



The College of Osteopaths

Safeguarding Policy

1.0 Introduction

Purpose and Aim

- 1.1 The College of Osteopaths (CofO) believes that all children, young people and vulnerable adults have the right to be safe, happy and healthy and deserve protection from abuse. The College is committed to safeguarding and treating with respect all children, young people and vulnerable adults using any of its services and involved in any of its activities.
- 1.2 The College has a Prevent Policy which sets out the College's duty to tackle the ideological causes of terrorism, support and advise those at risk, and to engage with external bodies to help reduce this risk. This is known as the Prevent Duty and is aimed specifically at protecting vulnerable individuals who fall into this category.
- 1.3 The College recognises that within the course of their activities, its staff and students may come into contact with children or vulnerable adults. Additionally, staff and students supervising or undertaking professional placements in clinical settings and teaching will come into regular contact with children and vulnerable adults.
- 1.4 This policy sets out how the College will deal with concerns that are raised that an individual may be at risk of exploitation, harm or abuse (including radicalisation), and the type of action that the College may take to manage such matters and provide support.
- 1.5 For the purposes of this Policy the term "the College" is deemed to include all of those participating in any College business and representing the College.
- 1.6 The College wishes to ensure that it maintains the highest possible standards to meet its responsibilities to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. In order to ensure adherence to legal responsibilities the College is committed to practice that protects children and those adults identified as vulnerable; working in partnership with organisations as appropriate to facilitate this. We are committed to taking appropriate prompt action to protect individuals from harm and to respond to any allegations or suspicions.

Due Regard

- 1.7 This policy is developed in due regard to the following:
 - Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (2023)
 - Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015)
 - Co-operating where appropriate with those bodies that have duties under the Children Act 1989, 2004 & 2006
 - Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006



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Scope

- 1.8 This Policy is designed to assist the College to achieve the commitments set out above and to take reasonable steps to safeguard those who are vulnerable by ensuring there are clear guidelines and procedures for identifying risk, reporting concerns and taking action.
- 1.9 Examples of areas where the College may have contact with children and adults who may be vulnerable may include (this is not an exhaustive list):
- Admission of, teaching, supervision and support of students who are vulnerable adults;
 - Placements in professional and clinical settings;

Definitions

1.10 Vulnerable adult

The College defines a vulnerable adult as a person aged 18 or over who is, or may be, in need of services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness (including an addiction to alcohol or drugs) or is living in a sheltered or residential care home and who is, or may be, unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm, abuse or exploitation, including being drawn into terrorism.

1.10 Child

The College defines a child as a person who is under the age of 18 ("Child"). The fact that a Child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in Further/Higher education does not change his or her status for the purpose of this Policy.

2.0 Identifying Safeguarding Concerns

Key Principles:

- 2.1 The College will take all safeguarding concerns including suspicions and allegations of exploitation, harm or abuse (including radicalisation) seriously and will report concerns promptly, in accordance with paragraph 3 of the Policy.
- 2.2 The College will ensure that processes are in place to check the suitability of staff and students whose duties and responsibilities involve regular contact or supervision of children or adults who may be vulnerable. The College will ensure that appropriate suitability checks are carried out in relation to staff and students including criminal record checks and other checks where appropriate.
- 2.3 Safeguarding referrals to the relevant statutory authority will be made on the basis of identified and considered risk.



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- 2.4 College staff dealing with students or staff who are subject to safeguarding concerns will consider what support may be offered to them both from within the College and externally (e.g. signposting to local GPs, mental health services or in the case of Prevent, Channel services).
- 2.5 Research which involves children or vulnerable adults must comply with the University of Derby <https://www.derby.ac.uk/research/how-research-is-managed/ethics/research-ethics-policy/>. DBS checks will be conducted in relation to individuals involved in such research where permitted by law. Guidance on this may be sought from the relevant Chair of the School Research Ethics Committees.

It is not possible to guarantee confidentiality when a safeguarding concern is reported because the College owes a duty of care toward its staff, students or visitors and the College may need to take action on receipt of a report of a safeguarding concern that may result in the same being reported to an external third party. However, any reports will be dealt with sensitively and only disclosed to those people who need to be made aware of an incident or concern, whether internal or external to the College.

What is a Safeguarding Concern?

