



Wesley House

The Methodist College in Cambridge since 1921

A reflective, cross-cultural community of prayer and study for students and scholars in the Wesleyan tradition

Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy

Reviewed by Exec: 5 November 2024
Agreed by Trustees: 14 November 2024
Next review: Michaelmas Term 2025

1. Safeguarding is everyone's business

Wesley House, Cambridge, along with the whole Christian community, believes each person has a value and dignity which comes directly from God's creation of humans in God's own image and likeness. Christians see this as fulfilled by God's re-creation of us in Christ. Among other things, this implies a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm.

Wesley House recognizes that all persons are vulnerable to abuse including children and adults at risk. This risk, and therefore the need for safeguarding, is not limited to vulnerable characteristics of particular persons but is the responsibility of all for the safety of all in all circumstances in which abuse or neglect may occur. This includes the residential and online community of Wesley House.

Wesley House recognizes that abuse of children and adults at risk may take the form of physical, emotional, sexual, financial, spiritual, discriminatory, domestic or institutional abuse of neglect, abuse using social media or human trafficking (slavery). Wesley House recognizes that such abuse may occur through online engagement as well as in person. It acknowledges the effects these may have on people and their development, including spiritual and religious developments. Wesley House seeks to ensure that all people are safe in its care and that their dignity and right to be heard is maintained. It takes seriously the issues of promotion of welfare so that each of us can reach our full potential in God's grace.

Wesley House therefore. commits itself to:

- **RESPOND** without delay to any allegation or cause for concern that a child or adult at risk may have been harmed. Where appropriate, this response may take the form of **REFERRAL**.
- Ensure the **IMPLEMENTATION** of this Safeguarding Policy, relevant government legislation and other guidance and safe practice.
- The **PROVISION** of relevant and timely support, advice and training for staff and students.

2. Definitions

- 2.1. A child is anyone who has not yet reached their eighteenth birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, a member of the armed forces, in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change his/her status or entitlements to services or protection.
- 2.2. Adult at risk: Any adult aged 18 or over who is at risk of abuse or neglect for any reason, including self-harm or self-neglect.
- 2.3. Adult/child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity undertaken to protect children/ adults who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm, including neglect.
- 2.4. Abuse is mistreatment by any other person or persons that violates a person's human and civil rights. The abuse can vary, from treating someone with disrespect in a way that significantly affects the person's quality of life, to causing actual physical or mental suffering.
- 2.5. Abuse and neglect may occur in a family, in a community or in an institution. It may be perpetrated by a person or persons known to the child or adult or by strangers, by an adult or by a child. It may be an infliction of harm or a failure to prevent harm.

3. Non-exhaustive Examples of Abuse

3.1. Bullying

Bullying is defined as behaviour that is repeated, intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally, and is often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. It can include physical assault, teasing, making threats, name calling or cyber-bullying.

3.2. Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment includes touching someone against their will e.g. hugging, flirting, gesturing or making sexual remarks about someone's body, clothing or appearance.

3.3. Discrimination

Discrimination is defined as abuse that focuses on a difference or perceived difference. This may involve race, gender, disability, or any of the protected characteristics of the Equality Act. Examples of discriminatory abuse might involve harassment, slurs, or similar treatment based on the difference or perceived difference.

Wesley House recognizes bullying, sexual harassment, and discrimination as a serious forms of abuse that can take place among students, between staff, or between staff and students, whether in person or online. Discrimination is unacceptable within the life of any residential or online community and therefore will be treated as a safeguarding issue subject to the policies and procedures laid out in this document.

4. Personal Relationships between Staff and Students

4.1. Definitions

A Personal Relationship is defined as any association, however, brief, of a romantic, sexual or other intimate nature, either in person or remotely.

Student includes any person enrolled in a course of study through Wesley House, including, but not limited to, the Diploma in Theology for Ministry, the Master of Arts (including certificate and diploma courses), the DProf or the PhD, or short courses.

Staff refers to any person who is engaged by Wesley House as an employee.

4.2. Policy

Wesley House prohibits personal relationships between staff and students and considers such relationships a serious safeguarding matter.

