



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Child, Young Person and Adults at Risk 2026-27

1. Scope

This policy applies to all children and adults at risk who study at, access services from, or visit the College. It also applies to all members of staff, governors, volunteers, agency workers, contractors and visitors who may have safeguarding responsibilities or become aware of safeguarding concerns.

For the purposes of this policy, a child is any person under the age of 18. The fact that a young person has reached the age of 16 and may be living independently does not alter their status as a child or their entitlement to protection under relevant legislation and statutory guidance.

An adult at risk is a person aged 18 or over who has needs for care and support, is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect and, as a result of those care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves from the risk of, or experience of, abuse or neglect.

The College recognises that some students may be more vulnerable to safeguarding concerns due to their individual circumstances, including, but not limited to, special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), mental health needs, disability, care experience, social care involvement, exploitation, or other factors that may increase vulnerability.

This policy applies across all College provision, including full-time and part-time programmes, apprenticeships, work-based learning, employer-based activities, educational visits and all College premises, activities and learning environments, including online and remote learning activities where safeguarding responsibilities apply.

2. Statement

Herefordshire, Ludlow & North Shropshire College (HLNSC) recognises that children and adults at risk have a fundamental right to be protected from harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation and that students cannot learn effectively unless they feel safe and are safe. The College is committed to ensuring that best practice is adopted when working with all students, offering them support and protection. The College recognises its responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and protect adults at risk from abuse and neglect. The College will work in partnership with statutory and voluntary agencies and, where concerns arise



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regarding an adult at risk, will make referrals and share information in accordance with Care Act 2014 safeguarding procedures.

The College accepts that it has a legal and moral responsibility to implement procedures, to provide a duty of care to children and adults at risk, to safeguard their wellbeing and to protect them from harm. This Policy applies to all students and apprentices enrolled at the College.

The College fulfils its statutory safeguarding duties under the Education Act 2002 and has regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education, Working Together to Safeguard Children and other relevant legislation and statutory guidance. The College recognises that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility and that effective safeguarding requires a whole-college approach.

In accordance with the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, the College has due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and fulfils its responsibilities under the Prevent Duty as part of its wider safeguarding arrangements.

This policy is communicated to all staff and students through recruitment and induction processes, student awareness activities, staff training and continuing professional development (CPD) and is available on the College Launchpad.

3. Principles

The welfare of the child is paramount. The College recognises that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility and requires a whole-college approach. We are committed to maintaining a culture of vigilance in which concerns are identified early, reported appropriately and acted upon. The College achieves this through effective safeguarding arrangements, safer recruitment practices, regular staff training, robust record keeping, implementation of the Prevent Duty, and collaborative working with parents, carers, employers, training providers, safeguarding partners and other relevant agencies.

The policy aligns with the College's *Ready, Respectful, Safe* ethos and supports all learners, including full-time and part-time students, apprentices, and those engaged in work-based learning.

4. Key Personnel

Details of the College's safeguarding personnel and key safeguarding contacts are provided in **Appendix 1**. The appendix forms part of this policy and is updated as necessary to reflect changes in staffing, roles and responsibilities.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 Designated Safeguarding and Mental Health Lead (DSL) is responsible for:

- a. Maintaining appropriate safeguarding and mental health training proportionate with the responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- b. Overseeing the referral of cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agency.
- c. Providing advice and support to other staff on issues relating to child protection.



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- d. Ensuring that a proper record of any child protection referral, complaint or concern (even where that concern does not lead to a referral) is maintained on My Concern.
- e. Ensuring that parents of children and adults at risk within the College are aware of the College's child protection policy.
- f. Liaising with the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP), Shropshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) and other appropriate agencies, and overseeing other safeguarding staff as appropriate.
- g. Ensuring that appropriate arrangements are made for the pupils of secondary schools which send pupils to the College .
- h. Ensuring that appropriate safeguards are put in place for employers and training organisations that receive children or young people from the College on long term placements.
- i. Ensuring that staff receive basic training in child protection issues and are aware of the College child protection procedures.
- j. Lead responsibility for filtering and monitoring, in line with the Filtering and Monitoring Standards.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead also undertakes additional strategic responsibilities as set out within their job description, including leadership of Prevent, mental health, filtering and monitoring, safeguarding quality assurance and governance reporting.

The DSL will provide regular reports to the College Management Team and the Governing body setting out how the College has discharged its duties. The DSL is responsible for reporting deficiencies in procedure or policy identified by the HSCP and SSCP (or others) to the governing body at the earliest opportunity. Policies and procedures can be found on the College's launchpad and website.

5.2 Safeguarding Leads and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL) are responsible for:

Raising awareness 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 at the College. DDSLs will have received training in safeguarding and child protection issues and, although not legally required, will be trained to specialist level and will receive refresher training.

When the DSL is not available or in conjunction with the DSL, the DDSL is responsible for:

- a. Overseeing the referral of cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agency.
- b. Providing advice and support to other staff on issues relating to child protection.
- c. Maintaining a proper record of any child protection referral, complaint or concern (even where that concern does not lead to a referral).
- d. Ensuring that parents of children and adults at risk within the College are aware of the College's child protection policy.
- e. Liaising with the HSCP, SSCP and other appropriate agencies.
- f. Ensuring that appropriate arrangements are made with secondary schools which send pupils to the College.
- g. Ensuring that appropriate safeguards are put in place for employers and training organisations that receive children or young people from the College on long term placements.

In conjunction with the DSL, or in the DSL's absence, DDSLs may undertake delegated safeguarding responsibilities including the management of concerns, referrals to external



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agencies, record keeping, staff advice and support, liaison with safeguarding partners and promoting awareness of safeguarding policies and procedures.

5.3 Head of Safeguarding and Student Wellbeing and DDSL role

- a) Support the DSL and safeguarding team to ensure that the College provides a safe, inclusive and supportive environment for learning.
- b) Act as a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputise for the DSL when required.
- c) Provide advice, guidance and support to DDSLs, Safeguarding Network members and all staff on safeguarding, child protection, Prevent and wellbeing matters.
- d) Maintain oversight of safeguarding communications, referrals, information sharing and safeguarding records.
- e) Coordinate support arrangements for Looked After Children, care experienced learners and other vulnerable students.
- f) Act as a safe person for learners who have safeguarding, welfare, wellbeing or mental health concerns.
- g) Support the DSL and DDSLs in making referrals to appropriate internal and external support services.
- h) Support the DSL in maintaining effective working relationships with safeguarding partners and external agencies.
- i) Coordinate and manage safeguarding information received from and shared with external agencies, including referrals, reports and information sharing processes.
- j) Promote a positive culture of safeguarding, wellbeing and mental health across the College and support the development of safeguarding practice and staff awareness.

