Bishop Auckland College Group

Quality Management System

Policy Number

POL-CP-01

Policy Title

Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy

If you wish to make a safeguarding referral, please turn to page appendix 1 (page 16)

If someone is at immediate risk of harm, please call the Emergency Services on Tel 999

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Alternative Format Statement

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Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy

1.0 Introduction

Bishop Auckland College Group is made up of Bishop Auckland College and South West Durham Training. References to "the Group" throughout this policy is defined as those organisations stated above, unless otherwise stated.

The Group's Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy has been developed to protect, safeguard and promote the welfare of its learners (both adult and young people) and staff. By law, children include everyone under the age of 18 years and the Group has additional child protection responsibilities in line with the procedures of the Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership (DSCP), which can be accessed on www.durham-scp.org.uk/

2.0 Policy statement

The Group recognises that it has a statutory and moral duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of its children/staff. All staff within the Group are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is described in the statutory guidance 'Working Together to safeguard children'. The Group will ensure that appropriate action is taken to prevent any learner against the risk of suffering significant harm and complies with its child protection duties. This action extends to and includes the Group's duty to safeguard and protect all learners from radicalisation and extremism within the Prevent Duty.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of the guidance as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring the 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

In safeguarding adults, the Group will observe the Department of Health's definition, a vulnerable adult "...who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or her against significant harm or exploitation". However, the Group's policy is to safeguard all learners, children and adults.

The Group is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion to ensure that all learners/staff, regardless of gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion, sexual identity or socio-economic factors have equal rights to be protected from harm.

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.

This policy aims to:

- Demonstrate the Group's commitment to safeguarding learners
- Provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their safeguarding responsibilities
- Ensure consistent good practice

3.0 Whole group approach to safeguarding

The Governing body ensures that they facilitate a whole group approach to safeguarding. This means ensuring safeguarding and child protection is at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, the governing body and group leaders will ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Systems are in place, and they should be well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for students to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.

The Safeguarding policy is embedded across all of the College Group, including South West Durham Training and Durham Gateway.

See section 4 for the relevant contact information to raise a safeguarding concern.

Coordinating safeguarding across multiple sites:

To ensure that safeguarding protocols are thoroughly embedded across the group's multiple sites and delivered in a consistent approach. The group, via the senior leader with operational oversight for safeguarding will:

- Ensure that all staff and governors understand their role with regards to safeguarding.
- Ensure all staff and governors are trained to the same standard of safeguarding.
- Ensure that all policies and procedures are fully embedded across the culture of the group.
- Ensure that communication on matters related to safeguarding are consistently shared across the group.
- Ensure that the designated safeguarding leads meet on a regular basis to discuss their experiences, share best practice and inform future training.

This policy should be read alongside:

The policy is underpinned and shaped by legislation and guidance contained in a variety of documents and should be read alongside:

- The Children's Act 2004 (The Children Act 1989 guidance and regulations (publishing.service.gov.uk))
- Department for Education, Working together to Safeguard Children (Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk))
- Keeping Children Safe in Education – Statutory Guidance for Schools and Organisations, Department for Education Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance September 2025
- HM Government revised Prevent Duty guidance (Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales (accessible) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)) and Channel duty guidance (Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting people susceptible to radicalisation (publishing.service.gov.uk))
  Section 175 of the Education Act (Education Act 2002 (legislation.gov.uk)

4.0 Key personnel and their roles in safeguarding

All staff within the Group are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for students, promote student's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating.

Staff will receive safeguarding training relevant to their role to support the shared and equal responsibility of all staff to provide a safe environment for learners and to identify any learner who is likely to, or maybe suffering from significant harm and to take appropriate action in line with this policy.

The group has several key personnel that hold specific roles and responsibilities associated with Safeguarding and Prevent:

Senior Leader with Operational Oversight for Bishop Auckland College Group	
Details	**Responsibilities**
Shaun Hope Principal & Chief Executive Room 286 Ext 2209 or 01388 443001	Strategic co-ordination of individuals with significant roles in safeguarding including Health & Safety, Mental Health and IT safety Enforcing the group's safeguarding policy Maintaining review of guidance from DfE, ESFA and other sources in ensuring that the College's procedures are up to date; Ensuring the application of safeguarding procedures to employers and other organisations that receive students or young people on long term external placements.
Governors with special responsibility for Safeguarding	
Details	**Responsibilities**
Chris Hutchinson Contact made via the Clerk Ext 2322 or 01388 443138 Or Shaun Hope Principal & Chief Executive Room 286 Ext 2209 01388 443001 SWDT	Take a lead on safeguarding and will act as one of the links between the Group management and the Corporate Board/Executive Council/Management Committees Responsible for overseeing the liaison between agencies such as the Police and First Contact in connection with allegations against the Principal/Chief Executive or the Designated Lead. Responsible for liaising with the Principal/Chief Executive and Designated Lead over safeguarding matters, ensuring that: The Group has a policy and guidance for staff Regular reviews of the Group policy on Safeguarding are completed Receive bi-annual report from the Designated Lead, which will include a review ofsafeguarding matters, staff training and compliance of Safeguarding/Student Protection Policy

Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)	
Contact	**Responsibilities**
Shaun Hope Principal & Chief Executive Designated Lead Room 286 Ext 2209 or 01388 443001 Jonathan Hall Executive Director – SWDT Designated Lead - **SWDT** Ext 6003 or 01325 313194 Gavin Batie Head Teacher Durham Gateway Designated Lead – **Durham Gateway** Ext 3314 or 01388 443043 Lisa Campbell Head of HR Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead Ext 3311 or 01388 443015	Take lead responsibility for safeguarding/student protection in the Group (including online safety) Support staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure & Barring Service as required Liaise with the three safeguarding partners and work with other agencies in line with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' Liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff

Designated safeguarding team	
Contact	**Responsibilities**
Cheryl Hird Safeguarding & Mental Health Coordinator Student Services Ext 3249 or 01388 443130 Duty Manager (Senior Leadership Management Team) Telephone 07764 269223 Julie McManus Deputy Safeguarding Lead **– SWDT** Ext 6001 or 01325 313194 Daniel Shaw Deputy Safeguarding Lead – **Durham Gateway** Ext 4001 or 07850604433	Ensure the learner's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Be available to provide advice and support to staff on issues relating to safeguarding Deal with individual cases, including attending case conferences and review meetings Will know how to make an appropriate referral Work closely with the Group's Designated Safeguarding Lead(s), where appropriate, to support learners and make external referrals as appropriate Refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care as required Refer cases to the Channel programme where there is radicalisation concern as required Refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required – refer to NPCC guidance Have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns

	Have received training in safeguarding issues and inter-agency working, as required by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (DSCP) and will receive refresher training at least every 2years Will undertake additional safeguarding training, as appropriate Meet regularly to monitor and review the Group's safeguarding practices, to ensure best practice is observed and consistency in application of the policy. The team will also receive reports with respect to the Group's safeguarding actions, facilitating data analysis to identify any emerging themes.

For safeguarding enquiries, you can also e-mail: safeguarding@bacoll.ac.uk

5.0 The role of all group staff

As well as having designated roles in place, the Group does recognise that all staff have a role in the safeguarding of learners and providing a safe environment in which our students can learn. To this end all staff will:

- Receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) at induction. The training will be regularly updated in addition, all staff should receive and read/attend safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates for example via e-mail, bulletins, staff conferences and staff meetings as required. This should be at least annually to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.
- Receive an appropriate induction (and/or training) which ensures they are aware of systems within the Group which support safeguarding including: The Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Policy on Safeguarding Concerns and Allegations Made About Staff Including Supply Teachers Volunteers and Contractors (Safeguarding, Equality & Diversity - Bishop Auckland College (bacoll.ac.uk), the role of the Designated Lead, the Designated team and how to refer any concerns relating to safeguarding (including PREVENT)
- Receive safeguarding training (including online safety) and any updates relevant to their role
- Receive training in PREVENT, and any updates, relevant to their role
- Will read part 1 of the Keeping Children Safe in Education document
- Updates will be given at least annually

All Group staff should:

- Be aware of the early help process and understand their role in it.
- Know what to do if a learner tells them they are being abused, exploited or neglected.
- Never promise a learner that they will not tell anyone about an allegation, as that may ultimately not be in the best interests of the learner

All staff should be aware of systems within the Group which support safeguarding and these should be explained to staff as part of their induction. This should include:

- Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy (including the policy and procedure for dealing with child-on-child abuse). This is available at Safeguarding, Equality & Diversity - Bishop Auckland College (bacoll.ac.uk)
- Student Code of Conduct
- Behaviour/Disciplinary Procedure. This is available at: Higher Education - Bishop Auckland College (bacoll.ac.uk)
- Staff Code of Conduct (including, amongst other things, low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistleblowing) (ref: HR-DP-01)
- Policy on Safeguarding Concerns and Allegations Made About Staff Including Supply Teachers Volunteers and Contractors (Safeguarding, Equality & Diversity - Bishop Auckland College (bacoll.ac.uk))
- Public Interest Disclosure Policy (Whistleblowing)
- The safeguarding response to children who go missing from education (Stat guidance template (publishing.service.gov.uk)
- The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies)
- 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

What staff should do if they have concerns about safeguarding practices within the College Group:

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the College Group's safeguarding regime and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the Corporate Board/Executive Council/Management Committees, Executive Team and Senior Leadership Team.

There is a Public Interest Disclosure/Whistleblowing Policy in place which can be accessed via the staff portal, the Quality department or the Human Resources department.

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 may be open to them:

General guidance can be found on page 23 of the Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance. This can be found at Keeping children safe in education from 1 September 2025.pdf

What Group staff should look out for?

Appendix 2 should be read by all staff and identifies how to *recognise signs of safeguarding concern*.

What to do if you have a safeguarding concern about a learner:

Appendix 1 should be read by all staff and identifies how to raise a safeguarding concern.

Early help

If early help is appropriate, the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead 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 social care for assessment for statutory services, if the learner's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

Statutory children's social care assessments and services

Concerns about a child's welfare should be referred to local authority children's social care. 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. Referrals should follow the local referral process.

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:
https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/about/what-is- contextual-safeguarding

Children in need

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:

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, female genital mutilation, or other so-called 'honour'-based abuse, forced marriage and extra-familial harms like radicalisation and sexual exploitation.

What to do if a learner is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm

If a learner is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral should be made to First Contact and/or the police immediately.

Record Keeping

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

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

If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Where possible, the Group will aim to collect more than one emergency contact number for each learner. This will give the Group additional options to make contact with a responsible adult when a child missing education is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

Human Rights Act

The Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA) sets out the fundamental rights and freedoms that everyone in the UK is entitled to and contains the Articles and protocols of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) (the Convention) that are deemed to apply in the UK. It compels public organisations to respect and protect an individual's human rights when they make individual decisions about them.

Under the HRA, it is unlawful for the Group to act in a way that is incompatible with the Convention. The specific Convention rights applying to the College are:

- Article 3: the right to freedom from inhuman and degrading treatment (an absolute right)
- Article 8: the right to respect for private and family life (a qualified right) includes a duty to protect individuals' physical and psychological integrity
- Article 14: requires that all of the rights and freedoms set out in the Act must be protected and applied without discrimination, and
- Protocol 1, Article 2: protects the right to education.

Being subjected to harassment, violence and or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of these rights, depending on the nature of the conduct and the circumstances. Further information (including on absolute and qualified rights) can be found at Human Rights | Equality and Human Rights Commission

Equality Act 2010

The Group has obligations under the Equality Act 2010 (the Equality Act).

The Group is committed to creating an outstanding learning environment where we promote fairness, celebrate differences and the unique contributions and talents that all our community ("the College") (governors, staff, learners, visitors and contractors) can bring, to enable us to thrive. We will proactively work to create, diversity and equality of opportunity that is intended to be an integral part of college life.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (POL-ED-01) sets out, in detail the group's approach to this area. This is available at Safeguarding, Equality & Diversity - Bishop Auckland College (bacoll.ac.uk)

Public Sector Equality Duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) is found in the Equality Act. Compliance with the PSED is a legal requirement for state-funded colleges, advice on this – including on specific duties, is set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

More information on PSED can be found in The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (POL-ED-01). This is available at Safeguarding, Equality & Diversity - Bishop Auckland College (bacoll.ac.uk)

Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR

The Governing Body are aware that among other obligations, the Data Protection Act 2018, and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure. See ICO guidance 'For Organisations' which includes information about your obligations and how to comply, including protecting personal information, and providing access to official information.

All learners' safeguarding records will be stored confidentially and co-located with learner records, held in Student Support.

For more information on data protection please read General Data Protection Regulation Policy (POL-DP-01) or contact DPO@bacoll.ac.uk. This and related documents can be found at Data Protection - Bishop Auckland College (bacoll.ac.uk)

6.0 Multi-agency working

The College Group has a pivotal role to play in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. The Governing Body ensures that the College Group contributes to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'. The College Group work closely with relevant partners in the safeguarding partner arrangements.

