

The Linacre Institute

Policy for the Protection of Young Adults

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1. Introduction

The purpose of the Linacre Institute is to help Sixth Formers at comprehensive schools and colleges in the north of England reach the UK's most competitive universities.

The Linacre Institute organises activities which include tuition of Sixth Form students and summer schools for these students.

The students we work with are young adults, aged between 16 and 18, and one of our explicit aims is to broaden their horizons and sense of independence.

As such, our policy on protection balances the imperatives of protecting students from abuse and foreseeable harm with the need to foster independence.

The Institute organises residential trips, typically lasting a week, and tuition, which may take place face-to-face but more often via Skype or telephone. The Institute is committed to making all reasonable efforts to protect students from harm while with us.

Due to the short time students are with us, the Institute is not best placed to deal with certain types of ongoing child-protection issues – for instance serious suspicions of parental neglect. In the very unlikely event of such a suspicion or disclosure, we will pass on information to the designated child-protection person at the student's home school.

The staff of the Linacre Institute are committed to behaving in ways which protect young people from harm which could reasonably have been foreseen. In particular, we appreciate young adults can be vulnerable to abuse by adults and other young people.

The purpose of this policy is to make sure that the Institute and the adults working with us take all reasonable steps to keep students safe.

Parents / persons with parental responsibility are ultimately responsible for their children's welfare, and they should be assured that their children are involved with a credible organisation.

The Linacre Institute achieves this by:

- Publicising information about the work of the Linacre Institute on our website (linacreinstitute.org)
- Publishing the named Designated Child Protection Person(s) and how to make a complaint on the website (linacreinstitute.org)
- Publishing a copy of the Child Protection Policy on the internet site (linacreinstitute.org)
- Communicating regularly with parents and asking for their feedback.

2. OUR PRINCIPLES ABOUT PROTECTION OF YOUNG ADULTS

- The physical and emotional welfare of a young person will always be our first concern. This comes above any other target we have.
- The rights, wishes and feelings of young people and their families will be respected and listened to. Where these wishes and feelings clash significantly with the ethos and policies of the Institute, this may mean a student not taking up his or her place on the programme or leaving the programme.
- People in positions of responsibility within the organisation will follow the policy outlined below.
- These people will do their best to make sure that the same opportunities are available to everyone.
- We accept our responsibility to inform staff about things which can cause young adults harm.

3. WHAT WE DO TO AVOID FORESEEABLE HARM TO YOUNG ADULTS

- Ensure staff and volunteers have full DBS checks and are well-known to the management
- Incorporate child-protection guidelines into a code of behaviour for staff and volunteers
- Brief staff on these child-protection guidelines
- Make it clear what staff and volunteers should do in the event of concerns
- Follow best practice and the law when it comes to sharing any concerns with agencies who need to know, or with parents
- Make sure young adults are made aware of dangers which they could not reasonably be expected to be aware of themselves
- Ensure young adults know whom to contact in the event of any concerns
- Review our policy and good practice annually or when legislation changes

4. Our policy on providing a safe environment

We are committed to providing an environment that is safe for a responsible young person.

- All of our residentials are based at schools or university buildings, which are safely used by hundreds of young adults every day. As such, they have been assessed for their suitability.
- We draw up risk assessments for our residential trips, making sure that staff and students are briefed about any important risks.
- We recognise that we are in *loco parentis*. We will supervise the young people on our visits and monitor their behaviour as far as can reasonably be expected and as far as is compatible with them becoming more independent and responsible. In line with school trips involving sixth formers, this does not mean a member of staff is awake and patrolling throughout the night. Please note that this supervision may include 'remote supervision' for short periods of our summer schools. This allows small groups of students to explore within set safe bounds without an adult with them. They will sign in and out, have set times for return, and will not explore alone. Adults will be nearby and contactable by phone.
- We will make clear to students what we consider to be acceptable use of the internet.

5. Our policy about preventing and dealing with cases of harm and abuse

We want to protect young people from all forms of abuse. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse.

Abuse or neglect of a young person is caused by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. (See definitions and signs of abuse in Appendix.)

Staff/ volunteers of the Linacre Institute need to be alert to the potential abuse of young people both within their families and by others, including abuse by members of the Linacre Institute. They will know how to recognise and act upon indicators of abuse or potential abuse. We expect all members of the Linacre Institute to respond to any suspected or actual abuse by following these.