5.4 Wellbeing & Pastoral Mentors role

- a) Report safeguarding concerns promptly to the DSL, DDSL or safeguarding team in accordance with College procedures.
- b) Support vulnerable learners through pastoral mentoring, intervention and advocacy.
- c) Understand how to make appropriate safeguarding referrals and access internal and external sources of support.
- d) Support curriculum and support staff by providing advice and guidance on appropriate pastoral and safeguarding interventions.
- e) Provide a safe and accessible point of contact for learners wishing to discuss safeguarding, welfare or wellbeing concerns.
- f) Manage individual cases as directed, including attendance at multi-agency meetings, Child Protection conferences, Child in Need meetings and review meetings where appropriate.
- g) Maintain accurate and timely safeguarding and pastoral records in line with College procedures.
- h) Liaise with families, carers and external agencies to support identified learners.
- i) Maintain up-to-date safeguarding knowledge through regular training and continuing professional development.
- j) Ensuring that the College has procedures and policies which are consistent with KCSIE and the Herefordshire and Shropshire Safeguarding Partnerships' procedures.

5.5 Designated Governors

The designated governors are responsible for liaising with the Principal and Senior Staff Member with Lead Responsibility over matters regarding child protection, including:



- a. Ensuring that the College has procedures and policies which are consistent with KCSIE and the Herefordshire and Shropshire Safeguarding Partnerships' procedures.
- b. Ensuring that the governing body considers the College policy on child protection 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.
- d. The designated governors are responsible for overseeing the liaison between agencies such as the police, social services – as defined by the HSCP and SSCP in connection with allegations against the Principal or the DSL. This will not involve undertaking any form of investigation but will ensure good communication between the parties and provide information to assist enquiries.
- e. Designated Governors are responsible for ensuring all staff meet expectations in line with the Filtering and Monitoring Standards.
- f. The Designated Governors undertake termly professional challenge meetings with the DSL and Director of HR supporting service development and reflective practice.
- g. To assist in these duties, the designated governors receive appropriate training.

6. Definitions and indicators of abuse

Staff should be aware of the signs and indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation and other safeguarding concerns. Definitions, indicators of harm and specific safeguarding issues are contained within **Appendix 2**. Staff must not investigate concerns or determine whether abuse has occurred. Any concern must be reported immediately in accordance with this policy.

7. Radicalisation & PREVENT

The College meets its Prevent Duty in accordance with Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and exercises its functions with due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Children, young people and adults at risk may be susceptible to radicalisation and extremist influences. Protecting students from radicalisation is part of the College's wider safeguarding responsibilities, in the same way as protecting them from other forms of abuse, exploitation and harm. Radicalisation can occur both online and offline through exposure to extremist content, ideologies, individuals or groups.

All staff receive safeguarding and Prevent training appropriate to their role and regular updates to help them recognise indicators of radicalisation, extremism and terrorism and understand how to report concerns. Students receive Prevent-related learning through tutorials, enrichment activities and awareness sessions which promote the British values.

Any member of staff who has a concern should report it to the DSL or DDSL immediately. The DSL will assess the concern and, where appropriate, seek advice from or make referrals to relevant agencies, the appropriate safeguarding partnership, police, Channel Panel or other Prevent partners. Where appropriate, referrals may be made to Prevent or Channel, a voluntary multi-agency programme that provides early support to individuals who may be susceptible to being drawn into terrorism.



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The College has a duty to ensure that, where political issues are brought to the attention of students, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views. The promotion of extremist views, or political views presented without balance, where contrary to College values, equality legislation or the law, is not permitted and may constitute misconduct by students, staff, contractors or visitors.

8. Mental Health

At HLNSC we are committed to supporting and developing the mental health and emotional wellbeing of students and staff. The College understands the challenges faced by people with mental ill health and the impact that this can have on both their personal and academic lives.

The College aims to promote positive mental health, reduce barriers to learning and ensure that students and staff can access appropriate support when needed. The safeguarding team undertakes transition work for students who disclose support needs during the application process. Each campus has a Wellbeing Hub which is open throughout term time and offers both drop-in support and tailored mentoring interventions.

The College recognises that mental health concerns can, in some cases, be an indicator that a student has experienced or is at risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation or other safeguarding concerns. Staff should be alert to this possibility and follow safeguarding procedures where appropriate.

The College provides access to Health Assured, which offers a 24-hour telephone counselling service for students and apprentices. The service is funded by the College and clear escalation procedures are in place for risk levels 3 and 4. The College also has trained Mental Health First Aiders on site.

The package of support is enhanced by the tutorial framework, personal development opportunities and the wider curriculum delivery. All students can access support directly in person and online, via tutor referral or using the QR codes around campus. The College has a Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and associated action plan to support this area of work.

9. Online Safety, Filtering & Monitoring

HLNSC recognises the advantages of new technologies for staff and students as a means of communication and as a learning tool. However, technology can also expose children, young people and adults at risk to a range of safeguarding risks, including cyberbullying, online harassment, grooming, radicalisation, child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, misinformation, harmful content, and the creation, sharing or distribution of inappropriate or illegal imagery. The DSL has lead responsibility for filtering and monitoring arrangements and works with IT colleagues, management teams and governors to ensure that filtering and monitoring systems remain effective and proportionate. The College has specialist software designed to block access to potentially harmful websites and materials. The College follows the DfE Filtering and Monitoring Standards and related guidance.

The Online Safety Act 2023 created a number of new online communication offences and strengthened protections against harmful online behaviour, including cyberflashing, epilepsy trolling, threatening communications, sharing, creating or threatening to share illegal imagery,



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including non-consensual intimate images and AI-generated or manipulated imagery and encouraging self-harm as illegal (this list is not exhaustive). The College will investigate all such incidents and respond through safeguarding, disciplinary and/or referral processes as appropriate.

