



Policy Statements and Procedures

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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All children have the same protection regardless of gender, ethnicity, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability.

1. POLICY STATEMENT AND PRINCIPLES

Colleges within The Rosedale Hewens Academy Trust, are referred to as 'the College' throughout this policy. The Rosedale Hewens Academy Trust (the Trust) fully understands the contribution it must make to protect children, support students across the Trust and promote a safeguarding culture. The aim of the policy is to safeguard and promote students' welfare, safety and health by fostering an honest, open, caring, proactive and supportive environment in which all students can achieve their full potential. The Trust is committed to ensuring all staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns.

Rosedale College, a College within The Rosedale Hewens Academy Trust, is committed to providing an excellent educational experience for all its students. We believe that a child's safety and well-being is a key to achievement. Safeguarding and child protection concerns, and referrals will be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that support the needs of the child. We recognise that parents, guardians and carers have a vital role to play in their child's safety and well-being and that there is a need to establish strong home/College links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there are concerns about child protection.

All staff should be considering the context within which incidents and/or behaviours can occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. In adopting a robust 'Contextual Safeguarding' approach, we aim to recognise that children and young people risk experiencing significant harm in extra-familial contexts. We seek to include these contexts within prevention, identification, assessment, intervention through early help processes and safeguarding measures.

1.1 CHILD-CENTRED APPROACH

All safeguarding decisions will be made in the best interests of the child. Staff should adopt a child-centred approach, considering the child's wishes, feelings, lived experiences, vulnerabilities and individual needs when responding to safeguarding concerns. The college recognises that every child is unique and that safeguarding responses should be proportionate, compassionate and tailored to individual circumstances.

1.2 SAFEGUARDING CULTURE

The Rosedale Hewens Academy Trust is committed to maintaining a strong safeguarding culture in which safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is embedded within every aspect of Trust and college life. Safeguarding is recognised as everyone's responsibility and underpins all strategic, operational and educational decision-making. Children's welfare will always remain paramount.

The Trust promotes a safeguarding culture where:

- children are listened to, respected and taken seriously;
- safeguarding is everyone's responsibility;
- all staff maintain an attitude of "it could happen here";
- professional curiosity is encouraged;
- concerns are identified early and acted upon promptly;
- staff feel confident to report, challenge and escalate concerns;
- attendance, wellbeing, behaviour and achievement are considered through a safeguarding lens;

- children have access to trusted adults;
- safeguarding practice is reviewed, monitored and strengthened continuously.

Safeguarding Culture in Practice

The Trust demonstrates its safeguarding culture through:

Leadership and Governance

- safeguarding remains a standing item at leadership, local academy board and trustee meetings;
- safeguarding audits are undertaken regularly;
- safeguarding data is scrutinised at college and Trust level;
- safeguarding trends are analysed and inform strategic planning.

Listening to Children

- student voice activities are undertaken regularly;
- children know how to seek help;
- concerns are acted upon promptly;
- children's wishes and feelings are reflected within safeguarding plans and records.

Attendance and Inclusion

- attendance data is reviewed alongside safeguarding information;
- vulnerable students are monitored closely;
- barriers to attendance are identified and addressed;
- attendance concerns are considered within safeguarding assessments.

Professional Curiosity

- staff remain professionally curious;
- staff respectfully challenge information where concerns remain;
- staff recognise patterns, emerging risks and disguised compliance;
- safeguarding decisions are informed by the child's lived experience.

Staff Development

- safeguarding training is delivered regularly;
- emerging risks are addressed through updates and briefings;
- safeguarding responsibilities are reinforced through supervision and quality assurance.

Multi-Agency Working

- safeguarding partners are engaged proactively;
- information is shared appropriately;
- children and families receive support through Family Help, early intervention and statutory services where required.

1.3 CHILD PROTECTION STATEMENT

The new definition in KCSIE (2026) paragraph 3 is as follows. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this 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 the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

All staff, including those who do not work directly with children, must read and understand Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. Annex A has been removed from KCSIE 2026 and all staff are expected to follow the same safeguarding expectations.

All staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting any form of abuse and/or neglect. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or are being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.

The college recognises its duty is to safeguard and promote the care and welfare of all its students. This includes children who are in need (Section 17, Children Act 1989) and children who are at risk of significant harm (Section 47, Children Act 1989).

Confidentiality

The colleges' approach to confidentiality and data protection with respect to safeguarding is in line with all GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations May 2018), Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004 section 11.