Exceptions to this policy include relationships that pre-date the employment of the staff member or enrollment of the student. In such cases, the respective staff member should not be permitted any oversight role for the student in question. In such cases, complaints may be raised regarding the effect of the relationship upon the student's or staff member's performance or upon the life of the community.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1. Wesley House Trustees

- Appoint a Designated Safeguarding Trustee and a Safeguarding Officer.
- Wesley House has appointed The Revd Rose Westwood as Designated Safeguarding Trustee and The Revd Dr Jane Leach as Safeguarding Officer.

5.2. Designated Safeguarding Trustee

- Ensures Wesley House has appropriate and up-to-date safeguarding policies in place.
- Ensures the Trustees appoint a Safeguarding Officer.
- Ensures the Trustees review this policy annually.
- Supports the Safeguarding Officer in their work, providing access to resources to enable them to fulfil their functions.
- Supports the Safeguarding Officer in exercising responsibility for the implementation of safeguarding policy and practice.

5.3. Safeguarding Officer

- Ensures appropriate safeguarding training opportunities are in place for staff of Wesley House.
- Keeps themselves informed of safeguarding issues, keeping up to date with current policies and practice in statutory services and within the wider Methodist Church and Higher Education more generally.
- With the support of the Designated Safeguarding Trustee, makes sure that any incidents and allegations are followed up or referred as necessary.

- Makes sure a record of all safeguarding issues is kept (records will be kept in line with *Safeguarding Records: Joint Practice Guidance for the Church of England and the Methodist Church - 2015*).
- Makes sure that safeguarding is placed on the Tutors' meeting agenda as a 'standing' item and present a verbal report to each meeting about safeguarding events (noting the need for relevant confidentiality regarding specific cases).
- Maintains a record of safeguarding training undertaken by staff.
- Keeps a directory of useful names and contact details. (Appended to this document.)
- Reviews the safeguarding policy at least annually and in the light of any incident and send an updated copy to the Designated Safeguarding Trustee, then for approval by Trustees.

6. In the event of a complaint or allegation

- 6.1. Within the College, the handling of complaints and allegations relating to children and adults at risk is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Officer (Jane Leach). Should the complaint involve the Safeguarding Officer, or in her absence, the complaint should be made to the Safeguarding Trustee (Rose Westwood).
- 6.2. Concerns will always be taken seriously and those expressing concerns will not be subjected to any detriment. However, where the safety of children or adults at risk is in question, only limited assurances of confidentiality can be given as the matter must be addressed at once through the proper channels.
- 6.3. Action to be taken by all members of College (including Staff, Students and Trustees)
 - 6.3.1. Any member of College receiving concerns about the safety of children or adults at risk will listen and take notes, making no promises of absolute confidentiality, and refer the matter at once to the College's Safeguarding Officer. The notes that are taken should be comprehensive and factual and should use full names rather than being anonymised.
 - 6.3.2. If a child or an adult at risk is in immediate danger, the person receiving the concerns must call the Police or Social Services immediately. Dial the Police on 999 or Cambridgeshire Social Care on 0345 0455203 (children) or 0345 0450455202 (adults). 01733 234724 can be called out of hours.
- 6.4. Action to be taken by the Safeguarding Officer
 - 6.4.1. On receiving information, a complaint or an allegation, the Safeguarding Officer must take detailed notes of any complaint or allegation brought to them, listening carefully to all that is said, making no promises of absolute confidentiality. (Where handwritten notes are typed up later, the original contemporaneous notes will be retained.) The matter will thereafter be dealt with by the Safeguarding Officer and the senior management of the College will be kept informed, in confidence, unless for some reason this would place the child or adult at risk at increased risk of harm.
 - 6.4.2. The Safeguarding Officer will decide whether the risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults is low, medium or high.

6.4.3. Low risk behaviour will be addressed through a meeting with the Safeguarding Officer within seven days where the individual will be told of the concerns and be given advice and support. Employees will be informed they may be subject to the Disciplinary Procedure; others will be informed they may be subject to the Good Conduct Procedure.

The Good Conduct Procedure is available at www.wesley.cam.ac.uk/about/policies.
The Disciplinary Procedure is available for staff in the policies folder on the server

6.4.4. Medium risk behaviour will be addressed through a meeting with the Safeguarding Officer within seven days where the individual will be told of the concerns and a plan of action is put in place to address them. This may involve referral to statutory agencies, depending on the circumstances. The Disciplinary Procedure or Good Conduct Procedure will be used, as appropriate.