- 2.6 Examples of safeguarding concerns include, but are not limited to:
- A child or adult raises an allegation of abuse, harm or other inappropriate behaviour.
- 2.7 A student or staff member discloses information involving themselves or others which gives rise to possible concerns that a potential perpetrator may be harming or abusing vulnerable individuals or children involved in College activities.
- 2.8 There are suspicions or indicators that a child or adult is being abused or harmed or is at risk of exploitation, harm or abuse (including radicalisation). The indicators of abuse or harm or risk of abuse or harm or radicalisation can be very difficult to recognise and it is not a staff member's responsibility to decide whether a child or adult has been abused or harmed or subjected to abuse or harm, but only to raise concerns that they may have.
- 2.9 There are observable changes in a child or adult's appearance or behaviour that may be related to exploitation, harm or abuse (including radicalisation).
- 2.10 A concern is raised that an individual presents a risk of abuse or harm towards a child or adult in relation to, for example, his/her criminal convictions, or downloading, possession or distribution of inappropriate images or extremist material.
- 2.11 Concerns arise that a student or member of staff is vulnerable to radicalisation and there is an identifiable risk of being drawn into terrorism.



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3.0 Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

There are universal steps to follow if a cause for concern or an allegation is brought to your attention. The steps that you must follow are:

Listen

- Always accept what has been said without judgement
- Don't question or investigate yourself
- Never promise confidentiality

Act

- Write down your concern or what you have been told
- If arising from a conversation, this report should verbatim and include relevant contextual information, such as the time and date
- Sign the report and take it directly to the Designated Person (see below) or their deputy or their organisation lead if the Designated person is the focus of the concern.

Designated Safeguarding Officers

3.1 For any safeguarding concerns involving staff members, the appropriate people to report concerns to is the Bursar, Evelyn Gold (e.gold@collegeofosteopaths.ac.uk).

For any safeguarding concerns involving students, the appropriate person to report concerns to is the Head of Education, Angela Carryer (a.carryer@collegeofosteopaths.ac.uk).

The Registrar, Kate Hantom (K.hantom@collegeofosteopaths.ac.uk) and the Bursar, Evelyn Gold (e.gold@collegeofosteopaths.ac.uk) are the Designated Safeguarding Officers. The Designated Safeguarding Officers may delegate responsibility under this Policy to an appropriate nominee.

In a clinical setting a member of staff or student should normally report any safeguarding concern in the first instance to the Clinic Operations Manager, Lisa Nelson (l.nelson@collegeofosteopaths.ac.uk).

If the Designated Safeguarding Officer is not available, or the safeguarding concern involves a concern against them, then the referral should be made to the Principal, Pat Hamilton (p.hamilton@collegeofosteopaths.ac.uk).

Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Officers

3.2 It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Officers to:

- Undertake relevant training in safeguarding procedures and ensure their knowledge is kept up to date;
- Act as a point of contact for those who have safeguarding concerns, receiving information and recording those concerns;



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- Act upon concerns as appropriate in the circumstances, for example, by carrying out a risk assessment in accordance with this Policy and acting in accordance with the outcomes. This may range from taking no further action to making external referrals for example to Social Services or Police; and making referrals to the Senior Leadership Team to consider the appropriateness of a precautionary suspension.
- Monitoring the implementation of this Policy and procedure.

3.3 In addition to the explicit responsibilities set out above, the established management structures within College have a responsibility to ensure staff and students are aware of the College's safeguarding principles and procedures (including this Policy) and are able to refer concerns appropriately. Furthermore, managers and staff the College will promote awareness of safeguarding to reduce the potential for abuse and to promote wellbeing.

Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

3.4 A safeguarding concern is reported by completing Section 1 of the Safeguarding Incident Referral Report Form (appended to this procedure). The form should be submitted by email to the appropriate Designated Safeguarding Officer as promptly as possible, but generally within 24 hours of the incident giving rise to the concern. Staff may wish to discuss safeguarding concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Officer should they be in any doubt as to whether to make a report.

4.0 Taking Action

4.1 When completing the form, the Designated Safeguarding Officer will decide:

- a) That no further action is required.
- b) To refer the concerns to the Senior Leadership Team, in order for them to decide whether a precautionary suspension is required.
- c) To refer the matter to an alternative College policy or procedure, such as the Staff or Student Disciplinary Procedure or the Fitness to Study or Practise procedure.
- d) To report the matter to the local Safeguarding Team.
- e) To report the matter to the Police, Social Services or alternative appropriate external agency. If a member of the College, staff or student, has any immediate safeguarding concerns (including outside normal College hours) they may refer directly to the Police or Social Services, but otherwise they should follow the internal referral process described in this Policy. If a direct referral is made, the member of staff or student should inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer at the earliest opportunity.