The group understands its role in the three safeguarding partner arrangements. Governors and senior leadership team as well as the safeguarding team should make themselves aware of and follow the local arrangements:

7.0 Information Sharing

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect, and in promoting children's welfare, including their education outcomes. Schools and colleges have clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes

As part of meeting a learner's needs, the Group recognises the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies. This includes ensuring arrangements are in place that clearly set out the process and principles for sharing information with the Group, with safeguarding partners, other organisations, agencies and practitioners, as required. Staff must be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of the learner, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a learner is already known to local authority social care, whilst referring to the General Data Protection Regulation Policy (ref: POL-DP-01) at all times. This can be found at Data Protection - Bishop Auckland College (bacoll.ac.uk). Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

8.0 Opportunities to teach safeguarding

The Governing Body ensures that learners are taught about how to keep themselves and others safe, including online. It should be recognised that effective education will be tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual learners, including children who are victims of abuse, and children with special educational needs or disabilities.

The College Group play a crucial role in preventative education. Preventative education is most effective in the context of a whole-college approach that prepares students for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment. The College Group have a clear set of values and standards, upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of College/Group life. These are underpinned by the College's disciplinary procedure and pastoral support system, as well as by a planned programme of evidence-based RSHE delivered in regularly timetabled lessons and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum. Such a programme should be fully inclusive and developed to be age and stage of development appropriate (especially when considering the needs of children with SEND and other vulnerabilities).

This programme will tackle, at an age-appropriate stage, issues such as:

- Healthy and respectful relationships
- Boundaries and consent
- Stereotyping, prejudice and equality
- Body confidence and self-esteem
- How to recognise an abusive relationship, including coercive and controlling behaviour
- The concepts of, and laws relating to - sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so called 'honour'-based violence such as forced marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and how to access support
- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.

9.0 Online Safety

It is essential that learners are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. The College Group has a whole approach to online safety which empowers the College Group to protect and educate learners and staff in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate. These approaches are set out, in detail, in e-Safety Policy (ref: POL-IT-05).

Refer to Appendix 8 for further information.

10.0 What to do if you have concerns about another staff member

Corporate Board/Executive Council/Management Committees have ensured that there are procedures in place to manage safeguarding concerns, or allegations against staff (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors) that might indicate they pose a risk of harm to children.

Refer to the policy 'Policy on Safeguarding concerns and allegations made about staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors. This policy includes low-level concerns (Safeguarding, Equality & Diversity - Bishop Auckland College (bacoll.ac.uk) available on the staff portal or from Human Resources. This policy also gives further detail on dealing with low-level concerns.

Concerns and allegations that meet the harm test should be addressed as set out in section one, part 4 of the Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance (see Policy on Safeguarding concerns and allegations made about staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors. This policy includes low-level concerns)

11.0 What to do if you have concerns about child-on-line abuse

It is extremely important to recognise that learners are capable of abusing their peers. The Group endeavours to minimise any risk of this. However, it is important to remember that abuse is abuse no matter who it is from and will never be tolerated at Bishop Auckland College Group, nor should it be passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'.

As with any safeguarding concerns, if you have any concerns that a learner may be abusing another learner, including sexting and gender-based bullying, this should be alerted to the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead.

12.0 Safer Recruitment

The Group is committed to safer recruitment of its staff and volunteers, for full information on safer recruitment, please refer to the Safer Recruitment Policy (ref: POL-HR-05) or contact the Director of HR.

13.0 Staff training and induction

All staff should be aware of systems within the Group which support safeguarding and these will be explained to them as part of their staff induction. This will include:

- The Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy (including the policy and procedure for dealing with child-on-child abuse, safeguarding response to children going missing in education as well as the role of the designated safeguarding lead and the identity of the lead and deputies).
- Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedure. This is available at Higher Education - Bishop Auckland College (bacoll.ac.uk)
- Student Disclosure of Criminal Convictions Procedure. This is available at Higher Education - Bishop Auckland College (bacoll.ac.uk)
- Code of conduct

The Corporate Board/Executive Council/Management Committees will ensure that staff undergo:

- 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 within their induction at the Group
- Safeguarding training will be updated annually, and will be in line with advice from the three local safeguarding partners
- Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings) as required, and at least annually to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard learners effectively
- All staff will receive training in relation to the Prevent Duty
- All staff will receive training in relation to British Values
- All Human Resources staff will be expected to attend Safer Recruitment Training every 3 years
- All Managers or staff who have responsibility for recruitment will be expected to have had Safer Recruitment Training (in-house via the Director of Human Resources or through the DSCP/equivalent)
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will be expected to receive specific training to equip them to carry out the role, including Safeguarding Process Level 2 (or equivalent) Safeguarding

Training and wherever possible, advanced safeguarding training

- All Duty Safeguarding Officers will be expected to receive specific training to equip them to carry out the role including Safeguarding Process training or equivalent Level 2 training.
- All Corporate Board/Executive Council/Management Committees members will be expected to carry out safeguarding training
- Key staff will be given the opportunity to attend other relevant training such as in relation to specific safeguarding issues, LADO training or in relation to safer recruitment.

In recognition of the training which staff receive and the expertise they build, the opportunity will be given to key staff to contribute to and shape safeguarding arrangements and Safeguarding/Child Protection policy.

14.0 Use of school or college premises for non school/college activities

Where the College Group agree to hire or rent out College Group facilities/premises to organisations or individuals (for example to community groups, sports associations, and service providers to run community or extra-curricular activities) they will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe.

When services or activities are provided by the governing body, under the direct supervision or management of College Group staff, the arrangements for child protection will apply. However, where services or activities are provided separately by another body this is not necessarily the case. The governing body will therefore seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (including inspecting these as needed); and ensure that there are arrangements in place to liaise with the College on these matters where appropriate. This applies regardless of whether or not the children who attend any of these services or activities are children on the school role or who attend the College Group. The governing body or proprietor should also ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement (i.e. lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of the premises; and that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.

15.0 Alternative Provision

Where a school places a pupil with the College Group (as an alternative provision provider), it continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and should be satisfied that the placement meets the pupil's needs.

The cohort of pupils in Alternative Provision often have complex needs, it is important that the Governing Body are aware of the additional risk of harm that their pupils may be vulnerable to.

Schools will request written information from the College Group (alternative provider) that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at their establishment (i.e. those checks that schools would otherwise perform on their own staff). This will include confirmation that the College Group (alternative provider) will inform the commissioning school of any arrangements that may put the child at risk (i.e. staff changes), so that the commissioning school can ensure itself that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on new staff.

Schools should always know where a child is based during school hours. This includes having records of the address of the College Group (alternative provider) and any subcontracted provision or satellite sites the child may attend. The school should regularly review the College Group (alternative provision placement). Reviews should normally be frequent enough (at least half termly) to provide assurance that the child is regularly attending and the placement continues to be safe and meets the child's needs.

Where safeguarding concerns arise, the placement will be immediately reviewed and may be terminated, if the school deem it necessary, unless or until the concerns have been satisfactorily addressed.

The Department for Education has issued two pieces of statutory guidance to which, commissioners of Alternative Provision should have regard:

- Alternative provision - DfE Statutory Guidance; and
- Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - DfE Statutory Guidance

16.0 The use of reasonable force

The Group would always advise a policy of 'no contact' wherever possible, however,

there are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in the Group to use reasonable force to safeguard learners. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain learners. This can range from guiding a learner to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between learners or blocking a learner's path, or active physical contact such as leading a learner by the arm out of a classroom.

The decision on whether or not to use reasonable force to control or restrain a learner is down to the professional judgement of the staff concerned and should always depend on individual circumstances.

When using reasonable force in response to risks presented by incidents involving learners with SEN, the Group recognises the additional vulnerability of these specific learners. By planning positive and proactive behaviour support and agreeing them with parents/ carers, the Group can reduce the occurrence of challenging behaviour and the need to use reasonable force.

17.0 Related documents

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy	POL-ED-01
- Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy	POL-SS-01
- Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedure	BA-SS-01
- Student Disclosure of Criminal Convictions	BAC-SS-06
- Off Site Visit Procedure	BAC-SS-03
- Policy on Safeguarding Concerns and Allegations Made About Staff Including Supply Teachers Volunteers and Contractors	POL-HR-12
- Safer Recruitment Policy	POL-HR-05
- Public Interest Disclosure/Whistleblowing Policy	POL-HR-11
- Staff Code of Conduct	HR-DP-01
- Multi Faith Prayer Room Policy	
- Freedom of Expression Policy	
- Visitors, Contactors and Commercial Delegates Procedure	BAC-SS-05
- DfE, Keeping Children Safe in Education	
- DfE, Working Together to Safeguard Children	
- Safeguarding Alert and Referral Form (including Missing learners:	
- Risk- Assessment Form)	
- School Provision: Service Level Agreement	SS-RSC-01
- E-Safety Policy	POL-IT-05
- Acceptable Use of IT Policy	POL-IT-07

18.0 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or following any internal Group changes or any changes to legislation and guidance issued by relevant bodies and submitted to the governing body for review and approval.

Appendix 1

Safeguarding: Raising a Safeguarding Concern

1 Raising a safeguarding concern

If a member of staff has a safeguarding concern about a learner which can be from a disclosure by the learner, information from other learners or discovered by the staff member, the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead is to be contacted without delay. The member of staff raising the concern will then complete **Section 1 and 2** of the Safeguarding Alert and Referral Form (ref: SS-RSC-01). The staff member will then discuss the concern with the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead and provide the completed form (SS-RSC-01).

The Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead will discuss the concern with the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy or another member of the Designated Team in the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and jointly agree a course of action. The Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead will complete **Section 4 onwards** of the Safeguarding Alert and Referral Form (ref: SS-RSC-01).

In emergency situations (e.g. where there is a risk of severe physical injury), where immediate action is needed to safeguard the health or safety of the individual or anyone else who may be at risk, the emergency services will be contacted immediately. Where a crime has been committed or is suspected within a safeguarding concern, the police should be contacted immediately.

2 Dealing with a safeguarding concern:

Depending upon the age and circumstances of the learner the overarching Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy will apply and in addition, one of the appendices may also apply. The Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that the correct and appropriate action is taken in line with the Group policy and processes.

3 Referring a safeguarding concern

If after careful assessment the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead considers that there is a reasonable cause to refer to First Contact or other relevant agencies, this must be done without delay. This is in line with the DSCP child protection procedures.

The Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead will discuss with **First Contact** what action should be taken and will also agree if the parents/carers/guardians/next of kin will be informed unless to do so would put the learner at risk. The Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead will record the discussion and action agreed in **Section 5** of the Safeguarding Alert and Referral Form (ref: SS-RSC-01).

If anyone other than the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Designated Safeguarding Lead makes the referral, they should inform the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/ Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay. The local authority should make a decision within one working day of a referral being made about what course of action they are taking and should let the referrer know the outcome. Staff should follow up on a referral if that information is not forthcoming.

Appendix 2

Safeguarding: Recognising a Safeguarding Concern

The following information is provided on the specific safeguarding issues, types of abuse and neglect, exploitation and radicalisation to support staff in recognising and raising a safeguarding concern. If any staff members require any additional support in order to deal with any of the above issues, please contact a member of the Designated Safeguarding Team.

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 nude and semi-nude images and or videos can be signs that children are at risk.

Other safeguarding which all staff should be aware of include:

Issues with learners outside of Group

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside of the Group and/or can occur between children outside of the Group. All staff, but especially the Safeguarding and mental health coordinator /designated safeguarding lead/Duty Safeguarding Officers, should consider the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as: **Contextual Safeguarding.**

This means assessments of learners should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a learner's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Children's social care assessments will consider such factors so it is important that the College Group provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all of the available evidence and the full context of any abuse.

What College Group staff should look out for:

Early help

Any child may benefit from early help, but all 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 education, home or care,
- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, college and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit.

- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a parent or carer in custody, 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
- is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child

Abuse, neglect and exploitation

All staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation (see below), understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the College Group, 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.

All College Group staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation, 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.

All staff 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.

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.

In all cases, if staff are unsure, they should always speak to the Safeguarding and mental health coordinator /designated safeguarding lead/Duty Safeguarding Officers.

Indicators of 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. 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, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. 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.

Physical abuse

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

Recognising Physical Abuse

The following are some examples which are often regarded as indicators of concern:

- An explanation which is inconsistent with an injury
- Several different explanations provided for an injury
- Unexplained delay in seeking treatment
- The parents/carers are uninterested or undisturbed by an accident or injury
- Parents are absent without good reason when their child is presented for treatment
- Repeated presentation of minor injuries (which may represent a “cry for help” and if ignored could lead to a more serious injury)
- Family use of different doctors and A&E departments
- Reluctance to give information or mention previous injuries

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 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.

Recognising Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise, as the signs are usually behavioural rather than physical. The manifestations of emotional abuse might also indicate the presence of other kinds of abuse.