6.4.5. High Risk behaviour will be addressed by calling the Police or Social Services as detailed above.

6.4.6. The Safeguarding Officer will inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day of all allegations that an adult within College has:

6.4.6.1. behaved in a way that has harmed a child or adult at risk, or may have harmed a child or adult at risk;

6.4.6.2. possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or adult at risk; or

6.4.6.3. behaved towards a child or adult at risk in a way that indicates he/she may pose a risk of harm.

6.4.7. The Safeguarding Officer will decide whether the allegation additionally needs to be reported to University Partners (eg ARU in the case of an ARU student) or Church Authorities (eg in the case of ordained ministers), using their published procedures.

6.5. Local Authority

6.5.1. The advice of the LADO will be followed appropriately. Careful notes will be kept of information and advice received, decisions made and the reasoning behind them. In normal circumstances this will be done in full partnership with the parents or guardians of the child or adult at risk concerned, unless for some reason this would place the child or adult at risk at increased risk of harm.

6.5.2. In the event that the LADO advises the Safeguarding Officer that the matter should be referred to Children's Social Care or the Police, the Safeguarding Officer will refer this as advised.

6.5.3. The College will collaborate fully with the statutory agencies concerned with child and adult at risk protection. This includes following their advice about whether an individual should be removed from the premises whilst investigations are undertaken.

6.6. The Safeguarding Officer will inform the Safeguarding Trustee within one day of any allegations received and notify them of any action taken.

7. Safeguarding Contexts

7.1. Wesley House events involving children, young people or vulnerable adults

Events that may involve children or vulnerable adults are to be notified to the Safeguarding Officer prior to these being agreed to ensure that all permissions, risk assessments and good practice guidelines are in place.

7.2. Student Placements

Wesley House students who are undertaking formal placements within a local church or other context must abide by the Safeguarding Policy of the placement organization. It is the responsibility of the placement host to ensure that students are made aware of the applicable Safeguarding Policy. If a DBS check is required by the context, it is the responsibility of the placement host to arrange this. If a DBS check is unable to be conducted—i.e., for an international student with no UK records—then students will be advised to obtain a background check from their home context prior to coming to Wesley House. The placement host will determine whether this meets their institution's safeguarding requirements.

7.3. Preaching Appointments

Where students and staff undertake preaching appointments in local churches, this is done under the relevant church's Safeguarding Policy. It is the responsibility of the hosting church to ensure that all necessary arrangements are made.

8. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

- 8.1. Staff of Wesley House, Cambridge, do not require DBS checks in order to fulfil their duties as staff members.
- 8.2. Ordained members of staff will need to abide by any requirements of their Church regarding DBS checks and compulsory training. For ministers in full connexion with the British Methodist Church, this will be administered by the East Anglia Methodist District.
- 8.3. Students will only need to apply for a DBS check if required to do so by their placement host. In these cases, it is the responsibility of the placement host to arrange and administer this check.

9. Training

- 9.1. * All academic staff employed by Wesley House and any staff who have 1:1 contact with students must have annual safeguarding training. This:
 - includes academic staff who only meet students online;
 - excludes non-employed supervisors; and
 - excludes contractors (eg cleaners).
- 9.2. Wesley House has identified the following courses as being particularly relevant in our context, though other safeguarding training may also be suitable.

* Asterixed items are insurer requirements and can not be changed without their permission

- www.anncrafttrust.org/an-introduction-to-safeguarding-adults-in-higher-education-e-learning
- The Methodist Church's Creating Safer Space Foundation Module

10. * Whistleblowing

All staff and students must be made aware of, and have access to, confidential whistleblowing services.

Wesley House will designate an individual as the Whistleblowing Officer ("WO"). The WO cannot be an employee or provide services to Wesley House (eg as a lecturer or supervisor). However, an individual with a non-executive governance role could fulfil the WO position. The WO must have up to date safeguarding training.

All staff and students will be given contact details for the WO. If a complaint is made to the WO and the WO considers that the complaint should be made anonymously, the WO will report the complaint using Wesley House's complaint procedures, acting on the Whistleblower's behalf.

Rose Westwood is designated as the Whistleblowing Officer.