4.2 The Designated Safeguarding Officer (or their nominee) will liaise with other partner agencies as appropriate in order to address the safeguarding concerns identified.

4.3 The College reserves the right to take action under its disciplinary procedures and/or its fitness to practise procedures and/or fitness to study procedures should it later receive information that suggests that its conduct standards may have been breached and/or that reported safeguarding concerns give rise to an allegation that a student is not fit to practise/study. Staff or students who are dismissed from the College and/or found unfit to practise/study as a



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result of safeguarding concerns will be reported to the Disclosure and Barring Service and any relevant professional body.

- 4.4 Support from internal or external services, such as the local safeguarding authority, will be provided as appropriate for any individuals, staff or students, impacted by safeguarding issues.

5.0 Retention of Information

- 5.1 The College complies with the principles of data protection law in the way that it retains and disposes of personal information.
- 5.2 Written records of any safeguarding concerns will be retained for as long as is necessary for the purpose for which it was obtained or as legally required or lawfully permitted.
- 5.3 Such written records will be held centrally and separately from a member of staff or student's personal records.

6.0 Training

- 6.1 All staff and students whose roles and responsibilities include regular contact with children and potentially vulnerable individuals will receive training and guidance appropriate to their role. All staff will be made aware of this Policy and procedure and related guidance.

7.0 Monitoring & Reporting

- 7.1 The Curriculum and Standards Sub-Committee (CSC) will review this procedure on an annual basis and is responsible for overseeing and updating this policy and procedure particularly with respect to the legal obligations and other external requirements.

Equality issues have been taken into account during the development of this policy and all protected characteristics have been considered.

8.0 Key Contacts

Kate Hantom, Registrar (01782 971340) k.hantom@collegeofosteopaths.ac.uk

Evelyn Gold, Bursar (0208 905 1937) e.gold@collegeofosteopaths.ac.uk

Chloe Henaghan Lead Prevent Officer (020 8905 1937) chloe.henaghan@outlook.com

[Adult Safeguarding](#)

If the adult lives in Stoke-on-Trent call 0800 561 0015 at any time.

If the adult lives in Staffordshire call 0345 604 2719 (Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm, Fridays 8.30am to 4.30pm, excluding Bank Holidays) or 0345 604 2886 at any other time.

[Children Safeguarding – Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub \(MASH\)](#)

Staffordshire Children First Response Team (FRT): 0300 111 8007



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Stoke-on-Trent Children: Safeguarding Referral Team (SRT): 01782 235100 or 0845 604 2886
Staffordshire and 0800 5610015 Stoke-on-Trent

Adults with care and support needs: Adults Referral Teams: 0800 1313126

Hertfordshire Safeguarding Referral Team (SRT)

Adult: 0300 123 4042 call anytime
(Children: 0300 123 4043) call anytime.



Appendix 1: Safeguarding (including Prevent) Risk Assessment

Section 1 to be completed by individual reporting the concern

Name of child/vulnerable adult (if known):	
Date of birth or age (of child):	Gender: (M/F)
Description of the safe-guarding issue. Description might include a factual account of something you have witnessed or an account of something a third party has reported to you.	
Time, location, date if incident(s) if known:	
Any other observations/information:	
Name of Individual reporting the concern	
Position:	
Action undertaken by person reporting the concern:	
Date concern reported:	



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Section 2 to be completed by the Safeguarding Officer

Is the child or vulnerable adult who is the subject of the concern at immediate risk?	Yes / No Details:
Does the incident relate to an allegation about a student or member of staff?	
If the above applies, should the staff or student be referred to the Senior Leadership Team for consideration of a precautionary suspension?	
Does the reported incident constitute a criminal offence requiring referral to the police?	
Actions to be undertaken: a) No further action. b) Referral to the Senior Leadership Team for consideration of a precautionary suspension. c) Referral to an alternate College policy or procedure such as the Staff or Student Disciplinary Procedure. d) Report the matter to the local Safeguarding Team / initiate Channel process. e) Report the matter to the police.	
Signed:	
Date:	