Quality Management System

Policy Number

POL-CP-01

Policy Title

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

Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy

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Contents

Section and Title	Page Number
Alternative Format Statement	2
1.0 Introduction	5
2.0 Policy statement	5
3.0 Whole group approach to safeguarding	7
4.0 Key personnel and their roles in safeguarding	8
5.0 The role of all group staff	12
6.0 The Management of Safeguarding - information	15
7.0 Multi-agency working	19
8.0 Information Sharing	19
9.0 Opportunities to teach safeguarding	22
10.0 Online Safety	23
11.0 What to do if you have concerns about another staff member	23
12.0 What to do if you have concerns about child-on-child abuse	24
13.0 Safer Recruitment	24
14.0 Staff training and induction	24
15.0 Use of school or college premises for non-school/college activities	26
16.0 Alternative Provision	27
17.0 The use of reasonable force	28
18.0 Related documents	28
19.0 Policy Review	29
Appendix 1- Safeguarding: Raising and Dealing with a Safeguarding Concern	30
Appendix 2- Safeguarding: Recognising a Safeguarding Concern	35
Appendix 3- Safeguarding: Pre-16 Learners	67
Appendix 4- Safeguarding: HE Learners	69

Appendix 5- Safeguarding: Prevent Duty 79

Appendix 6 - Safeguarding: Children missing from education 84

Appendix 7- Safeguarding: Children potentially at greater risk of harm 87

Appendix 8- Safeguarding: Online safety 93

Appendix 9- Safeguarding: Child on Child Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence 98

Appendix 10 – Durham Safeguarding Continuum of Need Model 129

Appendix 11- Safeguarding: Suicide Safer College 131

Contact Information 138

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/. Whilst the statutory child protection framework applies to learners under 18, the Group adopts a whole-college safeguarding approach and applies safeguarding principles to all learners, including adults at risk, apprentices and high-needs learners.

2.0 Policy statement

The Group recognises that it has a statutory and moral duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of its learners'/staff. All staff within the Group are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for our learners. 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 outcome

In safeguarding adults, the Group will observe the Care Act 2014 definition of an adult at risk. “An adult at risk is a person aged 18 or over who has needs for care and support, is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, and as a result of those needs is unable to protect themselves from that abuse or neglect." The College Group recognises that vulnerability may be temporary, situational or lifelong, and will apply safeguarding principles to all learners where there are concerns regarding abuse, neglect, exploitation or wellbeing. 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 and 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 learners 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

The College Group recognises that effective safeguarding is not solely about policies and procedures but about creating a culture where everyone understands that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, concerns are acted upon promptly and learners feel safe, respected and able to seek help

3.0 Whole group approach to safeguarding

The Corporate Board 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 learner at their heart.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, the Corporate Board and group leaders will ensure the learner'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 are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for learners 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, McIntyres Centre and Durham Gateway.

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 Corporate Board understand their role with regards to safeguarding.
- Ensure all staff and Corporate Board 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 2026
- Keeping Children Safe in Education – Statutory Guidance for Schools and Organisations, Department for Education Keeping children safe in education 2026: September 2026
- 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 (accessible) - 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 learners, promote learners' 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:

Principal/Chief Executive with Oversight for Bishop Auckland College Group	
Details	**Responsibilities**
Shaun Hope Principal & Chief Executive Room 286 Ext 2209 or 01388 443001	Hold overall accountability for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk across the College Group. Ensure that effective safeguarding, child protection, Prevent, online safety and wellbeing arrangements are embedded throughout the organisation. Promote a culture in which safeguarding is regarded as everyone's responsibility and where learners feel safe, respected and supported. Ensure sufficient resources, staffing, systems and training are in place to enable the College Group to meet its safeguarding responsibilities. Provide strategic oversight of safeguarding, health and safety, learner wellbeing, mental health and digital safety arrangements. Support and challenge the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure safeguarding arrangements remain effective and compliant with statutory requirements. Ensure safeguarding policies, procedures and practices are implemented consistently across all College Group sites and provision. Receive regular safeguarding reports from the Designated Safeguarding Lead and seek assurance regarding compliance, risks, emerging themes and safeguarding effectiveness. Ensure that safeguarding duties are considered when entering partnerships, subcontracting arrangements, work placements, apprenticeships and external learning activities. Ensure appropriate action is taken following safeguarding audits, inspections, reviews or serious incidents. Act as the senior leader responsible for escalating significant safeguarding concerns to the Corporate Board where appropriate. Ensure compliance with relevant safeguarding legislation, statutory guidance and funding body requirements.

Governor with special responsibility for Safeguarding	
Details	**Responsibilities**
Chris Hutchinson Contact made via the Clerk Ext 2322 or 01388 443138	Provide strategic oversight and assurance of safeguarding arrangements across the College Group. Act as safeguarding link governor and provide appropriate challenge and support to senior leaders. Meet regularly with the DSL to review safeguarding activity, emerging risks, training, compliance and learner welfare. Receive and scrutinise safeguarding reports and seek assurance that statutory duties are being met. Oversee liaison with relevant agencies regarding allegations against the Principal/Chief Executive or DSL where appropriate. Report safeguarding matters to the Corporate Board and provide assurance regarding the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements.
Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)	
Contact	**Responsibilities**
Lisa Campbell Executive Director of People **Group Designated Safeguarding Lead** Ext 3311 or 01388 443015 Supported by: Designated Lead – **SWDT** Executive Director of SWDT (Interim Shaun Hope Principal & Chief Executive) Ext 6003 or 01325 313194 Gavin Batie Director of 14-16/Headteacher - Durham Gateway Designated Lead – **Durham Gateway** Ext 3314 or 01388 443043	Take overall strategic and operational lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection across the College Group, including online safety. Ensure the College Group's safeguarding and child protection policies, procedures and practices are implemented effectively and reviewed regularly. Act as the principal source of safeguarding advice, support and expertise for staff, managers and Corporate Board. Ensure that safeguarding concerns are responded to promptly and that appropriate referrals are made to Family Help and Children's Social Care, the police, the Channel programme, local authority designated officers (LADOs) and other agencies where required. Liaise with safeguarding partners and partner agencies in accordance with statutory guidance and local safeguarding arrangements. Maintain oversight of safeguarding records, referrals, actions

	and outcomes across the Group. Ensure appropriate arrangements are in place for safer recruitment, staff safeguarding training and safeguarding induction. Provide safeguarding leadership, guidance and challenge to designated safeguarding leads and deputies across all College Group sites and provisions. Ensure safeguarding arrangements are effective for students undertaking work placements, apprenticeships and external learning activities. Promote a culture where safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and where learners feel safe, supported and able to raise concerns. Provide regular safeguarding reports to the Principal/CEO, Senior Leadership Team and Corporate Board, identifying themes, risks, emerging issues and compliance with statutory requirements. Refer cases to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), Teaching Regulation Agency (where applicable), and other relevant bodies where statutory thresholds are met.
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	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

Lead – **SWDT** Ext 6001 or 01325 313194 Molly Lamb Deputy Safeguarding Lead – **Durham Gateway** Ext 4001 or 07850604433	Refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority Family Help and 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 Durham Safeguarding Children's Partnership and best practice , will receive refresher training every 2 years and will received safeguarding training updates at least annually 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

A Designated Safeguarding Lead or appropriately trained deputy will always be available during operational hours and during off-site educational visits where required.

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, Trainee 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 identifying and supporting learners who may benefit from early help.
- Know what action to take if a learner discloses abuse, neglect, exploitation or other safeguarding concerns.
- Be able to recognise indicators that a learner may be at risk of harm and understand how to report concerns in accordance with College Group procedures.
- Understand that safeguarding concerns must be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, a deputy or a duty manager and that information will be shared on a need-to-know basis to safeguard the learner.
- Never promise a learner that information disclosed to them will be kept confidential. Staff should explain that concerns may need to be shared with appropriate professionals in order to keep the learner safe.
- Maintain an attitude of **"it could happen here"** when considering safeguarding concerns.
- Be aware of safeguarding issues that can affect children and vulnerable adults, including online safety, exploitation, abuse, neglect, radicalisation and mental health concerns.
- Read and understand the safeguarding policies and procedures relevant to their role and participate in safeguarding training as required

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, Trainee 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
- Single Central Source of information for harassment and sexual misconduct, https://bacoll.ac.uk/harassment-and-sexual-misconduct/

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 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 in the Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance.

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:

Staff should maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a learner, staff should always act in the best interests of the learner. If staff have any concerns about a learner's welfare, they should act on them immediately.

Please see appendix 1 which should be read by all staff and identifies how to raise a safeguarding concern.

