



WYCLIFFE HALL

Safeguarding Policy

Name of Policy:	Safeguarding Policy
Scope of Policy:	This policy sets out Wycliffe Hall's approach to safeguarding children and adults and establishes guidance and procedures on preventing or dealing with a safeguarding issue. The policy applies to all staff, students, and volunteers (irrespective of whether they act in a paid or unpaid capacity) who may be working with children or adults at risk of harm through the Hall's teaching, accommodation provision or other activities.
Owner, Author and Contact for Further Information:	Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Lead
Applicable to:	Students, Staff and Volunteers
Approval Body:	Hall Council
Date of Approval:	19.06.2025
Date of Implementation (if different from the date of approval):	01.09.2025
Review Date:	7 th week of Trinity Term annually



WYCLIFFE HALL

Contents

Scope of the Policy	3
Governance and Responsibilities	3
Context.....	4
Policy Area 1: Promoting a safe environment & culture in academic & mission contexts	4
Policy Area 2: Promoting a safe environment for visitors to Wycliffe Hall.....	6
Policy Area 3: Safer recruitment and training support.....	6
Policy Area 4: Responding to every safeguarding concern or allegation.....	7
Policy Area 5: Caring pastorally for survivors / victims and other affected persons.....	8
Policy Area 6: Caring pastorally for those who are subject to concerns / allegations	9
Policy Area 7: Responding to those who may pose a present risk to others.....	9
Policy Area 8: Monitoring and Quality Assurance.....	10
Appendix A1: Definitions	11
Appendix A2: Key roles and contact details	11
Appendix A3: Training matrices.....	13
Appendix A4: Wycliffe Hall Safer Recruitment and Management of People process.....	14
Appendix A5: Advice for behaviour around children.....	17
Appendix A6: Forms of abuse & dealing with suspicions or allegations of forms of abuse....	18
Appendix A7: Confidentiality.....	21

Wycliffe Hall Safeguarding Policy.

Scope of the Policy.

1. This policy outlines Wycliffe Hall's commitment to safeguarding all individuals, including students, staff, and visitors, with particular attention to children, young people, and vulnerable adults. It aligns primarily with the latest policy of the Church of England [*Promoting a Safer Church \(2017\)*](#) and the specific requirements for Theological Education Institutions (TEIs).
2. Wycliffe Hall is a permanent private hall (PPH) of the University of Oxford, and is subject to [relevant University statutes and guidance](#). The Hall is therefore committed to following the [University of Oxford Safeguarding Policy](#) and procedures where appropriate. While there are differences in some areas of safeguarding process between Promoting a Safer Church and the University of Oxford Safeguarding Policy, this document offers a joint approach.
3. This policy applies to all staff, students, volunteers, and contractors associated with Wycliffe Hall.
4. Definitions of terms can be found in Appendix A1.

Governance and Responsibilities

5. The Wycliffe Hall Council maintains ultimate accountability for safeguarding by means of oversight and scrutiny of the implementation of this policy and associated procedures.
6. Within the Hall Council a Designated Council Trustee holds particular responsibility for safeguarding, supporting Council and the Designated Safeguarding Officers in monitoring safeguarding activity, policies and procedures to ensure compliance with statutory guidance.
7. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (SL) is responsible for managing safeguarding concerns and ensuring staff compliance with safeguarding training.
8. The Church of England also requires there to be a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who shares in management of safeguarding concerns and at Wycliffe Hall, has a particular focus on student compliance with safeguarding training.

9. Together the SL and DSL are responsible for managing safeguarding concerns and ensuring compliance with the policy across the Hall community. Detailed responsibilities and key contacts can be found in Appendix A2.
10. All Hall members – staff, students, and volunteers, are required to adhere to safeguarding policies and to complete safeguarding training when invited. Further details on staff training can be found in Appendix A3.1

Context

11. Although primarily a theological college, Wycliffe Hall offers a broad range of programmes and degrees to cater to a wide variety of needs.
12. The Hall does not provide any childcare service directly to children or young people under 18. While it does welcome the children of Hall staff and students in for worship, meals, and family friendly events, they remain at all times under the care and supervision of their parents/carers.
13. Students who have the primary care of children and young people are not given accommodation within the main communal college buildings; they reside in family homes away from the College site.
14. The Hall hosts commercial activities run by a range of organisations, and the client retains responsibility for the care and supervision of children, young people, or vulnerable adults involved in their programmes. See Policy Area 2 for the procedure for management of external bookings which include children or vulnerable adults.