The indicators of emotional abuse are often also associated with other forms of abuse. The following may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Developmental delay
- Abnormal attachment e.g. anxious, indiscriminate or not attachment
- Aggressive behaviour towards others
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence
- Withdrawn or seen as a "loner" – difficulty relating to others

Sexual abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of 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 (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Recognising Sexual Abuse

A person may be sexually abused and be scared to say anything due to guilt and/or fear. This is particularly difficult for a child to talk about and full account should be taken of the cultural sensitivities of any individual child/family.

Recognition can be difficult, unless the child discloses and is believed. There may be no physical signs and indications are likely to be emotional/behavioural.

Some behavioural indicators associated with this form of abuse are:

- Inappropriate sexualised conduct
- Sexually explicit behaviour, play or conversation, inappropriate to age
- Continual and inappropriate or excessive masturbation
- Self-harm (including eating disorder), self-mutilation and suicide attempts
- Involvement in prostitution or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners
- An anxious unwillingness to remove clothes e.g. for sports events (but this may be related to cultural norms or physical difficulties)

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 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.

Recognising Neglect

Evidence of neglect is built up over a period of time and can cover different aspects of parenting. Indicators include:

- Failure by parents or carers to meet the basic essential needs e.g. adequate food, clothes, warmth, hygiene and medical care
- A person seen to be listless, apathetic and irresponsive with no apparent medical cause
- Failure of child to grow within normal expected pattern, with accompanying weight loss
- Thrives away from home environment
- Frequently absent from school
- Child left with adults who are intoxicated or violent
- Child abandoned or left alone for excessive periods

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, unexplainable and/or persistent absences from 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 can be signs that children are at risk.

Below are some safeguarding issues all staff should be aware of

Bullying including cyberbullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

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.

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 and 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 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. NICCO provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

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 drugs and alcohol;
- 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 maintain them in education.

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.

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 schools (mainstream and special), 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 'traphouse 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.

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 the Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance. Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

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 computer (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 skill 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

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.

Drugs

Drugs include alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs, medicines, new psychoactive substances (legal highs) and volatile substances unless otherwise specified.

Fabricated or induced illness

There are three main ways for a carer to fabricate or induce an illness. These are not mutually exclusive and include fabrication of signs and symptoms and may include fabrication of past history; fabrication of signs and symptoms and falsification of hospital records and specimens of bodily fluids; induction of an illness by a variety of means

Faith abuse

This includes: belief in concepts of witchcraft and spirit possession, demons or the devil acting through children or leading them astray; ritual murders; use of belief in witchcraft or magic to create fear to make children more compliant when they are being trafficked for domestic slavery of sexual exploitation.

Female Genital Mutilation

(FGM): professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject

FGM mandatory duty for teachers

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, places a statutory duty upon teachers to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. However, it will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining learners.

Information on 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. Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and involve 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 normal safeguarding procedures.

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 organisations can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage. The Forced Marriage Unit has published statutory guidance and Multi-agency guidelines, with pages 32-36 of which focus on the role of schools and organisations.

In addition, since February 2023, it is also a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their 18th birthday, even if violence, threats, or another form of coercion are not used. As with the exiting forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding unofficial marriages 'as well as legal 'marriages'

Gangs and youth violence

'Street gangs' for whom crime and violence are a core part of their identity.

Gender based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)

The violence, physical, sexual or otherwise, stalking and harassment and female genital mutilation

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 in to 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 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 new duties shift focus to early intervention and encourage those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis. In most cases school and organisation 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 16-17-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. Children's services will be the lead agency for these young people and the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances.

Mental Health

Good or positive is more than the absence or management of mental health problems; it is the foundation for wellbeing and effective functioning both for individuals and their communities

All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a learner 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. Staff however, are well placed to observe a learner 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 learners 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 learners' experiences. Can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

College can access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies. More information can be found here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2

This should also be followed as best practice. Public Health England has produced a range of resources to support secondary school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among children. See https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/schools/topics/rise-above/overview for links to all materials and lesson plans.

If staff have a mental health concern about a learner that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following the child protection policy and speaking to the Safeguarding and mental health coordinator designated safeguarding lead or deputy.

The department has published advice and guidance on Preventing and Tracking Bullying, and Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (which may also be useful for colleges).

Operation Encompass Operation

Encompass operates in the majority of police forces across England. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when 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) 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 support to be given to the child according to their needs.

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
- Safelives: young people and domestic abuse

Child on Child Abuse

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 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.

All staff should understand that even if there are no reports in college 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).

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.

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, 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, 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 (also known as sexting
or youth produced sexual imagery)
• upskirting, 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).

Private Fostering

Private fostering occurs when a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) is provided with care and accommodation by a person who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility for them or a relative in their own home. A child is not privately fostered if the person caring for and accommodating them has done so for less than 28 days and does not intend to do so for longer. Such arrangements may come to the attention of the organisation staff through the normal course of their interaction and promotion of learning activities with children.

The organisation should then notify the Local Authority to allow them to check the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child

Further information on private fostering can be found in the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance', Annex A

Radicalisation

Radicalisation can be defined as 'the process through which an individual changes from passiveness or activism to become more revolutionary, militant or extremist, especially where there is an intent towards, or support for violence.
Driving factors behind radicalisation can include:

- Lack of integration
- Identify crisis and/or isolation
- Discrimination
- Foreign policy and/or internal crises or disputes
- Political movements
- Ideologies and faiths

Often it is vulnerable people who are targeted for radicalisation and can include those that:

- Have low self esteem
- Feel isolated
- Experience pressure from peers
- Have a lack of direction or purpose
- Feel guilt, loss, isolation, anger or fear
- Have suffered a family breakdown

Signs of radicalisation can manifest itself in several ways including

- Mood swings
- Anger
- Physical appearance
- Verbally expressing opinions, different to generally accepted values

There is no stereotype for people who hold extremist views and the above are only examples or circumstances that can drive someone to terrorism but the often lead is a sense of injustice – be that on a personal or more far-reaching scale. Their vulnerabilities or susceptibilities are then exploited towards crime or terrorism by people who have their own agenda.

Serious Violence

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that 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 being involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

Further advice is provided in the Home Office's 'Preventing youth violence and gang involvement' and 'Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines' guidance

Sexting

The exchange of self-generated explicit images, through mobile picture messages or webcams over the internet.

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

Trafficking

The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, or receipt of persons, by means of the threat of the use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, or deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments of benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purpose of exploitation.

Specific Safeguarding issues

Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues.

Specific safeguarding issues are detailed below with some detail on further information which is available:

Abuse of Safeguarding issue	Guidance/ Advice available	Source
Abuse	What to do if you're worried a child is being abused	DfE advice
	Domestic abuse: Various information/guidance	Home Office
	Faith based abuse: National Action Plan	DfE advice
	Relationship Abuse: disrespect nobody	Home Office website
Bullying	Preventing bullying including cyberbullying	DfE Advice
Children and the courts	Advice for 5–11-year-old witnesses in criminal courts	MoJ advice
	Advice for 12–17-year-old witnesses in criminal courts	MoJ advice
Children missing from education, home or care	Children missing from education	DfE statutory guidance
	Children missing from home or care	DfE statutory guidance
	Children and adults missing strategy	Home Office strategy

Abuse of Safeguarding issue	Guidance/ Advice available	Source
Children with family members in prison	National Information Centre on Children of Offenders	Barnardo's in partnership with Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) advice
Child Exploitation	County Lines: criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults	Home Office guidance
	Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners	DfE
	Trafficking: safeguarding children	DfE and HO guidance

Drugs	Drugs: advice for schools	DfE and ACPO advice
	Drug strategy 2017	Home Office strategy
	Information and advice on drugs	Talk to Frank website
	ADEPIS platform sharing information and resources for schools: covering drug & alcohol prevention	Website developed by Mentor UK
'Honour Based Violence' (so called)	Female genital mutilation: information and resources	Home Office
	Female genital mutilation; multi- agency statutory guidance	DfE, DH and HO statutory guidance
	Forced marriage; statutory guidance and government advice	Foreign Commonwealth Office and Home Office
Health and Well-being	Fabricated or induced illness; safeguarding children	DfE Department for Health and Home Office
	Rise Above; Free PSHE resources on health, wellbeing and resilience	Public Health England resources
	Medical-conditions, supporting pupils at school	DfE statutory guidance
	Mental health and behaviour	DfE statutory guidance
Homelessness	Homelessness: How local authorities should exercise their functions	MHCLG
Online	Sexting: responding to incidents and safeguarding children	UK Council for Child Internet Safety
Private Fostering	Private fostering: local authorities	DfE – statutory guidance
Radicalisation	Prevent duty guidance	Home Office guidance
	Prevent duty advice for schools	DfE advice
	Education Against Hate Website	DfE and Home Office
Violence	Gangs and youth violence: for schools and organisations	Home Office advice
	Ending violence against women and girls 2016-2020 strategy	Home Office strategy
	Violence against women and girls: national statement of expectations for victims	Home Office guidance
	Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and organisations	DfE advice
	Serious violence strategy	Home Office strategy

Appendix 3

Safeguarding: Pre-16 Learners

1.0 Introduction

This appendix relates to Pre-16 learners only and is to be read in conjunction with the Group's Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy which articulates the full safeguarding responsibilities of the Group.

2.0 Policy Statement

Changes in the provision of education and associated funding have facilitated the opportunity for organisations to deliver funded education to Pre-16 learners. With these changes, emerges a need to ensure that robust procedures are in place to safeguard Pre-16 learners and ensure that the Organisation's safeguarding requirements and duty of care extending to Pre-16 learners are fully comprehensive. As Pre-16 provision increases and learners are referred independently for learning provision, additional and specific arrangements are required in addition to the overarching Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy.

3.0 Principles of the policy

This aspect of the policy relates to the additional and specific arrangements for Pre-16 learners enrolled or referred to the Organisation, for learning provision and covers the following:

3.0 At the point of referral of a Pre-16 young person for a programme of study with the Organisation, a request will be made to the referring organisation to provide contextualised background information in relation to the learner.

3.1 Only following receipt of the above information will an admissions interview be arranged in line with the admissions process. An application form/agreement will be required to be completed by the pre-16 young person prior to, or during the admissions interview. The admissions interview will be completed by the relevant appropriate designated person i.e. Director of 14-16 Learning/Head Teacher Durham Gateway and associated organisation admissions documentation will be completed.

3.2 If the young person is suitable for the learning programme, arrangements will be made to complete an assessment to assess suitability to attend the Organisation, including identifying any specific safeguarding concerns that the Organisation will need to address.

3.3 If the outcome of the assessment is that the young person is able to study at the Organisation then enrolment will be completed and arrangements to start a trial or the programme of learning will be agreed. Prior to commencement, any requirements emerging from the assessment will be implemented in readiness for the learner starting their trial/programme and where appropriate a support plan/risk assessment will be completed and agreed with the learner and the referring organisation.

3.4 All Pre-16 learners will be supported by a Pre-16 Pastoral and Learning Mentor who will monitor attendance and participation in learning of the young person and will ensure that the relevant and appropriate pastoral and welfare support is provided. The Pre-16 Pastoral and Learning Mentor in liaison with the relevant Tutor/Designate will ensure that any assessment and support plans are implemented, monitored, reviewed and adjusted to meet the needs of the Pre-16 learner.

3.5 Interim review meetings will be held with the learner and the referring organisation to discuss learner progress and any emerging academic, pastoral, welfare or safeguarding concerns.

4.0 Safeguarding concern

If a safeguarding concern is raised in respect of a Pre-16 learner the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead will be contacted without delay and the relevant documentation completed as outlined in Appendix 1: Safeguarding: Raising a Safeguarding Concern. The referring organisation for the Pre-16 learner will be contacted immediately and agreed action will be taken.

Appendix 4

Safeguarding: HE Learners

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Underpinning this framework is the principle that all higher education students registered across the Group, however and wherever they may be studying should be protected from harassment and sexual misconduct from other students, staff and visitors.

1.2 These will be dealt with through the Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy. There is a Complaints Procedure also available to be used by HE learners, should this be needed. If a higher education students feels that an issue is not resolved, they can refer their concerns to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA).

1.3 While this statement focuses on the interests of higher education students, the Bishop Auckland College Group will take a similar approach to protecting our higher education staff and visitors from harassment and sexual misconduct.

