



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:	16.10.2023
Date of Implementation (if different from the date of approval):	16.10.2023
Review Date:	During week two of MT, the Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Lead review this annually.



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1 Preamble

Wycliffe Hall is committed to supporting and promoting the welfare of its students, staff and families and promoting a safe, positive environment. The Hall recognises that, within the course of its activities, its students and staff may come into contact with children or vulnerable adults who are not members of the Hall. The Hall wishes to maintain the highest possible standards to meet its social, moral and legal responsibilities to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and vulnerable adults with whom the Hall's work brings it into contact. The Hall is committed to promoting good practices about safeguarding. In the management of its community, the discharge of its functions, and the implementation of this policy, the Hall will remain mindful of its duty of care and other legal obligations owed under statute.

2 Background & Core Principles

2.1 Wycliffe Hall is an independent Company and Regulated Activity Provider. It is, therefore, required to incorporate all relevant legislation and Government guidance in its safeguarding policy and is responsible for its independent implementation and compliance. Ultimate authority and responsibility for safeguarding rests with Wycliffe Hall Council.

2.2 Wycliffe Hall is a Church Body of the Church of England and is subject to relevant Church of England legislation and guidance in its safeguarding policy. Wycliffe Hall adopts and implements [the House of Bishops' Policy Promoting a Safer Church](#) by whatever means is required and reasonable in its function as a Church Body.

2.3 Wycliffe Hall is a Permanent Private Hall of the University of Oxford and is subject to [relevant University statutes and guidance](#) in its safeguarding policy.

2.4 Whilst all efforts have been undertaken to incorporate all relevant legislation and guidance from all institutions under which the Hall is accountable, priority will be given to 2.1, above, when considering the Hall's response and actions to safeguarding concerns.

3 Scope and Definitions

3.1 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).

3.2 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



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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”.

The Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016, Section 6 (2) “defines a vulnerable adult 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, old age, emotional fragility or distress, or otherwise; and for that purpose, the reference to being impaired is to being temporarily or indefinitely impaired.”

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.

3.3 For the purpose of this policy, a staff member is anyone at Wycliffe Hall working or interacting with children and/or vulnerable adults, whether as a tutor, employee, student or volunteer, regardless of whether they act in a paid or unpaid capacity.

3.5 The Hall recognises that it has the legal duty to safeguard the welfare of children who come onto its premises or come into contact with its Members under the Children Acts 1989 and 2004.

3.6 Where a Hall member occupies a position of trust with regard to children and/or adults at risk, a sexual relationship with a child or adult at risk constitutes an abuse of trust under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

3.7. The Hall has certain powers, under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, to enquire as to the criminal records history of Members to assess any risk to children and/or vulnerable adults.

4. Preventative Measures

4.1 The Hall’s Safeguarding Lead (SL) is Mia Smith, and the Deputy Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Dr Lorand Deszpa. Contact details for the SL and DSL can be found in Appendix A of this policy.

4.2 The SL and DSL are required to undergo Enhanced DBS checks and complete appropriate training provided by the Church of England or facilitated by the University of Oxford.

4.3 The Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:

- Implementing and promoting this Policy;



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- Ensuring that the Policy is monitored and reviewed in accordance with changes in legislation and guidance on the protection of children and vulnerable adults;
- Acting as the main contact within the Hall for the protection of children and vulnerable adults;
- Nominating Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSO) for events/activities involving children or vulnerable adults.
- Ensuring that appropriate Hall members are provided with information, advice, and training on the protection of children and/or vulnerable adults;
- Establishing contacts with the relevant Social Care Services departments and Police where appropriate;
- Maintaining confidential records of any concerns or allegations of abuse and action taken.

4.4 Deputy Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:

- Implementing and maintaining this Policy;
- Acting as a contact for designated activities for the protection of children and/or vulnerable adults;
- Ensuring that Hall members assisting with their designated activities are provided with information, advice, and training on the protection of children and/or vulnerable adults;
- Ensuring that all necessary checks of Hall members and students taking part in outside activities under the Hall's aegis (e.g., missions) have been done;
- Ensuring all necessary checks of Hall members are done to foster a safer environment and culture at Wycliffe Hall. Ensuring that confidential records of any concerns or allegations of abuse and action taken are made and reported to the SL.

4.5 DBS Checks

4.5.1 All Hall staff are to have appropriate background checks, safeguarding training, and safer recruitment process appropriate to their role and responsibilities.