Policy Areas

15. The Hall's Safeguarding Policy falls into eight main areas:

Policy Area 1: Promoting a safe environment and culture in academic and mission contexts.

16. The Hall will strive to create and maintain environments which are safe, which promote well-being, which prevent abuse, and which create nurturing, caring conditions for everyone. This includes taking reasonable steps to ensure that Hall members can study, work, and live safely and without undue disruption or risks of harm and that others who come in contact with the Hall can do so safely. This creation of a safe and collegiate environment is the responsibility of all who work,

live, and study in the Hall. Several Hall policies and procedures support this, including:

- Promoting a healthy and safe environment and culture through the Health & Safety Policy.
- Providing reasonable and proportionate welfare support to students to facilitate academic success.
- Disciplinary procedures to address misconduct, including the Student Non-Academic Misconduct Disciplinary Procedures and the Staff Disciplinary Procedure.
- Specific measures to deter and address harassment and bullying.
- Defining the appropriate pastoral relationship between staff and students.

17. The Hall encourages the maintenance of professional boundaries, further guidance on which can be found in the [Pastoral Boundaries Policy](#).
18. Mission Contexts: The Hall conducts several missions each year attended by Ordinands or those studying on other pathways. For the former, the missions are a required part of their curriculum, while for the latter, participation is voluntary.
19. As part of the mission, students may come into contact with children or vulnerable adults. Therefore, anyone participating in the mission will be required to have an enhanced DBS check and complete safeguarding training (see student training matrix in Appendix A3.2).
20. The Ministerial Training Officer will ensure that all these requirements are met. Students who fail to comply will not be allowed to participate in missions.
21. The tutors or team leaders in charge of missions will request a copy of the safeguarding policy and relevant risk assessments from the hosting context and will go over these with participants. If there are any concerns related to safeguarding in the host context, these should be reported to the SL.
22. Students, when they are on placement, undertaking volunteering, or serving in a local church, chaplaincy, school or equivalent, are responsible for familiarizing themselves with local safeguarding policies and practice and for complying with them.

Policy Area 2: Promoting a safe environment for visitors to Wycliffe Hall.

23. Although most people who visit the Hall are not children or vulnerable adults, the Hall acknowledges that there are instances where children and vulnerable adults may enter the premises or come into contact with the Hall.
24. When a member of the Hall brings a child onto the premises, they will be responsible for the child's safety and well-being.
25. For any other organised Hall activities (e.g. summer school organised by the Hall), a Hall staff member will assume the role of the responsible adult.
26. If the activity is run by another organisation, such as childcare offered by third parties, summer schools or other programs, a member from that organisation will be responsible for the children's safety.
27. If there is a possibility of children or vulnerable adults coming into contact with the Hall during an event or activity, the Safeguarding Lead will assign a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO). This applies even if the primary responsibility for safeguarding lies with another organisation rather than the Hall.
28. The Domestic Bursar is the Designated Safeguarding Officer for official social events in the Hall.
29. The Designated Safeguarding Officer for summer schools organised by the Hall or another organisation is the Conference and Events Manager.
30. The Domestic Bursar is the Designated Safeguarding Officer for the childcare run by parents and volunteers on the Hall's premises.

Policy Area 3: Safer recruitment and training support

1. All staff will be recruited according to the Church of England's [Safer Recruitment and Management of People](#) process.
2. The Hall's Safer Recruitment and Management of People procedure can be found in appendix A4.
3. All Hall staff will complete safeguarding training to the level appropriate to their job description and role responsibility. Details are contained in the training matrix in appendix A3.1.
4. Safeguarding training is not required for students in order to be a member of the Hall but is required for certain students in specific contexts. Details are contained in the training matrix in appendix A3.2.

Policy Area 4: Responding promptly and appropriately to every safeguarding concern or allegation.