1.4 The Bishop Auckland College Group is guided by the Office for Students statement of expectations which refers throughout to 'harassment and sexual misconduct'. The definitions for the purposes of this framework are as follows:

a) **Harassment** (as defined by Section 26 of the Equality Act 2010) includes unwanted behaviour or conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment because of, or connected to, one or more of the following protected characteristics:
   - Age
   - Disability
   - Gender reassignment
   - Race
   - Religion or belief
   - Sex
   - Sexual orientation

b) As defined, the Group understand harassment to include domestic violence and abuse (which can also involve control, coercion, threats), and stalking.

c) The Group would also consider harassment to include any incidents of physical violence towards another person(s) on the basis of a protected characteristic, and hate crimes, such as those criminal offences which are perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice, based on a person's disability or perceived disability; race or perceived race; or religion or perceived religion; or sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation or transgender identity or perceived transgender identity.

d) **Sexual misconduct** relates to all unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Sexual harassment (as defined by Section 26 (2) of the Equality Act 2010)
- Unwanted conduct which creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment (as defined by the Equality Act 2010)
- Assault (as defined by the Sexual Offences Act 2003)
- Rape (as defined by the Sexual Offences Act 2003)
- Physical unwanted sexual advances (as set out by the Equality and Human Rights Commission: Sexual harassment and the law, 2017)
- Intimidation, or promising resources or benefits in return for sexual favours (as set out by the Equality and Human Rights Commission: Sexual harassment and the law, 2017)
- Distributing private and personal explicit images or video footage of an individual without their consent (as defined by the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015).

1.5 Our definitions include harassment and sexual misconduct through any medium, including, for example, online.

1.6 The Bishop Auckland College Group will continue to take into account its statutory duties, and the OfS' regulatory requirements, relating to academic freedom and free speech.

1.7 As outlined in the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) guidance on freedom of expression, published in February 2019, exposure to course materials that students might find offensive or unacceptable is unlikely to constitute harassment.

2.0 Communication

2.1 Bishop Auckland College Group will continue to clearly communicate, and embed across the whole organisation, our approach to preventing and responding to all forms of harassment and sexual misconduct affecting higher education children. The Group sets out below the expectations that we have of these students, staff and visitors.

a) Visible and ongoing commitment from senior leaders and the governing body to preventing and responding to all forms of harassment and sexual misconduct. There is a clear governance line of accountability to ensure that the approach is embedded, upheld in practice, and remains fit- for-purpose across all higher education activities.

b) Collaboration with higher education student ambassadors and representatives to deliver a clear and consistent message to higher education students, staff and visitors that harassment and sexual misconduct will not be tolerated. This involves making clear the possible consequences and actions that the Group may take in response to such instances.

c) Expected standards of behaviour for all higher education students, staff and visitors are displayed throughout the Group, and the behaviour policy sets out the possible sanctions that can be imposed where these are not followed. These expectations are visible and easy to understand for all higher education students, staff and visitors, with communications adapted to the needs of

different groups. These are made clear to new and continuing higher education students and staff as part of induction and relevant ongoing activities.

3.0 Governing Body

3.1 The governing body ensures that the Bishop Auckland College Group approach to harassment and sexual misconduct is adequate and effective. The governing body ensures that risks relating to these issues are identified and effectively mitigated.

3.2 There is a systematic approach to tackle harassment and sexual misconduct embedded within existing governance structures. The Safeguarding Committee monitors progress and provides effective oversight across the whole Bishop Auckland College Group.

3.3 The governing body is routinely given information on the Group's approach to harassment and sexual misconduct for consideration and action (as necessary). This includes the provision of data including reported incidents and cases and outcomes of cases. It also includes the review and evaluation of the approach to harassment and sexual misconduct and its impact on our Higher Education students.

3.4 Appropriate training and briefings are given to governors and staff to ensure that those with a governance role have a clear understanding of the issues that are relevant to their responsibilities and their obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

4.0 Development and reviewing of policies and processes

4.1 Bishop Auckland College Group will continue to engage with Higher Education students to develop and evaluate systems, policies and processes to address harassment and sexual misconduct.

4.2 Proactive and meaningful engagement with higher education students and student ambassadors and representatives in the development, implementation and evaluation of systems, policies and processes for preventing and responding to harassment and sexual misconduct, and in how to support higher education children who have experienced it.

4.3 Engagement with a diverse range of higher education students, as well as learning from the experience of higher education students who have been involved in reports or investigations, to ensure that the development, implementation and evaluation of systems, policies and processes are adequate and effective. This may include consideration of protected characteristics and mode and level of study.

4.4 Engagement conducted in a sensitive manner to support higher education student wellbeing. This means that engagement will be accompanied by appropriate support and safeguards, which have been informed by specialist expertise, where appropriate.

5.0 Training for higher education staff

5.1 Bishop Auckland College Group will continue to implement adequate and effective training for higher education staff and students with the purpose of raising awareness of, and preventing, harassment and sexual misconduct.

5.2 Training will be made available on an ongoing basis for all higher education staff and students to raise awareness of harassment and sexual misconduct with the purpose of preventing incidents and encouraging reporting where they do occur.

6.0 Adequate and effective policies and processes in place for all higher education students

6.1 Bishop Auckland College Group have adequate and effective policies and processes in place for all higher education students to report and disclose incidents of harassment and sexual misconduct.

6.2 Easy to understand information is available to all Higher Education students and staff on how they can report, disclose or seek support and advice if they experience or witness any incident of harassment or sexual misconduct. This includes clearly communicating how the Bishop Auckland College Group may receive and respond to anonymous reports or reports made by Higher Education student ambassadors and representatives or third parties.

6.3 Provision of support for higher education students regardless of whether a formal report or complaint is made.

6.4 Policies and processes for reporting are communicated to all higher education students in an accessible way: for example, inclusion in the student handbook, on our website and all our social media platforms to ensure early communication with prospective higher education students.

6.5 Where required and requested, the Group will signpost or refer higher education students to the police, NHS, sexual assault referral centres or hate crime reporting centres, or to local specialist services such as Rape Crisis.

7.0 Bishop Auckland College Group have a fair, clear and accessible approach to acting in response to reports and disclosures.

7.1 The Group's approach ensures that Higher Education staff are able to respond appropriately and consistently to a disclosure about harassment and sexual misconduct. To protect individuals within investigatory and disciplinary processes, a clear explanation of how confidential information will be used and shared, is provided.

7.2 In response to reports and disclosures, our policies and procedures set out how the Group will initiate an investigatory process that is demonstrably fair, independent, and free from any reasonable perception of bias. This includes disciplinary proceedings against a higher education student, staff member or visitor (including member of the governing body) which may also constitute a criminal offence.

7.3 The Group ensures that information is visible and easy to understand for all higher education staff and students about the Group's investigatory process, decision-making process, associated timescales and factors which may impact on timescales. This includes the range of actions that may result from the investigation and includes information about the appeal process and how this can be accessed.

7.4 Disciplinary hearings that consider student complaints and appeals are conducted by a panel that is free from any reasonable perception of bias, diverse and include higher education student representatives where appropriate. All panel members are trained in handling complaints of this nature and will be independent from the investigatory process and specific case being considered.

8.0 Bishop Auckland College Group will ensure that higher education students involved in an investigatory process have access to appropriate and effective support.

8.1 In the event of a disclosure about an incident of harassment and/or sexual misconduct, both the reporting and responding parties have equitable access to appropriate support prior to the decision to launch a formal investigation, for the duration of any investigation, and following its outcome.

8.2 The Group have a protocol for timely communications with reporting and responding parties as well as procedures that ensure all reports of incidents of harassment and sexual misconduct are dealt with within a clearly communicated and reasonable timeframe.

8.3 Reporting and responding parties are provided with an outcome of the investigatory process where appropriate to share this information, or an explanation of any actions the Group have taken, or not taken, as a result of the complaint. Should the outcome of a process change, the reporting and responding parties will be informed of this.

9.0 Related documentation/information

9.1 Office of the Independent Adjudicator https://www.oiahe.org.uk/

9.2 Equality and Human Rights Commission www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/sexual-harassment-and-harassment-work- technical-guidance

9.3 Guidance for Higher Education Institutions on how to handle alleged student misconduct https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/topics/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/guidance-higher-education- institutions

9.4 Customer Complaints Procedure (ref: BAC-Q-05 Complaints - Bishop Auckland College (bacoll.ac.uk)
Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedure (ref: BAC-SS-01 Higher Education - Bishop Auckland College (bacoll.ac.uk)

Appendix 5

Safeguarding: Prevent Duty

1.0 Introduction

This appendix to the Bishop Auckland College Group's Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy relates to the Prevent Duty and the requirements placed upon further education organisations to ensure it safeguards learners from being radicalised and drawn into extremism and terrorism. This appendix is to be read in conjunction with the Group's Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy which articulates the full safeguarding responsibilities of the Group and the implementation of the Prevent Duty across the Group. The Group's Designated Safeguarding Lead also has responsibility for the Prevent Duty within the Group.

2.0 Policy Statement

The Counter –Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on certain bodies in the exercise of their duties to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from radicalisation, extremist influences and being drawn into terrorism. The Counter Terrorism Strategy - CONTEST- has four elements **Pursue – Protect – Prepare – Prevent.**

The Prevent Strategy, part of the governments overall Counter-terrorism strategy is to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism and paces a duty on institutions including further education to ensure robust procedures are in place to safeguard learners from being radicalised and drawn into terrorism.

The key theme of the Prevent is to **NOTICE-CHECK-SHARE,** remaining observant and vigilant to ensure concerns are reported early to facilitate intervention.

3.0 Principles of the Policy

Organisations need to be aware of these risks to protect vulnerable individuals from being radicalised and drawn into terrorism by extremist groups.

The Group will:

- Engage with external partners including but not limited to the Police and BIS (Business Innovation and Skills) Prevent Co-ordinator
- Provide representation at local police inter agency and Silver Contest meetings
- Provide training to all staff including governors on Counter Terrorism, The Prevent Duty and British Values and ensure that any Group sub-contractors understand the Group's Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy and the prevent duty
- Risk Assess the Group's management of internal policies and procedures in relation to the Group's buildings and access arrangements
- Have in place relevant internal task groups which have been established to take forward the Group's duties under the Counter-terrorism and Security Act.

- Have in place a student whistle blowing policy, alongside the staff policy
- Seek the views of learners on implementing the Prevent Duty within the Group
- Ensure learners have an understanding of terrorism, radicalisation and the Groups Prevent Duty to safeguard against being drawn into terrorism
- Ensure learners have an understanding of British Values and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and actively encourage respect with particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010
- Provide additional opportunities within the Group's curriculum to educate and challenge learners and to exemplify British values

- Ensure transparent policies are in place for access to multi faith prayer rooms and other faith related facilities
- Ensure a Freedom of Expression Policy is in place to clarify the Group's responsibilities to promote freedom of expression

4.0 Preventing radicalisation

Children may be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk is part of the Group's safeguarding approach.

- **Extremism** 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 those with different faiths and beliefs.
- **Radicalisation** is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence
- **Terrorism** 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 politic, religious or ideological cause.

Although there is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism, there are factors that may indicate concern.

It is possible to protect people from extremist ideology 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 learner's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying learners who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately but where required, refer to the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead. This may include making a Prevent referral.

5.0 The Prevent Duty

The Group 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 to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty. The Prevent duty should be seen as part of the Group's wider safeguarding obligations.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and other staff with safeguarding responsibilities will familiarise themselves with the revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales.

6.0 Channel

Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Prevent referrals may be passed to a multi-agency Channel panel which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. A representative from the College may be asked to attend the Channel panel to help with this assessment. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and those with responsibilities for safeguarding will be aware of local procedures for making a Channel referral. As a Channel partner, the Group may be asked to attend a Channel panel to discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required.

7.0 Safeguarding Concern

7.1 Learners

If a learner is displaying signs of behaviour that raises a concern that they are being radicalised (see Appendix 7: Recognising a safeguarding concern), or if the learner is voicing extreme views and/or exerting influences over other learners a safeguarding concern will be need to be raised. The Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead will be contacted without delay and the relevant documentation completed as outlined in Appendix 10: Safeguarding: Raising a Safeguarding Concern. Where appropriate a referral will be made to the police and subsequently the Channel programme, after liaison and advice from the police.

7.2 Staff

If a member of staff is verbalising views that are considered extremist views that have the potential to influence learners and other staff or is displaying behaviour associated with radicalisation (see Appendix 1: Recognising a safeguarding concern), a concern will be raised without delay and reported to the Director of Human Resources/Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Director of Human Resources/Designated Safeguarding Lead will handle the report in line with the Group's policy 'Policy on safeguarding concerns or allegations against a member of staff' (ref: POL-HR-12)

Appendix 6

Safeguarding: Children missing from education

1.0 Introduction

This appendix to the Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy sets out the Group's protocols for children missing from education. When a child goes missing or runs away from home or their care placement they are at risk and safeguarding children therefore includes protecting them from this risk. Although local authorities are responsible for protecting children whether they go missing from the family home or the local authority care, the Group also has a duty of care within its safeguarding responsibilities to protect learners from the risks associated with going missing and to help protect young people from going missing.

2.0 Policy statement

There are particular concerns about the links between missing children and child sexual exploitation. Missing children are also vulnerable to other forms of exploitation including drug and alcohol misuse, violent crime and gang exploitation.

Most learners in the Group are post 16, although learning provision is provided for learners Pre-16 and the duty of care to safeguard children includes these learners (see Appendix 3: Safeguarding: Pre-16 learners). Learners 16 or 17 who go missing are no less vulnerable than younger children and are equally at risk, particularly of sexual exploitation or involvement with gangs.

