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# Safeguarding & Prevent Policy and Procedure

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## 1. Purpose

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child.<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedure and related training are to ensure the college provides a safe learning environment for children, young people and adults at risk. The college is committed to:

- a. Raising the awareness and identification of children or adults at risk who are at risk of significant harm and providing clear procedures for reporting concerns.
- b. Raising the awareness of young people and adults at risk, including the importance of staying safe on-line.
- c. Raising awareness of the Prevent duty and identification of children or adults at risk of radicalisation and utilising the safeguarding procedures for reporting concerns.
- d. Establishing procedures for reporting and dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff.
- e. The safe recruitment of staff.

## 2. Scope

No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, **everyone** who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

This policy and procedure applies to all College staff, whether teaching, administrative, management or support, as well as to volunteers. The word "staff" is used to denote all these groups.

College staff will follow the guidance outlined in the Safeguarding Policy and Procedure.

The College has a statutory and moral duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of all our students under the age of 18 and adults at risk receiving education and training at the college. This includes protecting them from situations where they may be abused. The college will ensure that all staff understand that children and young people may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected or may not recognise their experiences as harmful

The policy applies to all students under the age of 18 years of age, all adults at risk, all students over the age of 18 where there are minors in the household and abuse is disclosed and all staff without exception. The policy is also applied to all visitors

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<sup>1</sup> DfE Keeping children safe in education September 2023

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and contractors to the college. The policy applies to all college sites and community venues.

### **3. Responsibility**

The policy ensures all disclosures are referred to the Designated Safeguarding Officers, where they will be acted upon accordingly.

Operational responsibility for the implementation of the policy lies with the Director of Student Support and Inclusion. This policy will be monitored by Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and the Director of Student Support and Inclusion at appropriate intervals and will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Any changes or addendums in response to changes in year will be agreed by ELT and the governing body and shared with staff and via the college website.

The Safeguarding Team will meet fortnightly to discuss any issues, and update on individual learners, and where appropriate updates from Channel Panel meetings including the Prevent strategy and local pertinent information available to the college.

The Principal has overall responsibility for Safeguarding.

### **4. General Principles**

- 4.1 The College recognises that it has a statutory obligation under the Children Act 1989, the Children Act 2004, section 175 Education Act 2002, section 55 of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009 and Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2020 (and from September 1<sup>st</sup> KCSIE 2023), to safeguard and promote the welfare of its individuals. This document offers guidance and outlines procedures that should be followed in all cases of suspected abuse and situations of serious risk. It applies to all individuals under the age of 18 or those over 18 who are considered to be “adults at risk”. Adults at risk are people aged over 18 who are affected by mental ill health, have a learning difficulty or disability, or a physical disability or impairment.
- 4.2 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children’s health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
- 4.3 In relation to adults at risk the government set out key principles in The Care Act 2014 (Chapter 14).
- 4.4 The College also recognises its responsibility to safeguard children and adults at risk in the wider community. For instance, if an individual has younger siblings or an adult at risk within their family.
- 4.5 This policy applies to all “children” i.e. young persons under the age of 18 years or those over 18 considered to be an adult at risk.
- 4.6 The welfare of the child/student is, at all times, of paramount importance, irrespective of where any harm takes place.

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The college is committed to ensuring that we:

- a. Provide a safe environment to learn, onsite and remotely, for children, young people and adults at risk.
- b. Identify children, young people and adults at risk who may benefit from early help. Ensure the appropriate staff and/or external agencies are involved in an early help assessment.
- c. Identify children, young people and adults at risk who are suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm, and take appropriate action to see that such children, young people and adults at risk are kept safe, both at home, in the workplace and at the college.
- d. Identify children, young people and adults who have been, or likely to be, radicalised and take appropriate action.
- e. Establish clear procedures for reporting and dealing with allegations of abuse.
- f. Establish a clear training schedule to ensure all staff are trained and familiar with the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- g. Provide appropriate support to students who have been abused. For example, signposting them appropriately to external services for specialist support.
- h. Establish clear procedures for reporting and dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff.
- i. Establish the safe recruitment of staff (including volunteers) in compliance with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) regulations, including DBS checks and additional barring checks to ensure that staff are not prohibited from teaching as well as obtaining and checking of references and identity checks.
- j. Ensure all staff who work for The College are made aware during induction, of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 and that it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a relationship with a child under the age of 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual. This applies where the child is in full-time education and the person works at the same establishment as the child, even if he/she does not teach the child.
- k. Ensure all staff who work for the college receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) at induction. The training is regularly updated and will be delivered annually. In addition, staff receive safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates (by email, Safeguarding & Prevent Bulletin, CPD and staff meetings), as required.

In developing the Safeguarding Policy, the college have consulted with and taken into account, guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE), the NSPCC, CEOP, UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) the Cheshire West and Chester and Warrington Local Safeguarding Partnerships, Cheshire Police, including

Counter Terrorism and Prevent, CSE Co-ordinators, The Office for Students (OfS) and Social Care.

The college will refer concerns that a child, young person or adult at risk is at risk of significant harm to Social Care and/or the Police.

## **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **5.1 Designated Staff with Responsibility for Child Protection**

The governing body will appoint a governor with special responsibility for child protection/adult at risk issues. He/she will undertake appropriate training with Social Services and other external agencies as appropriate.

There will be a member of the Senior Leadership Team, with lead responsibility for child protection and adult at risk protection who reports to the Principal. The designated member of staff with lead responsibility for child protection and adult at risk protection is the Director of Student Support and Inclusion, assisted by, the Deputy Safeguarding Leads (Safeguarding and Welfare Manager and Safeguarding and Inclusion Managers), Welfare Officers and Wellbeing Mentor. All Designated Safeguarding Officers will be required to update their Local Safeguarding Partnership training every 2 years.

All staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction; all staff receive training annually to ensure they are equipped with the skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. Refresher and update training takes place throughout the year if appropriate.

The governing body and the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) will receive on a termly and annual basis, a report on safeguarding issues and duties discharged (as well as a monthly report to SLT). The designated member of staff with lead responsibility for child protection and adults at risk protection is responsible for reporting deficiencies in procedure or policy identified by the Local Safeguarding Partnership (or others) to the governing body at the earliest opportunity.

### **5.2 Designated Member of Staff with Lead Responsibility**

The Director of Student Support and Inclusion has the lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection and has a key duty to take lead responsibility for raising awareness with staff of issues relating to the welfare of children and young people, and the promotion of a safe environment for the children and young people learning within the College.

The Director of Student Support and Inclusion has received training in child protection and safeguarding adults at risk issues and inter-agency working, as required by the Local Safeguarding Partnerships. In addition, the Director for Student Support and Inclusion has also undertaken Advanced Safeguarding for Designated Safeguarding Leads. The Director and wider team will receive refresher training at least every 2 years as well as regularly monitoring developments surrounding safeguarding and child protection.

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The designated Safeguarding Officer is responsible for:

- a. Overseeing the referral of cases of suspected abuse or allegations to Social Care.
- b. Identifying deputy designated safeguarding leads and ensure they are appropriately trained.
- c. Ensuring during term time the designated safeguarding lead and or a deputy is available in College to discuss safeguarding concerns.
- d. Ensuring that adequate and appropriate cover is available for out of hours/out of term activities.
- e. Providing advice and support to other staff on issues relating to child protection.
- f. Maintaining a proper record of any child protection referral, complaint or concern, even where that concern does not lead to a referral (see section 16 Confidentiality and section 17 Written Records).
- g. Liaising with the Principal and Governors in relation to ongoing enquiries under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations.
- h. Ensuring that parents of children and young people within the College are aware of the College's Safeguarding Policy.
- i. Liaising with the relevant local authority, and other appropriate agencies.
- j. Liaising with secondary schools which send pupils to the College to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for the pupils.
- k. Liaising with other colleges when a learner leaves to join another college to ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new college as soon as possible, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt.
- l. Liaising with employers and training organisations that receive children or young people from the College on long term placements or employ learners as part of their apprenticeship to ensure that appropriate safeguards are put in place.
- m. Ensuring that staff receive appropriate training in child protection issues and the Prevent Duty and are aware of the related College procedures.
- n. Ensuring that all governors and trustees receive safeguarding and child protection training at induction which is updated on a regular basis.

### **5.3 Designated Staff Members**

Other designated members of staff with responsibility for safeguarding issues are the Safeguarding and Welfare Manager, Safeguarding and Inclusion Managers, and Wellbeing Officers.

These designated staff members:

- a. Report to the senior member of staff with lead responsibility
- b. Will know how to make an appropriate referral

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- c. Will ensure that all referrals to Social Care / Police will be made verbally and/or via the appropriate referral form as directed by the Local Safeguarding Partnership.
  - d. Will be available to provide advice and support to other staff on issues relating to child protection
  - e. Have particular responsibility to be available to listen to children and young people and adults at risk studying at the College
  - f. Will deal with individual cases, including attending case conferences and review meetings as appropriate.
  - g. Have received training in child protection issues and inter-agency working, as required by the Local Safeguarding Partnership, and will receive refresher training at least every 2 years.
  - h. Will ensure that all referrals, complaints or concerns remain confidential (see section 16 Confidentiality and section 17 Written Records)
  - i. Review reports and findings from online filtering and monitoring systems and follow up where appropriate

#### **5.4 Designated Governor**

The designated governor is responsible for liaising with the Principal and the Designated Safeguarding Lead with lead responsibility over matters regarding child and adult at risk protection, including:

- a. Ensuring that the College has procedures and policies which are consistent with the Local Safeguarding Partnership's (Social Care) procedures
- b. Ensuring that the governing body considers the College policy on safeguarding each year
- c. Ensuring that each year the governing body is informed of how the College and its staff have complied with the policy, including but not limited to a report on the training that staff have undertaken.

The designated governor is responsible for overseeing the liaison between agencies such as the police, social services in connection with allegations against the Principal. This will not involve undertaking any form of investigation, but will ensure good communication between the parties and provide information to assist enquiries. To assist in these duties, the designated governor shall receive appropriate training.

#### **5.5 The Governing Body**

The Governing Body should ensure that:

- The college has appropriate policies and procedures in place in order for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare. This includes an effective child protection and safeguarding policy and a code of conduct written in accordance with local authority guidance and locally agreed inter-agency procedures. The policy is



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provided to all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers, and is made available to parents on request

- Appropriate safeguarding responses are in place for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions in order to identify the risk of abuse and neglect and to prevent the risks of their going missing in the future
- The college operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on staff and volunteers who work with children
- The college has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers that comply with guidance from the local authority and locally agreed inter-agency procedures
- A senior member of the college's SLT is designated to take overall responsibility for safeguarding and that this person has the necessary training and experience to undertake this role
- Staff undertake appropriate safeguarding training
- They remedy, without delay, any deficiencies or weaknesses regarding safeguarding arrangements
- A designated governor for safeguarding is appointed.
- An identified member of staff has responsibility for monitoring the achievement and personal circumstances of students who are in local authority care
- Where services or activities are provided on the college premises by another body, the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding and liaises with the college on these matters where appropriate
- They review their policies and procedures annually
- All policies and procedures take into account the statutory guidance outlined in "Keeping children safe in education: statutory guidance for schools and colleges" DfE, September 2020 and from September 1<sup>st</sup> 2021, KCSIE 2021 and "Working together to safeguard children" HM Government, February 2019.

A safeguarding update is submitted to Governors each term. An annual report is produced to ensure that Governors have an overview of safeguarding activities undertaken during the year and approve areas for development.

### **The Safeguarding Committee**

This meets termly to address issues such as safeguarding policy/procedure, staff training programme, student activities, maintaining outstanding safeguarding and other relevant issues. Members of the Committee are the Principal, Director of Student Support and Inclusion, Director of Human Resources, Director of IT Services, Safeguarding and Welfare Manager, Safeguarding and Inclusion Managers, Welfare Officers, Health & Safety Officer, Curriculum, pastoral and learning support representatives, The Designated Governor is also invited to attend.

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## 6. Definitions of child or adult at risk, abuse and neglect

**Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

All staff are made aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

### The College recognises the following as definitions of abuse:

**6.1 Physical abuse:** a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

**6.2 Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), 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, although it may occur alone.

**6.3 Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue (also known as peer on peer abuse) and all staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it.

**6.4 Neglect:** 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

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development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## **7. Safeguarding issues**

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk. Other safeguarding issues all staff should be aware of include:

Consensual image sharing, especially between older children of the same age, may require a different response. It might not be abusive – but children still need to know it is illegal- whilst non-consensual is illegal and abusive. UKCIS provides detailed advice about sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and videos.<sup>12</sup> Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE).

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

### **7.1 Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence, or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at

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higher risk of sexual exploitation. Further information about CCE including definitions and indicators is included in Annex B.

## **7.2 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include noncontact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.

CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

## **7.3 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

Whilst all staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific legal duty on teachers. 10 If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police. See Annex B for further details.

## **7.4 Mental Health**

All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.

Schools and colleges can access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following the Safeguarding and Prevent

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Policy and Procedure, and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

### **7.5 Peer on peer abuse (child on child)**

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse). And that it can happen both inside and outside of college and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of peer on peer abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

All staff should understand, that even if there are no reports in their schools or colleges it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have any concerns regarding peer on peer abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed below, that are actually abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as “just banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys” can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

Peer on peer abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence); For further information about sexual violence see Annex B.15
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes images and or videos<sup>13</sup> (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- Upskirting,<sup>14</sup> which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm; and
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

All staff should be clear as to the college’s policy and procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

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## 7.6 Serious violence

All staff should be aware of the indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

All staff should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

## 7.7 Forced Marriage

The tradition of arranged marriages has operated successfully within many communities and many countries for a very long time. A clear distinction must be made between a forced marriage and an arranged marriage. In arranged marriages, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice whether to accept the arrangement remains with the individuals. In forced marriage, at least one party does not consent to the marriage and some element of duress is involved.