5. Anyone who brings any safeguarding suspicion, concern, knowledge or allegation of current or non-current abuse to the notice of the Hall will be responded to respectfully and in a timely manner, in line with statutory child and adult safeguarding procedures and the relevant policy and practice guidance from the Church of England and the University of Oxford.
6. All safeguarding concerns will be responded to within 24 hours of receipt.
7. Safeguarding concerns should first be raised with the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead.
8. In cases where it was not possible or expedient to report to Safeguarding staff, any Hall staff member or trustee can receive the report and then refer it to the Safeguarding Lead.
9. If a safeguarding concern is raised against the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead, it should be reported to the Principal.
10. If a safeguarding concern is raised against a senior Hall staff member, it should be reported directly to the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): 01865810603 / lado.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk
11. If an individual feels that the Hall has not responded appropriately, then they can contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser or an officer from the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (see Appendix A2).
12. A safeguarding concern involving a child or vulnerable adult will always also be reported to the relevant statutory agency and/or police. See Appendix A7 on confidentiality).
13. Both the person with whom the concern is originally raised, and the SL/ DSL should keep written records of the meeting and keep them in a secure online location. The report should include a clear and comprehensive summary of any allegations made, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, and details of any action taken and decisions reached.
14. Closure and Follow-Up: Once resolved, each case should be officially closed, and a follow-up should be provided to ensure the effectiveness of the actions taken.

15. All suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations that reach the threshold for reporting to the statutory authorities will be reported via appropriate designated safeguarding adviser, to the appropriate statutory authorities. This will be done irrespective of the status of the person.
16. Responsibility for documentation concerning allegations against an ordinand lies with the sponsoring bishop.
17. The SL/DSL will always consult with the DSA about any safeguarding concern relating to an Ordinand or any staff member who holds a Bishop's License. This should take place within one working day of the concern being raised.
18. Should safeguarding concerns be raised about an ordinand, the SL will always inform and consult the DSA of the sponsoring diocese. The relevant DSA will be responsible for ensuring that, if the threshold for reporting is reached, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is informed, in line with their diocesan policy. The DSA shall also convene a Core Group in line with their diocesan policy.
19. In responding to concerns or allegations of abuse relating to staff or students, the Hall will act in accordance with the requirements of criminal, civil and (where appropriate) ecclesiastical law, and so will respect the rights and uphold the safeguards afforded in these, both to the victim/survivor and the subject of concerns or allegations.

Policy Area 5: Caring pastorally for survivors/victims of abuse and other affected persons.

20. Those who report safeguarding concerns will receive a compassionate response, be listened to and be taken seriously. The Hall will respond to any disclosure of abuse in accordance with this policy and the practice guidance of the Church of England and University. This will be done in collaboration with the relevant statutory agencies in accordance with criminal, civil and (where appropriate) ecclesiastical law.
21. Reporting parties will be offered appropriate pastoral care and support, as well as regular updates on the safeguarding case.

Policy Area 6: Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons.

22. The Hall acknowledges that being the subject of a safeguarding complaint may precipitate a degree of vulnerability in the reported person. The Hall will discuss pastoral support options with such individuals.
23. In exercising its responsibilities to suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations of abuse, the Hall will endeavour to respect the rights under criminal, civil and (where appropriate) ecclesiastical law of any accused staff member or student. A legal presumption of innocence will be maintained during the statutory and (where appropriate) Church inquiry process. As the process progresses additional assessment, therapy and support services may be offered.
24. The Hall staff and students who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse belong to families but also the wider Hall community. The Hall will be mindful of the need to provide support to members of families and the wider Wycliffe Hall community affected by the concerns or allegations.

Policy Area 7: Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others.

25. Wycliffe Hall is not a closed community and welcomes the families of students in for meals, and worship services in the Chapel. The College will take responsibility for ensuring that steps are taken to protect others when any member of staff or student is considered a risk to children, young people and vulnerable adults. This will be done by working to mitigate any identified risks according to a safeguarding agreement.
26. The College will ensure that any risk has been assessed and is being managed in a safeguarding agreement in accordance with the relevant policy and practice guidance. This will be done in collaboration with the relevant statutory agencies in accordance with criminal, civil and (where appropriate) ecclesiastical law.

Policy Area 8: Monitoring and Quality Assurance.

27. Within Hall Council the Designated Trustee holds particular responsibility for safeguarding, supporting Council and the SL/DSL in monitoring safeguarding activity, policies and procedures to ensure compliance with statutory guidance.
28. The SL will inform the Designated Trustee of any safeguarding concern which is taken forward by a Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor (DSA), the University Designated Safeguarding Lead, or the Oxford Safeguarding Board.