To ensure full compliance with its safeguarding responsibilities the Group will work closely with local authorities to ensure the risk of children going missing from the premises is minimised and protocols are in place to fulfil safeguarding responsibilities. For looked after children additional protocols may also be required to be in place in regard to children missing from care.

3.0 Principles of the policy

The Group will work closely with local authorities and external agencies to prevent and reduce the risk of learners going missing from the family home or from a care placement and has in place protocols for learners missing from the family home. These protocols are detailed below and differentiated by age of the learner.

3.1 Learners Pre-16

Appendix 3 details the policy for safeguarding Pre-16 learners. This aspect of the policy only applies to Pre-16 learners who go missing from the Organisation.
All Pre-16 learners are allocated a Pre-16 Pastoral and Learning Mentor whose responsibilities include: monitoring learner attendance on a daily basis. For any Pre-16 learner absent from the Group following an attendance check, contact will be made

immediately with the referring organisation and parent/carer to report the learner's absence. The referring organisation will be required to follow up any non-attendance in line with the Agreement. The learner's assessment plan may also include reporting of any absence to additional contacts and these will be contacted also.
The Group will monitor the absence with the referring organisation and any associated or subsequent action that may be taken.

3.2 Learners 16 – 18

All Group full time 16 – 18 learners are allocated a Student Progress Mentor whose responsibilities include monitoring learner attendance on a daily basis and contacting learners and their parents/carers when not in attendance.

Where a learner who is absent from education causes a concern, which may be a potential safeguarding issue, the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead should be notified. This may be in relation to information relating to their absence, prolonged absence, persistent absence or where no contact is able to be made with the learner or their parent/carer for 24 hours. This should be done in line with Appendix 1: Raising a Safeguarding Concern. The Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead in liaison with the Student Progress Mentor will undertake a risk assessment of the learner and categorise the situation as Low/Medium/High given the information that is known about the learner from records and any mitigating factors that may affect attendance. A risk assessment will be completed every 24 hours where contact is unable to be made with the learner or their parent/carer (during organisational hours). When the risk assessment reaches High a member of staff may be designated to make a welfare visit at the learner's residence. If the learner is still unable to be located the police will be contacted to investigate further.

3.3 Learners in Care

Where learners in care commence a programme of study at the Group, protocols will be agreed with the Carer/designate where appropriate on arrangements and responsive action if the learner does not attend the specified organisation on the designated day and times. These protocols will be different for each learner depending on the associated risks and the learner history. The Student Progress Mentor will monitor learner progress and ensure individual learner protocols are followed and implemented should the learner in care go missing and a safeguarding concern will be raised.

4.0 Further information on a child missing from education

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education, which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and such children are at risk of being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation. Group

staff should follow procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future.

The Group has in place appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, female mutilation and forced marriage.

Appendix 7

Safeguarding: Children potentially at greater risk of harm

Children potentially at greater risk of harm

Children who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse, neglect and complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health. Local authorities should share the fact a child has a social worker, where this happens, the designated safeguarding lead/designate will use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. This will be considered as a matter of routine. There are clear powers to share this information under existing duties on both local authorities and schools and colleges to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Where children need a social worker, this will inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).

The college has an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their learners. 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. The Governing body ensures that there are clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.

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

Children who are absent from education

Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. It is important the College's response to persistently absent pupils and children missing education supports identifying such abuse, and in the case of absent learners, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

Further information and support, includes:

- Statutory guidance on school attendance Working together to improve school attendance including information on how schools should work with local authority children's services where school absence indicates safeguarding concerns.

- Information regarding schools' duties regarding children missing education, including information schools must provide to the local authority when removing a child from the school roll at standard and non-standard transition points, can be found in the department's statutory guidance: Children Missing Education.

- further information for colleges providing education for a child of compulsory school age can be found in: Full-time-Enrolment of 14- to 16-year-olds in Further Education and Sixth Form Colleges.

- general information and advice for schools and colleges can be found in the Government's Missing Children and Adults Strategy.

Looked-after-child – a child who is looked after by a local authority, as defined in section 22 Children Act 1989, means a child who is subject to a care order (interim or full care order) or who are voluntarily accommodated by a local authority.

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. The Group endeavours to ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep looked after children safe.

In particular, it is important that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and also have information about the child's contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. Key staff will also require information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The Designated Teacher for Looked after Children should have full details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.

A previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe. When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, it is important that all agencies work together and prompt action istaken when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.

Care leavers

Local authorities have on-going responsibility to the young people who cease to be looked after and become care leavers. This includes, keeping in touch with them, preparing an assessment of their needs and appointing a personal adviser who develops a pathway plan with a young person. The plan describes how the local authority will support the care leaver to participate in education or training.

Learners with special educational needs, disabilities or health issues

Learners with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. The Group recognises that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of learners. These can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the learner's disability without further exploration
- Be more prone to peer group isolation than other children
- The potential for learners with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers
- cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact
  and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so.

Further information can be found in the department for Education's:

- SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 years, and
- Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions.

And from specialist organisations such as:

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information and Support Services (SENDIASS) – SENDIASS offers 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)

Mencap – Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people.

NSPCC - Safeguarding children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and NSPCC - Safeguarding child protection/deaf and disabled children and young people

Children who are lesbian, gay, bi, or trans (LGBT)

Please note – the guidance on this area is still under review, pending the outcome of the gender questioning children guidance consultation, and final gender questioning guidance documents being published, however it is felt that it is important information to consider. Should there be any questions around supporting or safeguarding a leaner, please contact the Safeguarding and mental health coordinator/Duty Safeguarding Officer/relevant Designated Safeguarding Lead.

A learner being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm, however, they can sometimes be targeted by other learners. In some cases, a learner who is perceived by other learners to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as a learner who is.

However, the Cass review identified that caution is necessary for children questioning their gender as there remain many unknowns about the impact of social transition and children may well have wider vulnerabilities, including having complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases additional diagnoses of autism and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

It recommended that when families/carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning children, they should be encouraged to seek clinical help and advice. When parents are supporting pre-pubertal children, clinical services should ensure that they can be seen as early as possible by a clinical professional with relevant experience.

As such, when supporting a gender questioning child, schools should take a cautious approach and consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with the child's parents (other than in the exceptionally rare circumstances where involving parents would constitute a significant risk of harm to the child), including any clinical advice that is available and how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying. The guidance which should be referred to is Guidance for Schools and Colleges in relation to Gender Questioning Children, when deciding how to proceed.

Risks can be compounded where learners lack trusted adults with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and create a culture where they can speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

Appendix 8

Safeguarding: Online safety

1.0 Introduction

It is essential that learners are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. The College Group has a whole approach to online safety which empowers the college to protect and educate learners and staff in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate.

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

- **content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example: pornography, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news), conspiracy theories, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation and extremism.

- **contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.

- **conduct**: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and

- **commerce** - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your learners or staff are at risk, please report this as a safeguarding concern.

The College Group will ensure online safety is a running and interrelated theme whilst devising and implementing policies and procedures. This will include considering how online safety is reflected as required in all relevant policies and considering online safety whilst planning the curriculum, any teacher training, the role and responsibilities of the designated safeguarding lead and any parental engagement.

Online safety policy

Online safety and the College Group's approach is reflected in the Child Protection Policy/Safeguarding and includes appropriate filtering and monitoring on college devices and networks. The College Group has a clear policy on the use of mobile and smart technology. Amongst other things this reflects the fact many learners have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks (i.e. 4G and 5G). This access means some learners, whilst at college, sexually harass, bully and control

others via their mobile and smart technology, share indecent images consensually and non-consensually (often via large chat groups) and view and share pornography and other harmful content. The College Group carefully considers how this is managed on the premises and reflects this in the policy.

Remote learning

Guidance to support the College Group's understanding of how to help keep learners and staff safe whilst learning remotely can be found at Safeguarding and remote education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) and Providing remote education: guidance for schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). The NSPCC also provide helpful advice - Undertaking remote teaching safely.

The College Group are likely to be in regular contact with parents and carers. Those communications should be used to reinforce the importance of children being safe online and parents and carers are likely to find it helpful to understand what systems the Group uses to filter and monitor online use. It will be especially important for parents and carers to be aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will asked to access and be clear who from the College/Group (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online.

Filters and monitoring

Whilst considering their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, the Governing body do all that they reasonably can to limit learner's exposure to the above risks from the Group's IT system. As part of this process, the Governing Body ensures the College Group has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness. They ensure that the leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified. The Governing Body considers the number and age range of their learners, those who are potentially at greater risk of harm and how often they access the IT system and the proportionality of costs verses safeguarding risks.

The appropriateness of any filtering and monitoring systems are a matter for individual schools and colleges and are informed in part, by the risk assessment required by the Prevent Duty.

The UK Safer Internet Centre has published guidance as to what "appropriate" filtering and monitoring might look like: UK Safer Internet Centre: appropriate filtering and monitoring. South West Grid for Learning (swgfl.org.uk) have created a tool to check whether a school or college's filtering provider is signed up to relevant lists (CSA content, Sexual Content, Terrorist content Your Internet Connection Blocks Child Abuse & Terrorist Content). The Department for Education has also published Generative AI: product safety expectations to which supports with how to use generative artificial intelligence safely and explains how filtering and monitoring requirements apply to the use of generative AI in education.

Information security and access management

The College Group are directly responsible for ensuring they have the appropriate level of security protection procedures in place, in order to safeguard our systems, staff and learners and review the effectiveness of these procedures periodically to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies.
Guidance on e-security is available from the National Education Network. In addition, broader guidance on cyber security including considerations for governors and trustees can be found at NCSC.GOV.UK.

Reviewing online safety

Technology, and risks and harms related to it, evolve and change rapidly. The College Group should consider carrying out an annual review of their approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks their learners face.

UKCIS has published Online safety in schools and colleges: Questions from the governing board. The questions can be used to gain a basic understanding of the current approach to keeping children safe online; learn how to improve this approach where appropriate; and find out about tools which can be used to improve the approach. It has also published an Online Safety Audit Tool which helps mentors of trainee teachers and newly qualified teachers induct mentees and provide ongoing support, development and monitoring.

When reviewing online safety provision, the UKCIS external visitor's guidance highlights a range of resources which can support educational settings to develop a whole school approach towards online safety.

Information and support

here is a wealth of additional information available to support Colleges and parents to keep children safe online.

Appendix 9

Safeguarding: Child on Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

1.0 Introduction

This appendix sets out the Group's protocols for child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment.

This section is about how the College Group will **respond to all reports and concerns** of child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment, including those that have happened outside of the College premises, and or online.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of **any age and sex**, from primary through to secondary stage and into colleges. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. 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. All staff working within the College Group are advised to maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'**.

Addressing inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) **can** be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

The College Group has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated. It should never be passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh", "a part of growing up" or "boys being boys". Failure to do so can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

Recognising, acknowledging, and understanding the scale of harassment and abuse and that even if there are no reports it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported.

Challenging physical behaviour (potentially criminal in nature) such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment wherever it happens, 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.

The College Group are aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the college, including intimate personal relationships.

Whilst **any** report of sexual violence or sexual harassment should be taken seriously, staff

should be aware it is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment and more likely it will be perpetrated by boys.

But 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

Staff should read the Department of Education advice: Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges it contains further detailed information on:

- what sexual violence and sexual harassment constitutes,
- important context to be aware of, including; what is consent, power imbalances, and developmental stages,
- harmful sexual behaviour (HSB), including that a child displaying HSB may be an indication that they are a victim of abuse themselves,
- related legal responsibilities for schools and colleges,
- advice on a whole school or college approach to preventing child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment, and
- more detailed advice on responding to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment, including safeguarding and supporting both the victim(s) and alleged perpetrator(s).

2.0 Responding to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment

Systems are in place (and are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible) for learners to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously.

Colleges not recognising, acknowledging or understanding the scale of harassment and abuse and/or downplaying some behaviours related to abuse can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

Reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are likely to be complex and require difficult professional decisions to be made, often quickly and under pressure. Pre-planning, effective training and effective policies provide the College Group with the foundation for a calm, considered and appropriate response to any reports. The Governing Body ensures that the College Group contributes to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children.

This policy does not attempt to provide (nor would it be possible to provide) detailed guidance on what to do in any or every particular case. The policy provides effective safeguarding practice and principles to consider in any decision-making process.

Ultimately, any decisions are for the College Group to make on a case-by-case basis, with the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead taking a leading role and using their professional judgement, supported by other agencies, such as children's social care and the police as required.

Support for the College Group

Local authority children's social care and the police will be important partners where a crime might have been committed. Referrals to the police will often be a natural progression of making a referral to local authority children's social care. The Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead should lead the College Group's response and will be aware of the local process for referrals to children's social care and making referrals to the police.

