

St John's College, Durham

Safeguarding Policy for Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

Introduction

1. This document sets out the safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults policy of St John's College, Durham. It is based on the latest policy of the Church of England *Promoting a Safer Church* (2017) and is also consistent with the Durham University Safeguarding Policies [Safeguarding - Durham University](#).
2. St John's College is committed to safeguarding as an integral part of its life and service. The College will take appropriate steps to maintain a safe environment for all. Established in 1909 within the Anglican tradition, the College endorses the principles and foundations for safeguarding set out by the Church of England in *Promoting a Safer Church*. <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/cofe-policy-statement.pdf>

Context

3. St John's College comprises two halls: John's Hall, where members may be undergraduates or postgraduates across a range of disciplines, and Cranmer Hall, where members may be ordinands (students approved for training for ministry in the Church of England), Free Church Track (FCT) students sponsored by local churches, or independent students studying theology and ministry at undergraduate or postgraduate level. Members of staff are all employees of St John's College as a whole, although some work directly within either John's Hall or Cranmer Hall. St John's College is constituent college of Durham University; while Safeguarding policy is agreed at College level, the College is committed to following University policies and procedures where appropriate.
4. While there are differences in some areas of safeguarding process between John's Hall and Cranmer Hall (and different designated officers), there is a joint approach to policy and oversight and scrutiny of this policy lies with the College Council as a whole.
5. St John's College also houses a number of Research Centres and Projects, all of which report to College Council via the Research Centres Committee. All Research Centres operate within the College Safeguarding Policy, with either the Warden or Vice Principal as Designated Safeguarding Officer. Some Research Centres will issue specific safeguarding practice guidance to those who work within them. This guidance will be consistent with the College Policy and will be reviewed annually by the Research Centres Committee.
6. St John's College does not provide any childcare service directly to children or young people under 18. While it does welcome the children of Cranmer Hall students in for

worship and meals, they remain at all times under the care and supervision of their parents/carers. 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.

- 6.1. Should a student resident in a college communal building become pregnant, plans should be made to arrange alternative accommodation appropriate to the care of the child alongside the arrangements being made for continuing study.
 - 6.2. On a limited number of occasions students organise an informal crèche using College rooms so that couples can participate in a formational day within Cranmer Hall. It should be made clear to parents using the crèche that this is students organising this among themselves and that only ordinands and their families are available to staff the crèche.
7. We recognise the University's commitment to seeing and treating students as independent, adult learners. The University does also allow, under certain circumstances, students to begin a course of study aged under 18. The College follows the University policy for students aged under 18, in which particular provision is made for pastoral care and support.¹

Policy Areas

8. The College's Safeguarding Policy falls into six main areas.

Policy Area 1: Promoting a safe environment and culture

9. The College will strive to create and maintain environments that are safe for all, that promote well-being, that prevent abuse and that create nurturing, caring conditions for children, young people² and vulnerable adults. This is the responsibility of all who work in the College, and particularly those who have regular contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- 9.1. 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 College recognises 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.
10. The College will strive to support all those who have regular contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults to adhere to safer working good practice and to challenge

¹ <https://www.durham.ac.uk/study/admissions-policy/under-18s-policy/>

² For the purposes of this policy young people/person means any individual(s) aged 14-17 years old.

the abuse of power. It will ensure that processes are in place that listen to and advocate on behalf of children, young people and vulnerable adults within the knowledge that they will be cared for.

- 10.1. The College requires as a matter of policy that all 1-1 tutorial meetings and student support meetings in person take place either in a public space or in a room with a partially-glazed door. It also requires that prayer ministry, when offered in the context of public worship, takes place where it can be seen by others.
 - 10.2. Cranmer Hall students, when they are on placement or otherwise serving in a local church, chaplaincy or school, are responsible for familiarising themselves with local safeguarding policies and practice and for complying with them.
 - 10.3. The College requires of all students and staff that no photos be taken during corporate acts of worship, or events where children are present. Where photos are being taken for marketing purposes, this will only be done with the agreement of College Officers or Cranmer Hall Officers, and the advance written consent of parents will be secured, with advice given on how the photos will be stored, for how long and how they will be used.
11. As part of promoting a safe environment and culture, the College commits to clear lines of accountability and responsibility for safeguarding.
- 11.1. The Principal of the College holds overall responsibility for the execution of this Safeguarding Policy.
 - 11.2. Within each Hall there is a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)
 - 11.3. Within John's Hall the Designated Safeguarding Officer is the Vice Principal. The John's Hall DSO deals with any concerns relating to John's Hall undergraduates and postgraduates, together with all College staff other than those working directly within Cranmer Hall. The John's Hall DSO will also deal with any concerns raised by any Research Centre or Project falling within their purview.
 - 11.4. Within Cranmer Hall the Designated Safeguarding Officer is the Warden. The Church of England also requires there to be a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer (DDSO), and this is the Deputy Warden. The Cranmer Hall DSO and DDSO deal with any concerns relating to Cranmer Hall students together with Cranmer Hall tutorial and admin staff, and any Research Centres falling within their purview.
 - 11.5. Within College Council as the Governing Body, a designated Council trustee holds particular responsibility for safeguarding, supporting Council and the Designated Safeguarding Officers in monitoring safeguarding activity, policies