29. The SL will give a summary report to the Hall Council of all safeguarding cases as a standing item on its agenda. This will include reporting on any informal conversations undertaken with the DSA.
30. The SL will provide an annual safeguarding report to the Hall Council at its Trinity meeting which will form the basis of the Hall Council Report to the Bishop.
31. As a Theological Education Institution (TEI) within the Church of England, the Hall is also required to make an annual report to the local bishop, the Bishop of Oxford, on safeguarding policy, procedures, practice and review within Wycliffe Hall.
32. The SL, DSL, and the Designated Trustee, led by the Principal, will be responsible for regular review of this policy, and propose such amendments to the Council as they see fit.
33. The Hall Council will review and renew the Safeguarding Policy annually, usually at its Trinity Term meeting.
34. Periodic external safeguarding audits will be conducted in line with Diocesan / University guidelines.

APPENDIX

Appendix A1 Definitions

A1.1 For the purpose of this policy, “child” and “children” refers to a person or persons under the age of 18 (as defined in the Children Act 2004).

A1.2 For the purpose of this policy, an “adult” refers to a person aged 18 or above, and “adult at risk”, as stated in the Church of England’s Guidance on Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults (2021, 1.2.3), is defined as one who: “has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any those needs) and is experiencing, or is at risk of abuse or neglect and as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it”.

A1.3 In *Promoting a Safer Church* a ‘vulnerable adult’ is defined as ‘a person aged 18 or over whose ability to protect himself or herself from violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation is significantly impaired through physical or mental disability or illness, emotional fragility or distress, or otherwise; and for that purpose, the reference to being impaired is to being temporarily or indefinitely impaired’. Thus, the Hall recognizes that any student or member of staff may at some point be defined as a ‘vulnerable adult’ or adult ‘at risk’. This may particularly be possible at a time of transition to new independence and demanding study.

A1.4 N.B. Adult vulnerability is not necessarily to replace mental capacity under the Mental Capacity Act 2005, and it should be assumed that an adult retains all legal capacity unless sectioned by an appropriate legal agent or professional. For the purposes of this policy, members of the Hall should always avoid making a judgement about an adult being vulnerable in terms of their capacity and to report safeguarding concerns to the appropriate agencies regardless of potential adult vulnerability in line with its statutory safeguarding obligations.

Appendix A2 Key Safeguarding Roles & Contact Details

Wycliffe Hall Safeguarding Lead: Mia Smith

01865 (2)74208 safeguarding@wycliffe.ox.ac.uk mia.smith@wycliffe.ox.ac.uk

- Hall policy compliance
- Staff compliance
- Safeguarding reporting
- Staff & Student Training
- Record keeping

- Liaison with Hall Council

Wycliffe Hall Safeguarding Deputy Lead: Nick Jackson

01865 (2)74216 safeguarding@wycliffe.ox.ac.uk nick.jackson@wycliffe.ox.ac.uk

- Hall policy compliance
- Safeguarding reporting

Wycliffe Hall Ministerial Training Officer: Jo Parry

jo.parry@wycliffe.ox.ac.uk

- Administrative support
- Student compliance

Wycliffe Hall Trustee for Safeguarding:

Mrs. Sarah A. Finch sarahrafinch@yahoo.co.uk

Oxford Diocesan Safeguarding Team: 01865 208295

safeguardingreferrals@oxford.anglican.org safeguarding@oxford.anglican.org

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):

01865810603 / lado.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Oxford Safeguarding Adults Board: <https://www.osab.co.uk/>

Oxford MASH (Safeguarding Children): 0345 050 7666

University of Oxford Safeguarding:

Regarding Staff: Director of Human Resources

director.hr@admin.ox.ac.uk

Regarding Students or Children: Director of Student Welfare & Support Services

director.swss@admin.ox.ac.uk

Emergency, Immediate Response Needed: 999

Appendix A3: Training Matrices

A3.1 Staff Safeguarding Training

	Basic Awareness	Foundations	Leadership	Senior Leadership	Domestic Abuse	Safer Recruitment	Spiritual Abuse & Healthy Cultures
All Hall Staff	X						
Student facing staff (including catering & cleaning)	X	X			X		
All ordained	X	X	X		X		
Fellowship Group Tutors	X	X	X		X		
Line Managers /Hiring Staff	X	X	X		X	X	
SMT, including Principal and Vice-Principal	X	X	X	X #	X	X	#
Hall Council	X	X	X	~	X		
SL / DSL	X	X	X	X*	X	X	*

- # This requirement applies only to the Principal and Vice-Principal
- ~ This requirement applies only to the Chair of Hall Council.
- *This requirement applies only to the Safeguarding Lead.