11. * Policy communication

It is a requirement that this policy document is proactively shared with all staff at least every 6 months.

Appendix A: Important Contact Details

1. The Wesley House Safeguarding Officer is The Revd Dr Jane Leach.
01223 765830
jl332@cam.ac.uk
2. The Wesley House Designated Trustee for Safeguarding and Whistleblowing Officer is The Revd Rose Westwood.
Office 01223 361360
Mobile: 07944068302
rose.westwood@methodist.org.uk
3. The East Anglia District Safeguarding Team can be contacted at eastanglia@dso.methodist.org.uk.
4. Contact details for the local Social Care services:

Name of Authority	Cambridgeshire County Council
Children's Services	0345 045 5203 (office hours). 01733 234724 (emergencies out of office hours)
Adult Services	0345 045 5202 (office hours) 01733 234724 (emergencies out of office hours)
5. Police
Emergencies: 999
Non emergencies: 101
6. The Wesley House Prevent Officer is The Revd Dr Jane Leach
Telephone: 01223 765830
Email: jl332@cam.ac.uk

Appendix B: Guidance for Creating Safe Space

At all times:

- Treat everyone with respect, valuing them as bearing the image of God.
- Respect personal space and privacy.
- Set a positive example for others, and do not put anyone, including yourself, in a vulnerable or compromising situation.
- Do not have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others.
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour.
- Do not keep allegations or suspected abuse secret, but tell those who need to know.

What to do if you have concerns about possible abuse:

1. If someone is in immediate danger, contact the Police.
2. Where there is no immediate danger, but you have concerns, make a written record of your concerns.
3. Inform the Safeguarding Officer (or Designated Trustee for Safeguarding), who will advise on any subsequent response or referral.
4. Only tell others who need to know.

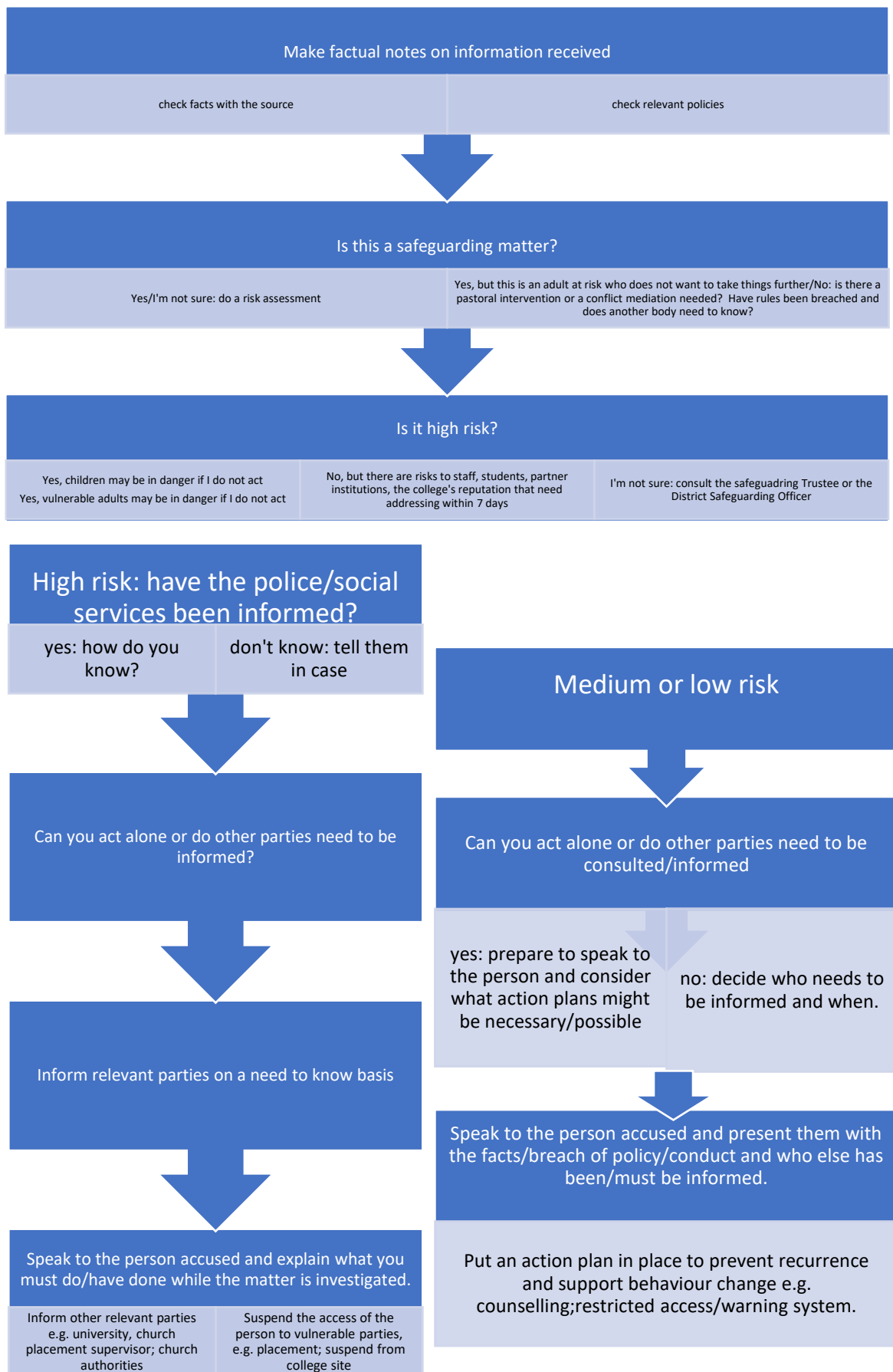
What to do if someone discloses to you that they have been abused:

1. Listen. Keep listening. Do not question or investigate.
2. Do not promise confidentiality; tell them you will need to share this.
3. Make careful notes of what was said to you, recording dates, times, events and when you were told. Make records as verbatim as possible.
4. Inform the Safeguarding Officer (or Designated Trustee for Safeguarding), who will advise on any subsequent response or referral.
5. Only tell those who need to know.

What to do if you have a concern that someone is becoming involved in extremist activity:

1. Inform the Prevent Officer or Safeguarding Officer.
2. Only tell those who need to know.

Appendix C: Responding to disclosures and information as the safeguarding officer



RISK OF HARM IS HIGH

Behaviour that has or may have harmed a child, young person or, vulnerable adult. Possible criminal offence committed against or related to a child, young person or a vulnerable adult. Possible offender may need to be suspended pending criminal charges and even if not charged a risk assessment will mean they should not return to some duties/contexts.

- Risk assessment arranged
- Refer to police
- Refer to DBS / PVG
- Refer to LADO
- Refer to Children's Services
- Refer to Adults' Services
- Inform media/communications

Example 1:

A resident staff member reports that he has been interviewed by the police in relation to bruises on his child's arms. This was reported by the school to the police.

- Note facts.
- It is a safeguarding matter.
- What is the risk level? Potentially high. A child is potentially at risk and potentially other children also. The college's reputation is also at risk. Act within 24 hours.
- Speak to social services to check the story and what actions you need to take, explaining their duties and checking whether they need to be suspended (or perhaps suspended from some duties) and how long this might need to be in place.
- Consult with the Safeguarding Trustee in order to do a risk assessment and devise an action plan and a communications plan (Board Chair; line manager of staff member; other colleagues and students if staff member is suspended; press statement in case it is needed)

MEDIUM RISK OF HARM

Behaviour that may harm a child, young person or, vulnerable adult. Advice and guidance of the Safeguarding Trustee/District Safeguarding Officer is required to identify risks and provide additional support to safeguard children and young people, vulnerable adults, the resident/academic community, employees and volunteers. It may be that the matter should be referred to statutory authorities or trigger a discipline case.

Example 2:

A resident student catches you after morning prayer and complains about sexual harassment by an older visiting scholar. She says that he blocked her into the kitchen and was asking personal questions that she did not want to answer and that now she is afraid to be in public spaces where he might be and that he might come to her door.

- Note facts.
- It is a safeguarding matter.
- Risk assess together with the safeguarding Trustee
 - What is the risk level? medium – this is an adult student but potentially vulnerable because of age and status differences.

- Does the student want you to act? Yes.
- Is any other institution involved or can you act alone? We can act alone
- Meet the person accused and present them with the account you have.
- Explain that you need an action plan to protect the student
- Agree an action plan with the safeguarding trustee based on the level of risk you judge after meeting both parties. This might include banning the visiting scholar from the site.