and procedures and ensuring compliance with statutory guidance and Charity Commission requirements.

- 11.6. As home to a Theological Education Institution (TEI) within the Church of England, the College is also required to make an annual report to the local bishop, the Bishop of Durham, on safeguarding policy, procedures, practice and review within Cranmer Hall.

Policy Area 2: Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children and vulnerable adults within the College

12. The College will select and vet all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the College, in accordance with the relevant practice guidance.
 - 12.1. The following College staff will be required to have a DBS check before taking up their posts: College Officers, Cranmer Hall Tutors, Reception Porters (Evening & Weekend), Resident Tutors, the Assistant Principal and the Student Support & Enrichment Officer, and any staff acting as College Duty Officer. Research Centres will give their own guidance in line with this policy and conduct DBS checks accordingly.
 - 12.2. All ordinands are required to have completed a satisfactory DBS check prior to starting training. Their DBS certificates will be checked by the Cranmer Hall admin on commencement of training. FCT students will also normally have completed DBS checks via their sponsoring church, and these will be confirmed in the same manner as ordinands. If an FCT student has not completed a DBS check, they will be required to do so.
 - 12.3. In line with University policy, other students within the College, including independent students at Cranmer Hall, will not be required to complete a DBS check, unless they are involved in programmes of study which necessitate interaction with children, young people or vulnerable adults. For example, independent students at Cranmer Hall will require a DBS check if they are participating in Schools Week.
13. The College will equip and train all those who have responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults to have the confidence and skills they need to care and support children, young people and vulnerable adults and to recognise and respond to abuse. This will be done by supporting the roll-out of consistent and accessible safeguarding training. As a minimum C0 (Basic Awareness) Safeguarding training will be required of all College Staff at Level 3 or above. Research Centres will undertake commensurate training.
 - 13.1. All ordinands students are required to complete the Church of England's Foundation Level training as part of their BAP process; ordinands are further required to undertake the Leadership module before being ordained. FCT



students will be required to undertake Foundation Level training (or equivalent) in their sponsoring church prior to starting at Cranmer Hall, and will be required to undertake Leadership level Safeguarding training either at Cranmer Hall or in their local church before completion of their training pathway.

13.2. All Cranmer Hall tutorial staff are required to undertake regular Leadership training. John's Hall Resident tutors, and all other College Staff at Level 3 or above are required to undertake the University online safeguarding training.

13.3. The Cranmer Hall DSO and DDSO are required to undertake any additional training that is asked of them by the Church of England. The John's Hall DSO complies with the training requirements of Durham University.

Policy Area 3: Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation

14. Anyone who brings any safeguarding suspicion, concern, knowledge or allegation of current or non-current abuse to the notice of the College 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 Durham.

14.1. All staff and ordinands are required to follow the training they have received – either from the Church of England or the University – in responding to a safeguarding concern. An outline approach is detailed in para 3.2. of the Durham University Safeguarding Children Policy.³

14.2. Whatever the level of concern, it is required that this information is shared as soon as reasonably possible with the DSO of the relevant Hall. Cranmer Hall staff and students should speak to Cranmer Hall DSO or DDSO. John's Hall students, tutorial staff together with College staff should speak to the John's Hall DSO.

15. All safeguarding work will be recorded in line with the relevant safeguarding practice guidance.

15.1. Both the person with whom the concern is originally raised and the relevant DSO should keep written records of the meeting and keep them in a secure online location.