A3.2 Student Safeguarding Training.

	Basic Awareness	Foundations	Leadership		Domestic Violence	Safer Recruiting
Ordinands	X	X	X		X	X
Students on placement / missions	X	X			Optional	

Appendix A4 Wycliffe Hall Safer Recruitment and Management of People Process.

This document is designed to help those using the Safer Recruitment & People Management Guidance to follow a clear step-by-step process.

Each section described in the Requirements corresponds with the relevant step listed.

Step	Section	Activity	✓/✗	Action
1.	Responsibilities	- The responsible person (RP) for Hall appointments is normally the Head of Human Resources (HHR). - The RP will identify all individuals involved in the recruitment process and those who have ongoing responsibility for identified roles. - The RP and Designated Safeguarding Lead (SL) will identify what safeguarding training the new role will require. - The SL will ensure all those involved in the recruitment process have completed the relevant safeguarding training.		
2.	Role Descriptions & Person Specifications	- The RP will ensure all documentation: - uses plain language no jargon or legalese. - reflects the requirements of the role in a proportionate way. - outlines the Hall's commitment to safeguarding.		
3.	Advertising a Role	- RP will ensure that all adverts/notices: - include or provide access to the Hall's safeguarding statement. - highlight the essential requirements for the role. - outline pre-appointment checks, including references and the appropriate level of DBS check.		
4.	Application process	- The HHR will: - Develop a standard application form which is clear, uses plain language and seeks all relevant information. - Send applicants information about the values of the Hall and the associated expected behaviours.		

		• Ensure applicants receive information on the level of criminal record check required. • Ensure applicants receive a privacy notice about how their personal data will be processed during the recruitment process.		
5.	Confidential Declarations	• Where an enhanced (with/without barred list) DBS check is required, the candidates will be asked to complete the Church of England Confidential Declaration form.		
6.	Shortlisting	• RP will ensure that at least two people are involved in shortlisting applications and use agreed criteria. • Any gaps or inconsistencies on the application form will be identified.		
7.	Interviews and assessment	• Clear interview questions and selection tools will be developed. • Candidates will be assessed using a proportionate range of selection methods where possible, including values-based questions. • Candidate attitudes and values towards children, young people and vulnerable adults will be probed.		
8.	Pre-Appointment checks	• The HHR will carry out all appropriate checks including proof of identity, right to work (employees) and qualifications, if relevant, on candidates successful at interview. • Only original documents will be accepted. • All relevant references will be taken up. • Checks will be made for gaps and any inconsistencies between information given on the application form or during the interview process and that provided by the references. • Clarifications will be sought by to verify reference received and if questions arise about any information provided.		
9.	Disclosure & Barring Service	• If candidate is successful at interview, the HHR will inform		

		the SL and DSL, who will apply for the appropriate level of DBS check.		
10.	Criminal Records	• If concerns arise from a Confidential Declaration or DBS certificate, support from the relevant member of the safeguarding team will be sought. • If appointment continues, a risk assessment will be carried out, if appropriate. • A copy of the risk assessment will be stored securely together with copy of the Confidential Declaration and DBS information, in line with current data protection legislation. Advice will be sought from the data protection lead if necessary.		
11.	Appointment	• All employment appointments are subject to a probationary period. • All volunteers must have a 'settling in' period.		
12.	Induction	• Induction from SL will highlight safeguarding training and responsibilities and set clear expectations of acceptable behaviour and boundaries of the individual's role during induction.		
13.	Probationary/Settling in Period	• All individuals will receive the relevant induction and training required to be safe and effective in their role. • For paid employment roles at the end of any probationary period, their appointment should be confirmed in writing.		
14.	Ongoing Support, Accountability, Oversight & Supervision	• Line managers will carry out regular one-to-one/supervision meetings with individuals, focussing on their attitudes, values and behaviours as well as what they do. • Hall will ensure that clear policies and procedures are in place which explain what individuals should do if they have concerns about the behaviour of another team		

		member or others within the body. • Hall will respond quickly and appropriately to any allegations as per guidance.		
15.	Training & Development	• The SL and DSL will ensure that staff training is kept up to date.		
16.	Recordkeeping	• HHR will ensure that comprehensive and easily accessible records are kept and maintained for all individuals working with children, young people and vulnerable adults.		