4.5.2 All Hall staff will have a current DBS at the highest level allowed by law according to their job description and role responsibilities. The Hall understands that DBS checks are measured according to the actual performance of Regulated Activities and that relevant legislation prevents it from requesting more information than is allowed by the appropriate level of DBS check for each role or job description.

4.5.3 Appropriate DBS eligibility, depending on the job description and role responsibilities, can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/find-out-dbs-check>. For most positions in the Hall, a Basic DBS will be appropriate.

4.5.4 Hall employees who are Church Officers (ordained clergy or any other role operating under a Bishop's licence) will undergo an Enhanced DBS check, including Adult and Children disbarring lists, regardless of job description or role responsibility. Basic DBS check applications can be completed



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online at <https://www.gov.uk/request-copy-criminal-record>. Enhanced DBS checks are to be completed through the Hall, which will pay for all fees associated with DBS checks for employees.

4.5.5 Certain Hall employees will require an Enhanced DBS, including Children disbaring lists. Hall employees with professional credentials or registration that require a higher level of DBS check (i.e. registered social workers, counsellors/psychotherapists, healthcare providers, etc.) will undergo an Enhanced DBS check with Adult and Children disbaring lists included, regardless of the job description or role responsibility.

4.5.6 All DBS certificates are valid for three years. The Hall will request DBS renewals as necessary.

4.5.7 For international staff who are eligible for a Basic DBS check, an international background check can be carried out by the Hall. The Hall can also accept a police record check from the country(ies) or state(s) of residence from the past five calendar years.

For international staff eligible for an Enhanced DBS, an international background check can be carried out by the Hall.

4.5.8 The Hall will pay for all fees associated with international background checks for employees.

4.6 Safer Recruitment

4.6.1 Any Hall staff member whose job description and role responsibilities include direct, unsupervised, and frequent contact with children or vulnerable adults will be hired according to the Church of England's Safer [Recruitment Process](#).

4.6.2 In addition, the supervisors of roles mentioned in section 4.6.1 will be safely recruited.

4.6.3 The Head of Finance and HR will liaise with the SL to establish and define the level and nature of contact with children and/or vulnerable adults the role has so that there is a clear understanding of the safeguarding dimensions, issues, and risks.

4.6.4 The assessment stated in section 4.6.3 will determine:

- the level of DBS check required;
- what other pre-appointment checks are required;
- the content of a role description and person specification;
- the presence of safeguarding messages in the job advertisement
- the selection process in which safeguarding issues will have to be explored with the applicant for that role;
- the level of safeguarding training requirement.

4.6.5 The attention of new staff members will be drawn to this Policy as part of the induction process. All Hall members are expected to comply fully with the guidance and procedures set out in this Policy. The Hall will ensure that staff members are fully briefed and/or trained (as appropriate) on the implications of this Policy.



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4.7 Staff Safeguarding Training

All Hall staff will complete safeguarding training to the level appropriate to their job description and role responsibility. See the training matrix below:

	Basic Awareness	Foundations	Leadership	Senior Leadership	Domestic Abuse	Safer Recruitment
All Hall Staff	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 the Principal and Vice-Principal	X	X	X	X	X	X
Safeguarding Lead / Deputy Safeguarding Lead	X	X	X	X*	X	X

- *This requirement applies only to the Safeguarding Lead.

The following modules can be completed online via the Church of England Safeguarding Portal at:

<https://safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org/>

- Basic Awareness
- Foundations
- Domestic Abuse
- Safer Recruitment

Note:

- Leadership Safeguarding is taught online via Zoom through the diocese or approved trainer.
- Senior Leadership is taught via the National Safeguarding Team.
- Completion of required safeguarding modules will be kept on file by the Hall.
- All safeguarding training modules are valid for three years.

5 Safeguarding Children

5.1 The Hall recognises that it has a legal duty to safeguard the welfare of children who come onto its premises or come into contact with its members under the Children Act 1989 and 2004 and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.