6.0 The Management of Safeguarding - information

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)

Sport

As children get older, some sports are typically taught and played in single-sex groups. The Equality Act 2010 contains an exception in relation to single sex sport. It applies to participation in any sport or game, or activity of a competitive nature, where the physical strength, stamina or physique of the average girl would put her at a disadvantage in competition with the average boy (or vice versa). This means that the college can separate children according to their biological sex in these circumstances without discriminating unlawfully against them on the basis of their sex.

Some sports may need to be played in single-sex groups from a certain age to ensure children's safety, and where this is the case there must be no exceptions.

Where there are no safety concerns and a child makes a request relating to how they participate, the college will consider the request in light of the advice on "considering requests for support with social transition". This means that the college would take into account all the relevant factors including whether supporting social transition is overall in the best interests of the child as well as considering safe and fair environments for children to participate in sport.

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, the UK GDPR and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 – 'data protection laws'

The Corporate Board 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 located separately from 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)

Regulations and safeguarding requirements relating to college premises

Toilets

The college must not allow children into toilets designated for the opposite biological sex. This includes where we are responding to a request to support any degree of social transition for children who are questioning their gender.

The college provides individual toilets that can be locked and used by individuals.

Therefore, if a gender-questioning child does not want to use the toilet designated for their biological sex, the college should consider whether they can provide an alternative toilet facility, for example self-contained individual toilets, without compromising the provision of single-sex facilities. These alternative arrangements should not compromise the safety, comfort, privacy or dignity of the child, or of any other children.

It is important that a clear record of these situations is kept, and ensure they are communicated appropriately, and review them regularly.

Changing Rooms and Showers

The college must not allow a child, aged 11 years or older at the start of the school year, to undress in front of a child of the opposite biological sex. The college is is required to provide suitable changing accommodation and showers, where required for pupils who are aged 11 years or over at the start of the school year. This means that the changing accommodation and showers must be suitable for the learners they are provided for, having regard to their ages, numbers, and sex and any special requirements they may have and is informed by the college's safeguarding obligations. When responding to a request to support any degree of social transition, the college must not allow a child access to changing rooms designated for the opposite sex.

If a gender-questioning child does not want to use the changing rooms and showers designated for their sex, the college should consider whether they can provide an alternative changing or washing facility without compromising the provision of single-sex

facilities. This could be a fully enclosed room – for use by one child at a time that can be secured from the inside – or by allowing access to facilities at an alternative time. These alternative arrangements should not compromise the safety, comfort, privacy or dignity of the child or of any other learners.

It is important that the college keeps a clear record of these situations, ensure they are communicated appropriately, and review them regularly

7.0 Multi-agency working

The College Group has a pivotal role to play in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. The Corporate Board 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:

8.0 Information Sharing

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation, and in promoting learner's welfare, including their education outcomes. The college has 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 Family Help and Children's Social Care.

When deciding what information to share, the college should consider:

• the relevancy of the information, including to the current safeguarding risk,

• what is necessary for the receiving setting to know, and
• whether it is clearly presented and appropriately contextualised.

Professional judgement should be used to ensure that the information shared is focused and proportionate. This may include summarising or omitting information which is not necessary for safeguarding purposes. But care should be taken not to omit information where it may be relevant to understanding or managing safeguarding risk. This is further supported by the new information sharing duty, which is intended to give staff greater confidence to share information appropriately and in a timely way to safeguard children.

Among other obligations, the data protection laws place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure.

Staff must have a due regard to the relevant data protection principles, which allow them to share (and withhold) personal information, as provided for in the data protection laws.

This includes:

- being confident of the processing conditions which allow them to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information, which is sensitive and personal, and should be treated as 'special category personal data',

- understanding that 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' is a processing condition that allows, where appropriate, practitioners to share special category personal data without the need for consent. and

- for schools, not providing pupils' personal data in response to a Subject Access Request where the serious harm test under data protection legislation is met. For example, in a situation where a child is in a refuge or another form of emergency accommodation, and the serious harm test is met, they must withhold providing the data in compliance with schools' obligations under the data protection laws.

Where in doubt the college would seek independent legal advice.

The data protection laws do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

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.

Where children leave the school or college, the Pastoral & Welfare Manager, Designated Safeguarding Lead or designate should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term to allow the new school or college to have support in place for when the child arrives.

The Pastoral & Welfare Manager, Designated Safeguarding Lead or designate should ensure secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as Designated Safeguarding Leads and special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs) or the named persons with oversight for special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in a college, are aware as required. It will then be for the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator or deputy to consider what other information should be shared with other relevant staff and when appropriate to do so.

In addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving particularly where the information would support an assessment of risk to others in the school as well as the individual learner. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting children who have had a social worker and been victims of abuse, or those who are currently receiving support through the 'Channel' programme and can have that support in place for when the child arrives or incidents that may indicate concerns about serious violence or harmful behaviours.

Where information indicates a risk to others and/or the individual learner, for example where a learner has previously carried, threatened with, or used a knife or weapon, it is incumbent on the receiving school/college to assess risk, and accordingly, put in place a safety and support plan for when the child arrives.

It is good practice for a conversation to take place between the Designated Safeguarding Leads or suitable designate at both settings, where there are issues or concerns.

9.0 Opportunities to teach safeguarding

The Corporate Board 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, racism misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual harassment/violence, derogatory behaviour or other forms of physical violence and conflict. 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 sessions such as RSHE, delivered in regularly timetabled lessons, where appropriate and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum. The programme is inclusive and developed to be age and stage of development appropriate (especially when considering the needs of our learners 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.

10.0 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.

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

The Corporate Board have ensured that there are procedures in place to manage safeguarding concerns, or allegations against staff (including supply staff, trainee teachers, 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, trainee 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.

If staff have a safeguarding concern or an allegation of harming or posing a risk of harm to children is made about another member of staff (including supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers, and contractors), then:

• this should be referred to the Group Designated Safeguarding Lead or Principal Chief Executive, who will consider whether an onward referral to the LADO is required,

• where there is a concern/allegation about the Principal/Chief Executive, this should be referred to the chair of governors, and

• in the event of a concern/allegation where there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the Group Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Principal/Chief Executive, this should be reported directly to the LADO.

Concerns and allegations that meet the harm test are set out in the Policy on Safeguarding concerns and allegations made about staff, including supply teachers, trainee teachers, volunteers and contractors. This policy includes low-level concerns that do not meet the harm threshold)

12.0 What to do if you have concerns about child-on-child 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, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy safeguarding lead or Duty manager .

See appendix 9

13.0 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 Executive Director of People (Group Designated Safeguarding Lead.

14.0 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 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 Executive Director of People (Group Designated Safeguarding Lead) or through the DSCP/equivalent)
- The Group Designated Safeguarding Lead and any Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads 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 Managers 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 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.

15.0 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 Corporate Board, 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 Corporate Board 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 College role or who attend the College Group. The Corporate Board 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.

16.0 Alternative Provision

Where a school places a pupil with the College Group (as an alternative provision provider), the school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and will need to 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 Corporate Board 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

The department has also published voluntary national standards for non- school alternative provision.

17.0 The use of reasonable force

The Group would always advise a policy of 'no contact' wherever possible, however, there are limited 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 necessary and for the least amount of time'. 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 SEND, mental health problems or with medical conditions, using professional judgement should also consider the additional vulnerability of these groups. 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.

18.0 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, Trainee 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, Contractors 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

19.0 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 Corporate Board for review and approval

Appendix 1- Safeguarding: Raising and Dealing with 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, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager 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, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager and provide the completed form (SS-RSC-01).

The Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager will discuss the concern with another member of the Designated Safeguarding Team in the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and jointly agree a course of action. The Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager 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, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager will ensure that the correct and appropriate action is taken in line with the Group policy and processes.

Options will then include:

• managing any support for the learner internally via the college's own pastoral support processes, including considering where doing so does not place the learner at additional risk, whether the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager should inform parents or carers to further support the learner's wellbeing,

• undertaking a Family Help assessment or

• making a referral to statutory services, for example as the learner could be in need, is in need or is suffering, or likely to suffer harm.

There will always be a designated member of the safeguarding team available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If in extreme exceptional circumstances, The Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager are not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local authority Family Help and Children's Social Care. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager as soon as is practically possible.

Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping learners safe. They should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for the effective identification, assessment, and allocation of appropriate service provision, whether this is when problems first emerge, or where a child is already known to local authority Family Help and Children's Social Care (such as a child in need or a child with a protection plan).

The link below will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice

Data protection laws do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the with the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager . Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Community-based Early Help assessment

If learners do not require the support of statutory services (such as statutory children's services), the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager will generally lead the liaison with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in carrying out this assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner.