Forced marriage is primarily an issue of violence against women. Most cases involve young women and girls aged between 13 and 30 years, although, there is evidence to suggest that as many as 15% of victims are male.

Forced Marriage is a criminal offence, the offences can include, abduction, physical violence, threatening behaviour. Sexual Intercourse without consent is rape.

How to proceed if you suspect a student may be forced into a marriage against their will.

If you suspect that one of your students is being forced into a marriage against their will, contact a Designated Safeguarding Officer, who will make an assessment whether to contact Social Services or go directly to the Forced Marriage Unit with the Police.

If a female ethnic minority student leaves college unexpectedly and without explanation, contact a Designated Safeguarding Officer, who will try to find out why this student has 'suddenly' left the college without explanation and monitor any concerns.

## 7.8 Private fostering<sup>2</sup>

Private fostering is very different from the care of children provided by local councils under the Children Act 1989.

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<sup>2</sup> Warrington Borough Council website [www.warrington.gov.uk](http://www.warrington.gov.uk)

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Children under 16 (or 18 if disabled) are classed as privately fostered when they are cared for on a full-time basis by adults, who are not their parents or a close relative (brother, sister, aunt, uncle, or grandparents by birth or marriage) for a period of 28 days or more.

Usually a birth parent chooses and arranges private foster placements, which could take many forms. These include:

- Children coming from abroad to access the education and health systems.
- Children living with a friend's family after separation, divorce or arguments at home.
- Teenagers living with the family of a boyfriend or girlfriend.
- People who come to this country to study or work, but antisocial hours make it difficult for them to care for their own children.

Sometimes it's the young person themselves who chooses to live elsewhere and their parents do not object.

There are many reasons why a parent may be unable to look after their child full time, such as:

- Being admitted to hospital.
- Going abroad for lengthy periods.
- A breakdown in relationship between a parent and young person.

Should the College become aware of a private fostering arrangement in place for a student under 16 this will be reported to the relevant local authority, to ensure they are aware. The College understands that the local authority has a duty to ensure that children are well cared for in a safe and suitable home.

### **7.9 Other safeguarding issues include:**

- Children missing from home, care or education
- Domestic violence
- Drugs
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Faith abuse
- Forced marriage
- Gangs and youth violence
- Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls
- Hate
- Preventing radicalisation
- Relationship abuse
- Trafficking

## **8. Additional forms of abuse relevant to adult at risk**

### **8.1 Financial/Material Abuse**

This includes theft, fraud, pressure around wills, property or inheritance or misuse of benefits.

## 8.2 Discriminatory Abuse

This includes racist, sexist, or other forms that are based on a person's disability and other forms of harassment, or similar treatment.

## 8.3 Self-Neglect

This is not a direct form of abuse but staff need to be aware of it in the general context of risk assessment/ risk management and to be aware that they may owe a duty of care to a vulnerable individual who places him/herself at risk in this way.

## 9. Procedure

### 9.1 Procedure to follow in the event of a disclosure or concern being raised with regards to child protection or adult at risk protection

Staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'** where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the best interests of the child<sup>3</sup>.

If a student discloses to a member of staff that abuse has taken place, they should be listened to carefully. The following points give guidance on how to proceed with a student who makes an allegation.

- i. The member of staff receiving the disclosure should remain calm
- ii. The student should be listened to carefully, but not interviewed or asked to repeat the account. As soon as it becomes clear that the student is making an allegation of abuse, it is important that the student is gently informed, that the member of staff cannot keep this information to themselves, that they have a legal duty to pass it on to the Designated Safeguarding Officer. Confidentiality cannot be offered to the student. If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately.
- iii. As soon as possible, all of the details should be noted, including timing, setting, who was present, and what was said. The details should be passed to a Designated Safeguarding Officer. Make sure the account reported is verbatim to the student's own words or as close as is possible.
- iv. The Designated Safeguarding Officer will discuss the line of action they have to take, so that the student is informed of the next stage. It may be appropriate for the Designated Safeguarding Officer to meet with the student. Details will be logged on the confidential area of Promonitor.

If a member of the safeguarding team is not available then contact should be made with a member of ELT or the duty manager.

Duty Managers and security staff have guidance to follow in the event of a referral being made "out of hours" A member of the Safeguarding Team will

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<sup>3</sup> Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023



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remain-available whilst college is open including via the telephone in the evening, with telephone numbers held on reception. In the event of an incident occurring outside of college hours, the Director of Estates or a member of ELT will contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Leads.

There is a dedicated safeguarding telephone number (01925 494222) with a voicemail facility for out of hours calls. Any messages left on the safeguarding voicemail will also automatically generate a message sent to the safeguarding e-mail.

The statutory guidance states that any member of staff can make a referral if they have concerns about a child or adult at risk. However, the college policy is for all referrals to be made via the Safeguarding Officers so that referrals can be managed and monitored effectively.

However, if a child or adult at risk is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately. Anyone can make a referral. Where referrals are not made by the designated safeguarding lead the designated safeguarding lead should be informed, as soon as possible, that a referral has been made.

- v. If the student is enrolled on a 14-16 programme, the Designated Safeguarding Officer, will contact the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead to liaise with them on referral. The conversation held with the school will be documented on Promonitor.
- vi. If the student is over the age of 18, is suffering a form of abuse, but is not deemed an adult at risk, but as a college we are aware that there may be other siblings under the age of 18 in the environment, then a Designated Safeguarding Officer must be informed.
- vii. Where a disclosure has been made learners will be signposted to external support services as required.

## **9.2 Reporting on Allegations of a Student abusing another Student (Child on Child abuse)**

All staff are made aware that children, young people and adults at risk are capable of abusing their peers. Peer on peer abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up".

All staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Should an allegation of abuse be made against a student by another student, the Designated Safeguarding Officer needs to be contacted immediately. The Designated Safeguarding Officer will make a decision about action to be taken, which may include contacting external agencies.

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Both sets of parents or carers will be informed and a decision will be made whether to suspend the accused student, pending outcome of any investigation

Victims of peer abuse will be supported through College student support teams and processes and where appropriate in partnership with external agencies. Examples of peer abuse are outlined in 7.5.

All staff will be made aware of gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse. This could for example include girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence.

### **9.3 Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in college<sup>4</sup>**

The College has a 'Prevention of harassment, including sexual harassment policy' which outlines the college approach and reporting channels for staff and students. Examples of this type of peer abuse are outlined in 7.5.

#### **The college will:**

- make clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up.
- not tolerate or dismiss sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”.
- challenge behaviour (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia and flicking bras and lifting up skirts.
- understand that all of the above can be driven by wider societal factors beyond the college, such as everyday sexist stereotypes and everyday sexist language. This is why a whole college approach (especially preventative education) is important.
- make clear that sexual harassment behaviours are not considered normal as reported by Ofsted<sup>5</sup>

### **SEND**

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are three times more likely to be abused than their peers. Additional barriers can sometimes exist when recognising abuse in SEND children. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration.
- the potential for children with SEND being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying and harassment, without outwardly showing any signs.

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<sup>4</sup> DfE Sexual Violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges May 2018  
Now incorporated in DfE: Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023

<sup>5</sup> [Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/reviews/sexual-abuse-in-schools-and-colleges) June 2021

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Any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will therefore require close liaison with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputies) and the named person with oversight for SEN in the college.

Children who are lesbian, gay, bi, trans, or questioning their sexuality (LGBTQ) can be targeted by their peers. In some cases, a child who is perceived by their peers to be LGBTQ (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBTQ.

Further information can be found at the following:

- SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 years [SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/612222/SEND_Code_of_Practice_0_to_25_years.pdf), and
- Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions. [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/612222/Supporting_pupils_with_medical_conditions_at_school.pdf)

And from specialist organisations such as:

- The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information and Support Services (SENDIASS). SENDIASS offer information, advice and support for parents and carers of children and young people with SEND. All local authorities have such a service: Find your local IAS service ([councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk](https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk)) [Find your local IAS service \(councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk\)](https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk)
- Mencap - Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people [Learning Disability - Down's Syndrome - Williams syndrome | Mencap](https://www.mencap.org.uk)

## Definitions

### Sexual violence

When referring to sexual violence in this policy, we do so in the context of child on child sexual violence.

For the purpose of this policy, when referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the **Sexual Offences Act 2003** as described below:

**Rape:** A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

**Assault by Penetration:** A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

**Sexual Assault:** A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

**What is consent?** Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not

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another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

- a child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity.
- the age of consent is 16.
- sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

## **Sexual harassment**

For the purpose of this policy, sexual harassment refers to 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline and is referred to in the context of child on child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names.
- sexual "jokes" or taunting.
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature.
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.
- Upskirting is a highly intrusive practice, which typically involves someone taking a picture under another person's clothing without their knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm, and is a specific criminal offence in England & Wales

Online sexual harassment may include:

- non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos.
- sexualised online bullying;
- unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media.
- sexual exploitation; coercion and threats.

Sexual harassment creates an atmosphere that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviours and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence.

## **Harmful sexual behaviour**

Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent.

Problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage.

Harmful sexual behaviour can occur online and/or offline and can also occur simultaneously between the two and should be considered in a child protection context.

When considering harmful sexual behaviour, ages and the stages of development of the children are critical factors to consider. Sexual behaviour between children can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than two years' difference however, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them, for example, if the older child is disabled.

Children displaying harmful sexual behaviour have often experienced their own abuse and trauma. It is important that they are offered appropriate support.

## **The immediate response to a report**

### **Responding to the report**

The initial response to a report from a child is important. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

In some cases, the victim may not make a direct report. For example, a friend may make a report or a member of staff may overhear a conversation that suggests a child has been harmed. It is important that in such instances staff take appropriate action personally by reporting these concerns to the college safeguarding team immediately. In such cases, the basic safeguarding principles remain the same, but it is important to understand why the victim has chosen not to make a report themselves. This discussion should be handled sensitively and with the support of children's social care if appropriate.

Where reports of alleged sexual violence or sexual harassment involves learners from this college, but is alleged to have taken place away from college premises, or online, or where the children concerned attend two or more different colleges. Appropriate information sharing and effective multi-agency working will be especially important.

## **Considering confidentiality and anonymity**

### **Confidentiality**

Staff taking a report should **never promise confidentiality** as it is very likely that it will be in the best interests of the victim to seek advice and guidance from others in order to provide support and engage appropriate agencies.

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The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will consider the following:

- parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)
- the basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to children's social care
- rape assault by penetration and sexual assaults are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police.

### **Anonymity**

The college will do all it reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment. Amongst other things, this will mean carefully considering, based on the nature of the report, which staff should know about the report and any support that will be put in place for the children involved.

### **Risk Assessment**

When there has been a report of sexual violence, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will make an immediate risk and needs assessment.

Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The risk and needs assessment will consider:

- the victim, especially their protection and support.
- the alleged perpetrator.
- all the other children (and, if appropriate, adult students and staff), especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them.

Risk assessments will be recorded (written or electronic) and will be kept under review.

At all times, the school or college will actively consider the risks posed to all students and putting adequate measures in place to protect them and keep them safe.

The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will ensure engagement with children's social care and specialist services as required. Where there has been a report of sexual violence, it is likely that professional risk assessments by social workers and or sexual violence specialists will be required.

Professional assessments will be used to inform the college's approach to supporting and protecting students and updating the college risk assessment.

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## Action following a report of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment

### What to consider

The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) is likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the schools or college's initial response.

Important considerations will include:

- **the wishes of the victim** in terms of how they want to proceed. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment. Victims should be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered.
- **the nature of the alleged incident(s)**, including: whether a crime may

### Ongoing response

For information on good practice in managing the ongoing response to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment the college will use the advice published in the Department for Education's in their document '**Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges**' May 2018.

The advice in this document will be used to inform actions around:

1. Safeguarding and supporting the victim
2. Safeguarding and supporting the alleged perpetrator
3. Discipline and the alleged perpetrator
4. Working with parents and carers
5. Safeguarding other children

### Sexting and Sharing Nudes (also known as Youth Produced Sexual Imagery)

Sexting is when someone sends sexually explicit messages and sharing nudes is when someone shares sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others. They can be sent using mobiles, tablets, smartphones, and laptops - any device that allows you to share media and messages. The NSPCC proposes in its update document '**Why language matters: Sexting or sharing nudes**' 3/10/22 that professionals should consider referring to sexting activities as '**sharing nudes**' which is in line with the language commonly used by young people<sup>6</sup>.

Creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of under 18's is illegal. Advice issued by UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) has issued the phrase 'youth produced sexual imagery' instead of sexting. This covers the following types of incident:

- A person under the age of 18 creates and shares sexual imagery of themselves with a peer under the age of 18

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<sup>6</sup> NSPCC website [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

- A person under the age of 18 shares sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18 with a peer under the age of 18 or an adult
- A person under the age of 18 is in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18<sup>7</sup>

Disclosing private sexual photographs and films with intent to cause distress is a criminal offence.<sup>8</sup> However the College is aware of the consequences of criminalising children and follows the guidance issued by the Police when dealing with cases of sexting to ascertain full circumstances and identify whether the act is:

**Aggravated** – Criminal or abusive elements

Adult involvement or criminal or abusive behavior by minors such as sexual abuse, extortion, threats, malicious conduct arising from personal conflicts.