Preventing harm or abuse

All our residential staff and volunteers will have undergone a Disclosure Barring Service check to ensure they have no criminal convictions. The *bona fides* of all staff will be checked by management.

All staff will be briefed on safety and child-protection matters. (See our Code of behaviour in appendix.)

At all times trustees, staff and volunteers should be mindful of individuals' rights, safety and welfare.

We will conduct ourselves in a way that reflects the ethos of the Linacre Institute, showing integrity, judgment and kindness. If ever in doubt, staff will consult the person responsible for child protection. This person will have been identified in staff briefings.

Students will be briefed on behaviour that we consider appropriate, and given clear rules, for instance about entering each other's bedrooms and about sexual contact with other students.

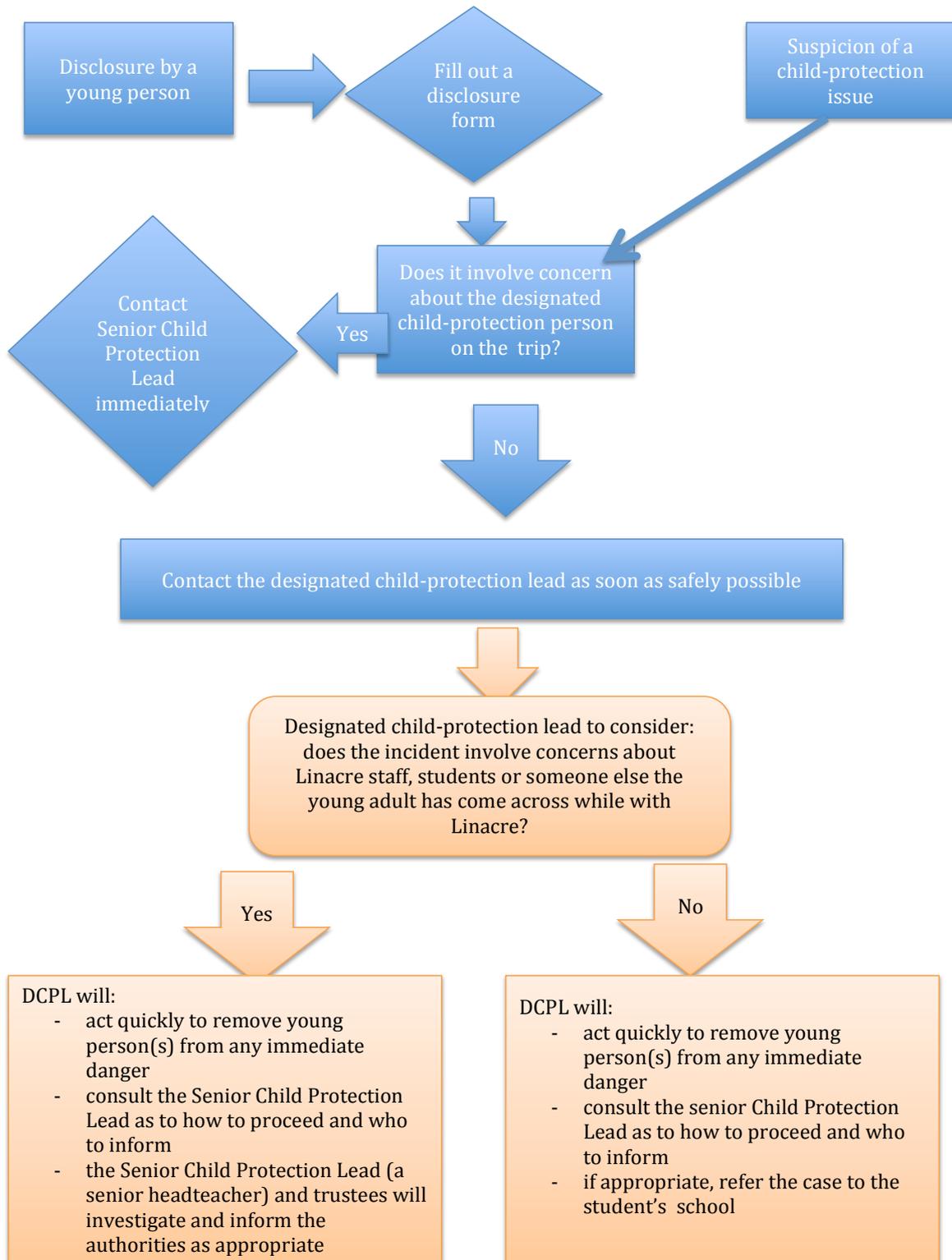
Dealing with concerns or disclosures about abuse

Our Senior Child Protection Lead is a headteacher and fully trained in how to deal with child-protection matters.