15.2. If the concern relates to a member of staff, the DSO should keep 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. This should be kept in a secure online location, and a paper note put in the employee's personnel file. A copy should also be given to the individual. The information should be retained for 70 years, and this is the case whether or not

³ For a summary see here <https://www.dur.ac.uk/safeguarding/guidance/process/>.



the person ceases to be at college. Responsibility for documentation concerning allegations against an ordinand lies with the sponsoring bishop.

16. All suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations that reach the threshold for reporting to the statutory authorities will be reported via the diocesan safeguarding adviser, or other designated safeguarding adviser, to the appropriate statutory authorities. This will be done irrespective of the status of the person.
 - 16.1. The Cranmer Hall DSO and DDSO will always consult with the Durham Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) about any safeguarding concern relating to a Cranmer Hall student or staff member. This should take place within one working day of the concern being raised.
 - 16.1.1. Should the concern be about a Cranmer staff member who holds a Bishop's Licence, (as a clergy person or Reader) and the DSA consider that the threshold for reporting to the statutory authorities has been reached, the DSA shall be responsible for ensuring that the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is informed, in line with diocesan policy.⁴ The DSA shall also convene a Core Group in line with diocesan policy.
 - 16.1.2. Should the concern be about an ordinand, the Cranmer Hall DSO 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.
 - 16.2. Should the concern relate to a FCT student, it may be necessary for the Cranmer Hall DSO and Durham Diocese DSA to involve other bodies in their discussion, for example the Northern Baptist College. The decision to do so will rest with the Cranmer Hall DSO and Durham Diocese DSA.
 - 16.3. The John's Hall DSO will consult with the Durham University Deputy Lead Safeguarding Officer (DLSO) about any concern relating to a John's Hall student, tutor or College staff member (other than Cranmer Hall staff). The DLSO will be responsible for ensuring that the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is informed, in line with University policy.
 - 16.4. Notwithstanding the policy outlined above, either DSO should feel able, if a child or vulnerable adult is considered to be under immediate risk, to contact either the police or local social services. Where possible, consent should be given by the child's guardians / parents or the vulnerable adult, unless it is considered that seeking consent will increase the risk of harm.

⁴ For reference, see here [the Safeguarding Policy for the Diocese of Durham](#).



17. In responding to concerns or allegations of abuse relating to staff or students, the College 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.
18. The following whistleblowing and complaints procedure is available for any member of the College who is unhappy with the way their concern has been addressed by a member of staff or the relevant DSO or who feels unable to use the standard reporting procedures for whatever reason.
19. Any member of the College who such concerns should contact the Governing Body Safeguarding Representative who may be contacted via the College Office. The Governing Body Safeguarding Representative should also be contacted if there is a concern about either of the DSOs.
20. Following such a complaint, the Governing Body Safeguarding Representative will consult with either the DSA or DLSD as appropriate and will make an initial written response to the whistleblower/complainant within ten working days.

Policy Area 4: Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons

21. The College will endeavour to offer care and support to all those in their care that have been abused, regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred.
22. The College is committed to continuing to learn how to respond in a supportive and healing way to the needs of those who have suffered abuse.
23. Those who have suffered abuse connected to St John's College will receive a compassionate response, be listened to and be taken seriously. The College 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. They will be offered appropriate pastoral care, counselling and support – according to the agreed need.
24. An appropriate pastoral response to the family and wider College community will be considered, with due regard to the right of privacy of those directly involved, and to the administration of justice.

Policy Area 5: Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons

25. The College, in exercising its responsibilities to suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations of abuse, 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.

26. 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.
27. College staff and students who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse belong to families but also the wider College community. The College will be mindful of the need to provide support to members of families and the wider College community affected by the concerns or allegations.

Policy Area 6: Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others

28. The College is not a closed community and welcomes the families of students in for meals, together with members of the public for worship services in the College Chapel. It will therefore endeavour to offer pastoral care and support to any member of this wider College community who may present a known risk.
29. 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.

Reporting and Review

30. The DSOs of John's Hall and Cranmer Hall will inform the Governing Body Safeguarding Representative of any safeguarding concern which is taken forward either by a DSA or the DLSO.
31. The Warden of Cranmer Hall will report to each meeting of the Cranmer Committee about the operation of the Safeguarding Policy within Cranmer Hall. This will include reporting on any informal conversations undertaken with the DSA.
32. College Officers, led by the Principal, will be responsible for regular review of this policy, and propose such amendments to Council as they see fit.
33. The College Council will review and renew the Safeguarding Policy annually, usually at its autumn meeting.

Approved by College Council on 22 September 2023

Date of next review: 18 October 2024