**Experimental** – Youths sending, receiving or forwarding sexually explicit messages, photographs or images of themselves: 1) to share with established boy or girlfriends 2) To create romantic interest in another youth 3) For reasons such as attention seeking (no criminal element or intent)

In the first instance the College will follow guidance issued by UKCCIS and existing safeguarding procedures when alerted to concerns regarding sexting. Should instances of sexting be disclosed or uncovered by the College, which are thought to be aggravated these will be referred to the CSE Co-coordinator (Police) at the relevant local authority. The CSE screening tool will also be used and a referral to Missing children/children at risk of sexual exploitation and trafficked children (MCSETO) operational group will be made. If appropriate young people will be directed to Child Exploitation Online Protection Centre (CEOP) to report if appropriate

Given the potential risks faced by young people online, it's crucial that staff feel confident communicating with young people. This means both understanding the language used by young people to describe their online interactions and using appropriate language that young people can understand and relate to.

## 10. Reporting and Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Members of Staff

The College recognises that an allegation of child abuse made against a member of staff may be made for a variety of reasons and that the facts of the allegation may or may not be true. The College therefore needs policies and procedures on the management of situations where there are allegations of abuse.

These procedures outline the steps to be followed and considerations to be made for the reporting and subsequent management of an allegation of abuse against a member or members of staff.

It is imperative that those dealing with an allegation maintain an open mind and those that investigations are thorough and not subject to delay.

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<sup>7</sup> Sexting in schools and colleges: Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people

<sup>8</sup> Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015



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The College recognises that the Children Act 1989 states that the welfare of the child is the paramount concern. It also recognises that hasty or ill-informed decisions in connection with a member of staff can irreparably damage an individual's reputation, confidence and career. Therefore, those dealing with such allegations within the College will do so with sensitivity and will act in a careful, measured way.

**Scope** - These procedures apply to all staff, whether teaching, administrative, management or support, as well as to volunteers. The word "staff" is used to denote all these groups.

**Procedures** - Making an allegation regarding concerns over another staff member.

There are two ways to raise concerns regarding the conduct of another staff member. Staff can either report the allegation directly to the Director of Student Support and Inclusion or the Director of Human Resources or they may use the Whistleblowing Procedure.

If they choose to use the Whistleblowing Procedure, then the staff member must be made aware that anonymity cannot be guaranteed if the matter is subsequently dealt with by the Police or other external organisation. The Whistleblowing Procedure outlines how a member of staff can report an allegation. The Director of Human Resources, the Director of Student Support and Inclusion and the Principal will then decide on how to deal with the matter who will then follow the normal procedure, which may/will result in a referral to the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO).

### **10.1 Procedures - Receiving an Allegation from a Child**

A member of staff who receives an allegation about another member of staff from a child should follow the guidelines in section 7 for dealing with disclosure.

The allegation should be reported immediately to the Director of Student Support and Inclusion or the Principal (unless the Principal is the person against whom the allegation is made, in which case the report should be made to the Director of Student Support and Inclusion or the designated Governor).

Immediately upon an allegation being made, as well as consulting with the LADO at Social Care and/or the Police, the Director of Student Support and Inclusion or the Principal (or designated person if the allegation is against the Principal) should:

- Obtain written details of the allegation, signed and dated from the person who received the allegation. (Not from the student who made and/or was the subject of the allegation)
- The written details should be countersigned and dated by the Principal (or designated person).
- Record information about times, dates, locations and names of potential witnesses.
- Contact details for the Warrington Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) 01925 442079 or [LADO@warrington.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@warrington.gov.uk) and for Cheshire West and Chester complete the referral form and send to [safeguardinglado@cheshirewestandchester.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:safeguardinglado@cheshirewestandchester.gcsx.gov.uk)

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## 10.2 Initial Assessment by the Principal (or designated person)

The Principal (or designated person) should make an initial assessment of the allegation (ensuring consultation with the Staff Member with Lead Responsibility, the Designated Governor and the relevant Local Safeguarding Partnership as appropriate).

Where the allegation is considered to be either a potential criminal act or indicates that the child has suffered, is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, the matter should be reported immediately to a LADO. It is important that the Principal (or designated person) does not investigate the allegation. The initial assessment should be on the basis of the information received and is a decision whether or not the allegation warrants further investigation.

Other potential outcomes are:

- a. The allegation represents inappropriate behavior or poor practice by the member of staff and is neither potentially a crime nor a cause of significant harm to the child. The matter should be addressed in accordance with the College disciplinary procedures.
- b. The allegation can be shown to be false because the facts alleged could not possibly be true.

## 10.3 Enquiries and Investigations

Safeguarding enquiries by Social Care or the Police are not to be confused with internal, disciplinary enquiries by the College. The College may be able to use the outcome of external agency enquiries as part of its own procedures. The safeguarding agencies, including the police, have no power to direct the College to act in a particular way; however, the College should assist the agencies with their enquiries. Social Care and the Police would be likely to convene a Senior Strategy Meeting and a representative of the College would be expected to participate.

The College shall hold in abeyance its own internal enquiries while the formal Police or Social Services investigations proceed; to do otherwise may prejudice the investigation. Any internal enquiries shall conform to the existing staff disciplinary procedures.

If there is an investigation by an external agency, for example the Police, the Principal (or designated person) should normally be involved in, and contribute to, the inter-agency strategy discussions. The Principal (or designated person) is responsible for ensuring that the College gives every assistance with the agency's enquiries. He/she will ensure that appropriate confidentiality is maintained in connection with the enquiries, in the interests of the member of staff about whom the allegation is made. The Principal (or designated person) shall advise the member of staff that he/she should consult with a representative, for example, a trade union.

Subject to objections from the Police or other investigating agency, the Principal (or designated person) shall:

- a. Inform the child/children/adult at risk/parent/carer making the allegation that the investigation is taking place and what the likely process will involve.
- b. Ensure that the parents/carers of the child making the allegation are aware that the investigation is taking place and what the likely process will involve.
- c. Inform the member of staff against whom the allegation was made of the fact that the investigation is taking place and what the likely process will involve.
- d. Inform the Chair of Governors and/or the designated Governor of the allegation and the investigation.

The Principal (or designated person) shall keep a written record of the action taken in connection with the allegation (see section 22 Confidentiality and section 23 Written Records).

Media attention during an investigation of an allegation can add to the problems for the member of staff and may even hinder an investigation. The College will carefully manage all media relations sensitively and appropriately, as outlined in the Critical Incident Management Strategy. Regrettably, it is often the case that the media become aware of allegations through parents or students. Any briefings to staff and governors will emphasise the need to avoid media coverage in accordance with the Staff Code of Conduct. Staff have the Human Rights Act 2000 to protect “privacy”. Advising the member of staff of any early indications of media interest and or coverage will be essential.

#### **10.4 Potential Outcomes from Senior Strategy Meeting**

There are four possible outcomes from a strategy meeting. If the matter is referred to the Police or Social Services, the College will be guided by these agencies on how to deal with the matter. It is likely that this will result in an external investigation.

Decisions on whether to suspend the member of staff and/or invoke the disciplinary procedure will be done in consultation with these organisations. The strategy meeting may decide that the College can investigate the matter and report back the outcome back to the strategy group. If this is the case, then the matter will be dealt with using the College’s disciplinary procedure. The fourth outcome could be that the strategy meeting felt there was no case to investigate.

#### **10.5 Suspension of Staff**

Please refer to the disciplinary procedure for guidance on suspension of staff. Consideration should be given to alternatives: e.g. paid leave of absence; agreement to refrain from attending work; change of, or withdrawal from, specified duties.

The parents/carers of the child/adult at risk making the allegation will be informed of the suspension. They should be asked to treat the information as confidential. Consideration should be given to informing the student making the allegation of the suspension.

#### **10.6 The Disciplinary Investigation**

The disciplinary investigation should be conducted in accordance with the existing

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staff disciplinary procedures.

The student/s making the allegation and/or their parents should be informed of the outcome of the investigation and proceedings. This should occur prior to the return to College of the member of staff (if suspended).

The Principal (or designated person) should give consideration to what information should be made available to the general population of the College.

The college will support the legal requirement to make a referral to the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) where they think an individual has engaged in conduct that harmed (or is likely to harm) a child or if the person otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child.

### **10.7 Low level concerns**

As part of their whole college approach to safeguarding, the college will ensure that we promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the college (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

It is critical to create a culture in which all concerns about adults (including allegations that do not meet the harms threshold) are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately. This should encourage an open and transparent culture, enabling college to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early.

#### **What is a low-level concern?**

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of college may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door.
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

It is crucial that any such concerns, including those which do not meet the harm

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threshold, are shared responsibly and with the right person, and recorded and dealt with appropriately. Ensuring they are dealt with effectively should also protect those working in or on behalf of schools and colleges from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

### **10.8 Allegations without foundation**

Obviously false allegations may be indicative of problems of abuse elsewhere. A record should be kept and consideration given to a referral to Social Care in order that other agencies may act upon the information.

In consultation with the designated senior member of staff and/or the designated Governor, the Principal shall:

- a. Inform the member of staff against whom the allegation is made orally and in writing that no further disciplinary or safeguarding action will be taken. Consideration should be given to offering counselling/support.
- b. Inform the parents/carers of the alleged victim that the allegation has been made and of the outcome
- c. Where the allegation was made by a child/adult at risk other than the alleged victim, consideration to be given to informing the parents/carers of that child/adult at risk.
- d. Prepare a report outlining the allegation and giving reasons for the conclusion that it had no foundation and confirming that the above action had been taken

### **10.9 Records**

It is important that documents relating to an investigation are retained in a secure place, together with a written record of the outcome and, if disciplinary action is taken, details retained on the member of staff's personal and confidential file (see section 16 Confidentiality and section 17 Written Records). These records should be kept until the member of staff's normal retirement age or for a period of 10 years from the date of allegation if that is longer.

If a member of staff is dismissed or resigns before the disciplinary process is completed, he/she should be informed about the College's statutory duty to inform the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

### **10.10 Monitoring Effectiveness**

Where an allegation has been made against a member of staff, the designated Governor, together with the senior staff member with lead responsibility should, at the conclusion of the investigation and any disciplinary procedures, consider whether there are any matters arising from it that could lead to the improvement of the College's procedures and/or policies and/or which should be drawn to the attention of the Local Safeguarding Partnership/Social Care. Consideration should also be given to the training needs of staff.

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally.

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Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and Email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).<sup>9</sup>

## 11. Recruitment and Selection Procedures

The College pays full regard to DfE guidance “Keeping children safe in education”, September 2023, ensuring that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works in the college (e.g. staff, volunteers and staff employed by contractors). Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and DBS checks and compliance with the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) regulations as well as a barred list check prior to the commencement of employment.

In addition, as part of the shortlisting process the college may consider carrying out an online search as part of due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the college may explore with the applicant at interview. The College informs shortlisted candidates that online searches may be done as part of due diligence checks.

As part of the College’s induction procedure all staff members receive Part one of the most recent publication of Keeping Children Safe in Education- undergo safeguarding and child protection training. Training is regularly updated and all staff receive updates at least annually.

This is outlined further in the College’s Recruitment and Selection Policy.

## 12. Responsibilities of College Staff

The College has a staff Code of Conduct which all staff employed by the College must read and adhere to. Full compliance is essential to ensure the wellbeing of students and staff. As well as safeguarding children/adult at risk, the Code of Conduct is also intended to protect staff from the potential risk of a safeguarding allegation being made against them. Staff must ensure they are aware of the college’s safeguarding policy and procedures and know the identity of the Safeguarding Officers. Staff will monitor attendance closely and follow up non-attendance promptly to minimise the risk of learners missing from education, therefore reducing the risk of learners becoming vulnerable to abuse and harm. The College will also use disciplinary procedures to reinforce positive behaviour and address instances of poor behaviour including bullying.

All staff will wear a college staff lanyard and ID badge.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

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## 13. Online Safety

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation: technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm. An effective approach to online safety empowers a school or college to protect and educate the whole school or college community in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any incident where appropriate.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into three areas of risk:

- **content**; being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example, pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views;
- **contact**; being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example, commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults;
- **conduct**; personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying and
- **commerce**: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If it is felt, students or staff are at risk, it can be reported to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>).

The College have filters and monitoring systems in place and these are regulated and risk assessed as part of the Prevent Duty. We have an online safety policy which identifies the usage and behaviour of staff and students.

The college has clearly assigned roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems, these are communicated at induction and at least annually in safeguarding training.

- The IT department are responsible for reviewing filtering and monitoring provision at least annually.
- The IT department are responsible for blocking harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning.
- The safeguarding team review the daily and weekly filtering and monitoring reports and follow up accordingly where appropriate or where there are safeguarding needs or concerns.

As a college of further education, we appreciate the value of technology and that appropriate filters are in place, yet this does not lead to unreasonable restrictions which would limit online teaching.

### Education at home

Where young people are being asked to learn online at home, the College will refer to and use the links and resources provided by the DfE alongside its own policies, procedures and guidance.

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## 14. Educational Visits and Work Placements

All College trips, activities and placements will be assessed to safeguard and promote the welfare of students and staff, and ensure they are not exposed to any potential safeguarding risks.

### 14.1 Trips, Residential Visits and Activities

These will be assessed via the relevant Health & Safety Educational Visits checks and paperwork. Learners will be made aware of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding themselves and others.

If students are staying with families overseas as part of a student exchange, the college should work with partner organisations to ensure appropriate checks are undertaken prior to the visit. DBS cannot access criminal records held overseas. The relevant foreign embassy or High Commission of the country in question can be contacted to see what checks can be undertaken in that country.

Wherever possible, college staff will visit overseas placements prior to the placement being undertaken. Contact details will be given to students to ensure they have an appropriate point of contact.

### 14.2 Work Placements

Employers and training organisations will be asked to co-operate with the College in putting in place and subscribing to appropriate safeguards. Health and Safety Procurement (HASP) paperwork will be completed by staff with Health & Safety qualifications.

Training organisations and employers will be asked to make a commitment to safeguarding learners' welfare by endorsing an agreed statement of safeguarding principles.