The College delivers online safety within the wider curriculum offer as part of the *Ready, Respect, Safe* ethos, focusing on content, contact, conduct and commerce. This enables students to learn and manage the associated risks effectively and will support parents and the college community to become aware of and alert to, the need to keep children and young people safe online.

The Student and Parent Handbook identifies expectations for safe online behaviour, the College's approach to filtering and monitoring, and the procedures for reporting safeguarding concerns. College policies set out expectations regarding the appropriate use of technology while protecting individuals and maintaining a safe and productive learning environment.

The College recognises that online safety risks can arise both within and beyond the College environment and forms an integral part of the College's safeguarding responsibilities.

9.1 Wearable Technology

The College recognises that wearable technology, including smart watches, fitness trackers, smart glasses, body-worn cameras, internet-enabled hearing devices and other connected wearable devices, can present safeguarding, privacy, information security and wellbeing risks. Such devices may provide access to the internet, messaging services, audio and video recording functions, photography, livestreaming, location tracking and artificial intelligence features. The college reserves the right to restrict the use of any wearable technology on its premises where it can be deemed a safeguarding risk.

The College supports the safe, responsible and appropriate use of wearable technology and expects all students, staff, contractors and visitors to use such devices in accordance with College policies, procedures and codes of conduct, including those relating to safeguarding, behaviour, examinations, data protection and information security.

The misuse of wearable technology may constitute a safeguarding concern where it is used to facilitate bullying, harassment, child-on-child abuse, exploitation, grooming, radicalisation, the creation or sharing of inappropriate images, unauthorised recording, invasion of privacy, academic misconduct, or any other behaviour that places an individual at risk of harm.

Any concerns regarding the use of wearable technology must be reported, recorded and managed in accordance with this Safeguarding Policy and the College's safeguarding procedures.

10. Gender Questioning Students

The College recognises that some children and young people may question their gender and may seek support from staff during this period. The College will respond to such situations with sensitivity, respect and compassion, whilst ensuring that safeguarding and the welfare of the child remain paramount.



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Where a student is questioning their gender, the College will consider their individual circumstances, wishes, feelings, age, understanding and any identified vulnerabilities. The College recognises that students who are questioning their gender may experience additional risks, including bullying, harassment, social isolation, mental health difficulties, self-harm or exploitation, and these risks will be considered as part of any safeguarding assessment through a CPSA.

Any safeguarding concerns relating to a student who is questioning their gender must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL in accordance with this policy. The DSL will consider whether additional support, risk assessment, information sharing, pastoral intervention or referral to external agencies is required.

The College will work in partnership with students, parents/carers and relevant professionals where appropriate. For students under the age of 18, parents/carers will normally be involved in discussions and decision-making unless there is reason to believe that doing so would place the student at risk of harm or otherwise be contrary to their welfare.

Requests relating to names, pronouns, presentation, participation, facilities or other matters associated with a student's gender identity will be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking into account safeguarding responsibilities, equality duties, the rights and needs of all students, and any applicable statutory guidance. Decisions will not be made in haste and will be informed by the student's welfare and best interests.

The College is committed to maintaining a safe, inclusive and respectful learning environment. Bullying, harassment, victimisation or discrimination against any student, including those who are questioning their gender, will not be tolerated and will be addressed through the College's safeguarding, behaviour and equality procedures.

For students aged 18 and over, the College will work directly with the student whilst continuing to fulfil its safeguarding responsibilities towards adults at risk where applicable.

11. Attendance, Absence and Children Missing Education

HLNSC recognises that children and young people who are absent from education, particularly on a repeated or prolonged basis, may be at increased risk of safeguarding concerns including neglect, abuse, child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation and other forms of harm.

The College recognises that absence may be linked to mental health concerns, substance misuse, exploitation, radicalisation, female genital mutilation (FGM), so-called honour-based abuse, forced marriage or other safeguarding concerns. Early intervention is taken in line with the college's absence monitoring and reporting processes to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk.

11.1 Responding to Unexplained Absence and Welfare Concerns:

- a. The College has an attendance reporting system in place and a dedicated absence hotline for each campus, this is in the student and parent handbook and all students are informed at induction.
- b. All students, and the parents/carers of students aged under 18, receive a notification when an unexplained absence is recorded.



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- c. Any young person under the age of 18 with a college pastoral support assessment risk rating of 4 or above not reporting their absence or registering for class will be directly contacted for a welfare call by their tutor/curriculum support at the earliest opportunity .
- d. If the student does not establish contact the matter will be referred immediately to the safeguarding team and a DDSL for assessment and appropriate action. The safeguarding team will liaise with parents/carers, social workers, police and other relevant agencies as identified through the students' CPSA and safeguarding records.
- e. If the student does not have identified risk factors or a College Pastoral Support Assessment (CPSA) risk rating of 4 or above then attendance will be monitored by the tutor who will contact the student directly and escalate concerns to their next of kin, parent or guardian .
- f. Where there are concerns about a student's safety or whereabouts and they cannot be contacted, the College will advise parents/carers or the appropriate responsible adult to report the matter to the police where appropriate. The College may also contact the police or other relevant agencies directly where safeguarding concerns indicate an immediate or significant risk.
- g. Attendance and absence monitoring are undertaken by Personal Tutors. Any safeguarding concerns identified through attendance monitoring are reported promptly to the DSL or DDSL.

The College monitors patterns of attendance, punctuality and engagement as part of its safeguarding arrangements and may consider attendance concerns alongside other indicators of vulnerability or risk.

12. Dealing with Sexual Violence and Harassment - Child on Child Abuse

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between children and young people of any age and sex. It can also occur online. It can also occur where a group of children sexually assault or sexually harass a single child or group of children. The College recognises that harmful sexual behaviour exists on a continuum and will respond proportionately to all incidents, considering the age, developmental stage and understanding of those involved.

The College maintains a culture where sexual violence and sexual harassment are not tolerated, are never acceptable and will never be dismissed as banter, part of growing up or harmless behaviour.

The wishes, feelings and needs of the alleged victim will be carefully considered when determining next steps and support arrangements. However, the College may need to take action to safeguard individuals and fulfil its statutory safeguarding duties.