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5.2 Where a Hall member occupies a position of trust with regard to children or vulnerable adults, an improper relationship with a child or vulnerable adult constitutes an abuse of trust under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

5.3 The Hall has certain powers, under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1972, to enquire as to the criminal record history of Hall members or other persons who have contact to children on the premises of the Hall to assess any risk to children (see Section 4.5-7)

5.4 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. These contexts include, but are not limited to:

5.4.1 Open-day activities on the Hall site;

5.4.2 Summer schools run under the Hall's aegis or by third parties who rent space from the Hall;

5.4.3 Premises at the Hall (e.g., Chapel) hired by third parties for activities with children;

5.4.4 The children of relatives of Hall members or students visiting the site or attending events organised by the Hall

5.4.5 Childcare provided for the student's children on the Hall's premises by parents and/or volunteers unrelated to the child.

5.5 When a member of the Hall brings a child onto the premises, they will be responsible for the child's safety and well-being. This includes any Hall activities the child may participate in, such as attending social events like All-Age Worship, Fireworks Night, or Family Lunch Day. 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 (see section 5.6). 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.

5.6 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.

5.6.1 The Designated Safeguarding Officer for open-day events is the Domestic Bursar. The Student Recruitment and Admissions Officer must inform the Domestic Bursar ahead of the open-day event if any children will attend.

5.6.2 The Domestic Bursar is the Designated Safeguarding Officer for official social events in the Hall.

5.6.3 The Designated Safeguarding Officer for summer schools organised by the Hall or another organisation is the Conference and Events Manager.



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5.6.4 The Domestic Bursar is the Designated Safeguarding Officer for the childcare run by parents and volunteers on the Hall's premises.

5.6.5 If the Hall organises an event outside of its premises, such as a trip for children attending a summer school, the Safeguarding Lead and the Conference and Events Manager will appoint a Designated Safeguarding Officer specifically for that event.

5.6.6 If children are housed on the premises of the Hall during an event, the Safeguarding Lead, along with the Domestic Bursar and/or the Conference and Events Manager, will appoint a Designated Safeguarding Officer for the night.

5.6.7 If any staff member plans an event involving children, they must inform the SL at least one month prior to the event so that the SL can appoint a DSO.

5.7 All Hall members who have responsibilities that entail interacting with, regularly taking care of, teaching, training, supervising, or being the sole authority for children must undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check as described in section 4.5 of this policy. Additionally, they must complete safeguarding training as outlined in section 4.7 of this policy.

5.8 The Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Safeguarding Lead will determine and implement any additional safeguarding training for Hall members who have contact with children beyond what the Church of England requires.

5.9 Conducting a thorough risk assessment is crucial to identify potential risks when planning activities involving children. The Safeguarding Risk Assessment should minimise these risks and provide clear guidelines for reporting concerns. Furthermore, it should consider relevant Health and Safety considerations.

5.9.1 Risk assessments must be approved by the SL / DSL, and a copy must be filed with the DSL before the activity is undertaken. All members involved in the activity should be provided with a copy of the completed risk assessment.

5.9.2 The Designated Safeguarding Officers are responsible for assessing the risks associated with the activities under their supervision. They may also require individuals who plan activities for children, which the Hall is responsible for (such as trips outside the Hall premises), to carry out risk assessments.

5.9.3 Risk assessments must be submitted five days before activities with children to the SL /DSL.

5.9.4 The Designated Safeguarding Officer will request the Safeguarding Policy and, if considered necessary, Risk Assessment from organisations which are using the Hall's premises for events/activities with children.

5.9.5 Safeguarding Policies should be submitted to the SL /DSL ten days before the event. A copy will be filed with the DSL.



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6. Safeguarding Students and others who come into contact with the Hall

6.1 The Hall actively promotes a safe environment and culture for all students in the Hall and other persons who might come in contact with students and staff outside the Hall. This includes taking reasonable steps to ensure that students can live and study safely and without undue disruption or risks of harm and that others who come in contact with the Hall can do so safely.

6.2 Several Hall policies and procedures support this, including:

6.2.1 [Promoting a healthy and safe environment and culture through the Health & Safety Policy.](#)

6.2.2 [Providing reasonable and proportionate welfare support to students to facilitate academic success.](#)

6.2.3 Disciplinary procedures to address misconduct, including [the Student Non-Academic Misconduct Disciplinary Procedures](#) and the [Staff Disciplinary Procedure](#).

6.2.4 [Specific measures to deter and address harassment and bullying.](#)

6.2.5 [Defining the appropriate pastoral relationship between staff and students.](#)

6.2.6 Preventative measures as outlined in section 4 of this policy.

6.3 The Hall acknowledges its responsibility to ensure a safe environment and culture while emphasising that individuals are responsible for their own behaviour and that the responsibility of misconduct lies with the perpetrator(s).