Please note that:

- Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding
- 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
- The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe
- If staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk
- Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests
- The government's information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or LSO)

The 7 'Golden Rules' to Information Sharing

1. Remember that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
2. Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. Seek advice from other practitioners, or your information governance lead, if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
4. Where possible, share information with consent, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 you may share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be clear of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you do not have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.
5. Consider safety and well-being: base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

We recognise that child protection is the responsibility of all staff. We will ensure that all parents and other working partners are aware of our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy by mentioning it in the college prospectus, displaying appropriate information in the college reception and by raising awareness at meetings with parents, guardians and carers. Our students' welfare is of paramount importance.

1.4 POLICY AIMS

The four main elements that ensure this policy is fully and effectively implemented are:

- **Prevention:** For example, following safer recruitment practices; supportive College atmosphere; teaching and pastoral support available to students, PSHE curriculum teaches children to keep themselves safe, regular workshops on internet safety, knife crime and gang culture and other local contextual concerns.
- **Protection:** For example, following agreed policies and procedures and monitoring their implementation and effectiveness; by ensuring staff are trained and supported appropriately and sensitively in child protection and safeguarding matters; by encouraging open communication.

- **Support:** Appropriate support will be offered to students and staff who make disclosures or voice concerns. The college will outline carefully the process that will follow for handling a complaint and will offer counselling or other pastoral support as necessary.
- **Equality:** All children have the same protection regardless of gender, ethnicity, religious beliefs, sexual orientation or identity (LGBT) or disability. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is a legally-binding international agreement setting out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of every child, regardless of their race, religion or abilities.

The main objectives of this policy are:

- To prevent abuse;
- To protect students;
- To provide appropriate support to students and staff;
- To work with parents, guardians and carers to ensure appropriate communications and actions are undertaken. Where necessary, referring any concerns to Children's Social Care or other agencies for further investigation so that children at risk can be identified quickly. This procedure is intended to protect children from abuse. In the event of the college referring a concern to Children's Social Care it is not accusing parents or other individuals of abuse, but requesting that further investigation takes place to establish whether a child is at risk;
- To provide clear direction to staff and others about expected behaviour in managing and dealing with child protection issues and concerns;
- To resolve child protection concerns and incidents in a professional and sensitive manner.

1.5 PRINCIPLES

Where the Governing Body provides services or activities directly under the supervision or management of college staff, the colleges' arrangements for safeguarding and child protection will apply. Where another body provides services or activities separately, the Governing Body must seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place to safeguard and protect children and there are arrangements to liaise with the college on these matters where appropriate.

The college adopts an open and accepting attitude towards children as part of its responsibility for pastoral care. Staff hope that children and their parents, guardians and carers will feel free to talk about any concerns and will see college as a safe place when there are difficulties. Children's worries and fears will be taken seriously and children are encouraged to seek help from members of staff.

The college:

- Maintains an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to;
- Ensures that children know there are adults in their College whom they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty;
- Includes in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for PSHE/Citizenship which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse, and which will help them develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, including the importance of e-safety in an increasingly digital world;
- Ensures every effort is made to establish effective working relationships with parents, guardians, carers and colleagues from other agencies;
- Ensures all staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns;

- Operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers who are to work with children, including Disclosure and Barring Service and Barred List checks, and maintain a single, central record of these checks. Additional checks include scrutinizing applicants, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. The college follows statutory guidance in particular, the Department of Education's 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' (January 2007). All appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone involved who is likely to be perceived by the children as a safe and trustworthy adult including, for example, volunteers and staff employed by contractors.

Terminology:

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the college, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

DSL refers to the designated safeguarding lead at the school / **LSO** refers to the lead safeguarding officer of the Trust

Child includes everyone under the age of 18.

Parent, guardians and carers refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026), and the Governance Handbook. We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Part 3 of the schedule to the Education (Independent College Standards) Regulations 2014, which places a duty on academies and independent colleges to safeguard and promote the welfare of students at the college
- The Children Act 1989 (2004), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B (11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- Statutory guidance on FGM, which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM May 2016 to reflect the publication of statutory guidance on FGM; in February 2019 with some minor amendments
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains colleges' duties under the Counter-Terrorism

and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism

- The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 (referred to in this policy as the “2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations”) and Childcare Act 2006, which set out who is disqualified from working with children
- This policy also meets requirements relating to the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2025).
- This policy has been written with reference to the London Child Protection Procedures (5th Edition 2017, Updated April 2024). <https://www.londoncp.co.uk/index.html>
- This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association Children and Families Act (2014)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice (January 2015)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Groups Act (2006)
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)
- Information sharing - Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents, guardians and carers (July 2018)
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2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Key Safeguarding Personnel – Rosedale College

