2025-2026

Hampstead Fine Arts

Safeguarding Code of Conduct for Staff

Safeguarding Code of Conduct for Staff (ISI Handbook, Part 3)

Legal Requirements

The Department for Education's guidance: Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), September 2025, requires all staff members to be aware of the systems within Fine Arts College which support the safeguarding of children. These include the College's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, the identity of the College's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Julie Cope and the Deputy DSLs, Oonagh Ryan and Mattew Peters and a Safeguarding Code of Conduct for Staff. The College Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy may be found on the College website: hampsteadfinearts.com, or in hard copy from Julie Cope.

Purpose of the Safeguarding Code of Conduct for Staff

Hampstead Fine Arts College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. All successful applicants will be subject to an enhanced DBS and barred list check.

All members of staff have a responsibility for safeguarding children. This Code of Conduct draws together guidance for staff about behaviour and actions required so as not to place students or staff at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to a student. It should be read in conjunction with the College's policies on low-level concerns, behaviour, bullying and safeguarding and our disciplinary procedures.

General Principles

The College has a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn and members of staff should always act in the interests of the welfare of each individual child. To assist them in doing so, members of staff need:

- Specifically, to be trained in children's safeguarding, to read and adhere to relevant documentation, which includes the College's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Part 1 and Annex A and B of KCSIE and this Code of Conduct.
- Generally, to be aware of their responsibility to raise with and report concerns about any child to the College's DSL or to Camden's Children and Families Contact Service (formerly MASH).
- Seek advice from the College's DSL about matters affecting, or with the potential to affect, children's welfare and safety.

While the College will take responsibility for providing training and auditing its effectiveness,

members of staff have a responsibility for maintaining their understanding of safeguarding and welfare best practice: in particular they are advised to adopt an *'it could happen here'* attitude, and to remember that anyone (not only those with designated responsibilities) can and may have to make a referral to the relevant Local Authority.

Routine considerations

In order that staff do not place themselves or students at risk of harm, members of staff must:

- Conduct themselves with students (including recent leavers in 'Year 14') mindful of their pupil/teacher relationship avoiding any sense of friendship or of favouritism.
- Be aware that it is an offence for a person aged 18 or over , such as a teacher, to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if, in the case of those over 16, the relationship is consensual. Sexual relationships should not take place between tutors and recent leavers in 'Year 14'.
- Avoid situations where they are on their own with a student and, in such situations, plan ahead, and signal the arrangement to a line-manager. Protective measures will include; ensuring that there is easy sight into the classroom (no closed doors/ door windows); having another member of staff or support staff in the vicinity. Where this is not practicable, alternative arrangements should be considered and agreed with line managers and DSL.
- Avoid last-minute or informal arrangements for one-to-one tuition or coaching
- Not give lifts in cars (or any private vehicle) to students, particularly one-to-one, other than in an emergency when a senior member of staff and/or the DSL should be informed of the circumstances as soon as is practicable
- Ensure any out-of-College contact with students adheres to College policy, is necessary and 'open' (eg emails are copied to relevant line managers); phone or text messages have to be authorised in the framework of risk-assessed educational visits or academic need and must have the formal consent of parents.
- Seek advice from your line manager or the DSL if a student's interaction with you seems out of the ordinary or makes you feel uncomfortable
- Be aware of guidelines about physical contact: corporal punishment is of course illegal, but in certain circumstances when a student's behaviour is judged to be a danger either to themselves or to others, tutors may use reasonable force to restrain a student. If possible, call another member of staff to help and witness the difficulty. (See the College *Behaviour and Sanctions Policy*.)
- Music tutors and other tutors in one-one-tutorials have particular guidance on safeguarding and interaction with students related to their roles. Details can be found in the College *Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.*

Specific advice relating to mobile phones, digital communication, and social media

- Students' mobile telephone numbers and text messaging should not be used without the prior approval of a line manager and the DSL. Calls should be made from College phones or the College mobile, not personal mobiles. (See our Data Protection Policy on our website.)
- Mobile numbers of students must not be stored on a personal mobile and students should not have access to tutors' personal mobile numbers or personal email addresses.
- It is good practice to use a school-issued mobile to make contact with a student (eg on a trip or school outing) and to collect and use student numbers only in the context of a planned, risk-assessed trip.