Appendix A5: Advice for Behaviour Around Children.

Hall members should remember that inappropriate behaviour can occur via telephone, internet, e-mail or other social media and during direct interaction with children.

Prohibited conduct:

- Spending excessive amounts of time alone with children, away from others;
- Taking children to your home;
- Giving personal gifts to children;
- Any physical contact with children that is not necessary;
- Friendship conducted via social media and/or text messaging.
- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games with children;
- Giving children inappropriate drugs or other inappropriate substances, including alcohol;
- Allowing or engaging in any form of inappropriate touching;
- Making sexually suggestive comments to children, even in jest;
- Allowing allegations made by a child to go unreported;
- Doing things of an intimate nature for children that they can do for themselves.

Hall Members should:

- Treat everyone with fairness, equality and respect;
- Be sensitive to children's appearance, race, culture, religious belief, sexuality, gender or disability;

- Act as a good role model and challenge any unacceptable behaviour;
- Report all allegations or suspicions of abuse using the procedure outlined in this policy and safeguarding training;
- Consider whether contact with an individual child should involve a colleague's presence;
- Be aware that physical contact may be misinterpreted;
- Retain a professional approach to children, including avoiding physical contact with a child;
- Respect the child's right to privacy and, in residential accommodation, do not enter a child's bedroom without prior authorisation from the SL, DSL or DSO.
- Should be aware that an image of a child in the form of a photograph or video is personal data. Where images are stored in a way that makes the data subject identifiable or where images are used for publication (online or print), written consent should be obtained before the images are created. If the data subject is capable of comprehending the implications of consenting to data use, then their consent should be sought; otherwise, the consent of the parent or legal guardian should be obtained.

Appendix A6: Forms of Abuse and Dealing with Suspicion or Allegations of Forms of Abuse

The UK Government guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010) (1.33 - 1.36), defines types of child abuse. The forms of abuse include:

- Physical – the physical hurt or injuring of a child.
- Emotional – the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, which results in severe or persistent adverse effects. Emotional abuse is often present in other categories of abuse, although it may occur independently.
- Sexual – the forcing or enticing of a child to take part in sexual activities. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration or non-penetrative acts. They may also include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at or in the production of pornographic material.
- Neglect – the persistent failure to meet a child risk's basic needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development. Neglect can include failure to provide the following: adequate food, clothing and shelter; protection from physical and emotional harm or danger; adequate supervision; access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

Recognising Abuse

The abuse of children can and does occur both within the family and in institutional or community settings. The following may indicate that a child is being or has been abused:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries, particularly if such an injury is unlikely to have occurred accidentally;
- An injury for which the child's explanation appears inconsistent;
- The child describes an abusive act or situation;
- Unexplained changes in behaviour;
- Inappropriate sexual awareness or sexually explicit behaviour;
- The child appears distrustful of adults;
- The child is not allowed to be involved in normal social activities;
- The child becomes increasingly dirty or dishevelled.

It is the responsibility of all Hall members to act on concerns to safeguard the welfare of the child.

Dealing with suspicion or allegations of abuse of a child

Those working with children may:

- Have alleged abuse disclosed to them;
- Suspect abuse is being carried out; or
- Be accused of abusing those in their charge.

Whilst these issues may require very different courses of action, the safety and welfare of the child must be prioritised.

- If any member of the Hall has concerns, they should immediately contact the SL. If the SL is unavailable, the DSL or DSO may be contacted. If the Hall member feels that discussing the issue with the available person would represent a conflict of interest, they must speak to the Principal. If an individual thinks that the Hall has not responded appropriately, then they can contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser or an officer from the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (refer to Appendix A).

- Maintaining confidentiality (refer to Appendix D) is of utmost importance, and suspicions or allegations of abuse must not be disclosed to anyone other than those listed in Appendix A. It is the responsibility of the SL to act on behalf of the Hall in dealing with allegations or suspicion of abuse. In the absence of the SL, the DSL will act on behalf of the Hall, in consultation with the Principal or in his absence with the Vice-Principal.