Further guidance on effective assessment of the need for Family Help can be found in Working Together to Safeguard Children.

Any such cases should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to local authority Family Help and Children's Social Care for assessment for statutory services if a child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

Statutory Family Help and Children's Social Care assessments and services

Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to local authority Family Help and Children's Social Care and if appropriate the police, (see when to call the police: guidance for schools and colleges (npcc.police.uk)) is made immediately. Referrals should follow the local referral process. Where this is an adult, this may require a referral to adult services.

Local authority Family Help and Children's Social Care assessments should consider where children are being harmed in contexts outside of the home, so it is important that the college 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.

What the local authority do

Within one working day of a referral being made, a local authority social worker should acknowledge its receipt to the referrer and make a decision about the next steps and the type of response that is required.

This will include determining whether:

the child requires immediate protection and urgent action is required,

any services are required by the child and family and what type of services,

the child is in need and should be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Working Together to Safeguard Children provides details of the assessment process,

there is reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and whether enquiries must be made, and the child assessed under section 47 of the Children Act 1989. Working Together to Safeguard Children provides details of the assessment process, and

further specialist assessments are required to help the local authority to decide what further action to take.

The referrer should follow up if this information is not forthcoming.

If social workers decide to carry out a statutory assessment, staff should do everything they can to support that assessment, supported by the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager as required.

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

Record Keeping

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 or the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator.

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.

The College's Safeguarding Alert and Referral Form (ref: SS-RSC-01) should be fully completed with all information and agreed actions for any safeguarding concern.

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, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager, 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. Family Help and 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 pregnant and/or is a parent themselves
- Has exhibited early signs of abusive, violent and/or harmful behaviours
- 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 been repeatedly removed from the classroom, experienced multiple suspensions, is on a part-time timetable, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit
- 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 exploitation, modern slavery, trafficking, including sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised into terrorism
- 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 honour or faith-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, exploitation and modern slavery (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 – including physical, sexual, emotional abuse and stalking), criminal exploitation (including financial 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, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager.

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. Children may also cause harm to other family members, often referred to as child to parent or care giver abuse.

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 verbal abuse, such as persistent criticism, belittling or name calling, as well as 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 penetration with an object) 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. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue, which is covered later in this policy.

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 tocultural 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 education
- 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 overlap and can put children at risk of harm, including but not limited to:

- drug taking and/or alcohol misuse
- unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education
- serious violence, criminal exploitation (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation and
- consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes.

Note: consensual image sharing, especially between older children of the same age, may require a different response. It might not be abusive – but children still need to know it is illegal – whilst non-consensual is illegal and abusive. For further information, UKCIS provides detailed advice about sharing nudes and semi-nudes.

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.

Child-on-child abuse (including harassment and violence)

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 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 abuse is not being reported. As such it is important that when staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse (whether these concerns are thought to have taken place on or off-site) they should speak to the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager . As part of this, we should also try to be alert to when children might be at highest risk around the college day (for example immediately after college).

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children that are abusive in nature. Examples of which are listed below.

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 behaviour, misogyny, 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.

All staff should be aware that child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding issue for both the victim and alleged perpetrator

As well as knowing how to respond to concerns, all staff should know that child-on-child abuse is preventable. As well as knowing how to recognise behaviours and indicators of risk early, staff should know that timely, evidence-based support can be key to preventing children from going on to commit abuse or violence.

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

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying),
- discriminatory behaviour, including racism, faith-targeted abuse, and other prejudice-based incidents,
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (also known as teenage relationship abuse),
- physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm,
- physical assault and harm, or the threat of harm with a weapon,
- harmful sexual behaviour, sexual violence and sexual harassment – which may include misogyny/misandry.
- consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and semi nudes, including those generated using AI.
- 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,
- up skirting (which is a criminal offence), 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.

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)

Both CCE and CSE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal or sexual activity. It may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. This can be committed or facilitated by an organised network or gang, and the victim may identify as being part of this group. CCE and CSE can affect children, both male and female, and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation. This may constitute modern slavery, and further information is available in the Modern Slavery statutory guidance. In accordance with this guidance, a relevant child protection and modern slavery referral should be completed where a potential victim of CCE or CSE is identified.

Child criminal exploitation (CCE)

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

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation, as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. Children who are criminally exploited should have their vulnerabilities recognised by adults and professionals (particularly older children) and

should be treated as victims. It is not possible for a child to consent to be exploited, abused or trafficked, and they may not recognise that it is happening to them.

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

Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

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

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

CSE can affect any child who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. This can be committed by an individual or an organised network and most sexual abuse is committed by those previously known to the victim. Some children do not realise they are being exploited and may believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship. As with CCE, victims are not always recognised and can be criminalised for actions they take whilst under coercion. This remains a significant concern, as professionals continue to encounter cases where children are manipulated, groomed, and exploited without fully understanding the abuse they are experiencing.

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 'trap house or cuckooing' or hotel room where there is drug activity;
- owe a 'debt bond' to their exploiters;
- have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.

Further information on the signs of a child's involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office.

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 Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager who 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 Group Designated Safeguarding Lead and involve Family Help and 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 existing 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 Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager will be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into Family Help and 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 Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager will ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances.

Mental Health

All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns. This could include self-harm, suicidal ideation or risk of suicide. They could also be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. College staff, however, are well placed to observe learners 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.

If a learner is struggling with their mental health, self-harming, has an eating disorder or is experiencing suicidal ideation and making plans to end their life, there are likely to be potential warning signs which college staff are well placed to recognise. These could include:

- significant changes in behaviour,
- ongoing difficulty sleeping,
- withdrawing from social situations,
- not wanting to do things they usually like, and
- physical signs of self-harm or neglecting themselves

Not every learner who exhibits these behaviours is suicidal or has a mental health concern. However, by identifying these and other potential warning signs, staff can identify learners who may be struggling with their mental health and contemplating suicide and offer support and vital early intervention. Any interventions offered must be evidenced as safe and effective and appropriate for the need and phase of education.

If staff have a concern about a learner's mental health that is potentially a safeguarding concern, they should follow the safeguarding/child protection policy and immediate action should be taken, by speaking to the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager.

If staff feel that a learner is in danger, they should call 999 or arrange for them to be taken to A&E immediately by a parent/carer or other suitable person. If a learner needs help urgently for their mental health, but it's not an emergency, staff can get help from NHS 111 online or call 111 and select the mental health option.

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

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 Group 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

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'.

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
- Identity 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

Serious violence is a continuing safeguarding concern. It may involve physical assault, carrying, threatening with, or using weapons, often in the context of peer conflict or bullying, and it can also be associated with criminal exploitation. Staff should report any concerns about a learner carrying or using a weapon (or expressing intent to do so) to the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager. The Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager should assess the risk to both the individual learner and others in college, considering wider information or concerns, and take appropriate action. Depending on the risk, they should put in place a safety and support plan, and where relevant, consider action to de-escalate peer conflict.

The college should play a key role in protecting learners from violence, safeguarding victims, as well as those who may be at risk of, or are involved in committing violence (who may also be victims themselves). Staff should be alert to signs that a learner may be at risk of or involved in serious violence. These risks are higher for children with disrupted education (e.g. suspensions, permanent exclusions, time in alternative provision) or a history of offending. The College should also try to be alert to when children might be at highest risk around the college day (for example, immediately after college).
There are a number of indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved in committing serious violence. These may include:

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

gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation. The likelihood of involvement in serious violence may be increased by factors such as:

- being male,
- having been suspended, spent time in Alternative Provision or permanently excluded from school,
- having experienced child maltreatment,
- having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery,
- having used drugs or alcohol in early adolescence, and
- having previously been a victim or previously perpetrated violence

A fuller list of risk factors can be found in the Home Office's Serious Violence Strategy.
All professionals should also be aware that violence can often peak in the hours just before or just after college, when learners are travelling to and from college and can concentrate in particular places. These times can be particularly risky for young people involved in serious violence. It is important that we try to understand where these places are, with a view to working with partners to promote safety for our learners. It is important that we listen to our learners to help establish when and where they feel unsafe.

Working with wider partners can also help build understanding of the local context beyond college and help co-ordinate a collective safeguarding response around the college day.

Early, evidence-based support for those considered at risk, as well as at critical points when concerns emerge, is vital. This includes access to trusted adults, social and emotional skill support, and, where available, targeted interventions such as mentoring or therapeutic support (practical guidance on evidenced support is available from the Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) (the "what works" centre for preventing violence).

Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance. The Youth Endowment Fund 170 (YEF) (the "what works" centre for preventing violence) has produced practical guidance for schools and colleges and an accompanying self-assessment tool to help introduce evidenced practice for preventing children becoming involved in violence.