Enhanced DBS checks cannot be requested for staff supervising 16 and 17 year olds in the workplace. However, a representative from the college will meet any person whose normal duties will include regular caring for, training, looking after or supervising a child in the workplace where that person has been specifically designated to have responsibility for such activities.

### 14.3 Work Place (Apprenticeships)

Employers and training organisations will be asked to co-operate with the College by putting in place and subscribing to appropriate safeguards. Health and Safety vetting documentation must be provided to the college alongside a child protection policy, and employer's liability insurance (unless eligible for ELI exemption). The college in conjunction with the employer will review and update this annually.

Each apprentice will have an 8 - 12 weekly performance review where Prevent and safeguarding will be discussed. If any concerns occur outside of these time employers and apprentices will contact their apprentice coach as point of contact.



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Appendix C gives more information, and can be used as a separate document for employers to help them understand and carry out their duty with regards to Prevent, Safeguarding and British Values.

### **Employers Safeguarding and Prevent Duty**

Employers have a duty to comply with all current and future UK legislation and statutory responsibilities. There is a particular exception that an employer should take responsibility for an apprentice's welfare in the workplace, and to also seek appropriate advice when they feel an apprentice may be at risk in their personal lives.

### **Employers Safeguarding and Prevent Role**

- Familiarise themselves with relevant government legislation.
- Take appropriate steps to understand what safeguarding means in practice at their organisation, in the context of the responsibilities they have for the people they employ.
- Ensure that any staff working with apprentices in a position of trust are appropriate for the role, and do not present any danger or threat.
- If appropriate, identify a person to coordinate safeguarding across an organisation.
- Demonstrate a commitment to the principles that underpin the Prevent Duty, referring any issues or concerns to the Safeguarding Team at college
- Volunteering
- The college will instigate a Partnership Agreement for volunteering placements that will outline the responsibilities of external organisations and the college.
- The college will take a written volunteering opportunity form from the organisation that will also act as a checklist/registration form.
- The college will carry out inspection and initial meeting with the external organisation.
- The college will ensure that the organisation has adequate safeguarding procedures in place.
- The college will ensure that the organisation has adequate DBS checking procedures in place if appropriate.
- The college will help with pre-selection screening of student volunteers as part of referral process.
- The college will ensure that adequate induction and training are offered to volunteers.
- The college will ensure proper supervision, and will provide a dedicated contact for volunteers in case of concerns or difficulties.

## **15. Bullying and Harassment**

The College is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our learners so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. If bullying does occur, all learners should be able to tell and

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know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to let staff know. Staff are required to inform Safeguarding Officers of any incidence of bullying as soon as they are aware that it has occurred. This refers to both in face and remote learning.

Further guidelines can be found in the Anti-Bullying & Harassment Procedure and the Prevention of Harassment, including Sexual Harassment Policy.

## 16. Supporting Vulnerable/at risk Learners

College staff are alerted to the potential need for early help and intervention for a child/young person who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan)
- Those in care or care leavers
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse
- has returned home to their family from care
- is showing early signs of abuse or neglect
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- is a privately fostered child

Services and support are available in college to assist and support those students who are vulnerable or may be at risk. The Safeguarding Team, Progress Coaches and all tutors are trained to recognise signals that students may be struggling or may be experiencing difficulties. Full time students meet regularly with their Progress Coach to monitor their progress, attendance and general wellbeing. Swift referral can be made to support services such as the Welfare team, Learning Support team, as well as referral to external support services.

Evidence suggests that LGBTQ+ children and young people might be at increased risk of some forms of harm such as child sexual exploitation, online abuse and bullying (***Safeguarding LGBTQ+ children and young people, NSPCC. 20/5/22***)

Assessments to identify vulnerable learners (such as those in care, care leavers, young carers, learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, learners with mental health problems, adults at risk, etc.) are undertaken prior to enrolment to

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ensure the students are adequately supported. The At Risk system enables staff to identify and closely monitor students.

Any unauthorised absence is followed up by Progress Coaches to check why the student was not in college. Any persistent absence is discussed with parents of under 18s. The unexplained absence of any child, young person or adult at risk should be referred to the Safeguarding Officers as their absence may be an indication of potential abuse or concern. The Safeguarding Officer will then contact appropriate external agencies and parents/carers. Attendance will also be tracked if students are working remotely (see Attendance and Punctuality Procedures)

The college has close working relationships with the Local Authorities' Virtual School to monitor vulnerable students, such as those in care and young carers. The appropriate member of the Safeguarding Team has regular meetings with officers from the Virtual School to monitor student progress and review the Personal Education Plan (PEP). The Safeguarding and Inclusion Managers and Safeguarding and Welfare Manager retain detailed information in relation to children in care, their circumstances and social worker details.

The College recognises that Children and adults with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. During training reference is made to the additional barriers that can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children, such as:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child or adult disability without further exploration
- Children and adults with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying - without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

### **Students with Previous Criminal Convictions**

Guidance regarding the recruitment of students who have previous criminal convictions, cautions or reprimands can be found in the Admissions Policy and Procedure.

## **17. Safeguarding 14-16 Students**

Safeguarding arrangements and responsibilities for students studying on 14-16 provision at the college are undertaken on an individual basis dependent on the needs of the learner, in agreement with partner school, parent and local authority.

Procedures for ensuring that under 16 year olds are safe when undertaking work placement in the college are in place.

## **18. Visitors and Contractors**

All visitors must sign in at Reception and wear a college visitor lanyard and ID badge whilst they are in college. Visitors will be asked to read and support the college's commitment to safeguarding our learners. They will be supervised around college as appropriate.

Contractors are issued with guidance on an annual basis to ensure they are aware of safeguarding and their responsibilities whilst in college. If appropriate, supervision or DBS checks for contractors will be arranged. The identity of contractors should be checked on arrival at the college.

## **19. Curriculum**

The college will ensure learners are taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities. Children, young people and adults at risk can develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe. The Tutorial programme includes key topics such as, bullying, cyber bullying, internet safety, abuse, Prevent, British Values, Equality & Diversity, sexting, peer on peer, personal health and well-being and health and safety. Awareness raising begins at enrolment and induction involving students, staff and parents.

## **20. Safeguarding Information for Learners**

All learners know that we have staff with responsibility for safeguarding and know who they are. We inform learners of whom they might talk to, their right to be listened to and what steps can be taken to protect them from harm. We make learners aware of these arrangements through appropriate tutorial provision, induction and information on Moodle.

College's arrangements for consulting with and listening to learners are clearly outlined in the Learner Involvement Policy. The college consults with learners to identify and address their safeguarding and health and safety concerns.

All learners will wear a college student lanyard and ID badge.

## **21. Partnership with Parents/Carers**

The college shares a purpose with parents to keep children safe from harm and to have their welfare promoted. The college is committed to working with parents positively, openly and honestly ensuring that all parents are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. The college respects parents' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless given permission, or it is necessary to do so in order to protect a child.

The college will share with parents any concerns we may have about their child unless to do so may place a child at risk of harm. The college encourages parents to discuss any concerns they may have with the Safeguarding and Inclusion Manager or Progress Coach. Parents are made aware of our policies upon request and via the website.

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## 22. Confidentiality

In order to meet the needs of children, young people and adults at risk, the College recognises the importance of information sharing between professionals and local agencies.<sup>10</sup>

Fears about sharing information **cannot** be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children, young people and adults at risk. Inter-agency working and information sharing are vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse, it is clear they are especially important to identify and prevent child sexual exploitation.

All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Partnerships. Consent to share information is obtained prior to information sharing, except where a young person or adult at risk is at risk from harm.

Electronic records are kept on the college's ProMonitor system, however these do not contain the details of referrals as this is confidential. Notes are made to show there has been Safeguarding staff involvement.

## 23. Written Records

All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing.

Records should include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern;
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome

The nominated member of staff shall retain a copy of:

- Any reports
- Any notes, memoranda or other correspondence dealing with the matter
- Any other relevant materials

The nominated member of staff will also keep copies of Children in Care Statutory Reviews, risk assessments, YJS behaviour plans, etc.

Records are electronic where possible and held on a shared drive, with limited user access. Paper copies will be securely destroyed once electronic versions are uploaded.

Copies of paper reports, notes etc. if held are stored in a securely locked filing cabinet within the college archives, keys are held by the Dedicated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Safeguarding Lead. They are kept for a minimum period of 7

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<sup>10</sup> Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers  
March 2015

years (or until learners reach the age of 25). Copies of reports regarding allegations made against staff shall be kept securely sealed by the Principal until the member of staff's normal retirement age or for a period of 10 years from the date of allegation if that is longer.

## **24. Legislation and Guidance**

These procedures are driven by Government legislation and guidance available from the Director of Student Support and Inclusion.

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## Reporting arrangements:

The college arrangements continue in line with our Safeguarding Policy.

Please report via ProMonitor or to [safeguarding@wvr.ac.uk](mailto:safeguarding@wvr.ac.uk)

## The Designated Safeguarding Lead is:

Laura Williams      ☎ 07866 987 164      ✉ [lwilliams@wvr.ac.uk](mailto:lwilliams@wvr.ac.uk)

## The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are:

Debbie Warren      ☎ 07595 071 800      ✉ [dwarren@wvr.ac.uk](mailto:dwarren@wvr.ac.uk)

Helen Stanley      ☎ 07866 986 812      ✉ [hstanley@wvr.ac.uk](mailto:hstanley@wvr.ac.uk)

Nikky Bradley      ☎ 07860 919 104      ✉ [nbradley@wvr.ac.uk](mailto:nbradley@wvr.ac.uk)

## The Safeguarding Officers are:

Alison Stevens      ☎ 07860919112      ✉ [AStevens@wvr.ac.uk](mailto:AStevens@wvr.ac.uk)

Kerrie Wild      ☎ 07860 919113      ✉ [kwild@wvr.ac.uk](mailto:kwild@wvr.ac.uk)

Alexandra Roscoe      ☎ 07990 778080      ✉ [ARoscoe@wvr.ac.uk](mailto:ARoscoe@wvr.ac.uk)

## Additional Key Contacts

Nichola Newton      Principal and CEO      ✉ [nnewton@wvr.ac.uk](mailto:nnewton@wvr.ac.uk)

Mervyn Ward      Chair of Governors      ✉ [mward@wvr.ac.uk](mailto:mward@wvr.ac.uk)

Governor for Safeguarding

We will be operating during normal business hours, 8.30am – 5pm (Mon – Thurs) and 8.30am – 4.30pm (Friday).

We have confirmed the arrangements to contact the LADO at the local authorities remain unchanged:

- Warrington: [LADO@warrington.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@warrington.gov.uk)
- Cheshire West: [safeguardinglado@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:safeguardinglado@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

Staff will continue to follow the safeguarding procedures and advise the safeguarding leads immediately about concerns they have about any child, whether in college or not.

If you have access to ProMonitor please continue to log confidential comments as you normally would. If you do not have access to ProMonitor to log confidential comments please email concerns to [safeguarding@wvr.ac.uk](mailto:safeguarding@wvr.ac.uk) where a member of the safeguarding team will respond to the concern and log on ProMonitor. This email address is monitored by all safeguarding staff.

Normal safeguarding procedures apply for referrals to children's services. This contact will go through a member of the safeguarding team (listed above) who will follow appropriate measures in seeking the appropriate and necessary support. Out of hours guidance can be found in the Safeguarding Guidance 2019-20 and also here: <https://www.warrington.gov.uk/mars>

### **Allegations or concerns about staff**

With such different arrangements in place, young people could be at greater risk of online abuse. We remind all staff to maintain the view that 'it could happen here' and to immediately report any concern, no matter how small, to the safeguarding team.

Any agency staff or volunteers working with students during college closure will complete an induction to ensure they are aware of the risks and know how to take action if they are concerned.

### **New staff or volunteers**

All new starters must have an online induction. They must read the college Safeguarding and Prevent Policy including this annex, the Student Disciplinary and Positive Behaviour Management Procedures, the Whistleblowing Procedures and the Staff Code of Conduct. The DSL or deputy will ensure new recruits know who to contact if they have concerns about a child or young person and ensure that new starters are familiar with the child protection procedure. All new starters or volunteers will be required to confirm that they have read Part 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education

### **Child on child abuse (Formally peer on peer)**

We recognise the potential for abuse to go on between young people, especially in the context of a college closure or partial closure. Our staff will remain vigilant to the signs of child-on-child abuse, including those between young people who are not currently attending our provision. Extra care should be taken where groups have mixed age, developmental stages, are attending other education establishments as an interim measure and similar. When making contact with these families our staff may ask about relationships between learners.

### **Risk online**

Young people will be using the internet more during this period. The College may also use online approaches to deliver training or support. Staff will be aware of the signs and signals of cyberbullying and other risks online and apply the same child-centred safeguarding practices as when students are learning at the College. The College continues to ensure appropriate filters and monitors are in place.

It is extremely important that professional boundaries do not slip during this exceptional period and protocols for online working have been issued.

Staff can access further guidance here:

Safeguarding and remote education - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)) and Providing remote education: guidance for schools - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)). The NSPCC also provide helpful advice - Undertaking remote teaching safely.



Students accessing remote learning will receive guidance on keeping safe online and know how to raise concerns with the college, Childline, the UK Safer Internet Centre and CEOP.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/internet-connected-devices/>

## **Mental Health**

Restrictions to movement and contact with other people means pupils are more likely to be at risk of mental health problems. Individual colleges should make pupils and their families aware of where further support can be found. The Department for Education have produced guidance to support parents:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

The following organisations can also provide support:

[www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com) – Free online emotional wellbeing and counselling with self-help articles

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/helping-someone-else/>

Calm Harm App – A phone app providing help for those who use self-harm as a coping strategy; <https://calmharm.co.uk/>

## **Parents and Carers**

Parents and carers will receive information about keeping students safe online with peers, the College, other education offers they may have access to and the wider internet community. We have set out the College's approach, including the online platform which students will be asked to access. We have also provided details on the College staff members who students will be interacting with online.

