

Safeguarding and protection

Information for IChemE volunteers working in schools and colleges

Safeguarding is ensuring that children are protected from maltreatment; preventing impairment of young people's health and development, ensuring they grow up with the provision of safe and effective care, and taking any action required to ensure they have the best outcomes. Anyone who works with or volunteers with children has a duty of care to keep them safe.

We expect you to have read this document before taking part in the activity (in person, online or hybrid); please note that it is not always possible to identify a child if say they are a sixth form student and not in school uniform.

Definitions

- A 'child' is all persons under eighteen years of age.
- A DSO is the Designated Safeguarding Officer for the school or college.

Key principles

- **Safeguarding is *everyone's* responsibility.** We all have a duty to safeguard the welfare of children, and to prevent their harm and abuse.
- **The needs of children are paramount.** This means that the need to ensure this group are protected is a primary consideration and may override the rights and needs of those working with them.
- **If in doubt, record and report.** Report any concerns, no matter how minor, to the school DSO.

Do

- Value and take seriously information from, and contributions by children; listen, and show respect.
- Notify the DSO if you have any questions, concerns or suspicions regarding the safeguarding of children.
- Be clear about and follow the procedures for dealing with disclosures and allegations set out below.
- Avoid behaviour which could be interpreted as showing preference or partiality; this could be misconstrued.
- Avoid being alone with a child (including online). However, there may be circumstances when this is unavoidable. In this case, you should ensure that your behaviour cannot be construed as representing a risk to the child.
- maintain professional boundaries at all times which reduces the risks of allegations and helps keep young people safe from harm.

Do not

- Allow allegations of abuse to go unreported.
- Exaggerate or trivialise safeguarding issues. If you are unsure, discuss this with the DSO.

- Use physical contact unless it is necessary and appropriate for example, in a medical emergency. In no circumstances should you act in a way that could be perceived as using physical punishment.
- Act or speak in a way that could be perceived as threatening, intrusive, demeaning or discriminatory for example, sexist, racist, homophobic.
- Use sarcasm or insensitive comments.
- Take photographs or video footage of children without the agreement of your school contact; or unless you are directly asked to do so by a parent or carer by using a parent or carer's camera/phone etc.
- Give your PERSONAL contact details to, or interact on social network sites with, children except after discussion with, and with the consent of, the child's parent/carer/teacher.

Disclosures

- A **disclosure** in the context of safeguarding is when a child talks to you about abusive or harmful behaviour that s/he has experienced, or if s/he expresses concerns that s/he or others are at risk of such behaviour happening in the future. Disclosure can relate to previous, recent, or potential behaviour or events. An example of a disclosure would be if a child came up to you and expressed concerns about the behaviour of someone else at an event or activity.
- It is unlikely that you will find yourself in the sort of situation where a child could make a disclosure (for example alone with a child). However, it is important that you understand the procedure, and react appropriately, to reduce the risk to that child and/or others.
- If you should find yourself in this position, remember that it is not your responsibility to decide whether or not a child has been abused, but it **IS** your duty to report the disclosure to your point of contact on the same day, and to prevent future harm occurring.
- A child's right to be protected from harm takes precedence over his/her right to confidentiality.

In the event of a disclosure you should:

- Listen carefully and remain calm.
- Try to remain objective, whilst being reassuring and sympathetic.
- Never trivialise the information that has been shared with you.
- Avoid interpreting information; ask questions only for the purposes of clarification.
- Never promise or agree to keep a disclosure secret.
- Explain to the child/young person making the disclosure that you will need to share this information with people who need to know and who can help. Tell him/her what you are going to do, and when you are going to do it.
- Report the disclosure as soon as possible on the same day to the DSO.
- Depending on the nature of the disclosure, further action may be needed. Your point of contact and/or DSO will need to decide what action to take and should be clear with you about what is expected of you at this time.
- Similarly, if you witness any breaches of safeguarding practice or have any concerns, report these immediately to the DSO.

Document Control

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