The Institute provides guidance for all of its staff on how to deal with suspicions or disclosures of abuse (see Appendix).

The Institute recognises that it has a moral and legal obligation to pass on any concerns about abuse or harm which takes place on during its work. Our procedure for doing so is outlined in the following flowchart.

Linacre Institute
What to do if you suspect a child-protection issue or a young person tells you about abuse or something else of concern



Points of contact if you have concerns

If any parent or young person has any concerns about the conduct of any member of the organisation, this should be raised in the first instance with Paul Coupar-Hennessy (07961 844 756). If the concern is about the conduct of this person it should be raised with the Senior Child Protection Lead, Pippa Dodgshon (01302 320626).

APPENDIX

1. Definitions of abuse and signs of abuse
2. Guidance for staff in the event of disclosures or suspicions of abuse
3. Guidance for designated child protection lead and senior child protection lead
4. Form for recording suspicions; form for recording disclosures
5. Code of behaviour for staff

1. Definitions of Abuse

Physical Abuse

This is when a child is hurt or injured by a child or an adult. Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. It also includes giving a child harmful drugs or alcohol. Female genital mutilation is a form of physical abuse which is illegal in the UK. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child they are looking after. A person might do this because they enjoy or need the attention they get through having a sick child.

Emotional Abuse

This is when adults deny children love or affection, or constantly threaten or humiliate them. Sarcasm, degrading punishments and ignoring a child are also forms of emotional abuse and undermine a child's confidence and sense of self-worth. Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

This is when a child is used sexually by an adult or young person. Sexual abuse can include kissing, touching the child's genitals or breasts, vaginal or anal intercourse and oral sex. Encouraging a child to look at pornographic magazines or videos is also sexual abuse. Bullying, racism and other types of discrimination are forms of child abuse. Like other kinds of abuse they can harm a child physically and emotionally. Sexual abuse includes sexual exploitation, such as forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution. Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/or females, by adults and by other young people.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born it may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care givers) or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Possible Signs of Abuse

Physical signs of abuse:

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls or games
- Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body
- Bruises which reflect hand marks or fingertips (from slapping or pinching)
- Cigarette burns
- Bite marks
- Broken bones
- Scalds
- Injuries which have not received medical attention
- Neglect-under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained stomach pains.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate physical abuse:

- Fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- Flinching when approached or touched
- Reluctance to get changed, for example, wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- Depression
- Withdrawn behaviour
- Running away from home.

Emotional signs of abuse

The physical signs of emotional abuse may include:

- A failure to thrive or grow particularly if a young person puts on weight in other circumstances: e.g. in hospital or away from their parents' care
- Sudden speech disorders
- Persistent tiredness
- Development delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate emotional abuse include:

- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults
- Attention seeking behaviour
- Fear of making mistakes
- Self-harm
- Fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour.

Sexual Abuse

The physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- Pain or itching in the genital/anal area
- Bruising or bleeding near genital/anal areas
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Vaginal discharge or infection
- Stomach pains
- Discomfort when walking or sitting down
- Pregnancy.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming withdrawn or aggressive
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- Having nightmares
- Running away from home
- Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or developmental level
- Sexual drawings or language
- Bedwetting
- Eating problems such as over-eating or anorexia
- Self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
- Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about
- Substance or drug abuse
- Suddenly having unexplained sources of money or expensive gifts
- Not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
- Acting in an inappropriate sexually explicit way with adults.

Neglect

The physical signs of neglect may include:

- Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children
- Constantly dirty or smelly
- Loss of weight or being constantly underweight
- Inappropriate dress for the conditions.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect include:

- Complaining of being tired all the time
- Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments
- Having few friends
- Mentioning being left alone or unsupervised.

2. Guidance for staff in the event of disclosures or suspicions of abuse

WHAT TO DO IN THE EVENT OF A CHILD-PROTECTION CONCERN

It is the responsibility of the management to ensure that relevant information is available to staff and volunteers. Some information is confidential and will only be shared on a strictly need-to-know basis.

What is harm or abuse?