Parents will be offered the following links:

- Internet matters - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- Net-aware - for support for parents and carers from the NSPCC
- Parent info - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- Thinkuknow - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
- UK Safer Internet Centre - advice for parents and carers

Free additional support is available for staff which supports with advice on responding to online safety issues. This can be accessed from the Professionals Online Safety Helpline at the UK Safer Internet Centre.



Department  
for Education

# Keeping children safe in education 2023

Statutory guidance for schools and colleges

Part one: Information for all school and  
college staff

The 2022 version of the guidance is currently  
in force. The 2023 version will come into force  
on 1

September 2023.

# Contents

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## Summary

Keeping children safe in education is statutory guidance that schools and colleges in England must have regard to when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

It is essential that **everybody** working in a school or college understands their safeguarding responsibilities. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that those staff who work directly with children read at least Part one of the guidance.

Governing bodies and proprietors, working with their senior leadership teams and especially their designated safeguarding lead, should ensure that those staff who do not work directly with children read either Part one or Annex A (a condensed version of Part one) of the full version of the document. This is entirely a matter for the school or college and will be based on their assessment of which guidance will be most effective for their staff to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The full version of KCSIE can be found here: [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/426273/Keeping-children-safe-in-education-GOV.UK.pdf)

## About this guidance

We use the terms “**must**” and “**should**” throughout the guidance. We use the term “**must**” when the person in question is legally required to do something and “**should**” when the advice set out should be followed unless there is good reason not to.

## Part one: Safeguarding information for all staff

### What school and college staff should know and do

#### *A child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding*

1. Schools and colleges and their staff are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is described in the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children.
2. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone’s** responsibility. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child.

3. No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, **everyone** who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.
4. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:
  - protecting children from maltreatment
  - preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
  - ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and
  - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
5. Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

#### *The role of school and college staff*

6. School and college staff are particularly important, as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating.
7. **All** staff have responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
8. **All** staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help.<sup>11</sup> Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.
9. **Any staff member** who has **any** concerns about a child's welfare should follow the processes set out in paragraphs 51-67. Staff should expect to support social workers and other agencies following any referral.
10. **Every** school and college should have a designated safeguarding lead who will provide support to staff to carry out their safeguarding duties and who will liaise closely with other services such as local authority children's social care.
11. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns.
12. The Teachers' Standards 2012 state that teachers (which includes headteachers) should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.<sup>2</sup>

#### *What school and college staff need to know*

13. **All** staff should be aware of systems within their school or college which support safeguarding, and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. This should include the:

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<sup>11</sup> Detailed information on early help can be found in Chapter 1 of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#). <sup>2</sup> The [Teachers' Standards](#) apply to: trainees working towards QTS; all teachers completing their statutory induction period (newly qualified teachers [NQTs]); and teachers in maintained schools, including maintained special schools, who are subject to the Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012.

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- child protection policy (which should amongst other things also include the policy and procedures to deal with child-on-child abuse)
  - behaviour policy (which should include measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)<sup>12</sup>
  - staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct) should amongst other things, include low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistleblowing
  - safeguarding response to children who go missing from education, and

- 
- role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies).

Copies of policies and a copy of Part one (or Annex A, if appropriate) of this document should be provided to **all** staff at induction.

14. **All** staff should receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) at induction. The training should be regularly updated. In addition, **all** staff should receive safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, and staff meetings), as required, and at least annually, to continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.
15. **All** staff should be aware of their local early help process and understand their role in it.
16. **All** staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments<sup>13</sup> under the Children Act 1989, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.
17. **All** staff should know what to do if a child tells them they are being abused, exploited, or neglected. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and local authority children's social care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.
18. **All** staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting **any** form of abuse and/or neglect. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

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<sup>12</sup> All schools are required to have a behaviour policy (full details are [here](#)). If a college or chooses to have a behaviour policy it should be provided to staff as described above.

<sup>13</sup> Detailed information on statutory assessments can be found in Chapter 1 of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)

19. **All staff** should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or are being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having

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a professional curiosity and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.

#### *What school and college staff should look out for*

##### *Early help*

20. **Any** child may benefit from early help, but all school and college staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
- has returned home to their family from care
- is at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child, or
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

##### *Abuse and neglect*

21. **All** staff should be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect (see below), understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school/college, inside and outside of home and online. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

22. **All** school and college staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.
23. **All** staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines, and radicalisation.
24. **All** staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography to those who do not want to receive such content.
25. **In all cases, if staff are unsure, they should always speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.**

#### Indicators of abuse and neglect

26. **Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.
27. **Physical abuse:** a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
28. **Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), 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, although it may occur alone.
29. **Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative

acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and **all** staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it.

30. **Neglect:** 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, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### *Safeguarding issues*

31. **All** staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and/or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education, serious violence (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos<sup>14</sup> can be signs that children are at risk. Below are some safeguarding issues all staff should be aware of. **Additional information on these safeguarding issues and information on other safeguarding issues is included in the annex.**

### *Child-on-child abuse*

32. **All** staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online. **All** staff should be clear as to the school's or college's policy and procedures with regard to child-on-child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.
33. **All** staff should understand that even if there are no reports in their schools or colleges it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have **any** concerns regarding child-on-child abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).
34. It is essential that **all** staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children, many of which are listed below, that are abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

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<sup>14</sup> Consensual image sharing, especially between older children of the same age, may require a different response. It might not be abusive – but children still need to know it is illegal- whilst non-consensual is illegal and abusive. [UKCIS](#) provides detailed advice about sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and videos.



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35. Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’)
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- sexual violence,<sup>15</sup> such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)

- 
- sexual harassment,<sup>16</sup> such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
  - causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
  - consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos<sup>8</sup> (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
  - upskirting,<sup>9</sup> which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm, and
  - initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

#### Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

36. Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

#### Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

37. Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting, or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

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<sup>15</sup> For further information about sexual violence see Part 5 of the full document and the Annex.

<sup>16</sup> For further information about sexual harassment see Part 5 of the full document and the Annex. <sup>8</sup>

UKCIS guidance: [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes advice for education settings](#) <sup>9</sup> For further information about ‘upskirting’ see Annex.

38. Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation, as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims

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despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

39. It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

#### Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

40. CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include noncontact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

41. CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge for example through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.

42. CSE can affect any child who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited for example they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

#### Domestic Abuse

43. Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

#### Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

44. Whilst **all** staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific **legal duty on teachers**.<sup>17</sup> If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher **must** report this to the police.

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<sup>17</sup> Under section 5B(11) (a) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, "teacher" means, in relation to England, a person within section 141A(1) of the Education Act 2002 (persons employed or engaged to carry out teaching work at schools and other institutions in England).

## Mental Health

45. **All** staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.
46. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Schools and colleges can access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies.
47. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy, and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

### Serious violence

48. **All** staff should be aware of the indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school or college, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

### Additional information and support

49. Departmental advice [What to Do if You Are Worried a Child is Being Abused - Advice for Practitioners](#) provides more information on understanding and identifying abuse and neglect. Examples of potential indicators of abuse and neglect are highlighted throughout the advice and will be particularly helpful for school and college staff. The [NSPCC](#) website also provides useful additional information on abuse and neglect and what to look out for.
50. **The annex contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues. School and college leaders and those staff who work directly with children should read the annex.**

### What school and college staff should do if they have concerns about a child

51. Staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'** where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the **best interests** of the child.
52. If staff have **any concerns** about a child's welfare, they should act on them **immediately**. See page 22 for a flow chart setting out the process for staff when they have concerns about a child.
53. If staff have a concern, they should follow their own organisation's child protection policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).
54. Options will then include:
  - managing any support for the child internally via the school's or college's own pastoral support processes

- undertaking an early help assessment,<sup>18</sup> or
- making a referral to statutory services,<sup>19</sup> for example as the child might be in need, is in need or suffering, or is likely to suffer harm.

55. The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If in exceptional circumstances, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local authority children's social care. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) as soon as is practically possible.

56. Staff should not assume a colleague, or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. They should be mindful

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that early information sharing is vital for the effective identification, assessment, and allocation of appropriate service provision, whether this is when problems first emerge, or where a child is already known to local authority children's social care (such as a child in need or a child with a protection plan). [Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers](#) supports staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. This advice includes the seven golden rules for sharing information and considerations with regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

57. DPA and UK GDPR **do not** prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy). Fears about sharing information **must not** be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

#### *Early help assessment*

58. If early help is appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner. Any such cases should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to local authority children's social care for assessment for statutory services if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

#### *Statutory children's social care assessments and services*

59. **Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to local authority children's social care (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately.** Referrals should follow the local referral process.

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<sup>18</sup> Further information on early help assessments, provision of early help services and accessing services is in Chapter 1 of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

<sup>19</sup> Chapter 1 of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) sets out that the safeguarding partners should publish a threshold document that should include the criteria, including the level of need, for when a case should be referred to local authority children's social care for assessment and for statutory services under section 17 and 47. Local authorities, with their partners, should develop and publish local protocols for assessment. A local protocol should set out clear arrangements for how cases will be managed once a child is referred into local authority children's social care.

60. Local authority children's social care assessments should consider where children are being harmed in contexts outside the home, so it is important that schools and colleges provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and enable a contextual approach to address such harm. Additional information is available here: [Contextual Safeguarding](#).
61. The online tool [Report Child Abuse to Your Local Council](#) directs to the relevant local authority children's social care contact number.

#### Children in need

62. A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

#### Children suffering or likely to suffer significant harm:

63. Local authorities, with the help of other organisations as appropriate, have a duty to make enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Such enquiries enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare and must be initiated where there are concerns about maltreatment. This includes **all** forms of abuse and neglect.

#### What will the local authority do?

64. Within one working day of a referral being made, a local authority social worker should acknowledge its receipt to the referrer and make a decision about the next steps and the type of response that is required. This will include determining whether:
- the child requires immediate protection and urgent action is required
  - any services are required by the child and family and what type of services
  - the child is in need and should be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) provides details of the assessment process
  - there is reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and whether enquiries must be made, and the child assessed under section 47 of the Children Act 1989. Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) provides details of the assessment process, and
  - further specialist assessments are required to help the local authority to decide what further action to take.
65. The referrer should follow up if this information is not forthcoming.
66. If social workers decide to carry out a statutory assessment, staff should do everything they can to support that assessment (supported by the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) as required).

67. If, after a referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the referrer should consider following local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.

#### *Record keeping*

68. **All** concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. This will also help if/when responding to any complaints about the way a case has been handled by the school or college. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child.

Records should include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved, and
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

69. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

## **Why is all of this important?**

70. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address safeguarding risks, prevent issues escalating and to promote children's welfare. Research and serious case reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action.<sup>20</sup> Further information about serious case reviews can be found in Chapter four of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#). Examples of poor practice include:

- failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect
- poor record keeping
- failing to listen to the views of the child
- failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve
- not sharing information with the right people within and between agencies
- sharing information too slowly, and
- a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.

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<sup>20</sup> An analysis of serious case reviews can be found at [gov.uk/government/publications/analysis-of-seriouscase-reviews-2014-to-2017](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/analysis-of-seriouscase-reviews-2014-to-2017).

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*What school and college staff should do if they have a safeguarding concern or an allegation about another staff member*

71. Schools and colleges should have processes and procedures in place to manage **any** safeguarding concern or allegation (no matter how small) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors).
72. If staff have a safeguarding concern or an allegation is made about another member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors) **harming or posing a risk of harm to children**, then:
- this should be referred to the headteacher or principal
  - where there is a concern/allegation about the headteacher or principal, this should be referred to the chair of governors, chair of the management committee or proprietor of an independent school, and
  - in the event of a concern/allegation about the headteacher, where the headteacher is also the sole proprietor of an independent school, or a situation where there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the headteacher, this should be reported directly to the local authority designated officer(s) (LADOs). Details of your local LADO should be easily accessible on your local authority's website.
73. If staff have a safeguarding concern or an allegation about another member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers or contractors) that **does not** meet the harm threshold, then this should be shared in accordance with the school or college low-level concerns policy. Further details can be found in Part four of the full version of KCSIE.