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) for child protection is: **BELISHIA VISSER (Principal)**

Email: bvisser@trhat.org

The deputy designated lead(s) is/are:

AISHA PATEL – apatel@trhat.org

DUNCAN VISSER – dvisser@trhat.org

JAYNE JAMES – jjames@trhat.org

MATTHEW HOBDAV – mhobday@trhat.org

The designated lead for looked after children:

MATTHEW HOBDAV – mhobday@trhat.org

The Lead Safeguarding Officer for the Trust is:

CARLA JORSLING-THOMAS – cjorsling-thomas@trhat.org

The nominated child protection governor is:

DEBRA SMITH – dsmith@trhat.org

2.1 THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL)

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) in the college. The DSL has the status and authority within the college to carry out the duties of the post, which include:

1. ensuring the child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately by staff, reviewed annually and publicly available
2. advising and supporting staff on child protection and safeguarding matters

3. encouraging a culture of listening to children
4. ensuring the voice of the child is reflected within safeguarding assessments, planning and decision-making;
5. promoting safeguarding culture across the college and wider Trust;
6. ensuring safeguarding practice reflects current statutory guidance and emerging safeguarding risks.
7. managing safeguarding referrals to children's social care, the police, or other agencies
8. liaising with the LSO regarding ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations and be aware of the requirement for children to have an appropriate adult in relevant circumstances.
9. taking part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings
10. liaising with the LSO and the designated officer(s) at the local authority where allegations are made against staff
11. transferring the child protection file to a child's new school / college
12. undergoing training and receiving regular updates to maintain the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role, including Prevent awareness training.

2.2. THE DEPUTY DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD(S):

Is/are trained to the same level as the DSL and supports the DSL with safeguarding matters as appropriate. In the absence of the DSL, the deputy DSL carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of students. In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL, the deputy will assume the functions above.

3. GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES AND STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

Good practice includes:

1. treating all students with respect
2. setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
3. involving students in decisions that affect them
4. encouraging positive, respectful and safe behaviour among students
5. being a good listener
6. being alert to changes in students' behaviour and to signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation
7. recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
8. reading and understanding the college's child protection policy, staff behaviour policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues
9. being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some students lead to an increased risk of abuse
10. referring all concerns about a student's safety and welfare to the DSL, or, if necessary, directly to police or children's social care

4. PROFESSIONAL CURIOSITY AND PROFESSIONAL CHALLENGE

All staff are expected to exercise professional curiosity when considering the welfare and safety of children.

Professional curiosity involves respectfully exploring and questioning information, understanding a child's lived experience and considering whether further information or action is required.

Staff should remain alert to:

- inconsistent information;
- disguised compliance;
- minimisation of concerns;
- changes in presentation or behaviour;
- barriers preventing engagement with support services;
- indicators of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Where concerns remain unresolved, staff should utilise escalation procedures and seek guidance from safeguarding leaders and relevant agencies where appropriate.

5. ABUSE OF POSITION OF TRUST

All college staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards students is unacceptable and that their conduct towards students must be beyond reproach.

Staff understand that under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the college staff and a student under 18 may be a criminal offence. [The Trust's code of conduct sets out our expectations of staff and is signed by all staff members.]

6. CHILDREN WHO MAY BE PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur. To ensure that our students receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- living away from home or in temporary accommodation;
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations;
- living transient lifestyles;
- affected by parental substance misuse, domestic violence or parental mental health needs;
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying;
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality;
- do not have English as a first language;
- at risk of sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, forced marriage or being drawn into extremism;
- Young carers whose caring responsibilities may affect their educational attainment, emotional wellbeing, attendance and development;
- children who are persistently absent or severely absent from education;
- children living within kinship care arrangements;
- children with medical conditions;
- pregnant students and teenage parents.

This list provides examples of additionally vulnerable groups and is not exhaustive. Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information and resources in community languages and accessible formats for children with communication needs.

7. CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children, which can include:

1. assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
2. the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
3. communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Staff are trained to manage these additional barriers to ensure this group of children are appropriately safeguarded.

8. CHILDREN WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Children with medical conditions may face additional safeguarding vulnerabilities due to increased dependency upon adults, healthcare needs, communication barriers, emotional wellbeing concerns or barriers to education.

Staff will work collaboratively with families, health professionals and other agencies to ensure that children with medical conditions are safe, supported and able to achieve positive outcomes.