The following are helpful resources:

- Child Exploitation and Online Protection command: CEOP is a law enforcement agency which aims to keep children and young people safe from sexual exploitation and abuse. Online sexual abuse can be reported on their website and a report made to one of its Child Protection Advisors
- The NSPCC provides a helpline for professionals at 0808 800 5000 and help@nspcc.org.uk. The helpline provides expert advice and support for school and college staff and will be especially useful for the Safeguarding and mental health coordinator/ designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies)
- Support from specialist sexual violence sector organisations such as Rape Crisis or The Survivors Trust
- The Anti-Bullying Alliance has developed guidance for schools about Sexual and sexist bullying.

Online: The College Group recognises that sexual violence and sexual harassment occurring online (either in isolation or in connection with face-to-face incidents) can introduce a number of complex factors. Amongst other things, this can include widespread abuse or harm across a number of social media platforms that leads to repeat victimisation. Online concerns can be especially complicated and support is available from:

- The UK Safer Internet Centre provides an online safety helpline for professionals at 0344 381 4772 and helpline@saferinternet.org.uk. The helpline provides expert advice and support for school and college staff with regard to online safety issues
- Internet Watch Foundation: If the incident/report involves sexual images or videos that have been made and circulated online, the victim can be supported to get the images removed by the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF)
- Childline/IWF Report Remove is a free tool that allows children to report nude or sexual images and/or videos of themselves that they think might have been shared online
- UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes advice: Advice for education settings working with children and young people on responding to reports of children sharing non-consensual nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting and youth produced sexual imagery).

- Thinkuknow from NCA-CEOP provides support for the children's workforce, parents and carers on staying safe online

- LGFL 'Undressed' provided schools advice about how to teach young children about being tricked into getting undressed online in a fun way without scaring them or explaining the motives of sex offenders.

3.0 The immediate response to a report

Responding to the report

It is important to note that learners may not find it easy to tell staff about their abuse verbally. Learners can show signs or act in ways that they hope adults will notice and react to. 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 learner has been harmed or a learner's own behaviour might indicate that something is wrong. If staff have any concerns about a learner's welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told.

The Group's initial response to a report from a learner is incredibly important. How the College Group responds to a report can encourage or undermine the confidence of future victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment to report or come forward.

It is essential that **all** victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward and that they will be supported and kept safe. Abuse that occurs online or outside of the College should not be downplayed and should be treated equally seriously. 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. It is important to explain that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them, and this should be explained in such a way that avoids alarming or distressing them.

All staff are trained to manage a report. Local policies (and training) will dictate exactly how reports should be managed. However, effective safeguarding practice includes:

- if possible, managing reports with two members of staff present, (preferably one of them being the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead. However, this might not always be possible.

- Where the report includes an online element, being aware of searching screening and confiscation advice (for schools) and UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes' advice for education settings working with children and young people. **The key consideration is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child.** The highlighted advice provides more details on what to do when viewing an image is unavoidable. In some cases, it may be more appropriate to confiscate any devices to preserve any evidence and hand them to the police for inspection;

- Not promising confidentiality at this initial stage as it is very likely a concern will have to be shared further (for example, with the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead to discuss next steps. Staff should only share the report with those people who are necessary in order to progress it. It is important that the victim understands what the next steps will be and who the report will be passed to;

- Recognising that a child is likely to disclose to someone they trust: this could be **anyone** on the College Group staff. It is important that the person to whom the child discloses recognises that the child has placed them in a position of trust. They should be supportive and respectful of the child;

- Recognising that an initial disclosure to a trusted adult may only be the first incident reported, rather than representative of a singular incident and that trauma can impact memory and so children may not be able to recall all details or timeline of abuse;

- Keeping in mind that certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation;

- Listening carefully to the child, reflecting back, using the child's language, being non-judgemental, being clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed, not asking leading questions and only prompting the child where necessary with open questions – where, when, what, etc. It is important to note that whilst leading questions should be avoided, staff can ask children if they have been harmed and what the nature of that harm was;

- Considering the best way to make a record of the report. Best practice is to wait until the end of the report and immediately write up a thorough summary. This allows the staff member to devote their full attention to the child and to listen to what they are saying. It may be appropriate to make notes during the report (especially if a second member of staff is present). However, if making notes, staff should be conscious of the need to remain engaged with the child and not appear distracted by the note taking. Either way, **it is essential a written record is made**;

- Only recording the fact as the child presents them. The notes should not reflect the personal opinion of the note take. The College Group is aware that notes of such reports could become part of a statutory assessment by children's social care and/or part of a criminal investigation; and

- Informing the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as practically possible, if the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is not involved in the initial report.

4.0 Risk assessment

When there has been a report of sexual violence, the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead should 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 should consider:

- the victim, especially their protection and support;
- whether there may have been other victims,
- the alleged perpetrator(s); and
- all the other learners, (and, if appropriate, adult children and staff) within the College Group, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them from the alleged perpetrator(s), or from future harms.

Risk assessments should be recorded (written or electronic) and should be kept under review. At all times, the school or college should be actively considering the risks posed to all their students and put adequate measures in place to protect them and keep them safe.

The Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead should ensure they are engaging 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. The above school or college risk assessment is not intended to replace the detailed assessments of expert professionals.

Any such professional assessments should be used to inform the College Group's approach to supporting and protecting their pupils and children and updating their own risk assessment.

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

<u>What to consider</u>

As set out above, sexual violence and sexual abuse can happen anywhere, and all staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of '**it could happen here.** The College Group should be aware of, and respond appropriately to **all** reports and concerns about sexual violence and/or sexual harassment both online and offline, including those that have happened outside of the college. The Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead is likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the College Group'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. This will however, need to be balanced with the College Group's duty and responsibilities to protect other children;

- the nature of the alleged incident(s), including whether a crime may have been committed and/or whether HSB has been displayed;
- the ages of the learners involved;
- the developmental stages of the children involved;
- any power imbalance between the learners. For example, is the alleged perpetrator(s) significantly older, more mature or more confident? Does the victim have a disability or learning difficulty?
- if the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse (sexual abuse can be accompanied by other forms of abuse and a sustained pattern may not just be of a sexual nature);
- that sexual violence and sexual harassment can take place within intimate personal relationships between children
- importance of understanding intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following incidents;
- are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult children or staff; and,
- other related issues and wider context, including any links to child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation.

As always when concerned about the welfare of a child, all staff should act in the best interests of the child. In all cases, the College Group should follow general safeguarding principles as set out throughout this guidance**. Immediate** consideration should be given as to how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator(s) (and any other children involved/impacted).

Children sharing a classroom: Initial considerations when the report is made

Any report of sexual violence is likely to be traumatic for the victim. 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.

However, reports of rape and assault by penetration are likely to be especially difficult with regard to the victim, and close proximity with the alleged perpetrator(s) is likely to be especially distressing.
Whilst the College Group establishes the facts of the case and starts the process of liaising with children's social care and the police, the alleged perpetrator(s) should be removed from any classes they share with the victim. The College Group should also carefully consider how best to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) a reasonable distance apart on the College premises including on transport to and from the college, where appropriate (a taxi or collection from parent/carer may also be considered). These actions are in the best interests of all learners involved and should not be perceived to be a judgment on the guilt of the alleged perpetrator(s).

For other reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment, the proximity of the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) and considerations regarding shared classes, sharing premises and or transport, should be considered immediately.

In all cases, the initial report should be carefully evaluated. The wishes of the victim, the nature of the allegations and the protection of all learners in the College Group will be especially important when considering any immediate actions.

6.0 Options to manage the report

It is important that the College Group considers every report on a case-by-case basis. When to inform the alleged perpetrator(s) will be a decision that should be carefully considered. Where a report is going to be made to children's social care and/or the police, then, as a general rule, the College Group will speak to the relevant agency and discuss next steps and how the alleged perpetrator(s) will be informed of the allegations. However, as per general safeguarding principles, this does not and should not stop the College Group taking immediate action to safeguard their learners, where required.

There are four likely scenarios for the College Group to consider when managing any reports of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment. It will be important in all scenarios that decisions and actions are regularly reviewed and that relevant policies are updated to reflect lessons learnt. It is particularly important to look out for potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour.

Where a pattern is identified, the College Group should decide on a course of action. Consideration should be given to whether there are wider cultural issues within the Group that enabled the inappropriate behaviour to occur and where appropriate extra teaching time and/or staff training could be delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again.

The four scenarios are:

1. **Manage internally**

- In some cases of **sexual harassment**, for example, one-off incidents, the school or college may take the view that the children concerned are not in need of early help or that referrals need to be made to statutory services and that it would be appropriate to handle the incident internally, perhaps through utilising their behaviour policy and by providing pastoral support.
- Whatever the response, it should be underpinned by the principle that there is a **zero-tolerance** approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and it is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- **All** concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded (written or electronic).

2. **Early help**

- In line with 1 above, the College Group may decide that the children involved do not require referral to statutory services but may benefit from early help. In line with managing internally, the college may decide that the children involved do not require referral to statutory services but may benefit from early help. Early help is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help can be particularly useful to address non-violent HSB and may prevent escalation of sexual violence. It is particularly important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) know what the local early help process is and how and where to access support.
- More information on Early Help is set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education with full details of the early help process in Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children.
- Multi-agency early help will work best when placed alongside strong school or college policies, preventative education and engagement with parents and carers.
- The College Group, as a relevant agency, should be part of discussions with statutory safeguarding partners to agree the levels for the different types of assessment and services to be commissioned and delivered, as part of the local arrangements. Safeguarding partners should publish a local threshold document which includes the process for the local early help assessment and the type and level of early help services to be provided, and designated safeguarding leads (and their deputies) will need to familiarise themselves with this document.
- Early help and the option to manage a report internally do not need to be mutually exclusive: the College could manage internally and seek early help for both the victim and perpetrator(s).
- Whatever the response, it should be under-pinned by the principle that there is zero tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and it is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.

- All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded (written or electronic).

3. Referrals to children's social care

- Where a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm, or is in immediate danger, The College Group should make a referral to local children's social care.
- At the point of referral to children's social care, schools and colleges will generally inform parents or carers, unless there are compelling reasons not to (if informing a parent or carer is going to put the child at additional risk). Any such decision should be made with the support of children's social care.
- If a referral is made, children's social care will then make enquiries to determine whether any of the children involved are in need of protection or other services.
- Where statutory assessments are appropriate, the College Group (especially the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead should be working alongside, and cooperating with, the relevant lead social worker. Collaborative working will help ensure the best possible package of coordinated support is implemented for the victim and, where appropriate, the alleged perpetrator(s) and any other children that require support.
- The College Group should not wait for the outcome (or even the start) of a children's social care investigation before protecting the victim and other learners in the College Group. It will be important for the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead to work closely with children's social care (and other agencies as required) to ensure any actions the College Group takes do not jeopardise a statutory investigation. A risk assessment may help inform any decision. Consideration of safeguarding the victim, alleged perpetrator(s), any other children directly involved in the safeguarding report and all learners at the College Group should be **immediate**.
- In some cases, children's social care will review the evidence and decide a statutory intervention is not appropriate. The College Group (generally led by the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead should be prepared to refer again if they believe the child remains in immediate danger or at risk of harm. If a statutory assessment is not appropriate, the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead should consider other support mechanisms such as early help, specialist support and pastoral support.
- Whatever the response, it should be under-pinned by the principle that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and it is never acceptable and will not be tolerated
- **All concerns**, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded (written or electronic).

4. Reporting to the Police

- **Any report** to the police will generally be in parallel with a referral to children's social care (as above).
- It is important that the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead are clear about the local process for referrals and follow that process.
- Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, the starting point is that this should be passed on to the police. Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is ten, if the alleged perpetrator(s) is under ten, the starting principle of reporting to the police remains. The police will take a welfare, rather than a criminal justice, approach.
- Where a report has been made to the police, the College Group should consult the police and agree what information can be disclosed to staff and others, in particular, the alleged perpetrator(s) and their parents or carers. They should also discuss the best way to protect the victim and their anonymity.
- At this stage, the College Group will generally inform parents or carers unless there are compelling reasons not to, for example, if informing a parent or carer is likely to put a child at additional risk. In circumstances where parents or carers have not been informed, it will be especially important that the school or college is supporting the child in any decision they take. This should be with the support of children's social care and any appropriate specialist agencies.
- All police forces in England have specialist units that investigate child abuse. The names and structures of these units are matters for local forces. It will be important that the Safeguarding and mental health coordinator/ designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) are aware of their local arrangements.
- In some cases, it may become clear very quickly that the police (for whatever reason) will not take further action. In such circumstances, it is important that the College Group continues to engage with specialist support for the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) as required.
- Whilst protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator(s), it will be important for the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead to work closely with the police (and other agencies as required), to ensure any actions the College Group takes do not jeopardise the police investigation.
- If the College Group have questions about the investigation, they should ask the police. The police will help and support the College Group as much as they can (within the constraints of any legal restrictions).
- Whatever the response, it should be under-pinned by the principle that there is a **zero-tolerance** approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and it is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded (written or electronic).

