supported by a series of operating procedures relating to the above activities.

The Registrar is the designated senior University officer with overall responsibility for this policy and for its regular review. The University staff available to act as contact points in case of any query are noted in Appendix A.

The committee responsible for monitoring the operation of this policy and recommending modifications to the Registrar will be the Health & Safety Committee. The procedure for reporting any concerns relating to safeguarding children is set out in Appendices B and C.

## **3. Outreach and recruitment activities involving children**

The Department of Marketing is responsible for a range of activities aimed at raising aspirations of young people to enter higher education and works with prospective students. Where these activities involve working with young people under the age of 18 or other vulnerable groups procedures relating to child protection issues are in place. These are also to be developed to assist academic departments in their own outreach and recruitment activities.

## **4. Work placements involving children**

The Human Resources department provides co-ordinates work experience placements with the Bucks Education Business Partnership (or equivalent for other authorities) and adhere to their procedures for risk assessment. The recommended approach is for the work experience co-ordinator in the relevant department to ensure that students on work placement do not work closely on a 1:1 basis with a single member of University staff, which will help to avoid compromising staff and/or students. This is in line with local authority / government guidelines and therefore DBS checks are not required. In general, DBS checks are required only when contact is substantial and unsupervised.

The agreed position is that students will work within a team placement, thus minimising the risk of the student working too closely with one individual or alternatively working unsupervised. This means that the student will work alongside other members of the team, even though one individual may have ultimate responsibility for the student's work. If there are specific concerns relating to a particular set of circumstances (e.g. where there may be substantial unsupervised access by a member of University staff to children) then this should be raised with HR in order that an assessment of the risk may be undertaken.

The relevant manager must inform HR of the arrival and departure of children for work placements, their place of work and whether any DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks have been made as a consequence.

Member of staff responsible for operational procedures – Human Resources Assistant.

## **5. The admission of students under the age of 18 (or over 18 but vulnerable)**

The University may, in exceptional cases, admit students who will reach the age of 18 during their first term of study.

A procedure is in place to identify applicants who will be under the age of 18 when their course starts, or who may be vulnerable for another reason, for example owing to a disability. Applicants in this category may be interviewed to establish the extent of their social and personal preparation for study in a higher education environment. The procedure is operated jointly with the Student Welfare Department and involves contact with parents and/or guardians (see section 7. Student Support and Services).

Registry should inform the following departments as soon as possible after the student completes registration:

1. The School of study
2. Student Welfare
3. Accommodation
4. The Sports Officer
5. The Student Union

Where interviews or meetings are held with individual applicants as part of the admissions process, appropriate procedures are followed. Member of staff responsible for operational procedures – Registry / Admissions.

## **6. Residential services for students under the age of 18 (or over 18 but vulnerable)**

A procedure is in place to take appropriate account of students in this group during the process of allocating accommodation pre-arrival. Arrangements are made to ensure appropriate additional student support and for the necessary DBS checks to be made on relevant staff. The procedures also address the implications for commercial services, including the sale of alcohol. Member of staff responsible for operational procedures – Head of Student Experience.

## **7. Student support and services**

### **7.1 Student administration and student support**

Procedures are in place in the Student Services Department to make advance contact with incoming students under the age of 18 to offer appropriate support. At the same time information is also provided to parents. A protocol ensures liaison with Accommodation and Campus Services and with the relevant academic department/s. Where 1-1 meetings

are held with individual students in the context of student services and support, appropriate procedures are followed. Member of staff responsible for operational procedures - Student Welfare Department.

## **7.2 Information services**

Arrangements relating to the use of computing, ICT and library facilities are covered by established Codes of Practice and associated procedures. Any concerns relating to improper use of facilities are investigated and action taken where appropriate, in line with the relevant procedures.

The providers of these services should be made aware of the members of vulnerable groups so that appropriate action can be taken.

## **7.3 Students Union**

Child protection procedures are in place in relation to student activities (such as volunteering) that involve work among children and other vulnerable members of the community. This includes DBS checks where appropriate. Member of staff responsible for operational procedures – Head of Student Experience

# **8. Sports facilities**

A comprehensive policy is in place covering staff recruitment and training alongside the delivery of sports and other recreational services. The Policy is set in the context of an understanding of the powerful and positive influence of sporting activities and the need to ensure the welfare of all participants and the adoption of practices that are supportive, protective and empowering. DBS checks are also carried out where appropriate.

Member of staff responsible for operational procedures – Stefan Ridley

# **9. Activities in academic departments**

## **9.1 Teaching and Learning**

Incoming students under 18 or who may be vulnerable for other reasons are identified pre-arrival. The Student Welfare Department is responsible for discussing student support arrangements with the relevant academic departments to ensure that the implications for matters such as personal tutoring are understood. DBS checks are made on relevant staff in academic departments. These are usually necessary only when contact is substantial and unsupervised. Student placements outside the university might raise additional issues.

Members of staff responsible for operational procedures – Head of relevant academic department/s, with guidance provided by the Student Welfare Department.