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 Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager. As appropriate, they will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and Family Help 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 – additional advice and support

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:
The following list is not exhaustive but should provide a useful starting point – all links can be found via Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance, September 2026 pages 174 - 182

Abuse

Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse has introduced new resources to help education professionals identify and respond to concerns of child sexual abuse and abusive behaviours.

Signs and indicators of child sexual abuse | CSA Centre

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – DfE advice

Domestic abuse: Various Information/Guidance – Home Office advice

Faith based abuse: National Action Plan – DfE advice

Forced marriage resource pack

Disrespect NoBody campaign – GOV.UK – Home Office website

Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy – Home Office policy paper

Together we can stop child sexual abuse – HM Government campaign

Bullying

Preventing bullying including cyberbullying – DfE advice

Children missing from education, home or care

Children missing education – DfE statutory guidance

Children who run away or go missing from home or care – DfE statutory guidance

Missing Children and Adults strategy – Home Office strategy

Children with family members in prison

The Prisoners' Families Helpline offers free, confidential support and advice for families in England and Wales who are in contact with the criminal justice system.

Child exploitation

Modern Slavery: statutory guidance for England and Wales (under s49 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015) and non-statutory guidance for Scotland and Northern Ireland (accessible version) - GOV.UK – Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance.

Interim guidance for ICTGs - Independent Child Trafficking Guardianship Service guidance

Safeguarding children who may have been trafficked – DfE and Home Office guidance

Care of unaccompanied migrant children and child victims of modern slavery – DfE statutory guidance

Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims – Home Office statutory guidance

Child exploitation disruption toolkit – Home Office guidance

Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation – The Children's Society and Home Office

County Lines Toolkit For Professionals – The Children's Society in partnership with Victim Support and National Police Chiefs' Council

Multi-agency practice principles for responding to child exploitation and extra-familial harm – non-statutory guidance for local areas, developed by the Tackling Child 176 Exploitation (TCE) Support Programme, funded by the Department for Education and supported by the Home Office, the Department for Health and Social Care and the Ministry of Justice

What is county lines and child criminal exploitation? - Missing People advice

SafeCall - Missing People - SafeCall is a national free, confidential and anonymous helpline and support service for young people and family members that are affected by missing, county lines and criminal exploitation. Confidential support and webinars are also available to professionals.

County Lines Support and Rescue | Catch22 - A specialist support and rescue service for young people and their families who are criminally exploited through county lines. (The service currently operates from London, Merseyside, the West Midlands, West Yorkshire and Greater Manchester.)

Confidentiality

Gillick competency Fraser guidelines – Guidelines to help with balancing children's rights along with safeguarding responsibilities.

Drugs From harm to hope: A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives – Home Office strategy

Honest information about drugs – Talk to Frank website

Drug and Alcohol education – teacher guidance & evidence review – PSHE Association

'Honour' or faith-based abuse, including FGM and forced marriage

Female genital mutilation: information and resources – Home Office guidance

Female genital mutilation: multi agency statutory guidance – DfE, Department for Health, and Home Office

Forced marriage – Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) resources

Forced marriage – Government multi-agency practice guidelines and multi-agency statutory guidance

FGM resource pack – HM Government guidance

Health and well-being

Rise Above: Free PSHE resources on health, wellbeing and resilience – Public Health England

Supporting pupils at schools with medical conditions – DfE statutory guidance

Mental health and behaviour in schools – DfE advice

Overview - Fabricated or induced illness – NHS advice

Homelessness

Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities - Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government guidance

Information sharing Government information sharing advice – Guidance on information sharing for people who provide safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers.

Information Commissioner's Office: Data sharing information hub – Information to help schools and colleges comply with UK data protection legislation including UK GDPR.

Online safety advice

Childnet – Provides guidance for schools on cyberbullying

Educateagainsthate – Provides practical advice and support on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation

London Grid for Learning – Provides advice on all aspects of a school or college's online safety arrangements

NSPCC E-safety for schools – Provides advice, templates, and tools on all aspects of a school or college's online safety arrangements

Safer recruitment consortium – 'Guidance for safe working practice', which may help ensure staff behaviour policies are robust and effective

Searching screening and confiscation – Departmental advice for schools on searching children and confiscating items such as mobile phones

South West Grid for Learning – Provides advice on all aspects of a school or college's online safety arrangements

Online Safety Audit Tool – From UK Council for Internet Safety to help mentors of trainee teachers and newly qualified teachers induct mentees and provide ongoing support, development and monitoring

Online safety guidance if you own or manage an online platform – DCMS advice

A business guide for protecting children on your online platform – DCMS advice

UK Safer Internet Centre – Provides tips, advice, guides and other resources to help keep children safe online

Understanding and responding to AI-generated child sexual abuse material: guidance from the National Crime Agency's CEOP Education programme in collaboration with the Internet Watch Foundation.

Financially motivated sexual extortion (FMSE): guidance for education settings on FMSE 178 from the National Crime Agency's CEOP Education programme.

Online safety relating to remote education, virtual lessons and live streaming

Guidance Get help with remote education – Resources and support for teachers and school leaders on educating pupils and students

Departmental guidance on safeguarding and remote education – Including planning remote education strategies and teaching remotely

London Grid for Learning – Guidance, including platform-specific advice

National Cyber Security Centre – Guidance on choosing, configuring and deploying video conferencing

UK Safer Internet Centre – Guidance on safe remote learning

Online safety – support for children

Childline – For free and confidential advice UK Safer Internet Centre – To report and remove harmful online content CEOP Safety Centre – to report online child sexual abuse Online safety - parental support

Childnet – Offers a toolkit to support parents and carers of children of any age to start discussions about their online life, and to find out where to get more help and support

Commonsensemedia – Provides independent reviews, age ratings, & other information about all types of media for children and their parents

Government advice – About protecting children from specific online harms such as child sexual abuse, sexting, and cyberbullying

Help your child stay safe online - Kids Online Safety – includes practical information from trusted places to help parents feel more confident on the steps they can take to protect their child online.

Internet Matters – Provides age-specific online safety checklists, guides on how to set parental controls, and practical tips to help children get the most out of their digital world

How Can I Help My Child? – Marie Collins Foundation – Sexual abuse online

London Grid for Learning – Provides support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online, including tips to keep primary aged children safe online

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

CEOP Education – Provides information, guidance and resources for support for parents and carers, helping them to protect their child(ren) from online sexual abuse

Parentzone – Provides help for parents and carers on how to keep their children safe online

Talking to your child about online sexual harassment: A guide for parents – This is the Children's Commissioner's parental guide on talking to their children about online sexual harassment

2019 UK CMOSs' advice - UK CMO commentary on screen time and social media map of reviews - GOV.UK

Private fostering

Private fostering: local authorities – DfE statutory guidance

Radicalisation Prevent duty guidance – Home Office guidance

The Prevent duty: safeguarding learners vulnerable to radicalisation - DfE advice

Educate Against Hate website – DfE and Home Office guidance

Prevent for FE and Training – Education and Training Foundation (ETF)

Extremism and Radicalisation Safeguarding Resources – Resources by London Grid for Learning

Managing risk of radicalisation in your education setting – DfE advice

Serious violence

Serious violence strategy – Home Office strategy

Factors linked to serious violence and how these factors can be used to identify individuals for intervention – Home Office

Youth Endowment Fund – Home Office

Gangs and youth violence: for schools and colleges – Home Office advice

Tackling and girls strategy – Home Office strategy

Violence against women and girls: national statement of expectations for victims – Home Office guidance

Sexual harassment and sexual violence

Specialist organisations

Barnardo's – UK charity caring for and supporting some of the most vulnerable children and young people through their range of services.

Lucy Faithfull Foundation – UK-wide child protection charity dedicated to preventing child sexual abuse. They work with families affected by sexual abuse and also run the confidential Stop it Now! Helpline.

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

NSPCC – Children's charity specialising in child protection with statutory powers enabling them to take action and safeguard children at risk of abuse.

Rape Crisis – National charity and the umbrella body for their network of independent member Rape Crisis Centres.

UK Safer Internet Centre – Provides https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-andresources to children, young people, parents, carers and schools about staying safe online.

Harmful sexual behaviour

Rape Crisis (England & Wales) or The Survivors Trust – For information, advice, and details of local specialist sexual violence organisations.

NICE guidance – Contains information on, amongst other things: developing interventions; working with families and carers; and multi-agency working.

HSB toolkit – The Lucy Faithfull Foundation – designed for parents, carers, family members and professionals, to help everyone play their part in keeping children safe. It has links to useful information, resources, and support as well as practical tips to prevent harmful sexual behaviour and provide safe environments for families. The Lucy Faithfull Foundation also run shorespace.org.uk which provides a safe and anonymous place for young people to get help and support to prevent harmful sexual behaviours.