If a student discloses an incident of sexual violence, please reassure the student and follow the process in section 12 below. If a student makes an immediate disclosure of an alleged sexual assault, staff should ensure the student's immediate safety, inform the DSL/DDSL without delay and seek police or emergency services support where there is an immediate risk, recent assault or forensic evidence may need to be preserved.

The DSL and DDSLs will manage allegations of sexual violence and sexual harassment in accordance with Part Five of Keeping Children Safe in Education and any local safeguarding procedures.

For reporting of sexual violence and harassment students can access the College safeguarding HUBs at any time to report in person, they can report via email or text message using the QR code



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on all safeguarding posters. Anonymous reporting for general action such as campus safety, transport safety, etc. can be provided through the student voice system. Students can also access anonymous 24/7 support and advice from Health Assured. Students receive workshops on healthy relationships, safeguarding, coercive control, personal safety and consent as part of their wider curriculum offer.

If students are alleged to have been involved in a sexually violent or harassment incident: -

- The DSL/DDSL must be contacted immediately.
- The DSL/DDSL will review all available information, including disclosures provided by the alleged victim, alleged perpetrator and any witnesses.
- Information will be shared only with those who need to know in order to safeguard students and fulfil statutory responsibilities. Students will not be promised confidentiality where safeguarding concerns are identified.
- The DSL/DDSL will assess the situation and inform the Deputy Principal. The DSL/DDSL will consider informing parents/carers and involving external agencies, taking account of the student's wishes, age, capacity and any safeguarding risks associated with sharing information.
- The alleged victim and alleged perpetrator will be supported, and arrangements put in place to keep both in education if safe to do so.
- The College may suspend a student where this is considered necessary following a risk assessment to protect the safety and wellbeing of those involved and the wider College community.
- An internal investigation will take place as necessary and in conjunction with any police and/or social care advice. The investigation will focus on the level of risk posed and the safety and wellbeing of students and staff. Where police or social care investigations are underway, the College will take care not to compromise those investigations. Internal enquiries will focus on safeguarding, risk management, support arrangements and whether measures are required to protect students and staff.
- If there is police involvement an individual safeguarding and risk assessment will be completed and regularly reviewed. This may be recorded through the College Pastoral Support Assessment (CPSA) process, so that a decision can be made regarding the individual's attendance, learning arrangements, access to College facilities and any additional safeguarding measures required pending the outcome of any investigation.

Where allegations are determined to be unfounded, unsubstantiated, false or malicious, the College will consider appropriate support for those involved and any further action required.

13. Dealing with Disclosure of Abuse and Procedure for Reporting Concerns

The College follows the safeguarding and child protection procedures set out by the relevant local safeguarding partnership arrangements and any locally agreed multi-agency safeguarding procedures.

The College recognises 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. Staff are expected to maintain professional curiosity and discuss any concerns, no matter how small, with the DSL or a DDSL without delay. Where there is an immediate risk to life or a crime is in progress, emergency services should be contacted without delay.



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If a child, young person or adult is at risk and tells a member of staff about possible abuse:

- Listen carefully and stay calm.
- Do not ask leading questions, investigate, or interview the individual. Only ask open questions where necessary to clarify what is being said and to establish whether there is an immediate risk of harm.
- Do not put words into their mouth.
- Reassure them that by telling you, they have done the right thing.
- Inform them that you must pass the information on, but that only those that need to know about it will be told. Inform them who you will report the matter to.
- Record the disclosure accurately, using the exact words of the child, young person or adult at risk wherever possible.
- Make a detailed note of the date, time, place, what they said, did and your questions etc. (Questions should only be used to establish an understanding of current level of risk).
- **If there is reason to believe that the child, young person or adult at risk is in immediate danger or at risk of serious harm, inform the DSL or a DDSL immediately, usually in person or by telephone without delay.**
- Find out what they would like to happen, but make them aware that you may have to act against their wishes if you feel they or others are at risk of harm (e.g. they may ask you not to disclose it to anyone else).
- Adult learners with capacity have the right to make their own decisions regarding safeguarding concerns. However, information may be shared without consent where there is a legal safeguarding duty, where a child is at risk, where there is a risk of serious harm to the individual or others, or where required by law.
- Record all concerns, disclosures, actions taken and decisions made on the College's safeguarding recording system (My Concern) as soon as possible and on the same working day wherever practicable.
- Staff must not investigate concerns or allegations themselves.
- Staff must not promise confidentiality and should make clear that information will only be shared with those who need to know in order to safeguard the individual.
- Staff should not make assumptions about the nature of a concern and should report all safeguarding concerns, however minor they may appear, to the DSL or DDSL.

If in doubt, staff must seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Head of Safeguarding & Student Wellbeing or a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL). The DSL/DDSL will consider the nature of the concern and determine what support, intervention or referral is required. This may include internal pastoral, wellbeing or safeguarding support, and/or referral to external agencies where appropriate.

14. Child Protection and Adult Safeguarding

Whilst many safeguarding duties arise from legislation relating to children and young people, the College recognises its responsibilities towards adults at risk under the Care Act 2014. The College is committed to safeguarding adults with care and support needs and who may be experiencing, or be at risk of, abuse or neglect.

Concerns relating to an adult at risk will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL), who will consider the need for referral to the



appropriate Adult Social Care safeguarding team, the police, health services or other relevant agencies.

Where a concern involves both an adult at risk and a child, the safety and welfare of the child will remain paramount, and information will be shared in accordance with safeguarding, information-sharing and statutory guidance requirements

15. Managing Allegations, Concerns and Low-Level Concerns Related to Staff, Volunteers and Contractors

These procedures apply to all staff, whether teaching, administrative, management or support, as well as to volunteers. The word “staff” is used for ease of description.

15.1 Purpose

The College is committed to promoting a culture of safeguarding, openness and accountability. Concerns about the conduct of staff, volunteers, agency staff, contractors, governors or any person working on behalf of the College will be taken seriously and managed in accordance with statutory safeguarding guidance.

The College recognises that safeguarding concerns relating to adults working with children may arise in a variety of circumstances and that such concerns may or may not be founded. Any concerns will be managed fairly, consistently, confidentially and without delay, ensuring that the welfare of children remains paramount whilst also supporting the individual who is the subject of the concern.