## **9.2 Research**

Research projects involving children are subject to the University's Ethics Policy for research. Partner agencies (e.g. NHS Trusts) also have their own ethics procedures.

Member of staff responsible for operational procedures - Head of relevant academic department/s.

## **9.3 Investigations**

Before any student is invited to attend an investigation into his or her behaviour concerning academic or non-academic matters, the dean, senior tutor or delegate will check whether the student is under 18 or is being supported by Student Welfare. If the student is receiving support, Student Welfare will be asked for any further relevant

information. It is important that the student is made aware of the right to be accompanied by a friend when attending any investigation.

Members of staff responsible for operational procedures – Dean of School of Study (academic matters) or Senior Tutor (non-academic matters),

## 10. Catering

In relation to the sale and consumption of alcohol in University run licensed premises, bar staff are trained to request I.D. where necessary and all 'Personal License Holders' are DBS checked.

## 11. Prevent

The University undertakes regular risk assessments in line with the Prevent agenda. See specific policy relating to Prevent.

## 12. Staff employment issues

The University as a responsible employer ensures that it engages staff in a way that is compliant with the relevant legislation and in particular that which exempts people with specific convictions from applying for or indeed holding particular job roles where there is an acknowledged risk associated with access to children or vulnerable adults. As a direct consequence, all vacant positions within the University are routinely reviewed and a consideration of the risks undertaken.

Where there is the potential for substantial unsupervised access to children and vulnerable adults then a DBS check will be undertaken. Offers of employment to all posts subject to a DBS are conditional with the individual meeting the required standard and a failure to do so would result in an immediate withdrawal of the offer of employment. Failure to disclose or the provision of a false statement of disclosure by a potential employee may result in disciplinary action with a potential sanction up to and including summary (instant) dismissal of the employee. All DBS disclosures are risk assessed against the job role on an individual basis by a designated senior member of the HR Department.

Periodically, when the role of an existing member of staff changes it may be necessary to review the job role and for the existing staff member to be required to undertake a DBS check. It is anticipated that such applications will be kept to a minimum as all University of Buckingham employees are contractually obliged to notify the University as their employer of any post employment criminal convictions that may impact upon their future employment with the University. If the individual is found to be in breach of this contractual obligation then disciplinary action may be taken with a potential sanction up to and including summary dismissal.

In the event of a University employee having suspicions regarding the contact of another employee or individual engaged on University business with a child/ children or vulnerable adult, then at their earliest opportunity they must raise this with the HR Department and the Vice Chancellor. This is in order that any potential risks can be minimised with immediate effect and to allow an investigation in to the allegations to take place in accordance with the University of Buckingham Disciplinary Procedure for all University staff. If the concerns at issue relate to the HR Manager or the Vice Chancellor then contact should be made directly with the Chair of Council.

HR must inform the Health & Safety Committee of the arrival, and departure or removal from risk category of children and other vulnerable persons, their place of work and DBS checks made as a consequence.

Member of staff responsible for operational procedures: Human Resources Manager.

## Appendix A – Contact points for advice and support

### University Child Protection Contacts

The following members of University staff have been designated as Child Protection Contacts. These staff undergo specific training in order to be able to respond to incidents, and to advise and support other members of staff.

Name	Department	Telephone extension
Mr John Spoerry	Business School	2350

(Matters relating to safeguarding children may raise issues that lead an individual to consider professional counselling support. The University provides a Counselling Service for employees and a Welfare Officer for registered students).

### Local Authority Contacts

If you think that you or someone that you know is at risk then you also have the option of contacting the local authority:

Aylesbury Vale and North Bucks Area:  
Buckinghamshire County Council  
County Hall  
Walton Street  
Aylesbury  
HP20 1YU  
Telephone: 01296 395000

Emergency Duty Team - 01494 675802

For serious emergencies in the evening, weekends or public holidays, you can call the Emergency Duty Team for advice on 01494 675802 or fax 01494 672783

If you think someone is being hurt, please call Careline on freephone 0800 137915.