- It is important to note that the responsibility of investigating suspicions or allegations of abuse falls under the Children's Social Care jurisdiction and **not** the

Hall. This is outlined in Section 47 of the Children Act 1989. It is imperative that Hall members **do not conduct** their own investigations or question children closely, as doing so may compromise any potential investigation carried out by the Police or Children's Social Care.

If a child says something or acts in such a way that abuse is suspected, the person receiving the information should:

- React in a calm but concerned way;
- Tell them that they are right to share what has happened and that they are not responsible for what has happened;
- Find an early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared;
- Take what the child says seriously and allow them to continue at their own pace;
- Keep questions to an absolute minimum (only clarify what the child is saying) and do not ask a question that suggests a particular answer;
- Not interrupt the child when they are recalling significant events;
- Reassure the child that the problem can be dealt with;
- Tell the child what will happen next and with whom the information will be shared;
- Do not promise to keep secrets;
- Make a full record of what is said and done as soon as practicable, though this should not result in a delay in reporting the problem;

The record should include:

- The child's account of what has occurred;
- Any dates, times or places and any other potentially useful information;
- The nature of the allegations or concern;
- A description of any visible physical injury (clothing should not be removed to inspect the child).

The record may be used later in a criminal trial, and it is vital that what the child discloses is recorded as accurately as possible. The record must be drafted in the child's words and should not include the assumptions or opinions of others.

Appendix A7: Confidentiality.

- The Hall is responsible for respecting all individuals' privacy and confidentiality. However, it is not always appropriate or sensible to promise complete confidentiality to informants in circumstances of alleged abuse. In some circumstances, the Hall assumes a duty of care to its students and visitors that cannot be fulfilled unless it takes action based on information that might have been provided in confidence. Anyone making an allegation of abuse should be assured that:
 - Staff will only pass on information to the minimum number of people who must be told to ensure proper action is taken.
 - Staff will never tell anyone who does not have a clear 'need to know'.
 - Staff, with support, will take whatever steps they can to protect the informing child or adult from retaliation or unnecessary stress that might be feared after a disclosure of alleged abuse has been made.
- There will be circumstances where the SL, DSL, DSO or other Hall members must share information with third parties such as the Diocese, the Local Authority, the police or the child's parents or guardians.

Also note that:

- Should an incident arise where information needs to be shared with internal stakeholders or external bodies, such as those indicated herein, the Hall will, in all cases, follow the [University's Guidance on Confidentiality in Health and Welfare](#), which considers disclosure of personal information about students, including special category data about a student's physical or mental health, where welfare staff reasonably believe that a risk of serious harm to the student or others exists.
- In general, information relating to the health and welfare of an individual will amount to special category data (as defined in the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)) and must be kept confidential and only disclosed with consent. The University's Guidance sets out the basis for dealing with exceptions to that general rule, and therefore where the Hall's Data Protection Policy will be superseded by this Guidance. Where safeguarding concerns have been raised, the Hall reserves the right to make contact with any relevant party or body and share these concerns.
- It should be noted that a significant amount of sharing of personal data relating to students is already permitted and envisaged between University departments and Colleges under both the Terms and Conditions of the student's contract with the University (at <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/new/contract>) and The Student Privacy Notice (incorporated as part of that contract) at <https://compliance.admin.ox.ac.uk/student-privacy-policy>. The Student Privacy Notice was updated in 2020 to clarify limited circumstances in which special category data related to health might be shared even if students have not consented to it (i.e.

where there is a risk of serious harm), providing the safeguards within the Student Privacy Notice and this Guidance are followed.

- Those involved in safeguarding concerns or incidents should additionally note that the University Guidance refers to “Students on Professional Courses” and states that “Special considerations apply to students on courses leading to qualifications for professions governed by codes of conduct and health intended to protect the public for example, medicine and teaching”.
- Those training for ordination should expect that DDOs, nominating Bishops, or other Church of England officials may need to be informed of any incidents or concerns that the Hall has and that the Hall may seek the advice of Diocesan Safeguarding Officers or other parties when dealing with a risk of serious harm, and that reports may be kept within a s personal file.