These procedures apply to all staff, volunteers, agency staff, contractors, governors and anyone working on behalf of the College.

15.2. Whistleblowing

HLNSC promotes a culture of openness, transparency and accountability. All staff, volunteers, governors and contractors have a responsibility to raise concerns where they believe that a child, young person or adult at risk may not be receiving appropriate protection, or where safeguarding practices are unsafe. This includes concerns about poor or unsafe safeguarding practice, failures to act on safeguarding concerns, or actions that may place a child, young person or adult at risk at increased risk of harm.

Concerns relating to the conduct, practice or behaviour of staff, leaders, governors, contractors or volunteers, including safeguarding practice or the management of safeguarding concerns, should be reported without delay in accordance with the College's Whistleblowing Policy.

Staff should feel able to raise concerns in good faith without fear of victimisation, discrimination, disadvantage or reprisal. The College will take all concerns seriously and investigate them appropriately.

If a member of staff feels unable to raise concerns internally, or believes that concerns have not been addressed appropriately, they may contact external agencies including the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Children's Social Care, Police, Ofsted, the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) or the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line.



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All safeguarding concerns must continue to be reported in line with the procedures outlined within this policy. Whistleblowing procedures do not replace the requirement to report safeguarding concerns immediately to the DSL or a DDSL.

15.3 Reporting Concerns About Adults Working with Children

Any safeguarding concern, allegation or low-level concern regarding the conduct of an adult working with children must be reported immediately. Where a concern relates to a member of staff, volunteer, agency worker or contractor, it should be reported to the DSL without delay. Where a concern relates to the Principal, it should be reported directly to the Clerk of Governors (or their nominated deputy).

Concerns must not be investigated by the person receiving the allegation. A written record should be made promptly and submitted to the DSL or Clerk of Governors as appropriate.

The College will maintain appropriate confidentiality and information will only be shared with those who have a legitimate need to know in order to safeguard children and manage the allegation appropriately.

15.4 Allegations that Meet the Harm Threshold

An allegation may meet the harm threshold where an adult working in or on behalf of the College has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child.
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

The DSL will undertake an initial assessment of the information received to determine whether the matter appears to meet the harm threshold and requires consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Where an allegation may meet the harm threshold, the DSL (or Clerk of Governors where appropriate) will consult the LADO without delay and before any internal investigation is undertaken.

Following consultation with the LADO, referrals may be made to Children's Social Care, Adult Social Care, the Police, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA), or any other relevant agency as required.

The College will fully cooperate with any external investigation whilst ensuring that the welfare of children remains the primary consideration.

15.5 Low-Level Concerns

The College promotes a culture in which all concerns about adult conduct are shared responsibly and addressed promptly.

A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, that an adult working in or on behalf of the College may have acted in a way that:



- is inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct.
- falls below the expected professional standards.
- creates a sense of unease or doubt about their suitability to work with children.

Low-level concerns may arise from conduct inside or outside the workplace. All low-level concerns should be reported to the DSL as soon as possible. Concerns relating to the Principal should be reported to the Clerk of Governors.

Low-level concerns will be recorded, reviewed and addressed appropriately in accordance with the Staff Code of Conduct, safeguarding procedures and relevant HR processes.

15.6 Managing Allegations and Investigations

The College will not undertake any investigation that could prejudice a police, social care or other external agency investigation. Where an allegation meets the harm threshold, all actions will be taken in consultation with the LADO and other relevant agencies. The College may undertake internal investigations and disciplinary procedures where appropriate and in accordance with College policies, once it is agreed that doing so will not interfere with any external investigation.

The College will ensure that all parties are treated fairly throughout the process and that appropriate support is made available to both the individual raising the concern and the member of staff who is the subject of the allegation.

Subject to advice from the LADO, Police or Children's Social Care, the College will keep relevant individuals informed of the progress and outcome of the process as appropriate.

15.7 Suspension and Alternative Arrangements

Suspension is a neutral act and will not be an automatic response to an allegation. The College will consider all reasonable alternatives before deciding whether suspension is necessary. The decision to suspend will be based on an assessment of risk and will normally be taken following consultation with the LADO and other relevant agencies where appropriate.

Alternative arrangements may include:

- temporary redeployment;
- amended duties;
- increased supervision;
- restrictions on contact with students; or
- temporary leave arrangements.

Where suspension is deemed necessary, the member of staff will be informed of the reasons for the decision and provided with appropriate support throughout the period of suspension. The member of staff will be advised of their right to seek support from a trade union, professional association or workplace colleague.

15.8 Resignation and Settlement Agreements

The College will continue to investigate safeguarding concerns where appropriate, even if the individual resigns or ceases to provide their services before the process is concluded. The College will not enter into any agreement that prevents information relating to safeguarding concerns from being shared with relevant authorities.

**15.9 Records, References and Referrals**

A clear and comprehensive record of all allegations, low-level concerns, decisions, actions taken and outcomes will be maintained securely and confidentially. The College will record the outcome of allegations in accordance with statutory guidance, including where allegations are substantiated, malicious, false, unfounded or unsubstantiated.

Records relating to safeguarding allegations will be retained in accordance with statutory guidance, data protection requirements and the College's records retention schedule. Where appropriate, information relating to substantiated safeguarding concerns will be included in employment references.

The College will fulfil its statutory duty to make referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) where an individual has been removed from regulated activity or would have been removed had they not resigned. Where applicable, referrals will also be made to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) and other relevant professional or regulatory bodies.

15.10 Learning Lessons and Monitoring Effectiveness

Following the conclusion of any allegation or low-level concern, the Vice Principal, Designated Safeguarding Lead and Clerk of Governors will consider whether there are any lessons to be learned. This review may include consideration of:

- safeguarding practice and procedures.
- staff conduct expectations.
- training and development needs.
- recruitment and safer working practices.
- any amendments required to College policies.

The College is committed to continuous improvement and to maintaining an open and transparent safeguarding culture in which concerns are identified, reported and managed effectively.