9. CHILDREN WHO ARE YOUNG CARERS

A young carer is a child under the age of 18 who helps to care for a family member who may have a disability, illness, mental health condition or substance misuse issue. Young carers may experience additional barriers to learning, attendance, wellbeing and achievement. Staff should be alert to indicators that a child may have caring responsibilities, including:

- persistent tiredness;
- lateness or absence;
- anxiety or emotional distress;
- social isolation;
- difficulties completing homework.

The college will work collaboratively with families and relevant agencies to ensure young carers receive appropriate support.

10. CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION, PERSISTENT ABSENCE AND SEVERE ABSENCE

The DfE's Working together to improve college attendance is statutory guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-college-attendance>)

Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. A child being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions, and a child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation, child criminal exploitation or mental health problems. The DSL will monitor unauthorised absence and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority, particularly where children are absent or go missing on repeated occasions and/or are missing for periods during the college day. Staff must also be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female

genital mutilation and forced marriage.

10.1 ATTENDANCE AND SAFEGUARDING

The college recognises that attendance is an important safeguarding issue. Children who are persistently absent, severely absent or repeatedly missing education may be at increased risk of:

- abuse and neglect;
- child criminal exploitation;
- child sexual exploitation;
- serious violence;
- radicalisation;
- mental health difficulties;
- domestic abuse;
- harmful online activity.

Attendance information will be reviewed alongside safeguarding information to identify vulnerable students and emerging concerns.

Where attendance concerns indicate actual or potential harm, safeguarding procedures will take precedence and referrals will be made where necessary.

10.2 ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION

The college recognises that parents, guardians and carers have the right to electively home educate their children.

Prior to a student being removed from roll for Elective Home Education the college will:

- review safeguarding information;
- consider attendance patterns;
- consult with the DSL;
- liaise with the local authority where appropriate;
- ensure safeguarding information is shared securely.

Where concerns exist regarding abuse, neglect, exploitation or coercion, safeguarding partners will be consulted as appropriate.

11. MENTAL HEALTH

Colleges have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their students. All staff are aware that mental health problems can be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff are also aware that where children have suffered adverse childhood experiences those experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

Colleges and colleges play an important role in identifying children who may require mental health support. Early identification can prevent concerns from escalating and can improve outcomes for children. Staff should be alert to indicators including:

- persistent absence;
- changes in behaviour;
- withdrawal from friendships;
- self-harm;
- anxiety;
- emotional dysregulation;
- significant changes in presentation or wellbeing.

Where concerns are identified, staff should report them to the DSL and record them in accordance with college procedures so that appropriate support and intervention can be considered. Where staff are concerned that a child's mental health is also a safeguarding concern, they will discuss it with the DSL or the LSO.

11.1 SELF-HARM AND SUICIDAL IDEATION

Self-harm and suicidal thoughts may indicate that a child is experiencing significant emotional distress or may be at risk of harm.

Any concerns relating to:

- self-harm;
- suicidal thoughts;
- suicide plans;
- suicide attempts;
- significant emotional distress

must be reported immediately to the DSL and managed as safeguarding concerns.

Appropriate risk assessments, parental engagement and referrals to specialist services will be undertaken where necessary.

12. COMMUNITY-BASED EARLY HELP

The college recognises that children benefit from receiving the right help at the right time. Staff should be alert to emerging concerns and vulnerabilities and should not wait until children experience significant harm before seeking support.

Early help may be appropriate where a child:

- is experiencing mental health difficulties;
- has poor attendance or is frequently absent;
- is affected by parental conflict, substance misuse or domestic abuse;
- is a young carer;
- is at risk of exploitation;
- is vulnerable to online harms;
- is experiencing difficulties in education, health or family life.

Concerns should be discussed with the DSL who will consider appropriate early help intervention and

multi-agency support in liaison with the LSO.

The college recognises the evolving Family Help framework and will work collaboratively with safeguarding partners and Family Help services to ensure children and families receive support at the earliest opportunity.

The college is committed to early identification, intervention and coordinated multi-agency working to improve outcomes for children and families.

13. CHILDREN WHO MAY BE LGBT OR QUESTIONING THEIR GENDER

The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. Unfortunately, children who are LGBT, or are perceived to be LGBT, can be targeted by other children. The risk to these children can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. Our staff endeavour to reduce the barriers and provide a safe space for those children to speak out or share their concerns with them. We have Senior Mental Health Leads who are available as the identified adult to support LGBT children. Staff recognise that children who are LGBT, perceived to be LGBT, or who may be questioning their gender can face additional vulnerabilities, including bullying, harassment, isolation and discrimination.