NSPCC Learning: Protecting children from harmful sexual behaviour and NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework – Free and independent advice about HSB.

Contextual Safeguarding Network – Beyond Referrals (Schools) – Provides a school self-assessment toolkit and guidance for addressing HSB in schools.

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

Support for victims

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

Rape Crisis – Provides and signposts to a range of services to support people who have experienced rape, child abuse or any kind of sexual violence.

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

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

Childline – Provides free and confidential advice for children and young people.

Toolkits

NSPCC – Online Self-assessment tool to ensure organisations are doing everything they can to safeguard children.

NSPCC – Resources which help adults respond to children disclosing abuse.

NSPCC also provide free and independent advice about HSB: NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework

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

Contextual Safeguarding Network – Self-assessment toolkit for schools to assess their own response to HSB and levers for addressing HSB in schools.

Childnet - STAR SEND Toolkit – Equips, enables and empowers educators with the knowledge to support young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
Childnet - Just a joke? – Provides lesson plans, activities, a quiz and teaching guide designed to explore problematic online sexual behaviour with 9–12-year-olds.

Childnet - Step Up, Speak Up – A practical campaign toolkit that addresses the issue of online sexual harassment amongst young people aged 13-17 years old.

NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework – An evidence-informed framework for children and young people displaying HSB.

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

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes

London Grid for Learning-collection of advice – Various information and resources dealing with the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.

UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people – Advice for schools and colleges on responding to incidents of non-consensual making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes.

Support for parents/carers

National Crime Agency's CEOP Education Programme – Provides information for parents and carers to help protect their child from online child sexual abuse, including #AskTheAwkward - help to talk with your children about online relationships – Guidance on how to talk to their children a

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:

3.1 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.

3.2 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 (or relevant Director or designate) and associated organisation admissions documentation will be completed.

3.3 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.

3.4 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.

3.5 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.

3.6 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, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager 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, visitors and offsite.

1.2 For information on safeguarding, bullying and harassment, including sexual harassment and sexual misconduct, please see the single source of information which can be found at: https://bacoll.ac.uk/harassment-and-sexual-misconduct/

1.3 Any issues of bullying and harassment, including sexual harassment and misconduct 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). There is a separate complaints procedure for HE students studying through the Open University. For further information, please contact the Quality Office.

1.4 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.

1.5 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:

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

The following provides examples of harassment but is not an exhaustive list:

- Verbal abuse
- Insulting behaviour or personal insults
- Sexist jokes, racist jokes, or jokes about an individual's sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion or belief or age
- Behaviour which incites racial hatred, e.g., wearing racist insignia or badges
- Offensive written or computer-generated material, including the use of social media or email
- Unreasonable, unfair or offensive behaviour relating to an individual's disabilities or mischievous interference with personal aids or equipment
- Unwanted physical contact ranging from touching to serious assault
- Leering and offensive gestures
- Display or circulation of sexually suggestive or racially abusive material
- Coercive or menacing behaviour which interferes with dignity and privacy or which undermines an individual's self-confidence
- Asserting a position of seniority in an aggressive, abusive, or offensive manner e.g., inappropriate, or derogatory remark in connection with performance of duties / responsibilities, intrusion by pestering, spying, or stalking
- Ridicule, isolation or exclusion from everyday social interaction or activities

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

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.

Sexual misconduct and violence relates to all unwanted conduct and behaviour 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).

Domestic abuse and coercive or controlling behaviour is defined as any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse between those who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. This can include, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial and/or emotional abuse.

The Group recognises that there are potentially additional types of behaviour which will therefore need to be considered under the Group's internal disciplinary processes:

a) Vexatious reporting involves the creation of unwarranted reports made, or a refusal to accept any reasonable decisions arising from the application of the Group's internal disciplinary processes.

b) Malicious reporting occurs when an individual shares allegations of HSMV with the intent to cause harm.

c) Abuse of Power whereby a relevant member of staff exploits a position of power in relation to a reporting party, so as to apply pressure in a way which may result in the student doing something, or refraining from doing something, that they may not have otherwise done, and/or that action or inaction could reasonably result in something that falls within the scope of an intimate personal relationship.

Intimate personal relationships between staff and students

- Intimate personal relationships between members of staff and students are prohibited where a real or perceived power imbalance exists. Any pre-existing relationship must be declared immediately to the Executive Director of People (Group Designated Safeguarding Lead) and appropriate arrangements implemented to remove any conflict of interest.

- All students are entitled to equality of treatment and it is important that this is maintained and also perceived to be maintained. The Group and its staff have a professional responsibility to protect the interests of the students. Relationships between staff and students are not generally equal, as staff members can be seen to have a higher hierarchical status at the Group than the student. A relationship between a member of staff and a student poses risks to both parties: the student may become isolated from peers, particularly if other students perceive there to be favourable treatment from the member of staff, which could affect the student's group work and general college experience.

Refer to the 'Relationships at Work Policy' POL-HR-07

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

1.7 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.

1.8 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 students. 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 Corporate Board 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 Corporate Board

3.1 The Corporate Board ensures that the Bishop Auckland College Group approach to harassment and sexual misconduct is adequate and effective. The Corporate Board 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 Corporate Board is routinely given information on the Group's approach to harassment and sexual misconduct for consideration and action (as necessary). Data is shared/reported through the HR Governance Structure at HE Academic Board and the Curriculum & Quality Committee, a sub-committee of Corporate Board.

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 students 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.

6.6 The Group will not use any non-disclosure agreement, confidentiality clause or similar arrangement that would prevent a student from disclosing, discussing or seeking support in relation to harassment or sexual misconduct

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 Corporate Board) 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 An indicative timeframe for dealing with an investigation would be: acknowledgement within 5 working days, risk assessment within 2 working days, regular updates every 20 working days, target investigation completion timeframe four weeks, wherever possible.

8.4 The Group adopts a trauma-informed approach which seeks to minimise re-traumatisation and ensure that those making disclosures are treated fairly, sensitively and with dignity

8.5 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)

9.5 Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedure (ref: BAC-SS-01 Higher Education - Bishop Auckland College (bacoll.ac.uk)

9.6 The Office for Students guidance on protection from sexual harassment and sexual misconduct.

https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/for-providers/student-protection-and-choice/harassment-and-sexual-misconduct/condition-e6-harassment-and-sexual-misconduct/

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.

The Prevent Duty applies to all learners, including children, young people and adults at risk. Safeguarding arrangements relating to radicalisation will be applied proportionately across all learner groups.

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 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 places 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 guidance is to Notice concerns, assess risk and share concerns through appropriate safeguarding and Prevent referral pathways**,** 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 Regional 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
- The Group will maintain and regularly review a Prevent risk assessment which considers local, regional and national risks, online risks, external speakers and events, partnership arrangements, IT filtering and monitoring, learner vulnerabilities and staff training needs
- 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
- The Group will have procedures for assessing and approving external speakers and events to ensure that freedom of expression is balanced with the need to protect learners from radicalising influences and extremist views.
- The Group will maintain appropriate filtering and monitoring systems designed to reduce the risk of learners accessing terrorist or extremist material online whilst ensuring that systems support safeguarding and educational requirements.

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** refers to the process by which a person becomes susceptible to extremist ideology and may be drawn into supporting or engaging in terrorism
- **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 political, religious or ideological cause.

Radicalisation may occur through online platforms, including social media, encrypted messaging applications, livestreaming services, forums, gaming environments and the use of AI-generated content. Staff should remain alert to indicators that a learner may be accessing or being influenced by extremist content online.

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, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager. 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 Group Designated Safeguarding Lead and other staff with safeguarding responsibilities will familiarise themselves with the revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales.
The Group Designated Safeguarding Lead and other staff with safeguarding responsibilities will familiarise themselves with the revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales as well as any updates.

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 Group 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 need to be raised. The Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager will be contacted without delay and the relevant documentation completed as outlined in Appendix 1: 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.

As an indicator, signs could include:

- fixation on extremist narratives;
- sudden intolerance of others;
- justification of violence;
- accessing extremist material online;
- significant changes in behaviour or friendship groups;
- attempts to recruit others to extremist causes.

There is no single profile of a person susceptible to radicalisation. Staff should be alert to a range of factors and circumstances that may increase susceptibility and should consider concerns alongside wider safeguarding information

7.2 Staff

Where there are concerns that a member of staff's conduct, behaviour or expressed views may pose a risk of radicalising or influencing learners towards extremist ideologies or terrorism, 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 Executive Director of People (Group Designated Safeguarding Lead). Executive Director of People (Group 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, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager 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, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager 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 ma

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 Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager 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 Corporate Board 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 Family Help and 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.