## Appendix B

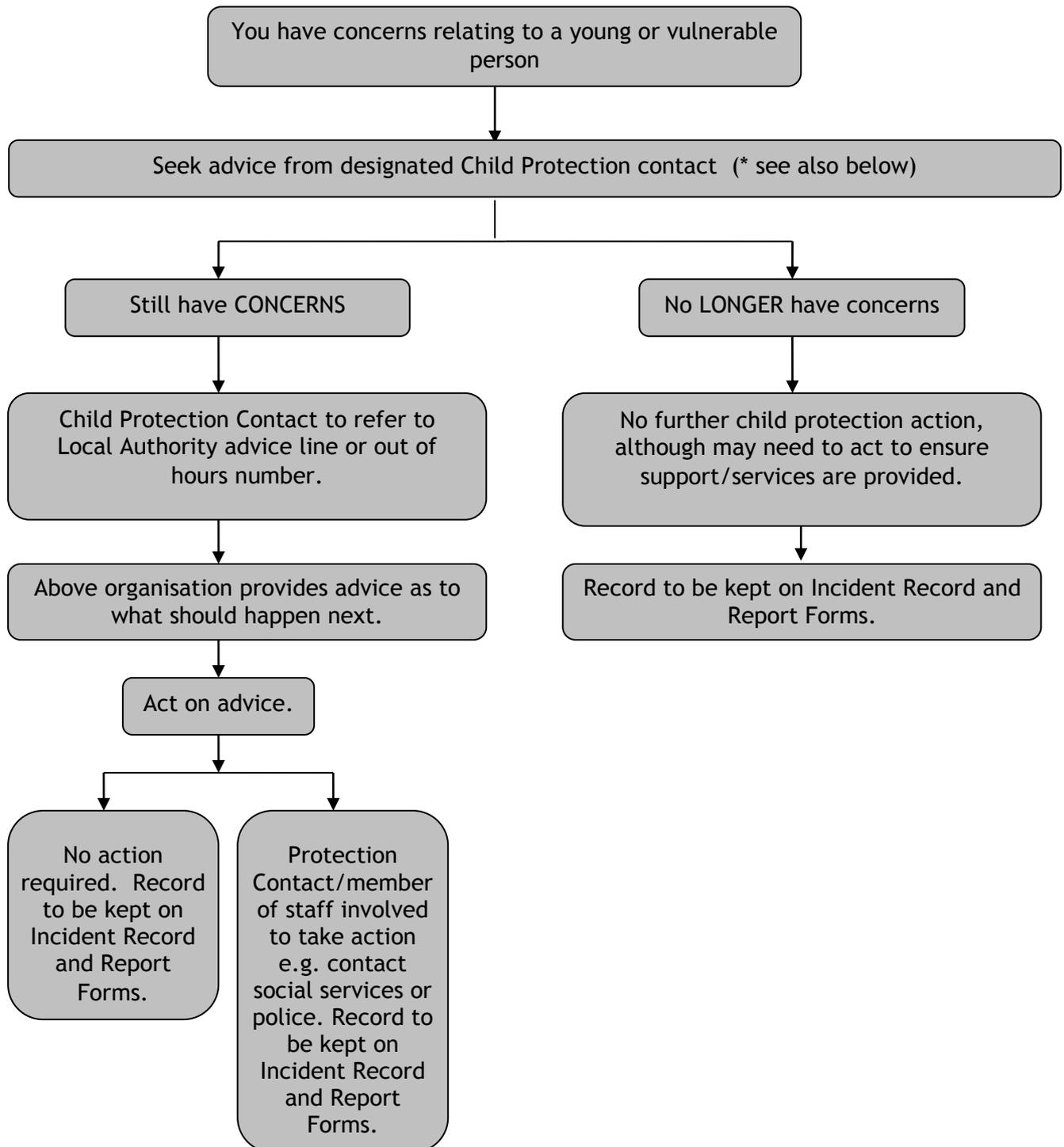
### Responding to a disclosure / allegation of abuse

If you encounter a safeguarding incident you should follow these basic guidelines, which are based on material produced by the NSPCC.

- **Stay** calm.
- **Listen** carefully to what is said.
- Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others – **do not promise to keep secrets**.
- **Allow** the child to continue at her/his own pace.
- **Ask questions for clarification only**, and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.
- **Reassure** the child that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- **Tell them** what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared. Tell them that you will be speaking to the person at the University who is responsible for their protection and that they may contact Student Welfare Office (or, if not appropriate, a member of the Health, Safety & Welfare Committee).
- **Record in writing** what was said using the child's own words as soon as possible – note date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated. Use the Incident Record and Report Forms for reporting abuse.
- **Contact a Child Protection Contact**, as detailed above for further advice and for onwards referral, as necessary.
- **DO NOT talk to other people about the incident**. Others should only be made aware of this on a 'needs to know' basis.

The incident reporting procedure is set out in Appendix C

## Appendix C - Incident Reporting Procedure



\* If your concerns relate to the behaviour of a member of staff, contact should be made with the Human Resources Department so that a decision can be taken on whether additional HR procedures should be followed.

## Appendix D

### Safeguarding Children

### Incident Record Form

Please complete as much of the following as possible

Name of child/ young person

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Age and date of birth

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Ethnicity

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Religion

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First language

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Disability

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Any special factors

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Parent's/carer's name(s)

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Home address (and phone no. if available).

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Are you reporting your own concerns or passing on those of somebody else? Give details.

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Brief description of what has prompted the concerns: include dates, times etc. of any specific incidents.

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Any physical signs? Behavioural signs? Indirect signs?

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Have you spoken to the child? If so, what was said?

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Have you spoken to the parent(s)? If so, what was said?

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Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser? If so, give details.

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Have you consulted anybody else? Give details.

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Your name and position.

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In what capacity have you had any contact with the child / young person

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To whom reported and date of reporting.

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Signature

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Today's date

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An incident report form should also be completed and attached to this record. Both forms should be submitted to the HR Administrator.