How might we become aware of harm or abuse? Harm/abuse to a young person may come to the attention of staff/ volunteers in different ways. These include:

- Medical emergencies
- Allegations of abuse of a young person made by others
- Suspicions of abuse of a young person voiced by others
- Disclosures by the young person.

DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE

HOW TO DEAL WITH A CHILD-PROTECTION DISCLOSURE

DO:

- **Tell the young person that you cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality, as child protection will always have precedence over any other issues.**
- **Avoid making promises that you cannot keep**
- Treat any disclosure extremely seriously and act at all times towards the young person as if you believe what they are saying
- Listen to the young person rather than question directly. Reassure the young person that they are not to blame and try to alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement
- Allow the young person to speak without interruption. Accept what is said – **it is not your role to investigate or question.** Do not overreact.
- Tell the young person that they are right to tell you
- Advise that you will try to offer support, but that you must pass the information on. Explain what you have to do and whom you have to tell.

- **Take further action: you may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse. Tell your nominated person immediately**
- **Record the discussion accurately and as soon as possible after the event.** Use the young person's words or explanations – do not translate into your own words in case you have misconstrued what the young person was trying to say. Write down everything said and what was done by you.
- **Contact one of the Linacre Institute Designated CP Persons for advice/guidance.** The CP Designated Person may then discuss the concern/suspicion with the relevant organisation, and, if appropriate, make a direct referral.
- Within 24 hours make sure you have recorded any discussions or actions taken. Pass record on to the appropriate person as soon as possible.

IMMEDIATE ACTION TO ENSURE SAFETY

Immediate action may be necessary.

IN ALL CASES IT IS VITAL TO TAKE WHATEVER ACTION IS NEEDED TO SAFEGUARD THE CHILD/REN

This may involve:

- Moving them from any danger or threat as quickly and safely as possible, recognizing at all times the potential to cause further harm and panic by acting rashly or hastily.
- Offering reassurance
- If emergency medical attention is required call an ambulance (dial 999) or take a child to the nearest Accident and Emergency Department.

WHAT TO RECORD

In any case where an allegation is made, or someone in the Linacre Institute has concerns, a record should be made. Details must include, as far as practical:

- Your name, email address and relationship to the young person (if relevant)
- Name of young person
- Age of young person

- Home Address (if known)
- Date of Birth (if known)
- Name/s and Address of parent/s or person/s with parental responsibility
- Telephone numbers if available
- Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns, or passing on those of somebody else? If so, record details
- What has prompted the concerns? Include dates and times of any specific incidents
- Has the young person been spoken to? If so, what was said?
- Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser? If so, record details
- Who has this been passed on to, in order that appropriate action is taken? e.g. school, designated officer, social services etc
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details
- Does the young person require medical attention?
- Signature and Date
- **The referral should immediately be passed on to the Designated Child Protection Person whose responsibility it is to assess and deal with the allegation/ suspicion of abuse.**
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A referral Form is available (see appendix 4).

3. GUIDANCE FOR DESIGNATED CHILD PROTECTION LEAD and SENIOR CHILD PROTECTION LEAD

For reasons of confidentiality the only person(s) who need to know this information are the following Designated Child Protection Persons

1. Paul Coupar-Hennessy

2. Pippa Dodgshon

In the event of an allegation/suspicion of abuse or disclosure being made, the Designated CP Person(s) will seek advice from the relevant outside organisation as to how to best proceed.

It is good practice to be as open and honest as possible with parents/carers about any concerns. **Parents/carers should be informed if a referral is being made except in the circumstances outlined below:**

- Where sexual abuse is suspected
- Where organised or multiple abuse is suspected
- Where fictitious illness by proxy (also known as Munchausen Syndrome by proxy) is suspected
- Where contacting parents/carers would place a child, yourself or others at immediate risk.

However, inability to inform parents/carers for any reason should not prevent a referral being made. It would then become a joint decision with Children's Social Care Services about how and when the parents should be approached and by whom.

IF YOUR CONCERN IS ABOUT ABUSE OR RISK OF ABUSE FROM SOMEONE NOT KNOWN TO THE CHILD OR CHILD'S FAMILY, YOU SHOULD MAKE A TELEPHONE REFERRAL DIRECTLY TO THE POLICE AND CONSULT WITH THE PARENTS.

Information required when making a referral

Be prepared to give as much of the following information as possible (in emergency situations all of this information may not be available). Unavailability of some information should not stop you making a referral.