Children requiring mental health support

The College has an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their learners. All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns. This could include self-harm, signs of an eating disorder, suicidal ideation or suicide. They could also be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, still have an important role to play. Specifically, they can support the fulfilment of 4 key roles:

- promoting good mental wellbeing and preventing the onset of mental illness,
- observing learners and identifying early those who may be experiencing mental health problems or being at risk of developing one,
- ensuring early targeted support is provided, and
- liaison with/referral to specialist services where needed.

Where support is needed, the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager should consider whether to inform parents or carers to support a child's wellbeing, where doing so would not place the child at additional risk.

Whilst all staff are able to observe and support the mental health and wellbeing of their learners, the College has a Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator in place.

The Promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing guidance sets out how colleges can help prevent mental health problems by promoting wellbeing and resilience as part of an integrated, whole college approach to social and emotional wellbeing, which is tailored to the needs of learners.

The College can also access advice to help identify children in need of extra mental health support. Additional guidance and resources can be found on the Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges website on GOV.UK. The department has also published advice and guidance on Preventing and tackling bullying (which may also be useful).

Young carers

The College are alert to the needs of young carers, recognising that caring responsibilities can impact on their attendance, attainment, behaviour and wellbeing. Early identification is essential to ensure young carers receive support at the right time and by the appropriate services including additional support from external partners, or local authority and health services.

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 condition without further exploration,
- these learners being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other learners,
- the potential for learners with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs,
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges risks that they do not understand that what is happening to them is abuse,
- the need for intimate care or that these learners are isolated from others,
- that these learners are more likely to be dependent on adults for care, and
- these learners may have issues over cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in college 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

Safeguarding children with medical conditions

The fact that there has been an incident relating to the management of a learner's medical condition (including allergies) would not in and of itself warrant a referral to local safeguarding partners. A safeguarding referral would only be needed where an incident highlighted concern that the learner might be at an increased risk of being neglected, abused or exploited by persons inside or outside of their family unit because of their medical condition. This might occur where relevant information about a child or young person's medical condition is not provided to a school, college or setting, or where they are repeatedly sent without essential medication, thereby putting the individual at risk.

Further information is provided in our statutory guidance on supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions and Allergy safety in schools. Statutory guidance about the support that pupils with medical conditions and allergies should receive at school.

Children who are lesbian, gay or bisexual

A learner being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not in itself a risk factor for harm; however, they can sometimes be vulnerable to discriminatory bullying. 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 learners who are. The College has processes and policies in place to address vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying and takes steps to prevent it, including putting appropriate sanctions in place. If you have any concerns, please speak to the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager.

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, extreme sexual or physical violence.

- **contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users or generative AI applications that simulate this; 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**: 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, including those generated by AI 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.

Guidance to support schools and colleges to understand safety considerations and legal responsibilities if they choose to use Generative AI (either teacher-facing or pupil-facing) can be found at Generative artificial intelligence in education.
AI in education

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. https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-remote-education

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 Corporate Board 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 Corporate Board ensures the College Group has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness. Reviews will be carried out by the SLT member responsible for filtering and monitoring, with the support of the Group Designated Safeguarding Lead and IT. They will include checks that filtering is working appropriately on all internet-connected devices in all relevant locations, and a record will be kept of these checks. The Corporate Board will 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. They will consider the number of and age range of learners, those who are potentially at greater risk of harm and how often they access the IT system along with the proportionality of costs versus 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 department's filtering and monitoring standards provide more detailed guidance. They set out that schools and colleges should:

- identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems,
- review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually,
- block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning, and ·
- have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet their safeguarding needs.

Additional guidance on "appropriate" filtering and monitoring can be found at:

- UK Safer Internet Centre: A Guide for education settings and filtering providers. https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/teachers-and-school-staff/appropriate-filtering-and-monitoring
- The UK Safer Internet Centre produced a series of webinars for teachers on behalf of the department. These webinars were designed to inform and support schools with their filtering and monitoring responsibilities and can be assessed at Filtering and monitoring webinars available – UK Safer Internet Centre, https://saferinternet.org.uk/blog/filtering-and-monitoring-webinars-available

- South West Grid for Learning (swgfl.org.uk) has created a tool https://testfiltering.com/ 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),

- Support for schools when considering what to buy and how to buy it is available via the: Schools' buying strategy with specific advice on procurement here: Buying for schools, and

- The department has published Generative AI: product safety expectations to support schools 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 take measures to safeguard learners, including by protecting personal information and ensuring the College Group has appropriate cyber security systems in place. This forms part of the College Group's wider safeguarding responsibilities.

Reviewing online safety

Technology, and risks and harms related to it, evolve and change rapidly. The College Group carries out an annual review of their approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers 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.

Appendix 9- Safeguarding: Child on Child Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence

1.0 Introduction

This appendix sets out the College Group's procedures for identifying, preventing and responding to harmful sexual behaviour (HSB), child-on-child sexual harassment and sexual violence, including those that have happened outside of the College premises, and or online.

All staff who work for the College Group should maintain an attitude of:
'it could happen here'

Understanding harmful sexual behaviour (HSB), sexual harassment and sexual violence
HSB 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. HSB exists on a continuum and may escalate into sexual harassment or sexual violence, it can occur online and/or face to face (both physically and verbally) and is never acceptable.

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 awareness that:

- the College Group has a **zero-tolerance** approach to sexual harassment and sexual violence, 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, misogyny, 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 HSB, sexual harassment and sexual violence 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.

- recognising the escalatory nature of misogyny and the benefits of early identification to support the approach to minimising the risk of HSB, sexual harassment and sexual violence

- challenging behaviours (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.

- taking a safeguarding approach in response to all incidents involving the sharing of nude or semi-nude images, regardless of whether they are consensual or non-consensual. All such incidents require a safeguarding response, with a proportionate approach that considers the age, development, and circumstances of the children involved, as well as any elements of coercion, exploitation or vulnerability.

Children who are victims of HSB, sexual harassment and sexual violence, 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 college.

The College Group recognises that safeguarding incidents and, or behaviours can be associated with factors outside of the college, and that children may be at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations beyond their families and the college environment. This may include risks associated with intimate personal relationships, peer groups and friendship networks, the local community, online activity, criminal exploitation and gang related activity.

Whilst any report of HSB, sexual harassment and sexual violence should be taken seriously, staff should be aware it is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual harassment and sexual violence and more likely it will be perpetrated by boys. Children with disabilities are also three times more likely to be abused that their peers.

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 HSB, sexual harassment or sexual violence. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB)

The umbrella term 'harmful sexual behaviour' (HSB) is widely used in child protection and applies to behaviour occurring online, face-to-face, or both. HSB should always be considered within a child protection context.

Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive or violent. Behaviour that is problematic, abusive or violent is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. Advice on stages of typical sexual development and behaviour for different age groups can be found at https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-health-development/sexual-behaviour

When assessing HSB, the ages and developmental stage of the children involved is critical. Sexual behaviour between children may be considered harmful if there is a significant age difference, typically more than two years' difference or if one is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child may also abuse an older child, especially if they hold power over them, e.g., due to a disability or physical size. Advice on responding to children who display sexualised behaviour is available in https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/2685/responding-to-children-who-display-sexualised-behaviour-guide.pdf

The safeguarding team will have a good understanding of HSB. This knowledge could will form part of safeguarding training.

HSB can, in some cases, progress on a continuum. Early intervention in inappropriate behaviour such as misogyny can help to prevent escalation to more serious abuse such as

sexual harassment and sexual violence. Children who display HSB have often experienced their own abuse and trauma. It is important that they are offered appropriate support.

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment refers to 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' which can occur both online and offline and inside and outside of school or college. In this context it specifically relates to child-on-child sexual harassment, however it is equally important to recognise, learner-on-learner harassment.

Such behaviour can:

- violate a child's dignity,
- make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, and
- create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

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

- sexual comments, such as telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothing or appearance and using sexualised names,
- sexual "jokes" or taunting,
- physical behaviour, such as deliberately brushing against someone, or interfering with someone's clothes. The college will assess when such behaviour crosses into sexual violence – it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim,
- displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature,
- upskirting (this is a criminal offence, and
- online sexual harassment, which may occur independently, or as a broader pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.

  This may include:

  consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes. Advice for education can be found here - UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes

- sharing of unwanted explicit content,
- sexualised online bullying,
- unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media,
- sexual exploitation; coercion and threats, and
- coercing others into sharing images of themselves or performing acts they're not

comfortable with online.

It is important that the College Group consider sexual harassment in broad terms. If left unchallenged, it can foster a culture that normalises inappropriate behaviour and increases the risk of leading to sexual violence.