Staff should maintain a safeguarding approach that is child-centred and responsive to a child's needs, circumstances and welfare. Any concerns should be considered on a case-by-case basis with the child's best interests at the centre of decision making.

14. WHISTLEBLOWING, IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT A COLLEAGUE

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a student are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount.

The Trust's whistleblowing policy (available on the website) enables staff to raise concerns or allegations, initially in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place. All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues should be reported to the Principal and they will liaise with the LSO. Complaints about the Principal should be reported to the LSO who will liaise with the governing body.

Staff may also report their concerns directly to children's social care, the LADO or the police if they believe direct reporting is necessary to secure action.

15. SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS AND ALLEGATIONS MADE ABOUT STAFF, SUPPLY STAFF, CONTRACTORS AND VOLUNTEERS

When a safeguarding concern or allegation is made about a member of staff, including supply staff, contractors or volunteers, or relates to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using our premises for the purposes of running activities for children our set procedures must be followed. The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff and managing low level concerns raised about staff can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2024) and in the colleges safeguarding and child protection policy. Safeguarding concerns or allegations made about staff who no longer work at the college, or historical allegations will be reported to the police.

16. STAFF AND GOVERNOR/TRUSTEE TRAINING

It is important that all staff receive training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation, online safety (including an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities for filtering and monitoring) and to know what to do if they have a concern.

On behalf of the Rosedale Hewens Academy Trust, the Lead Safeguarding Officer will ensure that all staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated and in line with advice from all Safeguarding Partners. All staff receive a full level 1 Safeguarding Training, a briefing during their induction, which includes the college's child protection policy and staff code of conduct, reporting and recording arrangements, and details for the DSL.

All staff will also receive safeguarding and child protection updates via email, e-bulletins, website access and staff meetings throughout the year.

Our governors/trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety and an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities for filtering and monitoring) at induction which equips them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that there is an effective whole Trust approach to safeguarding. This training is updated annually.

Our safeguarding governor/trustee receives additional training to empower them to support and challenge the Designated Safeguarding Lead and support the delivery of high-quality safeguarding practices across the trust, delivered by our LSO.

17. SAFER RECRUITMENT

Our college complies with the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2026) and the local safeguarding partner arrangements by carrying out the required checks and verifying the applicant's identity, qualifications and work history. At least one member of each recruitment panel will have attended safer recruitment training. All relevant staff (involved in early years settings and/or before or after college care for children under eight) are made aware of the disqualification from childcare legislation and their obligations to disclose relevant information to the college obtains written confirmation from supply agencies or third-party organisations that supply staff or other individuals who may work in the college have been appropriately checked and are suitable to work with children.

Trainee teachers will be checked either by the college or by the training provider, from whom written confirmation will be obtained confirming their suitability to work with children. The Trust maintains a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken in each of our colleges.

17.1. VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers, including governors will undergo checks appropriate with their work in the college, their contact with students and the supervision provided to them. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised.

17.2. CONTRACTORS

The college checks the identity of all contractors working on site and requests DBS with barred list checks

where required by statutory guidance. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised during the college day.

17.3 ONLINE SEARCHES OF SHORTLISTED CANDIDATES

In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, online searches may be completed as part of the recruitment process for shortlisted candidates. The purpose of the search is to identify any incidents or issues that have happened and are publicly available online which the college may wish to explore with the applicant during interview. Online searches will be conducted fairly, consistently and in accordance with data protection legislation. Information that is protected by equality legislation will not form the basis of recruitment decisions.

18. SITE SECURITY

Visitors to the college, including contractors, are asked to sign in and are given a badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. Parents, guardians and carers who are simply delivering or collecting their children do not need to sign in. All visitors are expected to observe the college's safeguarding and health and safety regulations. The Principal will exercise professional judgement in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised while on site.

19. EXTENDED COLLEGE AND OFF-SITE ARRANGEMENTS

All extended and off-site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements. Where extended college activities are provided by and managed by the college, our own child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site on behalf of our college, we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures. When our students attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work-related activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

20. STAFF/STUDENT ONLINE RELATIONSHIPS

The college provides advice to staff regarding their personal online activity and has strict rules regarding online contact and electronic communication with students. Staff found to be in breach of these rules may be subject to disciplinary action or child protection investigation.

21. CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

Where it is believed that a child is suffering from, or is at risk of, significant harm, we will follow the procedures set out in the document produced by the Safeguarding Partnerships of the London Borough of Hillingdon.