5. Considering bail conditions

- The police will consider what action to take to manage the assessed risk of harm. This could involve the use of police bail with conditions, prior to a suspect appearing in court, or court bail with or without conditions after the first appearance.

- Alternatively, the person suspected of an offence could be 'released under investigation' (RUI). People released under RUI can have no conditions attached to their release from custody and it is possible for a person on bail also to have no conditions.

- Whatever arrangements are in place, the College Group will need to consider what additional measures may be necessary to manage any assessed risk of harm that may arise within their institution.

- Particular regard should be given to: the additional stress and trauma that might be caused to a victim within the institution; the potential for the suspected person to intimidate the victim or a witness; the need to ensure that any risk management measures strike a balance between management of risk and the rights of an unconvicted person (e.g. rights to privacy, family life, etc).

- Careful liaison with the police investigators should help to develop a balanced set of arrangements.

6. Managing any delays in the criminal process

- There may be delays in any case that is being progressed through the criminal justice system. The College Group should not wait for the outcome (or even the start) of a police investigation before protecting the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and other learners in the College Group.

7. The end of the criminal process

- If a child is convicted or receives a caution for a sexual offence, the College Group should update its risk assessment, ensure relevant protections are in place for all the learners within the College Group and, if it has not already, consider any suitable action in line with their behaviour policy. This process should include a review of the necessary actions to keep all parties safe and meet their needs. If the perpetrator(s) remains in the same College Group as the victim, the College Group should be very clear as to their expectations regarding the perpetrator(s) now they have been convicted or cautioned. This could include expectations regarding their behaviour and any restrictions the College thinks are reasonable and proportionate with regard to the perpetrator(s)' timetable.

- Any conviction (even with legal anonymity reporting restrictions) is potentially going to generate interest among other pupils or children in the College Group. It will be important that the College Group ensure both the victim and perpetrator(s) remain protected, especially from any bullying or harassment (including online).

- Where cases are classified as "no further action" (NFA'd) by the police or Crown Prosecution Service, or where there is a not guilty verdict, the College Group

should continue to offer support to the victim and the alleged perpetrator(s) for as long as is necessary. A not guilty verdict or a decision not to progress with their case will likely be traumatic for the victim. The fact that an allegation cannot be substantiated or was withdrawn does not necessarily mean that it was unfounded. The College Group should discuss any decisions with the victim in this light and continue to offer support. The alleged perpetrator(s) is also likely to require ongoing support for what will have likely been a difficult experience.

8. Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports

All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. Records should be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified, and addressed.

If a report is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead should consider whether the child and/or the person who has made the allegation is in need of help or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. In such circumstances, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate.

If a report is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the College Group, should consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual who made it as per their own behaviour policy.

9. Ongoing response

Safeguarding and supporting the victim

The following principles are based on effective safeguarding practice and should help shape any decisions regarding safeguarding and supporting the victim.

- The needs and wishes of the victim should be paramount (along with protecting the child) in any response. It is important they feel in as much control of the process as is reasonably possible. Wherever possible, the victim, if they wish, should be able to continue in their normal routine. Overall, the priority should be to make the victim's daily experience as normal as possible, so that the College is a safe space for them.

- Consider the age and the developmental stage of the victim, the nature of the allegations and the potential risk of further abuse. The College Group should be aware that, by the very nature of sexual violence and sexual harassment, a power imbalance is likely to have been created between the victim and alleged perpetrator(s).

- The victim should never be made to feel they are the problem for making a report or made to feel ashamed for making a report.

- Consider the proportionality of the response. Support should be tailored on a case-by-case basis. The support required regarding a one-off incident of sexualised name-calling is likely to be vastly different from that for a report of rape.

- The College Group should be aware that sexual assault can result in a range of health needs, including physical, mental, and sexual health problems and unwanted pregnancy. Children and young people that have a health need arising

from sexual assault or abuse can access specialist NHS support from a Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC). SARCs offer confidential and non-judgemental support to victims and survivors of sexual assault and abuse. They provide medical, practical, and emotional care and advice to all children and adults, regardless of when the incident occurred.

- Support can include

  - Early help and children's social care as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education.

  - Children and Young People's Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ChISVAs) provide emotional and practical support for victims of sexual violence. They are based within the specialist sexual violence sector and will help the victim understand what their options are and how the criminal justice process works if they have reported or are considering reporting to the police. ChISVAs will work in partnership with schools and colleges to ensure the best possible outcomes for the victim.

  - Police and social care agencies can signpost to ChISVA services (where available) or referrals can be made directly to the ChISVA service by the young person or school or college. Contact details for ChISVAs can be found at Rape Crisis and The Survivors Trust.

  - Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) is used as a term for all services that work with children who have difficulties with their emotional or behavioural wellbeing. Services vary depending on local authority. Most CAHMS have their own website, which will have information about access, referrals and contact numbers.

  - The specialist sexual violence sector can provide therapeutic support for children who have experienced sexual violence. Contact Rape Crisis (England & Wales) or The Survivors Trust for details of local specialist organisations. The Male Survivors Partnership can provide details of services which specialise in supporting men and boys.

  - NHS - Help after rape and sexual assault - NHS (www.nhs.uk) provides a range of advice, help and support including advice about the risk of pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections (STI), reporting to the police and forensics.

  - Rape and sexual assault referral centres services can be found at: Find Rape and sexual assault referral centres. Sexual assault referral centres (SARCs) offer medical, practical and emotional support. They have specially trained doctors, nurses and support workers. If children, young people, or their families are unsure which service to access, they should contact their GP or call the NHS on 111.

  - Childline provides free and confidential advice for children and young people.

  - Internet Watch Foundation works internationally to remove child sexual abuse online images and videos and offers a place for the public to report them anonymously.

- Childline / IWF: Remove a nude image shared online Report Remove is a free tool that allows children to report nude or sexual images and videos of themselves that they think might have been shared online, to see if they can be removed from the internet.

Victims may not talk about the whole picture immediately. They may be more comfortable providing information on a piecemeal basis. It is essential that dialogue is kept open and encouraged. When it is clear that ongoing support will be required, the College Group should ask the victim if they would find it helpful to have a designated trusted adult (for example, their tutor or the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead to talk to about their needs. The choice of any such adult should be the victim's (as far as reasonably possible). The College Group should respect and support this choice.

Children who have experienced sexual violence display a very wide range of responses to their experience, including in some cases clear signs of trauma, physical and emotional responses, or no overt signs at all. The College Group will remain alert to the possible challenges of detecting those signs and show sensitivity to the needs of the child (e.g. about attendance in lessons) irrespective of how overt the child's distress is.

A victim of sexual violence is likely to be traumatised and, in some cases, may struggle in a normal classroom environment. While the College Group should avoid any action that would have the effect of isolating the victim, in particular from supportive peer groups, there may be times when the victim finds it difficult to maintain a full-time timetable and may express a wish to withdraw from lessons and activities. This should be because the victim wants to, not because it makes it easier to manage the situation. If required, the College Group should provide a physical space for victims to withdraw.

It may be necessary for the College Group to maintain arrangements to protect and support the victim for a long time. The College Group should be prepared for this and should work with children's social care and other agencies as required.

It is therefore important that the Safeguarding and mental health coordinator/ designated safeguarding lead knows how and where to seek support.

It is important that the College Group do everything they reasonably can to protect the victim from bullying and harassment as a result of any report they have made.

Whilst they should be given all the necessary support to remain in the college, if the trauma results in the victim being unable to do this, alternative provision or a move to another school or college should be considered to enable them to continue to receive suitable education. This should only be at the request of the victim (and following discussion with their parents or carers).

It is important that if the victim does move to another educational institution (for any reason), that the new educational institution is made aware of any ongoing support needs. The Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead should take responsibility to ensure this happens (and should discuss with the victim and, where appropriate their parents or carers as to the most suitable way of doing this) as well as transferring the child protection file.

Ongoing Considerations: Victim and alleged perpetrator(s) sharing classes

Once the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead has decided what the next steps will be in terms of progressing the report, they should carefully consider again the question of the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) sharing classes and sharing space within the College Group. This will inevitably involve complex and difficult professional decisions, including considering their duty to safeguard children and their duty to educate them.

It is important each report is considered on a case-by-case basis and risk assessments are updated as appropriate. As always when concerned about the welfare of a child, the best interests of the child should come first. In all cases, the College Group should follow general safeguarding principles as per this guidance.

Where there is a criminal investigation into a rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault, the alleged perpetrator(s) should be removed from any classes they share with the victim. The College Group should also consider how best to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) a reasonable distance apart on college premises and on transport to and from college where appropriate. This is in the best interests of both children and should not be perceived to be a judgement on the guilt of the alleged perpetrator(s).

Where a criminal investigation into a rape or assault by penetration leads to a conviction or caution, the College Group should take suitable action, if they have not already done so. In all but the most exceptional of circumstances, the rape or assault is likely to constitute a serious breach of discipline and lead to the view that allowing the perpetrator(s) to remain in the same college would seriously harm the education or welfare of the victim (and potentially other pupils or children).

Where a criminal investigation into sexual assault leads to a conviction or caution, the College Group should, if it has not already, consider any suitable sanctions in light of their behaviour policy, including consideration of permanent exclusion. Where the perpetrator(s) is going to remain within the College Group, the principle would be to continue keeping the victim and perpetrator(s) in separate classes and continue to consider the most appropriate way to manage potential contact on college premises and transport. The nature of the conviction or caution and wishes of the victim will be especially important in determining how to proceed in such cases.

In all cases, the College Group should record and be able to justify their decision-making.

Reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment will, in some cases, not lead to a report to the police (for a variety of reasons). In some cases, rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault or sexual harassment are reported to the police and the case is not progressed or are reported to the police and ultimately result in a not guilty verdict. None of this means the offence did not happen or that the victim lied. The process will have affected both victim and alleged perpetrator(s).

Appropriate support should be provided to both as required and consideration given to sharing classes and potential contact as required on a case-by-case basis. In all cases, the College Group should record and be able to justify their decision-making.

All of the above should be considered with the needs and wishes of the victim at the heart of the process (supported by parents and carers as required). Any arrangements should be kept under review.

Safeguarding and supporting the alleged perpetrator(s) and children and young people who have displayed harmful sexual behaviour

Advice about safeguarding and supporting the alleged perpetrators is also set out in departmental advice: Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children at schools and colleges. The following principles are based on effective safeguarding practice and should help shape any decisions regarding safeguarding and supporting the alleged perpetrator(s):

- The College Group will have a difficult balancing act to consider. On one hand, they need to safeguard the victim (and the wider pupil/child body) and on the other hand provide the alleged perpetrator(s) with an education, safeguarding support as appropriate and implement any disciplinary sanctions. Taking disciplinary action and still providing appropriate support are not mutually exclusive actions. They can, and should, occur at the same time if necessary.

- Consider the age and the developmental stage of the alleged perpetrator(s), the nature of the allegations and frequency of allegations. Any child will likely experience stress as a result of being the subject of allegations and/or negative reactions by their peers to the allegations against them.

- Consider the proportionality of the response. Support (and sanctions) should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The alleged perpetrator(s) may potentially have unmet needs (in some cases these may be considerable) as well as potentially posing a risk of harm to other children. HSB in young children may be (and often are) a symptom of either their own abuse or exposure to abusive practices and or materials.

- It is important that the perpetrator(s) is/are also given the correct support to try to stop them re- offending and to address any underlying trauma that may be causing this behaviour. Addressing inappropriate behaviour can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

- Advice on behaviour and discipline in schools is clear that teachers can discipline pupils whose conduct falls below the standard which could be reasonably expected of them. If the perpetrator(s) is to be excluded the decision must be lawful, reasonable and fair

The Lucy Faithfull Foundation in collaboration with the Home Office, has developed https://shorespace.org.uk/ an online resource which works to prevent harmful sexual behaviour. Shore Space offers a confidential chat service supporting young people who are concerned about their own or someone else's sexual thoughts and behaviour.

Discipline and the alleged perpetrator (s)

Colleges

Whilst colleges are not under the same legal obligations as schools with regard to behaviour and discipline, the principles will still be relevant and should be applied to their decision-making process.

Discipline and support

Taking disciplinary action and still providing appropriate support are not mutually exclusive actions. They can, and should, occur at the same time if necessary. The College Group will be very clear as to what its approach is. On the one hand there is preventative or forward-looking action to safeguard the victim and/or the perpetrator(s), especially where there are concerns that a perpetrator themselves may have been a victim of abuse; and, on the other, there is disciplinary action to punish a perpetrator for their past conduct. The College Group will be very clear as to which category any action they are taking falls or whether it is really both and should ensure that the action complies with the law relating to each relevant category. Working with parents and carers.