Sexual violence

All college staff should be aware that child-on-child sexual violence can and does occur, both inside and outside of college.
For this section, sexual violence refers to specific sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:

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

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

Sexual assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (NOTE - sexual assault covers a very wide range of behaviour so a single act of kissing someone without consent or touching someone's bottom/breasts/genitalia without consent, can still constitute sexual assault).

Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally causes another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (NOTE – this could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party).

What consent is:

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

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

For further guidance refer to Rape Crisis England & Wales - Sexual consent
https://rapecrisis.org.uk/get-informed/about-sexual-violence/sexual-consent/

Preventing abuse

The college ensures effective safeguarding by having clear processes in place and available support for incidents involving HSB, sexual harassment or sexual violence. These are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure they are up to date.

What you need to know in advance of responding to reports of HSB, sexual harassment and/or sexual violence

The College has a clear, well-promoted, and accessible system that enable children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be taken seriously.

Reports of HSB, sexual harassment and sexual violence are likely to be complex and may require swift, difficult professional decisions to be made. To respond to reports effectively, the College invests in pre-planning, effective staff training and has robust safeguarding policies, which will provide staff with the foundation for a calm, and considered approach when incidents arise.

The Corporate Board ensures that the College Group contributes to multi-agency working in line with the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children.

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

Ultimately, any decisions are for the College Group to make on a case by-case basis, led by the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager using their professional judgement, supported by external agencies, such as local authority children's social care and the police as needed.

Support for schools and colleges

The College is not isolated when addressing incidents of HSB, sexual harassment and sexual violence. Support is available from a range of agencies and organisations.

Local authority Family Help and Children's Social Care and the police are key partners, especially where a crime may have been committed. Referrals to the police often follow a referral to local authority children's social care.

The designated safeguarding lead (or safeguarding team) should lead the College's response and should be familiar with the local referral process.

The following resources may be helpful:

- National Crime Agency's CEOP Safety Centre offers support and reporting mechanisms for online sexual abuse. https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/
- NSPCC helpline provides expert advice for professionals via 0808 80000 or help@nspcc.org.uk.
- Rape Crisis https://rapecrisis.org.uk/ and The Survivors Trust https://www.thesurvivorstrust.org/find-support provide specialist support for victims of sexual violence.
- The Anti-bullying Alliance provides guidance for schools on Sexual and sexist bullying.

Online incidents of HSB, sexual harassment and sexual violence can be complex, often involving widespread abuse or harm on multiple social media platforms and repeated victimisation.

Support is available from:

- UK Safer Internet Centre provides an online safety helpline for professionals at 0344 381 4772 or helpline@saferinternet.org.uk.
- Childline/IWF provides a free tool, Report Remove, for children to report nude or sexual images and/or videos of themselves that they think might have been shared online.
- UKCIS provides : Advice for education settings working with children and young people on handling reports of children sharing non-consensual self-generated intimate images and/or videos.
- National Crime Agency's CEOP Education Programme provides resources for professional's and parents and carers on protecting children and young people from online child sexual abuse.
- LGfL provide education materials via 'Undressed' on 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.

2.0 Responding to a report of HSB, sexual harassment and/or sexual violence

The immediate response to a 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. A supportive and respectful response can empower victims to come forward, whilst a poor response may discourage further disclosures.

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 HSB, 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. Staff must consider whether SEND, communication needs, developmental differences or other vulnerabilities affect a child's understanding of consent, relationships, boundaries or the behaviour being considered.

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, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager. 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, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager or children's social care 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 learner 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 learner discloses recognises that the learner has placed them in a position of trust. They should be supportive and respectful of the learner;

- 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 learners may not be able to recall all details or timeline of abuse;

- Keeping in mind that certain learners may face additional barriers to telling someone especially where there may be vulnerabilities related to disability, sex, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation;

- Listening carefully to the learner, reflecting back, using the learner's language, being non-judgemental, being clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed, not asking leading questions and only prompting the learner where necessary with open questions – where, when, what, etc. It is important to note that whilst leading questions should be avoided, staff can ask learners 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 learner 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 learner and not appear distracted by the note taking. Either way, **it is essential a written record is made**;

- Only recording the fact as the learner 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 Family Help and Children's Social Care and/or part of a criminal investigation; and

- Informing the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager as soon as practically possible, if they are not involved in the initial report.

Considering confidentiality and anonymity

Confidentiality

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

Only essential staff and agencies should be involved – those directly supporting the child/ren or participating in any investigation.

If a victim requests confidentiality, there are no easy or definitive answers. Even without consent to share, staff may share information if a legal basis under UK GDPR applies, such as the public task basis which allows sharing to fulfil a legal duty. Advice should be sought from the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager, who should consider:

- informing parents or carers, unless doing so increases the risk to the victim,
- referring to local authority Family Help and Children's Social Care if a child is at risk of harm, in immediate danger, or has been harmed, and
- reporting crimes such as rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault to the police. Even if the alleged perpetrator is under ten, the starting principle of referring to the police remains. The police will take a welfare, rather than a criminal justice approach, in these cases.

Ultimately, the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager should balance the victim's wishes with the duty to protect them and other children.

If the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager does make a referral to local authority Family Help and Children's Social Care and/or a report to the police against the victim's wishes, it should be handled with care. The decision should be explained to the victim and appropriate specialist support offered.

Further guidance on confidentiality and information sharing is available from the following: information Sharing Advice sharing advice

Anonymity

Where an allegation of sexual harassment or sexual violence is progressing through the criminal justice system, the College Group should understand the importance of anonymity, witness support, and the criminal process in general so they can offer support and act appropriately. Relevant information can be found in: CPS: Safeguarding Children as Victims and Witnesses.

As part of good safeguarding practice, the College Group will take reasonable steps to protect the anonymity of all children involved. Amongst other things, this includes carefully deciding, based on the nature of the report, which staff need to know about the report and what support that will be provided for the children involved.

The College Group will also consider the potential impact of social media, which can spread rumours and compromise victims' identities. Guidance on managing these risks is available from Childnet's cyberbullying guidance.

4.0 Risk and needs assessment

When there has been a report of sexual violence, the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager 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 for a report on sexual violence 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 learners and staff) within the College Group, and any actions that are appropriate to protect them from the alleged perpetrator(s), or from future harms.
- the location and time of the incident, with steps to improve safety in that area.

Risk and needs assessments should be recorded (written or electronic) and should be kept under review and used to inform ongoing safeguarding decisions. At all times, the College Group 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, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager should ensure they are engaging with Family Help and 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

What to consider

HSB, sexual harassment and sexual violence can happen anywhere, and all staff working within the College Group 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 HSB, sexual harassment and sexual violence, whether they occur online, offline or outside of the college. The Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager 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 victim's wishes regarding how they want to proceed. Victims should be given as much control as reasonably possible regarding how an investigation will be progressed and what support they are offered, balanced against the College Group's duty to protect others,
- 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 learners 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 HSB, sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. 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.

The four scenarios are:

1. **Manage internally**

- In some cases, such as one-off incidents of HSB or sexual harassment, it may be appropriate for the college to manage the situation internally, using the behaviour policy and providing pastoral support, without involving statutory services.

- The Group has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and sexual violence. This means that such behaviour will never be dismissed or normalised. The safeguarding response will, however, be proportionate and child-centred, taking account of the nature of the behaviour, the age and developmental stage of those involved and any vulnerabilities or contextual factors.

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

2. **Universal services and community based Early Help assessment**

In line with managing internally above, the College Group may decide that the children involved do not require referral to statutory services but may benefit from other support. Universal services and community based Early Help play a crucial role in identifying

emerging problems and providing support at an early stage. They are not an individual service, but a system of support delivered by local authorities and their partners working together and taking collective responsibility to provide the right provision in their area. This level of Early Help is provided through universal services and other voluntary and community services. This includes universal services such as education and health services, as well as support delivered through Best Start Family Hubs, youth services, after school clubs and housing provision. It is particularly important that the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead and Duty Managers know what the local Early Help process is and how and where to access support.

- More information on community-based 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.
- Community-based 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 the Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Leads, Deputy Safeguarding Leads and Duty Managers will need to familiarise themselves with this document.
- Community-based 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 Family Help – including targeted Early Help and local authority children's social care

- Some children and families may require more targeted support than that offered at the universal and community based Early Help level. The Families First

Partnership (FFP) Programme Guide. Provides a toolkit to assist safeguarding partners set up effective Family Help models to identify children and families who would benefit from more targeted support through Family Help. By Family Help, we mean both targeted early help and support and services delivered under s.17 of the Children Act 1989.