21.1. RECOGNISING ABUSE

To ensure that our students are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, for example by leaving a small child home alone. Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other children and young people. Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2026) refers to four categories of abuse. These are set out in Appendix 1, along with

indicators of abuse.

21.2. BULLYING

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause anxiety and distress. All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying should be reported and will be managed through our tackling-bullying procedures which can be accessed within the Anti-Bullying Policy.

21.3. TAKING ACTION

Any child, in any family in any college could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of *“it could happen here”*. Key points for staff to remember for acting are:

- in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child (including calling 999)
- report your concern as soon as possible to the DSL, definitely by the end of the day
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a cause for concern entry on CPOMS
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed

21.4 IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT A STUDENT’S WELFARE

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a student may be at risk. The student’s behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical signs may have been noticed. In these circumstances, staff will try to give the student the opportunity to talk and ask if they are OK or if they can help in any way.

Staff should use CPOMS to record these early concerns. If the student does reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below.

Following an initial conversation with the student, if the member of staff has concerns, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL **AND** log on CPOMS. Staff are aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful.

Children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or are being threatened, which could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This will not prevent our staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to our DSL and logging on CPOMS if they have concerns about a child.

21.5 IF A STUDENT DISCLOSES TO YOU

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual; their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell; they may have lost all trust in adults; or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abusive.

If a student talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, **the staff member will, at the appropriate time, let the student know that in order to help them they must pass the information on to the DSL.** The point at which they tell the student this is a matter for professional judgement. During their

conversations with the students, staff will:

- allow them to speak freely
- remain calm and not overreact
- give reassuring nods or words of comfort – *‘I’m so sorry this has happened’, ‘I want to help’, ‘This isn’t your fault’, ‘You are doing the right thing in talking to me’*
- not be afraid of silences
- **under no circumstances** ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings, or what does the student’s mother think about it
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as *‘I do wish you had told me about this when it started’* may be interpreted by the child to mean that they have done something wrong
- tell the student what will happen next
- report verbally to the DSL even if the child has promised to do it by themselves
- complete a log on CPOMS and inform DSL as soon as possible
- seek support if they feel distressed.

21.6. NOTIFYING PARENTS, GUARDIANS, CARERS

The college will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a student with their parents. This must be handled sensitively, and the DSL will contact the parent, guardian or carer in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

Our focus is the safety and wellbeing of the student. Therefore, if the college believes that notifying parents, guardians or carers could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from the LSO and/or children’s social care and/or the police before parents, guardians or carers are contacted.

22. CONFIDENTIALITY AND SHARING INFORMATION

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality. Staff should only discuss concerns with the DSL, Principal, LSO or chair of governors (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a ‘need-to-know’ basis.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) emphasises that any member of staff can contact children’s social care if they are concerned about a child.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with GDPR processes for retaining confidential information.

Information sharing will take place in a timely and secure manner and where:

- it is necessary and proportionate to do so; and
- the information to be shared is relevant, adequate and accurate.

Information sharing decisions will be recorded, whether or not the decision is taken to share. Welfare concerns and other written information will be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Child protection information will be stored separately from the student’s college file and the college file will be ‘tagged’ to indicate that separate information is held.

The DSL will normally obtain consent from the student and/or parents, guardians or carers to share sensitive information within the college or with outside agencies. Where there is good reason to do so, the DSL may share information without consent, and will record the reason for not obtaining consent.

If any member of staff receives a request from a student, parent, guardian or carer to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the data protection officer [or DSL].

The UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 does not prevent college staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

23. REFERRAL TO CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

The DSL will make a referral to children's social care if it is believed that a student is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The student (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents, guardians or carers will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

Any member of staff may make a direct referral to children's social care if they genuinely believe independent action is necessary to protect a child.

24. REPORTING DIRECTLY TO CHILD PROTECTION AGENCIES

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care, police or the NSPCC if:

1. the situation is an emergency and the designated safeguarding lead, their deputy, and the chair of governors are all unavailable
2. they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the student's safety
3. for any other reason they make a judgement that direct referral is in the best interests of the child.

25. CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the college's anti-bullying procedures where necessary. However, all staff recognise that children can abuse other children and young people and should be clear about the college's policy and procedures regarding child-on-child abuse. Staff will maintain an attitude of '*it could happen here*'. All child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Child-on-child abuse can take many forms, including:

- physical abuse such as shaking, biting, hitting, kicking or hair pulling
- bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
- sexual violence and sexual harassment such as inappropriate sexual language, touching, sexual assault or rape causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery) including pressuring another person to send sexual imagery or video content
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers (also known as teenage relationship abuse) - such as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual or emotional abuse

- upskirting – taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission for the purposes of sexual gratification or to cause humiliation, distress or alarm
- initiation/hazing - used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as sports team or college groups by subjecting them to a series of potentially humiliating, embarrassing or abusing trials which promote a bond between them
- prejudiced behaviour - a range of behaviours which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless or excluded and which relates to prejudices around belonging, identity and equality, in particular prejudices linked to disabilities, special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender and sexual identity.

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as ‘banter’, ‘just having a laugh’, ‘part of growing up’ or ‘boys being boys. Tolerance of such behaviours can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children. Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with child-on-child abuse, for example girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence. However, all staff recognise that it is more likely that girls will be victims of child-on-child abuse and boys are more likely to be the perpetrators.

Staff must recognise that that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place but simply not being reported.

25.1 MINIMISING RISK

At our college, we take the following steps to minimise or prevent the risk of child-on-child abuse;

- An open and honest environment where young people feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them.
- Assemblies are used to provide a moral framework outlining acceptable behaviour and stressing the effects of bullying.
- RE and PSHE are used to reinforce the message through stories, role play, current affairs and other suitable activities.
- Staff will endeavour always to create surroundings where everyone feels confident and at ease in college.
- We will ensure that the college is well supervised, especially in areas where children might be vulnerable.

25.2 MANAGING ALLEGATIONS OF CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE

Staff should pass all allegations of child-on-child abuse to the DSL immediately. They will then be investigated and dealt with as follows.

4. **Information gathering** – children, staff and witnesses will be spoken with as soon as possible to gather relevant information quickly to understand the situation and assess whether there was intent to cause harm.
5. **Decide on action** – if it is believed that any young person is at risk of significant harm, a referral will be made to children’s social care. The DSL will then work with children’s social care to decide on next steps, which may include contacting the police.
6. **Inform parents** - as with other concerns of abuse, the college will normally seek to discuss concerns about a student with parents, guardians and/or carers. Our focus is the safety and wellbeing of the student and so if the college believes that notifying parents, guardians and/or carers could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children’s social care and/or the police before parents, guardians or carers are contacted.

7. **Record** – all concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, will be recorded in writing, kept confidential and stored securely on the college's child protection and safeguarding system CPOMs. The record will include a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern, details of how the concern was followed up and resolved, and a note of the action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

Children can report allegations or concerns of child-on-child abuse to any staff member and that staff member will pass on the allegations to the DSL in accordance with this policy. Where allegations of sexual violence or sexual harassment are made, the college will act in accordance with the guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026).

25.3 SUPPORTING THOSE INVOLVED

Our staff reassure all victims 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. Our staff will never give a victim the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment, nor will victims be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Abuse that occurs online or outside of college will not be downplayed and will be treated equally seriously. We recognise that sexual violence and sexual harassment occurring online can introduce a number of complex factors. Amongst other things, this can include widespread abuse or harm across a number of social media platforms that leads to repeat victimisation.

The support required for the student who has been harmed will depend on their circumstance and the nature of the abuse. Support could include counselling, mentoring, the support of family and friends and/or support with improving peer relationships or some restorative justice work.

Support may also be required for the student that harmed. We will seek to understand why the student acted in this way and consider what support may be required to help the student and/or change behaviours. Once those needs have been met, the consequences for the harm caused or intended will be addressed.

26. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS (VAWG) AND MISOGYNY

The college recognises that harmful attitudes and behaviours linked to violence against women and girls may emerge during childhood and adolescence.

This may include:

- misogynistic language;
- sexual harassment;
- image-based abuse;
- online abuse;
- coercive behaviour;
- sexual violence;
- harmful gender stereotypes.

The college adopts a zero-tolerance approach towards these behaviours and promotes respectful relationships, equality and positive behaviour through the curriculum and wider college culture.

27. SERIOUS VIOLENCE

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

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

28. 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 of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. This power imbalance can be due to a range of factors, including age, gender sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status and access to economic or other resources. The college includes the risks of criminal exploitation and sexual exploitation in the PSHE and SRE curriculum. A common feature of such exploitation is that the child often doesn't recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and doesn't see themselves as a victim. The child may initially resent what they perceive as interference by staff, but staff must act on their concerns, as they would for any other type of abuse.

28.1 CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse which may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include 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.