16. Recruitment and Staff Conduct re: Safeguarding

Recruitment and selection procedures will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they reflect safer recruitment procedures. Safer Recruitment training is provided to identified staff. The College will ensure that at least one person involved in the recruitment process has undertaken appropriate safer recruitment training. Procedures will take account of the following:

- The post or role should be clearly defined.
- The key selection criteria for the post or role should be identified.
- Vacancies will be advertised and recruited to in accordance with the College's recruitment procedures and equality, diversity and inclusion commitments.
- A college application form must be completed; a CV alone is not accepted.
- Require documentary evidence of academic/vocational qualifications.
- Due diligence of shortlisted candidates will involve online searches, candidates will be informed of this.
- Obtain and scrutinise references, verify employment history, investigate any gaps in employment and explore any concerns or discrepancies identified during the recruitment process.



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- Appropriate DBS and barred list checks will be undertaken in accordance with statutory requirements and the nature of the role. Any information disclosed will be considered as part of a risk assessment process. This is a condition of employment. However, if appropriate, a risk assessment can be in place prior to their DBS being received. Authority for an employee to commence work without a DBS in place must be obtained from the DSL.
- Where a candidate has lived or worked overseas, the College will undertake any additional checks considered necessary to verify their suitability to work with children and young people.
- Use a variety of selection techniques (e.g. qualifications, previous experience, interview, reference checks).
- Teaching staff working at Ludlow Sixth Form College will be subject to Teacher Prohibition Checks as per legal requirements.
- All staff at induction are made aware of behaviour expectations in relation to safeguarding.
- Staff are required to inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and/or Head of HR without delay if they become subject to a criminal investigation, caution, reprimand, warning, conviction, social care intervention, police enquiry or any other matter that may affect their suitability to work with children, young people or adults at risk.

The College maintains a Single Central Record of pre-employment checks in accordance with statutory requirements and undertakes all recruitment activity in line with safer recruitment principles.

17. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

The College recognises that effective information sharing is essential to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk. Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis, in accordance with relevant legislation, statutory guidance and the College's Sharing Information Policy.

The College has regard to the Department for Education's Information Sharing Duty: Statutory Guidance issued under section 16LA of the Children Act 2004. The College recognises that relevant information should be shared with safeguarding partners and other appropriate agencies where this may assist them to assess risk, make decisions, provide support or take action to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child. Staff should not allow concerns regarding data protection, confidentiality or consent to prevent appropriate safeguarding information sharing where there is a lawful basis to do so.

If staff are aware of on-going investigations these must not be discussed with any other member of College staff or any external person other than the authorities dealing with the investigation itself. Information relating to safeguarding concerns or ongoing investigations must only be shared with those who have a legitimate professional need to know, such as the DSL, DDSL, Vice Principal, HR, LADO or relevant external agencies.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for safeguarding purposes where it is necessary and proportionate to do so. Fears about sharing information must not stand in the way of protecting children, young people or adults at risk from harm. Guidance is: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>



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Staff should be particularly aware of the professional risks associated with the use of electronic communications, including email, mobile phones, messaging applications and social networking sites. Staff should familiarise themselves with the expectations outlined within the College's Conduct at Work Policy and Staff Code of Conduct.

Please also refer to the College's Information Sharing Policy.

18. The use of college premises by other organisations

Where services, activities or facilities are provided by external organisations, agencies, contractors or individuals operating on College premises, the College will seek assurance that appropriate safeguarding and child protection arrangements are in place. Depending on the nature of the activity and the level of contact with children or adults at risk, the College may require evidence of appropriate recruitment checks, DBS checks, safeguarding policies, risk assessments, staff training and supervision arrangements. Where required by statutory guidance and the nature of the arrangement, details of relevant personnel may be recorded on the College's Single Central Record (SCR). Employees should seek advice from their line manager before engaging with the services of external individuals, groups or organisations.

The hiring organisation must notify the College immediately of any safeguarding concern, allegation, incident or investigation arising from activities conducted on College premises. The college will follow this Safeguarding Policy including referring to the LADO if required.

The College expects organisations hiring its premises to have regard to the Department for Education's Seven-Step Checklist for Running a Safe Club, Activity or Tuition Class for Children and to demonstrate that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place.

[Seven steps checklist towards running a safe club, activity or tuition class for children - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/seven-step-checklist-for-running-a-safe-club-activity-or-tuition-class-for-children)

19. Security

The College is committed to maintaining a safe and secure environment for children, young people, adults at risk, staff, visitors and contractors. Appropriate security arrangements support the College's safeguarding responsibilities.

All staff, students and visitors wear identifiable lanyards, and for staff and students photographic identification. College key entrances have swipe or gated access and in the main town center campuses security personnel available for support. All staff have a responsibility for maintaining awareness of buildings, visitors and ground security and for reporting concerns that may come to light.

Appropriate checks will be undertaken with respect to external individuals as necessary. Visitors must sign in and out via the designated reception point and always display a visitor badge whilst on College premises. All visitors are provided with safeguarding information on arrival, including guidance on reporting safeguarding concerns and the identity of key safeguarding personnel. Any individual who is not known, identifiable or displaying appropriate identification should be politely challenged and directed to reception for verification.

The College will not tolerate behaviour that threatens the safety, security or wellbeing of students, staff or visitors. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in



restricted or withdrawn access to College premises and, where appropriate, referral to external agencies.

20. Reporting to external agencies/organisations

20.1 Agencies

The College recognises that effective multi-agency working and information sharing are essential components of safeguarding and child protection practice.

To ensure the safety of its students, staff, governors and visitors the College will deal with a variety of external agencies including Children's Social Care, Adult Social Care, Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH), the Police and other relevant partner agencies. The College will ensure that all communication and information sharing is necessary and/or essential to safeguard individuals and or groups. The College will share information lawfully, appropriately and proportionately where this is necessary to safeguard children, young people, adults at risk, staff or visitors, or where there is a legal duty to do so. Information will always be shared when relevant to the investigation of, or prevention of, a criminal offence.

Up-to-date contact details for external safeguarding agencies and support services are maintained within **Appendix 1** of this policy. The appendix should be used as a quick reference guide by staff when seeking advice, making referrals, or contacting partner agencies in relation to safeguarding concerns.

20.2 Farriery Registration Council

The College operates its Farrier provision in accordance with the requirements of the Farriery Registration Council (FRC). Where safeguarding or child protection concerns arise that are relevant to a student undertaking Farrier training, the College may share information with the FRC where this is required under FRC requirements, necessary to protect individuals, or otherwise lawful and appropriate to do so.