6.4 Safeguarding, in accordance with the Church of England's Safeguarding Policy, involves promoting a safe environment and culture both within and outside the institution.

6.4.1 The contexts in which staff members, students, and volunteers might be involved outside the Hall include:

6.4.2 Missions

6.4.3 Summer and Weekly Placements

6.4.4 Preaching Placements

6.5 Every academic year, The Hall coordinates several missions attended by students either training to be ordained in the Church of England or studying on a different pathway. For the former, the missions are a required part of their curriculum, while for the latter, their involvement is considered voluntary.

6.5.1 As part of the mission, students may come into contact with children and vulnerable adults. Therefore, anyone participating in the mission must have an enhanced DBS clearance and complete Safeguarding training (see below section 6.6-7)



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6.5.2 The Ministerial Training Officer will ensure that all requirements from section 6.2.2 are met. Students who fail to comply with this regulation will not be allowed to participate in the missions.

6.5.3 The tutors or team leaders in charge of the missions will ask for a copy of the safeguarding policy from the hosting church or institution and go over it with the participants. If there are any concerns related to safeguarding at the host church or institution, they should be reported to the SL.

6.5.4 All participants must submit a completed risk assessment template to the Ministerial Training Officer one week before the mission begins.

6.6 Students attending summer and weekly placements might come into contact with children and vulnerable adults. Therefore, all students attending these placements will have an enhanced DBS clearance and relevant safeguarding training.

6.6.1 The Ministerial Training Officer will ensure that all requirements from section 6.3 are met.

6.6.2 The participants in summer and weekly placements will familiarise themselves with the Safeguarding Policy of the host church/institution and confirm this with the Ministerial Training Officer. If there are any concerns related to safeguarding at the host church or institution, they should be reported to the SL.

6.6.3 When parishes request information about DBS clearance and safeguarding training for student preachers, the Ministerial Training Officer will provide the information.

6.7 Student Safeguarding Policies & Procedures

6.7.1 Students are not required to hold a DBS check nor complete any safeguarding training to be a member of the Hall. Still, certain students must undergo a DBS check and/or complete safeguarding training modules by their status in the Church of England or if they wish to engage in a Regulated Activity on behalf of the Hall.

6.7.2 All students training to be ordained in the Church of England must undergo an Enhanced DBS check, including Adult and Children disbaring lists by virtue of their status as Church Officers in the Church of England.

6.7.3 It is expected that sending dioceses will have completed an Enhanced DBS check on all ordinands before approving them for ordination training, but the Hall can assist ordinands in acquiring an Enhanced DBS check as needed. The Hall should pay the application fee on behalf of the student but invoice the sending diocese for reimbursement.

6.7.4 Students on a different pathway only need to undergo a DBS check if they wish to perform an Activity on behalf of the Hall in one of the contexts stated in sections 6.1.1-6.1.3



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6.7.5 The Hall should determine what level of DBS check is required for students on a different pathway before sending students on mission or placement to assist them in applying for the proper DBS check. The Hall notes that it is a violation of legislation to require independent students to apply for a DBS beyond the scope of the type of work they expect to perform on behalf of the Hall, especially an Enhanced DBS check when one is not required by law.

6.7.6 Appropriate DBS eligibility, depending on student status and volunteer responsibility, can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/find-out-dbs-check>. Basic DBS check applications can be completed online at <https://www.gov.uk/request-copy-criminal-record>. Enhanced DBS checks are to be completed by the Hall.

6.7.7 For placements and/or college missions, it is up to the discretion of the receiving organisation to require the scope and type of an international background check. The Hall should determine whether or not a receiving organisation requires an international background check well before sending students on mission or placement to assist them in applying for the scope and type of international background check required.

6.7.8 For international students who are eligible for a Basic DBS check, an international background check can be carried out by the Hall, or the Hall can accept a police records check from the country(ies) or state(s) of residence from the past five calendar years.

6.7.9 For international students eligible for an Enhanced DBS check, an international background check can be carried out by the Hall

6.7.10 The Hall will invoice sending dioceses for all fees associated with international background checks for students training to be ordained in the Church of England. Students on a different pathway are expected to pay for all fees related to international background checks.