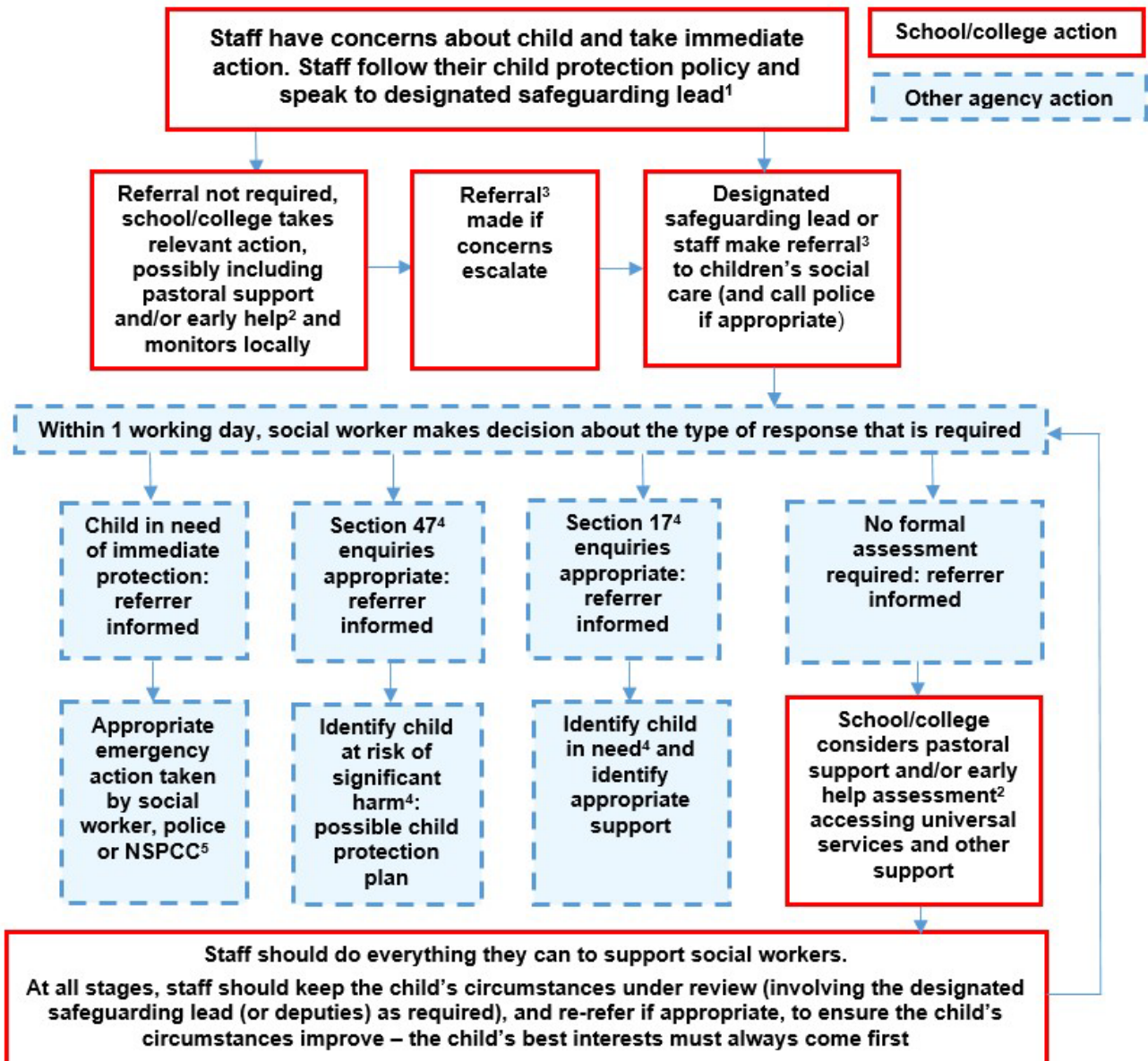
*What school or college staff should do if they have concerns about safeguarding practices within the school or college*

74. All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's or college's safeguarding regime and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.
75. Appropriate whistleblowing procedures should be put in place for such concerns to be raised with the school's or college's senior leadership team.
76. Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels are open to them:
- general guidance on whistleblowing can be found via: [Advice on Whistleblowing](#) the [NSPCC's what you can do to report abuse dedicated helpline](#) is available as an alternative route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally, or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by their school or college. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Alternatively, staff can write to: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), Weston House, 42 Curtain, Road, London EC2A 3NH.

*Actions where there are concerns about a child*



- <sup>1</sup> In cases which also involve a concern or an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part Four of the full version of KCSIE.
- <sup>2</sup> Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help, an early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) provides detailed guidance on the early help process.
- <sup>3</sup> Referrals should follow the process set out in the local threshold document and local protocol for assessment. Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).
- <sup>4</sup> Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to make enquiries to decide whether to take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. Full details are in Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).
- <sup>5</sup> This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

## Annex: Further information

This annex contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues. School and college leaders and those staff who work directly with children should read this annex.



As per Part one, if staff have any concerns about a child’s welfare, they should act on them immediately. They should follow their own organisation’s child protection policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

**Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to children’s social care (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately.**

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### *Child abduction and community safety incidents*

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers.

Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.

As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. Many schools provide outdoor-safety lessons run by teachers or by local police staff.

It is important that lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers. Further information is available at: [www.actionagainstabduction.org](http://www.actionagainstabduction.org) and [www.clevernevergoes.org](http://www.clevernevergoes.org).

### *Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)*

We know that different forms of harm often overlap, and that perpetrators may subject children and young people to multiple forms of abuse, such as criminal exploitation (including county lines) and sexual exploitation.

In some cases the exploitation or abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example, money, gifts or affection), and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage, such as increased status, of the perpetrator or facilitator.

Children can be exploited by adult males or females, as individuals or in groups. They may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, it is important that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim.

Whilst the age of the child may be a contributing factor for an imbalance of power, there are a range of other factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation, including, sexual identity, cognitive ability, learning difficulties, communication ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Some of the following can be indicators of both child criminal and sexual exploitation where children:

- appear with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions
- associate with other children involved in exploitation
- suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- misuse alcohol and other drugs
- go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late, and
- regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

Children who have been exploited will need additional support to help keep them in education.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

Some additional specific indicators that may be present in CSE are children who:

- have older boyfriends or girlfriends; and
- suffer from sexually transmitted infections, display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development or become pregnant.

Further information on signs of a child's involvement in sexual exploitation is available in Home Office guidance: [Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners](#)

## County lines

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including any type of schools (including special schools), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children’s homes and care homes.

Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

A number of the indicators for CSE and CCE as detailed above may be applicable to where children are involved in county lines. Some additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines are children who:

- go missing and are subsequently found in areas away from their home
- have been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime)
- are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs
- are exposed to techniques such as ‘plugging’, where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection
- are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a ‘trap house or cuckooing’ or hotel room where there is drug activity
- owe a ‘debt bond’ to their exploiters
- have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.

Further information on the signs of a child’s involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the [Home Office and The Children’s Society County Lines Toolkit For Professionals](#)

## Children and the court system

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age appropriate guides to support children [5-11-year olds](#) and [12-17 year olds](#).

The guides explain each step of the process, support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained.

Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online [child arrangements information tool](#) with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers.

### *Children who are absent from education*

All staff should be aware that children being absent from school or college, particularly repeatedly, and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect such as sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. It is important that staff are aware of their school's or college's unauthorised absence procedures and children missing from education procedures.

### *Children with family members in prison*

Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders, [NICCO](#) provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

### *Cybercrime*

Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer). Cyber-dependent crimes include:

- unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded
- 'Denial of Service' (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources, and,
- making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

Children with particular skills and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime.

If there are concerns about a child in this area, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy), should consider referring into the **Cyber Choices** programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low-level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.

Note that **Cyber Choices** does not currently cover 'cyber-enabled' crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs on-line and child sexual abuse and exploitation, nor other areas of concern such as on-line bullying or general on-line safety.

Additional advice can be found at: [Cyber Choices](#), '[NPCC- When to call the Police](#)' and [National Cyber Security Centre - NCSC.GOV.UK](#).

## *Domestic abuse*

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Under the statutory definition, both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be “personally connected” (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act).

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child to parent abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. The government has issued statutory guidance to provide further information for those working with domestic abuse victims and perpetrators, including the impact on children.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as ‘teenage relationship abuse’. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of ‘domestic abuse’ (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support.

## [Operation Encompass](#)

[Operation Encompass](#) operates in all police forces across England. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when the police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the key adult (usually the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy)) in school before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child’s circumstances and can enable immediate support to be put in place, according to the child’s needs. Operation Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding procedures. Where appropriate, the police and/or schools should make a referral to local authority children’s social care if they are concerned about a child’s welfare. More information about the scheme and how schools can become involved is available on the Operation Encompass website.

Operation Encompass provides an advice and helpline service for all staff members from educational settings who may be concerned about children who have experienced domestic abuse. The helpline is available 8AM to 1PM, Monday to Friday on 0204 513 9990 (charged at local rate).

## [National Domestic Abuse Helpline](#)

Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, which can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247. Its website provides guidance and support for potential victims, as well as those who are worried about friends and loved ones. It also has a form through which a safe time from the team for a call can be booked.

Additional advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at:

- [NSPCC- UK domestic-abuse Signs Symptoms Effects](#)
- [Refuge what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children](#)
- [Safe Young Lives: Young people and domestic abuse | Safelives](#)
- [Domestic abuse: specialist sources of support](#) (includes information for adult victims, young people facing abuse in their own relationships and parents experiencing child to parent violence/abuse)
- [Home: Operation Encompass](#) (includes information for schools on the impact of domestic abuse on children)

### *Homelessness*

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into local authority children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live. The following factsheets usefully summarise the new duties: [Homeless Reduction Act Factsheets](#). The new duties shift the focus to early intervention and encourages those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis.

In most cases school and college staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16 and 17 year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Local authority children's social care will be the lead agency for these children and the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities have published joint statutory guidance on the provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds who may be homeless and/or require accommodation: [here](#).

### *Mental health*

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour, attendance and progress at school.

More information can be found in the [Mental health and behaviour in schools guidance](#), colleges may also wish to follow this guidance as best practice. Public Health England<sup>22</sup> has produced a range of resources to

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<sup>22</sup> Public Health England: has now been replaced by the UK Health Security Agency and the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID), which is part of the Department of Health and Social Care, and by the UK Health Security Agency. However, the branding remains unchanged.

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support secondary school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among children. See [Every Mind Matters](#) for links to all materials and lesson plans.

### *Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism*

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including: sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs.

Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in Statutory Guidance. [Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims - GOV.UK](#)

### *Preventing radicalisation*

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools or colleges safeguarding approach.

**Extremism**<sup>23</sup> is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

**Radicalisation**<sup>24</sup> refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

**Terrorism**<sup>25</sup> is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat **must** be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

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Although there is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology, there are [possible indicators](#) that should be taken into consideration alongside other factors and contexts. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media or the internet) and settings (such as within the home).

However, it is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideologies and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being drawn to terrorism. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) making a Prevent referral.

Although not a cause for concern on their own, possible indicators when taken into consideration alongside other factors or context may be a sign of being radicalised.

Further information and a list of such indicators can be found at [Radicalisation and](#)

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<sup>23</sup> As defined in the Government's [Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales](#).

<sup>24</sup> As defined in the [Government's Prevent](#) Duty Guidance for England and Wales.

<sup>25</sup> As defined in the Terrorism Act 2000 (TACT 2000) <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/11/contents>

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## [Extremism - Examples and Behavioural Traits \(educateagainsthate.com\)](https://educateagainsthate.com)

### The Prevent duty

All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard<sup>26</sup> to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”.<sup>27</sup> This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

The Prevent duty should be seen as part of schools’ and colleges’ wider safeguarding obligations. Designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) and other senior leaders in schools should familiarise themselves with the revised [Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales](#), especially paragraphs 57-76, which are specifically concerned with schools (and also covers childcare). Designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) and other senior leaders in colleges should familiar themselves with the [Prevent duty guidance: for further education institutions in England and Wales](#). The guidance is set out in terms of four general themes: risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.

The school’s or college’s designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral.

### Channel

Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being susceptible to being drawn into terrorism. Prevent referrals are assessed and may be passed to a multiagency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are at risk of being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. A representative from the school or college may be asked to attend the Channel panel to help with this assessment. An individual will be required to provide their consent before any support delivered through the programme is provided.

The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse or those who are currently receiving support through the ‘Channel’ programme, and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

Statutory guidance on Channel is available at: [Channel guidance](#).

### Additional support

The Department has published further advice for those working in education settings with safeguarding responsibilities on the [Prevent duty](#). The advice is intended to complement the Prevent guidance and signposts to other sources of advice and support.

The Home Office has developed three e-learning modules:

- [Prevent awareness e-learning](#) offers an introduction to the Prevent duty.
- [Prevent referrals e-learning](#) supports staff to make Prevent referrals that are **robust, informed** and with **good intention**.
- [Channel awareness e-learning](#) is aimed at staff who may be asked to contribute to or sit on a multi-agency Channel panel.

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<sup>26</sup> According to the Prevent duty guidance ‘having due regard’ means that the authorities should place an appropriate amount of weight on the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism when they consider all the other factors relevant to how they carry out their usual functions.

<sup>27</sup> “Terrorism” for these purposes has the same meaning as for the Terrorism Act 2000 (section 1(1) to (4) of that Act).



[Educate Against Hate](#), is a government website designed to support school teachers and leaders to help them safeguard their students from radicalisation and extremism. The platform provides free information and resources to help school staff identify and address the risks, as well as build resilience to radicalisation.

For advice specific to further education, the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) hosts the [Prevent for FE and Training](#). This hosts a range of free, sector specific resources to support further education settings to comply with the Prevent duty. This includes the Prevent Awareness e-learning, which offers an introduction to the duty, and the Prevent Referral e-learning, which is designed to support staff to make robust, informed and proportionate referrals.

The [ETF Online Learning environment](#) provides online training modules for practitioners, leaders and managers, to support staff and governors/Board members in outlining their roles and responsibilities under the duty.

London Grid for Learning have also produced useful resources on Prevent ([Online Safety Resource Centre - London Grid for Learning \(lgfl.net\)](#)).

### *Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges*

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex from primary to secondary stage and into colleges. It can also occur online. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school or college. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable.

It is essential that **all** victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. Detailed advice is available in Part five of the full version of KCSIE.

### *Serious Violence*

There are a number of indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. These may include:

- increased absence from school
- a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups
- a significant decline in performance
- signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries
- unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

The likelihood of involvement in serious violence may be increased by factors such as:

- being male
- having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school

- having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

A fuller list of risk factors can be found in the Home Office's [Serious Violence Strategy](#).

Professionals should also be aware that violence can often peak in the hours just before or just after school, when pupils are travelling to and from school. These times can be particularly risky for young people involved in serious violence.

Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's [Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines](#) guidance. The [Youth Endowment Fund \(YEF\) Toolkit](#) sets out the evidence for what works in preventing young people from becoming involved in violence.