Any information shared with the FRC will be limited to that which is necessary and proportionate, with due regard to data protection legislation, confidentiality and safeguarding considerations.

21. Staff and Student Training

All College staff, Governors and regular volunteers receive safeguarding and child protection information and training as part of their induction. The College staff team then receive differentiated training depending upon their role.

- All staff with direct contact receive targeted training.
- All staff receive regular safeguarding bulletins and updates.
- All staff receive training on expectations, roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.
- Reflective learning is supported, and trends/topics disseminated in staff bulletins.
- The DSL, DDSLs and other identified safeguarding personnel receive appropriate specialist safeguarding training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out their roles. This training is refreshed at least every two years, with regular



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updates provided at least annually and whenever significant safeguarding developments occur.

- Governors receive bespoke training and annual updates.
- All staff receive an annual update for safeguarding.
- Safeguarding updates are provided throughout the year to ensure staff knowledge remains current and reflects local and national safeguarding developments.
- All students receive safeguarding information at induction and throughout their academic journey as part of the *Ready, Respectful, Safe* approach. Mandatory tutorials are delivered covering safeguarding, Prevent, online safety, healthy relationships, consent, wellbeing and other emerging safeguarding themes as appropriate.

Safeguarding training compliance, updates and development activities are reported to Governors as part of the College's safeguarding assurance arrangements.

22. Quality Assurance

HLNSC has established a quality assurance framework to provide assurance regarding the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements, safeguarding practice and the promotion of a strong safeguarding culture across the College. This includes:

- The Cross-College Safeguarding Network, which reviews operational safeguarding practice at least half-termly and includes the DSL, DDSLs, safeguarding specialists and curriculum leaders.
- Regular safeguarding case management reviews through the Safeguarding Network.
- Representation at relevant local safeguarding forums and partnership groups, including HSCP, SSCP, Prevent, exploitation and disruption forums, to support continuous improvement, partnership working and the sharing of best practice.
- An internal safeguarding audit framework overseen by the Director of HR.
- Termly reporting of safeguarding activity, themes, compliance and practice to Governors through the Safeguarding and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee and the Curriculum and Quality Committee.
- Annual review and approval of safeguarding policies and procedures by management team and Governors.
- An annual safeguarding report presented to Governors, including safeguarding data, emerging themes, actions taken, areas for development and opportunities for professional challenge.
- Inclusion of safeguarding within the Student Services self-assessment process and quality improvement arrangements.
- The Governing Body receives regular assurance that safeguarding arrangements are effective through reports, audits, training compliance monitoring, safeguarding data, external reviews, stakeholder feedback and professional challenge discussions.

**Appendix 1**

Role	Name	Contact Details
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Ella Taylor-Johnston	01432 365566 or mobile 07962609734
Deputy DSL(s)	Pippa Hart Lynne Hughes Kate Jones Peter Redding	01432 365523 ex 0623 01691 688067 or mobile 07436 263799 01432 870050 ex 0360 or mobile 07967 732896 01432 870050 ex 0272 or mobile 07866 365420
Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children	Pippa Hart	01432 365523 ex 0623

<u>Name/Department/Organisation</u>	<u>Contact Details</u>
MASH (Multi agency Safeguarding Hub) and Compass	Herefordshire - 01432 260800 www.herefordshire.gov.uk/MASH www.herefordshire.gov.uk/levelsofneeds Shropshire – 0345 678 9021 https://www.safeguardingshropshireschildren.org.uk/professionals-and-volunteers/
Family Assessment and Safeguarding Team	01432 261 628 01905 768 020 (Out of Hours)
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Hereford - 01432 261708 lado@herefordshire.gcsx.gov.uk Shropshire - 01743 254402
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Hereford - 01432 261708 lado@herefordshire.gcsx.gov.uk Shropshire - 01743 254402
Herefordshire Safeguarding Partnership Shropshire Safeguarding Partnership	01432 260 100 www.herefordshire.gov.uk/hscb 01743 254259 / 254246 http://www.safeguardingshropshireschildren.org.uk/
Herefordshire Council Switchboard Shropshire Council Switchboard	01432 260 000 0345 678 9000



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West Mercia Women's Aid	http://westmerciaconsortium.proceduresonline.com/index.htm
E-Safety	Hereford - Initial Contact Team - 0345 6789021 Shropshire - SSCB Development Officer - 01743 254251 West Mercia Police - 0300 333 3000 SITSS - 01743 254230 Child Exploitation Online Protection Centre www.ceop.police.uk Internet Watch Foundation - www.iwf.org.uk
West Mercia Police	Emergency – 999 Switchboard - 0300 333 3000 Non – Emergency - 101
Prevent team, Warwickshire and West Mercia Police	DS Phil Colley 01386 591835 07736 084701 philip.colley@westmercia.pnn.police.uk

Name/Department/Organisation	Contact Details
Shropshire's Safeguarding Partnership Independent Review Unit, Shropshire Council, Mount McKinley, Anchorage Avenue, Shrewsbury Business Park, Shrewsbury, SY2 6FG	Tel: 01743 254259 / 254246 Email: SSCPBusinessUnit@shropshire.gov.uk
Compass - Single point of coordination into Shropshire Children's Services at an Early Help level.	Tel: 0345 678 9021 Emergency Duty Team Tel: 0345 678 9040 (Out of hours) Telford & Wrekin Council Family Connect Tel: 01952 385 385 (Out of hours) Tel: 01952 676 500 Family Information Service Tel: 01743 254 400
Public Protection Unit (West Mercia Police)	Tel: 0300 333 3000 Tel: 0845 744 4888



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NSPCC	Tel: 0808 800 5000
Adult Protection Investigating Teams Shropshire Council	Tel: 0345 678 9021
Emergency Duty Team (Out of hours)	Tel: 0345 678 9040
Telford & Wrekin Council	Tel: 01952 381280
Emergency Duty Team (Out of hours)	Tel: 01952 676500
Suicide Prevention Care Pathway for Children and Young People in Shropshire	http://westmerciaconsortium.proceduresonline.com/pdfs/shrop_suicide_prevent_care_pathway.pdf
Self-Harm Care Pathway for Children and Young People in Shropshire	http://westmerciaconsortium.proceduresonline.com/pdfs/shrop_self_harm_pol.pdf



Appendix 2

Definitions, Indicators of Harm and Specific Safeguarding Issues

Staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation and safeguarding issues and maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" where safeguarding is concerned. Safeguarding concerns can occur inside and outside the College, online and offline, and can be perpetrated by adults or other children. Safeguarding concerns can occur inside and outside the College, online and offline, and can be perpetrated by adults or other children. Staff are not responsible for investigating concerns or determining whether abuse has occurred. Any concern, disclosure, allegation, suspicion or indicator of harm must be reported immediately in accordance with this policy.