- Targeted early help services delivered through Family Help are coordinated by a local authority and/or their partners to address specific concerns within a family. Examples of these include parenting support, mental health support, youth services, youth offending teams and housing and employment services. Targeted early help may be appropriate for children and families who have multiple and or complex needs. It is a voluntary approach, requiring the family's consent.

- 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, the college 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, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager 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, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager 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 and needs 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, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager 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, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager 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, Designated Safeguarding Leads, Deputy Safeguarding Leads and Duty Managers 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. The following advice may help schools and colleges decide when to engage the Police and what to expect of them when they do

- 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 Leads, Deputy Safeguarding Leads and Duty Managers 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, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager 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, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager 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
  - Family 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 young people's mental health services (CYMHS) 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 CYHMS 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 provides a range of advice, help and support allegations against staff

- 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. Referral Centre

- 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, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager 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 Leads, Deputy Safeguarding Leads and Duty Managers 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, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager 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, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager 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.

- The Lucy Faithfull Foundation has developed a HSB toolkit, which amongst other things, provides support, advice and information on how to prevent it, links to organisations and helplines, resources about HSB by children, internet safety, sexual development and preventing child sexual abuse.
- The Lucy Faithfull Foundation in collaboration with the Home Office, has developed 'Shore Space', 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.

- The NSPCC provides free and independent advice about HSB: NSPCC Learning: Protecting children from harmful sexual behaviour and NSPCC -Harmful sexual behaviour framework. provides a school self-assessment toolkit and guidance for addressing HSB in schools.

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

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, including sexism and misogyny, can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future. Advice on behaviour in schools is clear that teachers can sanction 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.

School and college can be a significant protective factor for children who have displayed HSB, and continued access to school/college, with a comprehensive safeguarding management plan in place, is an important factor to consider before final decisions are made. It is important that if an alleged perpetrator does move to another educational institution (for any reason), that the new educational institution is made aware of any ongoing support needs and where appropriate, potential risks to other children and staff. The Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager should take responsibility to ensure this happens as well as transferring the child protection file.

Sanctions and the alleged perpetrator (s)

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 Family Help and 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, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager 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 harassment or sexual violence, 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.

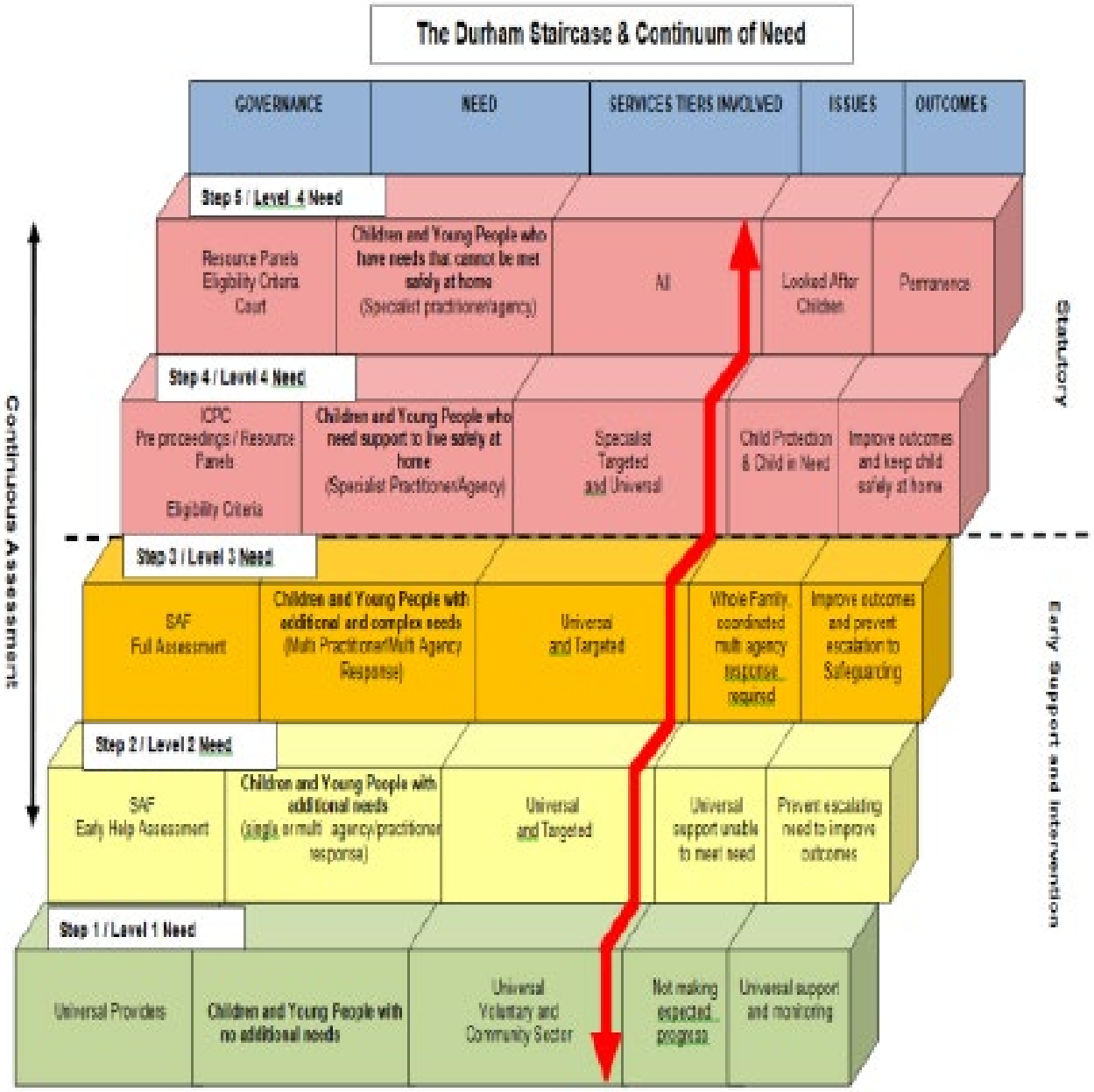
It is important that the College/Group keep their policies, processes, and curriculum under constant review to protect all their children. Reports of sexual violence and/or harassment (especially where there is evidence of patterns of behaviour) may point to environmental and or systemic problems that 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 – Durham Safeguarding Continuum of Need Model

The threshold document outlines Durham's criteria for action when a family requires support. This tool is designed to be transparent, accessible and easily understood by families and professionals alike. The support that is offered to families should increase in line with the level of concern or risk, including referral to children's social care for assessment for statutory services.

For further information, please visit DSCP safeguarding arrangements


The Durham Staircase & Continuum of Need
GOVERNANCE
NEED
SERVICES TIERS INVOLVED
ISSUES
OUTCOMES
Step 5 / Level 4 Need
Resource Panels
Eligibility Criteria
Court
Children and Young People who have needs that cannot be met safely at home
(Specialist practitioner/agency)
All
Looked After Children
Permanence
Step 4 / Level 4 Need
ICPC
Pre proceedings / Resource Panels
Eligibility Criteria
Children and Young People who need support to live safely at home
(Specialist Practitioner/Agency)
Specialist Targeted and Universal
Child Protection & Child in Need
Improve outcomes and keep child safely at home
Statutory
Step 3 / Level 3 Need
SAF
Full Assessment
Children and Young People with additional and complex needs
(Multi Practitioner/Multi Agency Response)
Universal and Targeted
Whole Family, coordinated multi agency response required
Improve outcomes and prevent escalation to Safeguarding
Early Support and Intervention
Step 2 / Level 2 Need
SAF
Early Help Assessment
Children and Young People with additional needs
(single or multi agency practitioner response)
Universal and Targeted
Universal support unable to meet need
Prevent escalating need to improve outcomes
Step 1 / Level 1 Need
Universal Providers
Children and Young People with no additional needs
Universal Voluntary and Community Sector
Not making expected progress
Universal support and monitoring
Continuous Assessment

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 and Senior Leadership Team are clear about how we will respond in the event of a suicide.

The Safeguarding and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager will work together where thoughts of suicide or suicidal behaviours are known amongst students 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, Designated Safeguarding Leads, Deputy Safeguarding Leads and Duty Managers 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 students are suicide aware by delivering information in group tutorials, providing information online and also notice boards/digital 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 and Mental Health Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager for students. If it is a member of staff, please contact the HR Department.

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, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager immediately. The staff member 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/Designated Safeguarding Lead or Duty Manager 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, Director of Curriculum and their Student Progress Mentor. 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:

- Designated Safeguarding Lead – liaison with external agencies
- 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/Counsellor – communication and liaison with families and students
- HE Student Liaison Mentor – communication and liaison with families and student
- Personal Tutors – communication with students

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:

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