- Your name, telephone number, position and request the same of the person to whom you are speaking.
- Full name and address, telephone number of family, date of birth of child and siblings.
- Gender, ethnicity, first language, any special needs.
- Names, dates of birth and relationship of household members and any significant others.
- The names of professionals' known to be involved with the child/family eg: GP, Health Visitor, School.
- The nature of the concern; and foundation for them.
- An opinion on whether the child may need urgent action to make them safe.
- Your view of what appears to be the needs of the child and family.
- Whether the consent of a parent with parental responsibility has been given to the referral being made.

Send a written copy of the referral as soon as possible.

RECORD-KEEPING

- The Designated CP Person will keep copies of all notes and referrals and will keep a log of all telephone conversations with regard to any allegation/suspicion/disclosure
- All records, information and confidential notes should be kept in separate files in a locked drawer or filing cabinet.
- Only the Designated CP Persons will have access to these files.

Appendix 4

LINACRE INSTITUTE REFERRAL FORM: ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE

ABOUT YOU

Your name and email address:

Your relationship to the Linacre Institute:

Your relationship to the young person concerned- if relevant:

ABOUT THE YOUNG PERSON/S

Name of young person:

Age:

Date of Birth of young person:

Home address of young person:

Name/s and Address of parent/s or person/s with parental responsibility

Telephone numbers if available:

YOUR CONCERN

Are you reporting your own concern or passing on those of someone else? Give details:

Brief description of what has prompted the concerns (include dates and times of any specific incidents):

Observations made by you: Physical signs? Behavioural signs? Indirect signs?

Have you spoken to the child? If so what was said?

Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser? If so give details:

Have you consulted a LA department or any other agency, or reported this to anyone else? Give details (name of person, organisation, date and time):

Does the child require any medical attention?

Signature:
Appendix 3

Date:

RECORDING A DISCLOSURE

**Young Person
Name:**

**Date of
Birth**

Person Referring:

Date:

Time:

Nature of Disclosure: (please tick those that apply):

Emotional

Physical

Neglect

Sexual

Other/Mix

Statement:

Notes/ Follow-Up:

Referred to:

Signature:

Date:

ATTITUDES WE EXPECT

Staff and volunteers of the Linacre Institute should:

- Treat young adults and colleagues with respect and dignity and be sensitive to the feelings of others
- Always listen to what a young adult is saying
- Value each person with whom they work
- Treat all young adults fairly
- Give encouragement and praise and avoid personal criticism

LEADING BY EXAMPLE

Staff and volunteers should:

- Set examples of behaviour that we would wish others to follow.
- Use appropriate language with young people and challenge inappropriate language used by a young person
- Think before we act

ONE-TO-ONE CONTACT

Staff and volunteers should:

- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with young adults, away from others
- Make every effort to keep one-to-one meetings with young people as open as possible
- Ask for advice before talking to students about any personal or difficult matters

PHYSICAL CONTACT

Staff and volunteers should never:

- Use any form of physical punishment
- Engage in rough physical games or games which could be seen as sexually provocative. For instance a casual game of football played carefully is OK; a game which would involve close physical contact or the clear chance of serious injury is not. Staff should also intervene to prevent students playing such games among themselves.
- Do things of a personal nature for a young person, such as helping them use a toilet, that they can do for themselves. This especially applies to disabled students. In such cases, the Linacre Institute staff should seek prior written consent from a parent/guardian.

- Allow, or engage in, inappropriate touching of any kind.
- Staff should avoid physically restraining a student unless the safety of that student, other students, or the member of staff is clearly at risk. The decision about whether to do this is yours and will always depend on the immediate circumstances. It will almost always be more appropriate, for instance, to let a student leave a room unless you are reasonably certain that they mean harm to themselves or someone else. Such restraint should be of the minimal force necessary and staff and volunteers should always be mindful of the keeping a person's airways free.

GENERAL

Staff and volunteers should:

- Think about what we are doing. Be aware that someone might misinterpret our actions no matter how well intentioned.
- Never draw any conclusions about others without checking the facts.
- Never get involved in intimate emotional or sexual relationships with the young adults in our care.
- Never make suggestive remarks or gestures about, or to, a young person, even in fun.

RELATIONSHIPS

- Staff and volunteers will not enter into intimate relationships with young adults in our care, regardless of their age.
- Staff who are who are involved in relationships with other members of staff or volunteers should ensure that their personal relationships do not affect their role within the Linacre Institute or the work of the Linacre Institute. Such relationships should be kept discreet.