The College Group will, in most instances, engage with both the victim's and the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers when there has been a report of sexual violence (this might not be necessary or proportionate in the case of sexual harassment and should be considered on a case-by-case basis). The exception to this rule is if there is a reason to believe informing a parent or carer will put a child at additional risk. The College Group will carefully consider what information they provide to the respective parents or carers about the other child involved and when they do so. In some cases, local authority children's social care and/or the police will have a very clear view and it will be important for the College Group to work with relevant agencies to ensure a consistent approach is taken to information sharing.

It is good practice for the College Group to meet the victim's parents or carers with the victim present to discuss what arrangements are being put in place to safeguard the victim and understand their wishes in terms of support they may need and how the report will be progressed.

It is also good practice for the College Group to meet with alleged perpetrator's parents or carers to discuss any arrangements that are being put into place that impact an alleged perpetrator, such as, for example, moving them out of classes with the victim and what this means for their education. The reason behind any decisions should be explained. Support for the alleged perpetrator should be discussed.

The Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead would generally attend any such meetings. Consideration to the attendance of other agencies should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Clear behaviour policies and child protection policies, especially policies that set out the principles of how reports of sexual violence will be managed and how victims and alleged perpetrators are likely to be supported, that parents and carers have access to, will, in some cases, help manage what are inevitably very difficult conversations.

Parents and carers may well struggle to cope with a report that their child has been the victim of a sexual assault or is alleged to have sexually assaulted another child. The College Group will consider signposting parents and carers to this support. Safeguarding other children.

Consideration should be given to supporting children (and adult children) who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape and assault by penetration. Witnessing such an event is likely to be traumatic and support may be required.

Following any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, it is likely that some children will take "sides". The College Group will do all they can to ensure both the victim and alleged perpetrator(s), and any witnesses, are not being bullied or harassed.

Social media is very likely to play a central role in the fall out from any incident or alleged incident. There is the potential for contact between victim and alleged perpetrator(s) and a very high likelihood that friends from either side could harass the victim or alleged perpetrator(s) online and/or become victims of harassment themselves.

School transport is a potentially vulnerable place for a victim or alleged perpetrator(s) following any incident or alleged incident. The College Group, as part of its risk assessment, will consider any additional potential support needs to keep all of their children safe.

A whole College Group approach to safeguarding, a culture that makes clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and that it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated, and a strong preventative education programme will help create an environment in which all children at the school or college are supportive and respectful of their peers when reports of sexual violence or sexual harassment are made.

It is important that the College/Group keep their policies, processes, and curriculum under constant review to protect all their children. Reports of sexual violence and/or harassment (especially where there is evidence of patterns of behaviour) may point to environmental and or systemic problems that could and should be addressed by updating relevant policies, processes, or relevant parts of the curriculum. Alongside this, patterns identified in schools may also be reflective of the wider issues within a local area and it would be good practice to share emerging trends with safeguarding partners.

Appendix 10

Safeguarding: Durham Continuum of Need Model

Durham Continuum of Need Model

	Governance	Need	Services involved	Issues	Outcomes	
Continuous Assessment	**Safeguarding**	Children and young people with complex needs, suffering or likely to suffer significant harm	Multi-agency safeguarding services	Statutory assessment multi-agency response from specialist services	Improve outcomes so children are safe and healthy	**Statutory**
	Early Help	Children, families and young people who need additional targeted support	Early Help partnership where a Team Around the Family is required	Universal services not able to meet the needs of the child or family	Improve health and wellbeing outcomes preventing escalation to statutory services	**Early Help & Intervention**
	Universal	Children and young people who have no additional support	Community services accessible by all families	Child meeting all expected outcomes	Progressing in line with expected outcomes	

Appendix 11

Safeguarding: Suicide Safer College

1 Introduction

Bishop Auckland College Group is aware that in the UK there is an increase in the overall suicide rate (deaths by suicide rose by 10.9% in 2018, Samaritans 2018) and that suicide is the leading cause of death in young people (Papyrus 2022).

Bishop Auckland College Group is aware that it plays a vital role in helping to prevent suicide amongst children and staff and therefore wants to make sure it is as suicide-safe as possible and that everyone (children, staff, stakeholders, governors) are aware of our commitment to being a suicide-safer College Group.

2 Bishop Auckland College Group's beliefs about suicide and contributory factors

- Suicidal thoughts are common – we acknowledge that thoughts of suicide are common among people, especially young people
- Suicide is complex – we believe that every suicide is tragic. There are contributory factors surrounding a suicide and the reasons are often complex and individual to that person. However, we believe that there are lessons that may be learned from each death that may help prevent future deaths
- Stigma inhibits learning, stigma can kill – we recognise that the stigma surrounding suicide and mental illness can be both a barrier to seeking help and a barrier to offering help. Bishop Auckland College is dedicated to tackling suicide stigma. In our language and in our working relationships, we will promote open, sensitive talk that does not stigmatise and perpetuate taboos
- Suicide is everyone's business – as a college, we recognise that students and staff may seek out someone who they trust with their concerns and worries. We want to facilitate the reporting of any risks or concerns
- Safety is important – we want to support our students and staff, sometimes working in partnership with family, external agencies and other professionals where this may enhance suicide safety
- Suicide is difficult to talk about – we know that a person who is suicidal may find it very difficult to make their feelings known and speak openly about suicide. We will provide trained staff who are able to identify when a student/staff may be struggling with thoughts of suicide
- Talking about suicide does not increase risk – we will provide our students and staff with opportunities to speak openly about their worries with people who are ready, willing and able to support them

3 Roles and responsibilities

Bishop Auckland College Governors / SWDT Executive Council and Senior Leadership Team are clear about how we will respond in the event of a suicide.

The Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead will work together where thoughts of suicide or suicidal behaviours are known amongst children and staff. We will manage the sharing of information in a way which enhances safety and liaise with relevant external agencies as appropriate.

4 How we can help ensure an active person-centred suicide prevention and intervention policy

Bishop Auckland College Group has a named Safeguarding Lead who is responsible for the implementation and updating of this policy.

The Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead understand this policy and are Safeguarding trained.

We will endeavour to ensure that all staff are suicide aware. Staff CPD will include suicide awareness.

We will endeavour to ensure that children are suicide aware by delivering information in group tutorials, providing information on Moodle and also notice boards throughout the College Group.

We will work with external organisations to ensure we are aware of potential dangers and risks and share our suicide-safer ways, as well as staying abreast of any national developments in suicide awareness and prevention.

We recognise the need to protect someone's confidentiality in balance against the need to protect someone's life.

5 What things to look out for

Often people thinking about suicide will have experienced a stressful event associated with a feeling of loss. This might be something others might consider to be small but hold great meaning for the individual.

People who are experiencing thoughts of suicide give out 'invitations' to ask for help. Invitations are signs of distress that invite help. Anything the person at risk says, does or makes you feel might be an invitation.

Invitations could include:

- actions (giving away possessions, loss of interest in sports, misuse of drugs, alcohol, self-harm)
- physical (lack of interest in appearance, change/loss of appetite, physical health complaints)
- words ('I just can't take it anymore', 'no-one can do anything to help me now', 'all of my problems will end soon')
- feelings (angry, guilty, worthless, lonely, sad, helpless)

6 What to do when there is a concern regarding a person

A concern is just that, it's not a judgement or an outcome, it's a concern. Whatever it is that makes you worried or questioning a person may well be worth exploring. Check how the person is by communicating directly with them, it is very important that the person is your central focus. Let the person know what you are concerned about and what you have seen or heard.

If the person is having thoughts of suicide, they will usually find a way to communicate this and it is unlikely to be an explicit verbal communication about suicide. Few people feel that they can be open about suicidal thinking or tell someone when they are struggling with their emotional health and wellbeing. When suicide is part of a person's thinking they usually show this in their behaviour, in how they interact and in how they communicate. When you notice changes in the way a person is behaving or communicating, and it is causing you concern, you must explore that concern with them.

In order to find out if a person is suicidal the most effective way is to ask the person directly if they have thoughts of suicide and if they do, you should ask if they have any specific or firm plans to take their own life. Ask a person directly 'are you thinking about suicide?', by using the word suicide you are telling the person that it is ok to talk openly about their thoughts of suicide with you. You could also say 'are you telling me you want to kill yourself/end your life/die/die by suicide?' or 'it sounds like you're thinking about suicide, is that right?'.

If you do not feel able to ask this question, this can be undertaken by the Safeguarding & Mental Health Coordinator or Duty Safeguarding Officer for children or a member of the HR Department for staff.

Ways you can continue a conversation about suicide in a reassuring, safe way could be 'it's not uncommon to have thoughts of suicide, with help and support many people can work through these thoughts and stay safe', 'you've shown a lot of strength in telling me this, I want to help you find support', 'can you tell me more about why you want to die?'.

All concerns regarding suicide must be reported to the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator/Duty Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. The member of staff or HR Department raising the concern will then complete the relevant sections of the Safeguarding Alert and Referral Form (ref: SS-RSC-01).

7 What to do if there is imminent risk of death or harm

If you determine that a person has acted in a way that puts their life in danger, act quickly to keep them safe and ensure that there is no imminent risk. If they have taken an overdose, you must contact the College First Aider and Duty Manager, immediately, providing them with as much information as possible. They will decide whether to contact the Emergency Services. Try to remain calm even though you might be feeling scared, confused, upset or frustrated.

If you determine that the person's behaviour has not put their life in danger but there has been an injury you must report this to the Safeguarding & Mental Health Coordinator or Duty Safeguarding Officer immediately.

8 How do I support a person with their return to College Group

When a student who has attempted to take their own life returns to College Group they must meet with the Safeguarding & Mental Health Coordinator, HoS and their Student Progress Mentor / SWDT Designate. When they meet, they will complete a Safety Plan and explore what support is in place and also what further support if any they require from the College Group e.g. ERA or Counselling. In the case of a member of staff they would be supported by the HR Department.

9 Suicide Safety Plan

It is important that a person who has attempted to take their life who may not currently be suicidal however suicide may still be an option for them has a Safety Plan in place. This is a plan that they have created with support from the Safeguarding & Mental Health Coordinator, DoC and Student Progress Mentor / SWDT Designate or HR Department and Line Manager for staff which details how they want to stay safe from suicide.

The plan will be created with the person, not for them but it must be discussed and created prior to the person returning to College Group. The plan must be something that the student feels they are able to agree to.

The Safety Plan will include: helpline numbers that are available for them, safety contacts who the person can contact when they feel they can't keep themselves safe, including a safety contact in College Group.

The Safeguarding & Mental Health Coordinator/Student Progress Mentor or HR Department/Line Manager/SWDT Designate will arrange for regular 'check-ins' with the person once they have returned to College Group to see how they are doing and to check the plan is ok for them. The Safety Plan can be changed and amended based on the persons needs and circumstances.

10 How we can help ensure a sensitive and safe suicide postvention provision

In the event of a suicide, Bishop Auckland College Group will have a Suicide Postvention Team who will respond in the event of a suicide:

- Safeguarding Lead – liaison with external agencies
- Director of HR – support for staff
- Pastoral & Welfare Manager – support for Student Progress Mentors
- Safeguarding & Mental Health Coordinator – communication and liaison with families and students
- Student Progress Mentors/ERA – communication and liaison with families and students
- HE Student Liaison Mentor – communication and liaison with families and student
- Personal Tutors – communication with student

We will support authorities if there is an inquest after someone has died by suicide in the College Group but we will be mindful of the distress an inquest causes to the bereaved people. We will also be mindful of the impact supporting an inquest can have on staff.

We will also:

- Provide information about services/sources of bereavement support to children and staff after a suicide
- Discuss with students/staff about how supported they feel
- Assess the impact of interventions on students/staff
- Review lessons learned and discuss any suggested changes to procedures and provisions
- Identify and act on multiple events, such as two suicides in a relatively short space of time which may indicate a possible suicide cluster including investigating possible connections between individuals, their circumstances and their suicidal behaviour. Multiple suspected suicides may not be connected but may contribute in some vulnerable individuals to thoughts of suicide as a way of dealing with problems.

Hearing the tragic news that a member of the College Group has taken their life will bring up many different emotions for staff and students and this is likely to be a difficult time for the entire College Group community. Staff/students might be feeling upset, shocked, angry, guilty or numb and all of these responses are normal reactions to a traumatic event such as suicide. The College Group will ensure that support is in place for staff and students.

After liaising with the person's family, the Postvention Team will liaise with colleagues as soon as possible to inform them of the person's apparent suicide (it is only at an inquest that the coroner can conclude whether or not the death is a suicide, before then it might be helpful to say that the person appears to have died by suicide). The Postvention Team will ensure that the College stops any standard communication with the family in relation to sending out information regarding off-site visits and reduce any unnecessary additional stress to the family.

The Senior Leadership Team and Postvention Team will agree the actions to be taken regarding the death.

It is important to remember someone who has died. In the first instance the Postvention Team will consult with the family regarding the person's funeral and seek permission for staff and students to attend where appropriate. If the family so wishes, the details of the funeral will be disseminated as appropriate.

Contact Information

For questions or feedback regarding this policy, please contact:

Bishop Auckland College

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