Physical Abuse

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

Possible Indicators

- Unexplained injuries
- Injuries inconsistent with explanations given
- Frequent injuries or repeated accidents
- Fear of physical contact
- Reluctance to change clothes for sports or practical activities
- Aggressive behaviour or extreme withdrawal

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

Possible Indicators

- Low self-esteem
- Excessive anxiety or fearfulness
- Withdrawal from social interaction
- Self-harm behaviours
- Over-compliance or excessive need for approval
- Extremes of behaviour

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

Possible Indicators

- Sexualised behaviour inappropriate to age or development



- Unexplained gifts, money or possessions
- Avoidance of particular individuals
- Sudden changes in behaviour
- Pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections
- Distress, anxiety or depression

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Possible Indicators

- Poor hygiene
- Inadequate clothing
- Hunger or malnutrition
- Untreated medical needs
- Frequent absence or lateness
- Lack of supervision or support

Adult Safeguarding Concerns

For adults at risk, abuse may include:

- Physical abuse
- Domestic abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological or emotional abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Modern slavery
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational abuse
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Self-neglect

Staff should report concerns relating to adults at risk immediately through the College safeguarding procedures.

Child-on-Child Abuse

The College recognises that children can abuse other children and that incidents can occur both inside and outside of education settings and online. All child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. The College operates a zero-tolerance approach.

- Bullying, including cyberbullying
- Physical abuse
- Sexual violence
- Sexual harassment
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images and/or videos



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- Initiation or hazing-type violence
- Abuse within intimate personal relationships
- Upskirting
- Prejudice-based bullying
- Abuse linked to protective characteristics
-

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

CCE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity.

Possible indicators

- Unexplained money or expensive items
- Association with older individuals or gangs
- Missing episodes
- Carrying weapons
- Drug-related activity
- Significant behavioural changes

County Lines

County lines is a form of criminal exploitation in which organised criminal groups use dedicated mobile phone lines and exploit children and vulnerable people to move, store and sell drugs and money.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse where an individual or group manipulates, deceives or coerces a child into sexual activity.

Possible Indicators

- Unexplained gifts
- Unhealthy relationships
- Older associates or partners
- Missing episodes
- Increased online activity
- Emotional distress

Serious Violence

Staff should be aware of indicators which may suggest a child is at risk from or involved in serious violence.

Possible Indicators

- Increased absence
- Changes in friendships
- Possession of weapons
- Decline in performance



- Unexplained injuries
- Involvement in anti-social behaviour

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse may involve physical, emotional, sexual, financial or controlling and coercive behaviour within a family or intimate relationship.

Children may be victims in their own right through seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects of domestic abuse.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Harmful sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour displayed by children and young people which may be harmful to themselves or others.

All concerns must be reported to the DSL.

So-Called Honour-Based Abuse (HBA)

So-called honour-based abuse encompasses incidents or crimes committed to protect or defend the perceived honour of a family, community or group and may include forced marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM). All concerns must be reported immediately to the DSL.

Radicalisation and Extremism

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism or extremist ideologies. Staff should be alert to indicators that a student may be vulnerable to radicalisation and should report concerns to the DSL. Concerns may be managed through safeguarding procedures, including referral to Prevent where appropriate.

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

Modern slavery encompasses slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour and human trafficking. Victims may be exploited for criminal, sexual, domestic or labour purposes. Any concerns must be reported to the DSL immediately.

Online Safety

Technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Online risks may include:

- Content: exposure to harmful, illegal or inappropriate material.
- Contact: harmful online interaction with others.
- Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases risk.
- Commerce: financial scams, fraud, gambling or exploitation online.
- Cybercrime is the use of computers or networks to commit crimes, such as committing fraud, trafficking, creating and distributing child pornography, stealing identities and/or violating privacy. Using such as ransomware, hacking, phishing and DDOS attacks. The college will work with the National Crime Agency (UK law enforcement agency that investigates and disrupts cybercrime) when required.



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- Disinformation is false information that is deliberately created and spread to cause harm, mislead or manipulate people. The college will treat all such concerns as gross misconduct.
- Conspiracy theories are stories or ideas that claim events are secretly being controlled by powerful groups, often without evidence. These stories can make children fearful, mistrust adults or authorities and increase vulnerability to harmful influence. The college will manage concerns in relation to conspiracy theories as gross misconduct
- Misinformation is the false or misleading information that is shared by someone who believes it to be true. They are not trying to cause harm, but what they pass on is wrong and can mislead others. This will be managed in line with the appropriate level of Ready, Respectful, Safe and well-being support given to all students involved.
- Generative AI technology is recognised by the college as posing a variety of risks to children. Any concern with potential to cause harm using AI-generated technology, such as child sexual abuse material (AI-CSAM), bullying, sexually harassment, grooming, extortion, and misleading children will be managed in line with this child protection policy, as gross misconduct.

All concerns regarding online safety should be reported in accordance with this policy.

Mental Health

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

Staff should not attempt to diagnose mental health conditions but should report concerns where safeguarding risks are identified.

Children Missing Education and Students at Risk of Disengagement

Children missing education can be an indicator of abuse, neglect, exploitation, mental health concerns or involvement in criminal activity. Staff should report concerns regarding attendance and unexplained absence in line with College procedures.

Students with SEND

Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges. Staff should recognise that assumptions should not be made that indicators of possible abuse, neglect or exploitation relate solely to a student's disability, communication needs or additional needs. Staff should be particularly vigilant to any changes in behaviour, presentation or engagement.

Further Guidance

This appendix should be read in conjunction with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current version)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- The Prevent Duty Guidance
- The Care Act 2014 (for adult safeguarding)
- Local safeguarding partnership procedures
- College safeguarding procedures and staff training materials