6.8 Student Safeguarding Training

6.8.1 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. Please see the training matrix below.

	Basic Awareness	Foundations	Leadership	Domestic Violence	Safer Recruiting
Ordinands	X	X	X	X	X
Different Pathway	X	X		Optional	



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6.8.2 The following modules can be completed online via the Church of England Safeguarding Portal at: <https://safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org/>

- Basic Awareness
- Foundations
- Domestic Abuse
- Safer Recruitment

6.8.3 Note:

- The Leadership Safeguarding Training is taught via Zoom by a trainer from the Oxford Diocese. Completion of safeguarding training will be recorded on ordinands' final year reports.
- Ordinands must complete all the necessary modules before ordination but must complete Basic Awareness and Foundations before participation in a ministry placement, mission, or Regulated Activity on behalf of the Hall.
- Independent students must complete Basic Awareness and Foundations before participating in a ministry placement, mission, or Regulated Activity on behalf of the Hall.
- Completion of required safeguarding modules will be kept on file by the Hall.
- All safeguarding training modules are valid for three years.

7. Monitoring and quality assurance

7.1 The Safeguarding Lead will maintain a Safeguarding File with copies of all the Safeguarding Risk Assessments and details of safeguarding concerns.

7.2. The Safeguarding Lead will report any safeguarding concerns or allegations raised by staff members to the Wycliffe Hall Trustee for Safeguarding twice a year.

7.3 Once a year, the SL provides assurance to the Hall Wide Management Meeting and Hall Council that this policy is being followed and that all necessary training and DBS checks have been completed.

8. Reporting a Safeguarding Concern

8.1 Safeguarding is everyone's business. If any staff member, student, trustee, member of the Hall, or wider community has any past, ongoing, or potential future safeguarding concerns, they should be reported to the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead.

8.2 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.



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8.3 If a safeguarding concern is raised against the Safeguarding Lead, it should be reported to the Principal. 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 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 (refer to Appendix A and Appendix C).

8.4 A safeguarding concern involving a child or vulnerable adult should also be reported to the relevant statutory agency and/or police. (refer to Appendix D on confidentiality)

8.5 For more practice guidance on responding to safeguarding concerns, see *Practice Guidance: Responding to Safeguarding Concerns or Allegations that Relate to Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults (Church of England, 2018)* [here](#).

9. Trustee Safeguarding Policies & Procedures

9.1 Trustees (Hall Council members) are required to undergo an Enhanced DBS check if their specific role as a Trustee is in relation to overseeing a Regulated Activity on behalf of the Hall. This would include any Trustees for Safeguarding.

9.2 Trustees who are ordained will have undergone an Enhanced DBS by their diocese by virtue of their status as a Church Officer.

9.3 Trustees are encouraged to complete Basic Awareness and Foundation safeguarding training modules (see above). Some trustees will have been required to complete these modules by their status as Church Officers.

9.4 The Governance & Nominations Committee of Wycliffe Hall Council may require trustees to undergo a Basic or Enhanced DBS check and to complete safeguarding training at their discretion.

9.5 Wycliffe Hall trustees carry responsibility for reporting any Serious Incidents to the Charity Commission according to Charity Commission guidance, found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>



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Appendix A: Key Safeguarding Roles & Contact Details

Wycliffe Hall Safeguarding Lead:

Mia Smith

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

01865 (2)74208

safeguarding@wycliffe.ox.ac.uk

Wycliffe Hall Safeguarding Deputy Lead:

Lorand Deszpa

- Administrative support
- Student Compliance
- Safeguarding reporting

01865 (2)74200

lorand.deszpa@wycliffe.ox.ac.uk

safeguarding@wycliffe.ox.ac.uk

Wycliffe Hall Trustee for Safeguarding

Mrs Sarah A. Finch

sarahafinch@yahoo.co.uk

Oxford Diocesan Safeguarding Team:

01865 208295

safeguardingreferrals@oxford.anglican.org

safeguarding@oxford.anglican.org

Oxford Safeguarding Adults Board:

<https://www.osab.co.uk/>

[Reporting Concerns about Adults](#)

Oxford MASH (Safeguarding Children):

0345 050 7666

[Reporting Concerns about Children](#)

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:

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Appendix B: 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, 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.



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

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 hurting 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.



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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;



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- 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 D: 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.



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- 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 student's personal file.