Home Office funded Violence Reduction Units (VRU) operate in the 20 police force areas across England and Wales that have the highest volumes of serious violence, as measured by hospital admissions for injury with a sharp object. A list of these locations can be found [here](#). As the strategic co-ordinators for local violence prevention, each VRU is mandated to include at least one local education representative within their Core Membership group, which is responsible for setting the direction for VRU activity. Schools and educational partners within these areas are encouraged to reach out to their local VRU, either directly or via their education Core Member, to better ingrain partnership working to tackle serious violence across local areas and ensure a joined up approach to young people across the risk spectrum.

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act will introduce early in 2023 a new duty on a range of specified authorities, such as the police, local government, youth offending teams, health and probation services, to work collaboratively, share data and information, and put in place plans to prevent and reduce serious violence within their local communities. Educational authorities and prisons/youth custody authorities will be under a separate duty to co-operate with core duty holders when asked, and there will be a requirement for the partnership to consult with all such institutions in their area.

The Duty is not intended to replace or duplicate existing safeguarding duties. Local partners may choose to meet the requirements of the Duty through existing multi-agency structures, such as multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, providing the correct set of partners are involved.

#### *So-called 'honour'-based abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)*

So-called 'honour'-based abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving 'honour' often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

#### Actions

If staff have a concern regarding a child who might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy). As appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with the police and local authority children's social care. Where

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FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on **teachers**<sup>28</sup> that requires a different approach (see below).

### FGM

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

#### FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon **teachers**, along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM

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appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases may face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should **not** be examining pupils or students, but the same definition of what is meant by “to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out” is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at: [Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information](#).

Teachers **must** personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.<sup>29</sup> Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school’s or college’s designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and involve local authority children’s social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures. The following is a useful summary of the FGM mandatory reporting duty: [FGM Fact Sheet](#).

Further information can be found in the [Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation](#) and the [FGM resource pack](#) particularly section 13.

#### Forced marriage

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some perpetrators use perceived cultural practices to coerce a person into marriage. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) has created: Multi-agency practice guidelines: handling cases of forced marriage (pages 75-80 of which focus on the role of schools and colleges) and, Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage, which can both be found at [The right to choose: government](#)

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<sup>28</sup> Under Section 5B(11)(a) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, “teacher” means, in relation to England, a person within section 141A(1) of the Education Act 2002 (persons employed or engaged to carry out teaching work at schools and other institutions in England).

<sup>29</sup> Section 5B(6) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 states teachers need not report a case to the police if they have reason to believe that another teacher has already reported the case.

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[guidance on forced marriage - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email [fm@fcdo.gov.uk](mailto:fm@fcdo.gov.uk).

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In addition, since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

#### *Additional advice and support*

There is a wealth of information available to support schools and colleges. The following list is not exhaustive but should provide a useful starting point:

#### Abuse

[Supporting practice in tackling child sexual abuse - CSA Centre](#) Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse has free evidence-based practice resources to help professionals working with children and young people to identify and respond appropriately to concerns of child sexual abuse.

[What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#) – DfE advice

[Domestic abuse: Various Information/Guidance](#) - Home Office (HO)

[Faith based abuse: National Action Plan](#) - DfE advice

[Disrespect NoBody campaign - GOV.UK](#) - Home Office website

[Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy](#) – Home Office policy paper

[Together we can stop child sexual abuse](#) – HM Government campaign

## **Bullying**

[Preventing bullying including cyberbullying](#) - DfE advice

Children missing from education, home or care

[Children missing education](#) - DfE statutory guidance

[Child missing from home or care](#) - DfE statutory guidance

[Children and adults missing strategy](#) - Home Office strategy

Children with family members in prison

[National Information Centre on Children of Offenders](#) - Barnardo's in partnership with HM

Prison and Probation Service

Child Exploitation

[Trafficking: safeguarding children](#) - DfE and Home Office guidance

[Care of unaccompanied and trafficked children](#) – DfE statutory guidance

[Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims](#) – HO statutory guidance

- [Child exploitation disruption toolkit](#) - HO statutory guidance
- [County Lines Toolkit For Professionals](#) - The Children's Society in partnership with Victim Support and National Police Chiefs' Council

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Multi-agency practice principles for responding to child exploitation and extra-familial harm – non-statutory guidance for local areas, developed by the Tackling Child Exploitation (TCE) Support Programme, funded by the Department for Education and supported by the Home Office, the Department for Health and Social Care and the Ministry of Justice

#### Confidentiality

[Gillick competency Fraser guidelines](#) - Guidelines to help with balancing children’s rights along with safeguarding responsibilities.

#### Drugs

[Drug strategy 2021](#) - Home Office strategy

[Information and advice on drugs](#) - Talk to Frank website

[Drug and Alcohol education — teacher guidance & evidence review](#) – PSHE Association

(so called) “Honour Based Abuse” including FGM and forced marriage

[Female genital mutilation: information and resources](#)- Home Office guidance

[Female genital mutilation: multi agency statutory guidance](#) - DfE, Department for Health, and Home Office

[Forced marriage](#) - Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) resources

[Forced marriage](#) - Government multi-agency practice guidelines and multi-agency statutory guidance

[Forced marriage resource pack](#) – HM Government guidance

#### Health and Well-being

[Rise Above: Free PSHE resources on health, wellbeing and resilience](#) - Public Health England

[Supporting pupils at schools with medical conditions](#) - DfE statutory guidance

[Mental health and behaviour in schools](#) - DfE advice

[Overview - Fabricated or induced illness](#) - NHS advice

#### Homelessness

[Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities](#) – Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities guidance

#### Information Sharing

[Government information sharing advice](#) - Guidance on information sharing for people who provide safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers.

[Information Commissioner's Office: Data sharing information hub](#) - Information to help schools and colleges comply with UK data protection legislation including UK GDPR.

#### Online safety-advice

[Childnet](#) provide guidance for schools on cyberbullying

[Educateagainsthat](#) provides practical advice and support on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation

[London Grid for Learning](#) provides advice on all aspects of a school or college’s online safety arrangements

[NSPCC E-safety for schools](#) provides advice, templates, and tools on all aspects of a school or college’s online safety arrangements

[Safer recruitment consortium](#) “guidance for safe working practice”, which may help ensure staff behaviour policies are robust and effective

[Searching screening and confiscation](#) is departmental advice for schools on searching children and confiscating items such as mobile phones

[South West Grid for Learning](#) provides advice on all aspects of a school or college's online safety arrangements

[Use of social media for online radicalisation](#) - A briefing note for schools on how social media is used to encourage travel to Syria and Iraq

[Online Safety Audit Tool](#) from UK Council for Internet Safety to help mentors of trainee teachers and newly qualified teachers induct mentees and provide ongoing support, development and monitoring

[Online safety guidance if you own or manage an online platform](#) DCMS advice

[A business guide for protecting children on your online platform](#) DCMS advice

[UK Safer Internet Centre](#) provide tips, advice, guides and other resources to help keep children safe online

Online safety- Remote education, virtual lessons and live streaming

[Guidance Get help with remote education](#) resources and support for teachers and school leaders on educating pupils and students

[Departmental guidance on safeguarding and remote education](#) including planning remote education strategies and teaching remotely

[London Grid for Learning](#) guidance, including platform specific advice

[National cyber security centre](#) guidance on choosing, configuring and deploying video conferencing

[UK Safer Internet Centre](#) guidance on safe remote learning

Online Safety- Support for children

[Childline](#) for free and confidential advice

[UK Safer Internet Centre](#) to report and remove harmful online content

[CEOP](#) for advice on making a report about online abuse

Online safety- Parental support

[Childnet](#) offers a toolkit to support parents and carers of children of any age to start discussions about their online life, and to find out where to get more help and support

[Commonsensemedia](#) provide independent reviews, age ratings, & other information about all types of media for children and their parents

[Government advice](#) about protecting children from specific online harms such as child sexual abuse, sexting, and cyberbullying

[Internet Matters](#) provide age-specific online safety checklists, guides on how to set parental controls, and practical tips to help children get the most out of their digital world [How Can I Help My Child?](#) Marie Collins Foundation – Sexual Abuse Online

[Let's Talk About It](#) provides advice for parents and carers to keep children safe from online radicalisation

[London Grid for Learning](#) provides support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online, including tips to keep primary aged children safe online

[Stopitnow](#) resource from [The Lucy Faithfull Foundation](#) can be used by parents and carers who are concerned about someone's behaviour, including children who may be displaying concerning sexual behaviour (not just about online)

[National Crime Agency/CEOP Thinkuknow](#) provides support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online

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[Parentzone](#) provides help for parents and carers on how to keep their children safe online

[Talking to your child about online sexual harassment: A guide for parents](#) – This is the Children’s Commissioner’s parental guide on talking to their children about online sexual harassment

[#Ask the awkward](#) – Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre guidance to parents to talk to their children about online relationships

## Private fostering

[Private fostering: local authorities](#) - DfE statutory guidance

Radicalisation

[Prevent duty guidance](#)- Home Office guidance

[Prevent duty: additional advice for schools and childcare providers](#) - DfE advice

[Educate Against Hate website](#) - DfE and Home Office advice

[Prevent for FE and Training](#) - Education and Training Foundation (ETF)

[Extremism and Radicalisation Safeguarding Resources](#) – Resources by London Grid for Learning

Serious Violence

[Serious violence strategy](#) - Home Office Strategy

[Factors linked to serious violence and how these factors can be used to identify individuals for intervention](#) – Home Office

[Youth Endowment Fund](#) – Home Office

[Gangs and youth violence: for schools and colleges](#) - Home Office advice

[Tackling violence against women and girls strategy](#)- Home Office strategy

[Violence against women and girls: national statement of expectations for victims](#) - Home Office guidance

## Sexual violence and sexual harassment

Specialist Organisations

[Barnardo's](#) - UK charity caring for and supporting some of the most vulnerable children and young people through their range of services.

[Lucy Faithful Foundation](#) - UK-wide child protection charity dedicated to preventing child sexual abuse. They work with families affected by sexual abuse and also run the confidential Stop it Now! Helpline.

[Marie Collins Foundation](#) – Charity that, amongst other things, works directly with children, young people, and families to enable their recovery following sexual abuse.

[NSPCC](#) - Children's charity specialising in child protection with statutory powers enabling them to take action and safeguard children at risk of abuse.

[Rape Crisis](#) - National charity and the umbrella body for their network of independent member Rape Crisis Centres.

[UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - Provides advice and support to children, young people, parents, carers and schools about staying safe online.

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## Harmful sexual behaviour

[Rape Crisis \(England & Wales\)](#) or [The Survivors Trust](#) for information, advice, and details of local specialist sexual violence organisations.

[NICE guidance](#) contains information on, amongst other things: developing interventions; working with families and carers; and multi-agency working.

[HSB toolkit](#) The Lucy Faithfull Foundation - designed for parents, carers, family members and professionals, to help everyone play their part in keeping children safe. It has links to useful information, resources, and support as well as practical tips to prevent harmful sexual behaviour and provide safe environments for families.

[NSPCC Learning: Protecting children from harmful sexual behaviour](#) and [NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework](#)- free and independent advice about HSB.

[Contextual Safeguarding Network – Beyond Referrals \(Schools\)](#) provides a school selfassessment toolkit and guidance for addressing HSB in schools.

[Preventing harmful sexual behaviour in children - Stop It Now](#) provides a guide for parents, carers and professionals to help everyone do their part in keeping children safe, they also run a free confidential helpline.

## Support for Victims

[Anti-Bullying Alliance](#) - Detailed information for anyone being bullied, along with advice for parents and schools. Signposts to various helplines and websites for further support.

[Rape Crisis](#) - Provide and signpost to a range of services to support people who have experienced rape, child abuse or any kind of sexual violence.

[The Survivors Trust](#)- UK-wide national umbrella agency with resources and support dedicated to survivors of rape, sexual violence and child sex abuse.

[Victim Support](#) - Supporting children and young people who have been affected by crime. Also provides support to parents and professionals who work with children and young people – regardless of whether a crime has been reported or how long ago it was.

[Childline](#) provides free and confidential advice for children and young people.

## Toolkits

[ask AVA](#) - The Ask AVA prevention platform has been created to support education practitioners across the UK to develop and deliver a comprehensive programme to stop Violence Against Women and Girls.

[NSPCC](#) - Online Self-assessment tool to ensure organisations are doing everything they can to safeguard children.

[NSPCC](#) - Resources which help adults respond to children disclosing abuse.

NSPCC also provides free and independent advice about HSB: [NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework](#)

[Safeguarding Unit, Farrer and Co. and Carlene Firmin, MBE, University of Bedfordshire](#) - Peer-on-Peer Abuse toolkit provides practical guidance for schools on how to prevent, identify early and respond appropriately to peer-on-peer abuse.

[Contextual Safeguarding Network](#) – self-assessment toolkit for schools to assess their own response to HSB.

[Childnet - STAR SEND Toolkit](#) equips, enables and empowers educators with the knowledge to support young people with special educational needs and disabilities.



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[Childnet - Just a joke?](#) provides lesson plans, activities, a quiz and teaching guide designed to explore problematic online sexual behaviour with 9-12 year olds.

[Childnet - Step Up, Speak Up](#) a practical campaign toolkit that addresses the issue of online sexual harassment amongst young people aged 13-17 years old.

[NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework](#) an evidence-informed framework for children and young people displaying HSB.

[Contextual Safeguarding Network – Beyond Referrals - Schools](#) leavers for addressing HSB in schools.

Farrer & Co: [Addressing child on child abuse: a resource for schools and colleges](#). This resource provides practical guidance for schools and colleges on how to prevent, identify early and respond appropriately to child-on-child abuse.

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes

[London Grid for Learning-collection of advice](#) - Various information and resources dealing with the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.

[UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#) - Advice for schools and colleges on responding to incidents of non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.