Example 3:

A resident PhD student tells you that her husband (resident overseas) beats her and that she is not looking forward to going back home in three months. She tells you that she cannot divorce him as that will mean that both he and she will be discontinued in ministry.

- Note facts.
- It is a safeguarding matter.
- The risk is potentially high but the person disclosing is an adult so it is treated as a medium level safeguarding risk.
- Invite the student to do her own risk assessment to herself and others (e.g. her children)
- Listen, present options.
- Ask what might be supportive to the student (before she leaves and when she arrives home).
- Put any action plan in place to which the student will agree.

RISK OF HARM IS LOW

Low-level concern – behaviour that is inconsistent with the ethos of the college and/or its policies.

Should be managed internally where action can be taken to resolve matters and maintain safety of all.

- Take notes
- Risk assess possible interventions for all parties including the risk of failing to act (consult safeguarding Trustee/tutors meeting if unsure what the options or risk levels are)
- When dealing with relevant parties:
 - Validate hurts;
 - Challenge inappropriate behaviour;
 - Request changed behaviour or particular actions
- If one party is complaining about the behaviour of another check what outcome they are hoping for and help them realistically assess ways to achieve this.
- Offer mediation between parties if appropriate (mediator must be acceptable to both parties and role is simply to help them hear each other)
- Consult with other bodies if implicated, e.g. CTF/faculty of divinity/ARU/sponsoring seminary

Example 4:

One student complains about the drunken comments of another student while they were both drinking in the common kitchen in the early hours of the morning. When asked he states his main goal as 'preventing this getting back to my bishop if he complains about me'.

Explore:

- what was the behaviour and in what ways did it breach policies/ethos?
- what outcome are you hoping for in bringing this to my attention?
- what risks are there to you in pursuing a formal complaint?

- what risks are there to you and others if this behaviour is not addressed?

Discuss possible options eg:

- They address the behaviour with the person directly
- You take a statement from the person complained about (formal complaint process) which might lead to a discipline measure against this person (and/or possibly the complainant) or perhaps a mediated conversation between them.
- No action

Note conversation and outcome and engage in any follow-up within 7 days.

Example 5:

A student witnesses what they perceive to be threatening behaviour between another student (male) and a resident of the college (female) in the common kitchen. The student is concerned that the female student is feeling intimidated.

It is potentially a safeguarding matter but it is hearsay.

Explore

- What exactly was witnessed, asking the witness to separate facts from opinions
- Were there other witnesses?
- What risks do they perceive?

Note the conversation and tell the witness that you will follow up within 7 days.

Consider

- What hard information do you have?
- What are the risks of doing nothing?
- What are the risks of confronting the male student?
- What are the risks of speaking with the female resident?

Act in a way that protects the vulnerability of the female student, e.g. invite her to share with you how she is finding living in the accommodation and whether she is concerned by any behaviour towards her. If she is feeling threatened follow the procedure for Example 1. If she is not feeling threatened no further action should be taken.

Inform the witness what action you have taken.

Example 6:

A resident DTM student who is in an ordination process from X Seminary is caught by IT looking at (adult) pornographic images on the Wesley House library computer. IT inform you of this. The student is unaware that this has been noticed.

- Speak to IT officer concerned and note facts
- Check IT policy contravened/good conduct policy/other relevant policies
- No it's not a safeguarding matter – but there is a breach of good conduct and the college ethos. The student is putting themselves at risk through this behaviour.
- The seminary needs to know because of their sponsorship of the student and a joint approach needs to be agreed. The ordaining church may need to know if a reference is required from either Wesley House or X seminary.

A joint action plan should be put in place to address the issues with the student as part of any terms on which the student continues to their programme.

Example 7:

A non-resident PhD student is suspended by her denomination because it has been discovered that she is in a same sex relationship. You find this out from the bishop of the student concerned in a meeting about something else. The bishop had forgotten that the student was one of ours. The student has not mentioned it.

- Note facts
- Have any college policies been breached? No.
- Is this a safeguarding matter? No.

The student herself may be at risk financially; her studies may be jeopardised; she is being talked about openly. How can the student be supported without making the situation worse?