Digital communications

- Transparency, openness and appropriate professional purpose must underpin all academic and pastoral interaction with students via electronic and digital means.
- The College's digital learning platforms, where these exist, should be the default forum for digital communication between staff and students.
- It is good practice to keep email communication with students brief, formal and professional. Students have an email address (via Google Classroom) and Tutors may directly email homework or coursework instructions to students from their College email. Always copy in mail@hampsteadfinearts.com to every email sent to students so that there is a centralised record of all communication.
- Staff and student College emails are open to scrutiny and will be regularly checked.
- Tutors should not send any emails directly to parents. These should always go through the College administrators, or the student's Head of Year or Personal Tutor.
- For any sensitive matters, (anything that is not a straightforward message about work being set) speak to Meena and ask her to send the email from mail@hampsteadfinearts.com so that she can deal with any response from students or parents.
- Staff should not communicate with students or parents from their private email addresses.
- Only email confidential information if it is absolutely necessary and always password protect the document. This is done by clicking 'File' in the top right-hand corner, then 'Protect Document', then 'Encrypt with Password' etc. Send the password to the recipient in a separate email.

Social Networking Sites

- Hampstead Fine Arts College staff must consider carefully the public nature of such sites and decide if it is appropriate to join
- Be aware of the information about you that may be available on the web and social network sites and that may be open to parents, students and colleagues. If you have any concerns that anything exists that could compromise your professional reputation, or undermine the reputation of the College, inform your line manager or the DSL without delay
- Contact between staff and current students on Facebook and other social network sites

is strictly prohibited. Never allow an existing or recent student to join your circle of 'friends'.

- It is not acceptable for any member of staff to be Facebook 'friends' or linked via any other social networking site with a current or former student under the age of 18. In addition, the College continues to regard 'Year 14' students (Year 13 leavers) as students until 12 months after leaving the College. Even at this point, staff must carefully consider the extended network of 'friends' of former students that may include siblings and parents still within the College.
- It is advisable to use the highest-level privacy settings
- Training and advice on privacy settings on social networking sites and their safe use can be obtained from the College IT providers.
- Members of staff should report any unwanted contact/emails/messages from students to a line manager or the DSL immediately. Do not engage with any inappropriate digital contact from students.

Photography, Video recording, Audio recording

- Any record taken of a student must be for legitimate educational reasons. The validity and necessity of such recording must be transparent, obvious and approved in advance by a line manager or the DSL
- Student consent must always be obtained; recordings must never be clandestine
- Care must be taken if recording images of children in clothing other than normal College dress, eg sports kit or costumes for drama. It is never acceptable to record images where students may not be fully dressed, eg backstage in drama productions or in changing rooms or sports venues
- It is good practice to use designated College equipment to make such recordings. If staff or students have to use their own personal IT equipment to record images, then the DSL should be informed.
- Recordings taken with personal equipment must be transferred to College IT facilities without delay and immediately deleted from the personal equipment. It is good practice to ask a line manager or the DSL to verify this transfer and deletion.
- Any temporarily stored recordings must be held on a College-issued computer or storage device. They must not be held on a personal computer or equivalent IT device. Copies must not be made, distributed nor shared.

Whistle Blowing Procedures

The Department for Education's guidance: Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2015) requires the College to have clear procedures for whistleblowing:

- Staff should raise any concerns about students or staff that are related to safeguarding with the DSL or Deputy DSLs or with a line manager as soon as possible.
- Staff may raise safeguarding concerns about the behaviour of colleagues, including the DSL and the Principal/Head, directly with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

- Camden Council also has an independent helpline for protected disclosure of concerns about staff: tel 0800 374199
- The Public Interest Disclosures Act (1998) provides employment protection for staff for whistle blowing or reporting bad practice.
- In the event of an allegation against the DSL, the Principal and Head have responsibility for liaising with Camden's Children Families Contact Service department on safeguarding and child protection matters and will contact the LADO within one working day and, in serious cases, the police.
- In the event of an allegation against the Principal/Head, a nominated member of the SLT (Julie Cope) has responsibility for liaising with the LADO within one working day and with the police in serious cases.
- The College will record all concerns that do not meet the LADO threshold, through the low-level concerns log.
- The NSPCC has a whistle-blowing helpline offering free information and advice about child protection concerns and whistleblowing, tel 0800 280285
- See the College *Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy* for more information.

Staff should sign the last page to confirm that they have read and understood this information

August 2025
Reviewed by: JC

FINE ARTS COLLEGE

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I confirm that I have read and understood the information in the College *Safeguarding Code of Conduct for Staff.*

Signed ……

Date……. (Staff member)

Name (please print)……