Support for parents/carers

NCA CEOP [Thinkuknow](#): Advice/resources on how to deal with concerns about what children may be doing online including advice on how to help challenge harmful sexual attitudes and start a conversation to [support positive sexual behaviour](#).



Department  
for Education

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write to Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London, TW9 4DU

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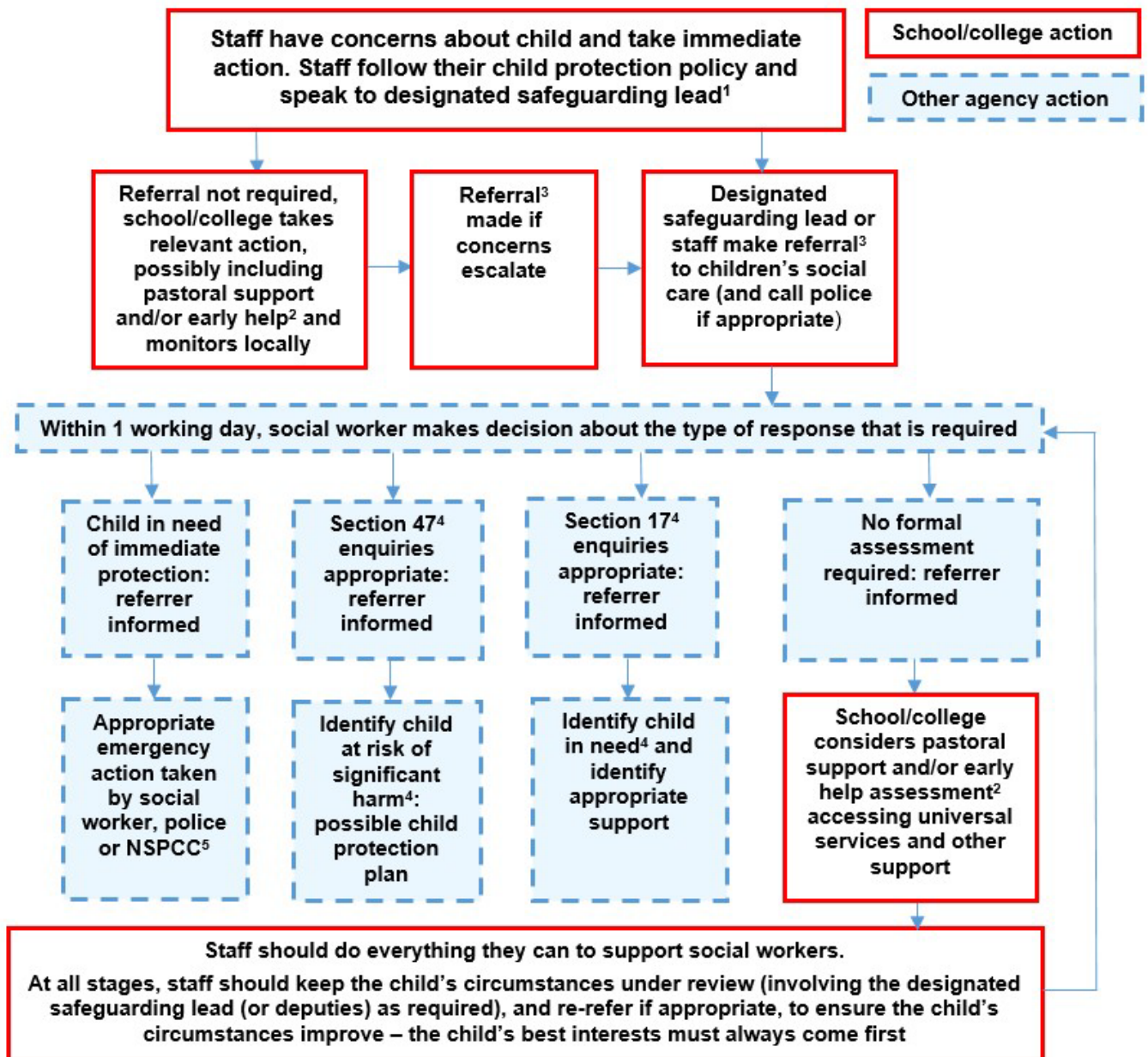
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# For information

*Actions where there are concerns about a child*



<sup>1</sup> In cases which also involve a concern or an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part four of this guidance.

<sup>2</sup> Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help, an early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) provides detailed guidance on the early help process.

<sup>3</sup> Referrals should follow the process set out in the local threshold document and local protocol for assessment. Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

<sup>4</sup> Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to make enquiries to decide whether to take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. Full details are in Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).<sup>5</sup> This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

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## Appendix B - Radicalisation & PREVENT Strategy

'The Prevent Duty' - All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter Terrorism Act 2015, in the exercise of their functions, to have 'due regard' to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This is known as the Prevent duty.

### 1) Introduction

The College is committed to providing students with the necessary skills and knowledge to keep themselves and others safe. Education, like other key sectors, has a responsibility to promote values of openness and tolerance and to facilitate free debate which is characteristic of being a British citizen. It is in this context that the College provides a 'Radicalisation and PREVENT Strategy'.

The College's strategy is formed from the National Strategy known as CONTEST. It has four elements Pursue, Protect, Prepare and PREVENT. The area in which colleges have the most influence is PREVENT which aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

### 2) Context

The aim of this strategy is to:

- Identify and assess the risks that learners may face
- Ensure external speakers and events are appropriately risk assessed
- Develop and regularly update the Prevent action plan in order to mitigate risk
- Establish effective partnerships in order to comply with the Prevent duty
- Ensure appropriate training is available for all staff across the College
- Embed the Prevent duty through the exemplifying of British Values throughout curriculum and the tutorial process
- Ensure appropriate welfare support is in place for learners
- Ensure existing policies and procedures including Equality and Diversity and the IT policies make specific reference to the duty
- Appropriate steps are taken to ensure the monitoring and enforcement of the duty
- Ensure there is a clear response to concerns, including referral to Channel
- Develop an awareness of PREVENT in the College
- Recognise current practice which contributes to the PREVENT agenda
- Identify areas for improvement
- To contribute to the development of a coordinated action plan

### 3) Local Partnerships

The College maintains partnerships, including Local Authorities, the Cheshire Counter Terrorism Unit and Prevent Police Officer to receive regular updates in order to keep staff and students safe and well informed.

### 4) College

PREVENT sits within the realm of the college's Safeguarding Policy. All staff are trained and regularly updated on the Policy and associated professional practice and conduct.

Whilst PREVENT sits within the College Safeguarding Policy and procedures, it is also integral to other policies, such as:

- Equality and Diversity
- IT Policies
- Health and Safety
- Anti-Bullying
- Tutorial

Issues related to radicalisation are included in safeguarding reports to Corporation.

## **5) Staff**

All staff receive awareness training on an on-going basis ensuring that they are up to date with PREVENT matters.

All staff are responsible for responding appropriately to students with challenging and inappropriate behaviour. Staff will be supported and use the skills required to challenge appropriately, as part of this strategy.

## **6) Students**

Students will receive awareness training on radicalisation and how to protect themselves through the tutorial system. British Values are embedded and promoted throughout all aspects of learners programmes at College.

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## Appendix C - Keeping Apprentices Safe

At Warrington and Vale Royal College we take our responsibility to ensure the safety of our students very seriously. This also extends to our students who have chosen to study as part of an apprenticeship programme. We are committed to working with our employers and apprentices to create a fantastic learning experience, and to ensure the highest levels of apprentice safety and wellbeing.

### Our Approach

The college has a clear commitment to safeguarding which is overseen by a dedicated safeguarding team led by the Dedicated Safeguarding Lead, currently the Director of Student Support. As a team they promote and implement the Safeguarding Policy, ensuring it is reviewed regularly and acted upon.

Additionally all members of staff including those working with apprentices are trained in safeguarding.

### Employers Duty

Employers have a duty to comply with all current and future UK legislation and statutory responsibilities. There is a particular expectation that an employer should take responsibility for an apprentice's welfare in the workplace and to also seek appropriate advice when they feel an apprentice may be at risk in their personal lives.

We appreciate that for many organisations this can be a confusing and complex area. The following information is made available to employers and explains the different support college provides, and also some of the ways in which employers can incorporate information into their current internal procedures.

### 1. Safeguarding

Safeguarding is the overarching term used to describe the protection of the health, wellbeing and human rights of individuals. Under legislation, all parties involved in an apprenticeship have to take reasonable action to minimise risks to apprentices. This includes aspects of the apprentice's experience, both in and outside of the workplace, as well as during attendance at college.

Many areas are considered to fall under the definition of safeguarding, including:

- Abuse (emotional and physical)
- Bullying (including online)
- Discrimination
- Forced Marriage
- Mental Health
- Neglect and Self-Harm
- Radicalisation and Extremism

### The College's Role:

- Ensure that employers are aware of their safeguarding obligations, through guidance and training.
- Ensure apprentices have an awareness of safeguarding and understand how to access college support services.
- Provide safeguarding training for all college employees working with apprentices
- Ensure college staff working with young and vulnerable people are subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check.
- Maintain open channels of communication with each employer. Apprentices may act very differently depending upon their environment, and may feel more comfortable discussing sensitive issues with different people.

### **The Employer's Role:**

- Familiarise themselves with relevant government legislation.
- Take appropriate steps to understand what safeguarding means in practice at their organisation, in the context of the responsibilities they have for the people they employ.
- Ensure that any staff working with apprentices in a position of trust are appropriate for the role and do not present any danger or threat.
- If possible, coordinate safeguarding across an organisation.

## **2. Prevent**

As part of the Terrorism and Security Act 2015, colleges are required to pay 'due regard to the need to prevent individuals from being drawn into terrorism'.

There is no single way of identifying a person who may be vulnerable to extremist ideology and it is often the culmination of a number of influences. These can include, family, friends or relationships they have made online. Extremism can include non-violent action.

All apprentices studying on a programme at college will be expected to attend a compulsory session in which these issues will be covered.

### **The College's Role**

- Provide relevant training for college staff so that they understand the obligations the college has under the Prevent Duty and how to manage risks and concerns.
- Have clear procedures in place so that any concerns can immediately be brought to specialist attention.
- Provide a forum for apprentices to explore these matters.
- Provide a contact for any information regarding the Prevent duty.
- Ensure apprentices are able to express views in non-extremist ways and create an environment and encourages respectful free speech.

### **The Employer's Role**

- Demonstrate a commitment to the principles that underpin the Prevent Duty
- Seek specialist support if any concerns are raised.

## **3. British Values**

An important part of Prevent is also the promotion of British values. These are the norm that shape our society and which are enshrined in law, through legislation such as the Equality Act 2010.

British values are described as:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty and mutual respect
- Tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs

Apprentices are encouraged to explore ideas in a context where these values are recognised and respected.

### The College's Role

- To promote British values throughout an apprentice's programme
- Provided a dedicated programme of study which defines and explores British values and how they influence our society.
- Create opportunities for apprentices to apply their learning to relevant situations and contexts.
- Encourage apprentices to respect each other and their differences, including with regard to protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010.

### The Employer's Role

- Demonstrate a commitment to British values
- Adhere to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

## 4. Safeguarding in Practice

The college is available to you as a resource and if you find that you need support managing a particular scenario please contact us. Some apprentices may feel more comfortable talking to someone outside of your organisation, so we will endeavour to be as transparent as possible with employers, while respecting the apprentices trust and adhering to college confidentiality policies. As always, if we feel a young person is at risk of harm we may need to break confidentiality, but this would be explained to the apprentice.

In many cases someone will not always seek help over a safeguarding issue, but there are common signs which can help you to recognise when things may go wrong.

Warning signs to consider:

- **Absence** - Missing work or not turning up at college
- **Change in appearance**
- **Changes in behaviour and character** - becoming quiet or loud, aggressive or withdrawn.
- **Changes in emotional health** - crying, anxiety or low mood
- **Excessive alcohol consumption**
- **Physical injuries** - cuts or bruises
- **Poor living conditions**



- **Self-harm**
- **Use of drugs**
- **Withdrawing from certain activities** - reluctance to go online, sudden changes in use of technology

It is important to stress that the existence of some of these characteristics is not a definitive sign that anything is wrong.

## 5. Who to Contact

- **General Support - Apprenticeships**  
Andy Atkin Director of Apprenticeships  
aatkin@wvr.ac.uk  
01925 494303
- **Safeguarding & Prevent**  
Laura Williams, Director of Student Support  
lwilliams@wvr.ac.uk  
01925 494248 or 01925 494222

**In an emergency, or when suspecting a serious issue, we recommend contacting the appropriate services/authorities in the first instance, e.g. Police**

The referral process for a Prevent concern for Cheshire West and Cheshire is at [Refer someone to the Prevent Team | Merseyside Police](#)

# Safeguarding and Prevent Policy

## Who are the Key Stakeholders:

College staff, learners

## Identify source of stakeholder views:

Staff, student and external bodies stakeholder meetings

Learner comments from the On Programme and Exit Survey

Audit from WBC and feedback from CWaC

## Summarise key messages from stakeholders:

Students did comment that they feel safe in college and they know who to contact for support.

CWaC – feedback update regarding Care Act, amendments made

WBC – Audit undertaken and policy approved

## What is the impact on the following:

### Have any additional safeguarding risks been identified?

Key characteristics	Comments
Age	No significant impact
Disability	No significant impact
Gender	No significant impact
Racial group	No significant impact
Religion or belief	No significant impact
Sexual orientation	No significant impact

Gender re-assignment	No significant impact
Pregnancy and maternity	No significant impact

Is a separate Safeguarding Risk Assessment required No

If yes please complete form SR1 Record of Safeguarding Risk Assessment

No major change needed: **NO**

Adjustment required: **NO**

Stop and remove: **NO**

**Actions to be addressed:**

**Validated by the Equality & Diversity Management Group**

**Date:**