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship. Children and young people are often unwittingly drawn into sexual exploitation through the offer of friendship and care, gifts, drugs and alcohol, and sometimes accommodation. Sexual exploitation is a serious crime and can have a long-lasting adverse impact on a child's physical and emotional health. It may also be linked to child trafficking.

All staff are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation which, as well as including the indicators set out under CCE below, can also include having older boyfriends and suffering sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant. All concerns are reported immediately to the DSL AND logged on CPOMs.

28.2 CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION (CCE)

CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing, being forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others. Children can become trapped by this 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 carry a knife for a sense of protection. Children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to. It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys and both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

All staff are made aware of indicators that children are at risk from or experiencing criminal exploitation.

The main indicator can include children who:

- appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- associate with other young people involved in exploitation
- suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- misuse drugs or alcohol
- go missing for periods of time or regular return home late
- regularly miss college or education or do not take part in education.

28.3 COUNTY LINES

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs around the country using dedicated mobile phone lines. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money, with offenders often using coercion, intimidation, violence and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

County lines exploitation can occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child. This power imbalance can be due to the same range of factors set out under CCE, above.

Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations, including schools and colleges. Indicators of county lines include those indicators set out under CCE, above, with the main indicator being missing episodes from home and/or school / college.

Additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited include children who:

- go missing and are subsequently found in areas away from home
- have been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime)
- go missing for periods of time or regular return home late
- regularly miss college or education or do not take part in education
- 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 with which they have no connection or in a hotel room where there is drug activity
- owe a 'debt bond' to their exploiters
- have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.

29. ONLINE SAFETY

The Trust recognises that safeguarding responsibilities extend beyond the physical environment and include children's use of digital technology, internet-enabled devices, social media platforms, online gaming environments and emerging technologies.

As colleges increasingly work online, it is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate material. The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues, such as child sexual exploitation, radicalisation and sexual predation. We have ensured that appropriate and effective filters and monitoring systems are in place to block harmful and inappropriate content by managing the content available to students, who can contact our students and the personal conduct of our students online. We take care to ensure that these systems do not unreasonably impact on teaching and learning, and staff have been identified and assigned suitable roles and responsibilities to manage these systems. We also have effective monitoring strategies in place to meet the safeguarding needs of our students. Our filtering and monitoring systems are reviewed regularly (at least annually) to ensure their effectiveness.

We share with parents, guardians and carers the filtering and monitoring systems we use, so they can understand how we work to keep children safe. We will also inform parents, guardians and carers of what we are asking children to do online, including the sites they need to access, and with whom they will be interacting online. We have also ensured that appropriate level of security protection procedures are in place to safeguard our systems, staff and learners. We review the effectiveness of these procedures periodically to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies.

KCSIE 2026 includes a link to the DfE guidance Generative AI: product safety expectations. This guidance on generative artificial intelligence (AI) explains how filtering and monitoring requirements apply to the use of generative AI in education and supports colleges to use generative AI safely. Online risks may include exposure to misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories and extremist content that may affect a child's wellbeing, safety or vulnerability to radicalisation.

Digital Safeguarding and Digital Resilience

The Trust recognises that online safety extends beyond preventing harm and includes developing children's knowledge, resilience and ability to engage safely, responsibly and respectfully within digital environments.

Children and young people will be supported to:

- understand how to stay safe online;
- recognise harmful, inappropriate and misleading content;
- protect personal information and privacy;
- develop healthy online relationships;
- understand the risks associated with social media, gaming and online communication;
- critically evaluate online content, including AI-generated information;
- recognise misinformation and disinformation;
- know how and where to seek help if they are worried about something they see or experience online.

Online safety education will be embedded throughout the curriculum, including Computing, Relationships Education, RSHE, assemblies, safeguarding programmes and wider personal development opportunities.

Online safety risks can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- **content** - being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation,

disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.

- **contact** - being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
- **conduct** - online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying, and
- **commerce** - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your students, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group
- (<https://apwg.org/>).
- All staff are aware of these risk areas and should report any concerns to the DSL AND log on CPOMs.

Staff should be aware of emerging risks associated with artificial intelligence (AI), including:

- AI-generated images and videos;
- deepfakes;
- image manipulation;
- nudification apps and technologies;
- AI-generated misinformation and disinformation.

Concerns relating to AI-generated abuse, exploitation, sexual harassment or bullying should be treated as safeguarding concerns and reported immediately to the DSL

Partnership with Parents, Guardians and Carers

The Trust recognises that effective online safety requires strong partnership working between colleges, parents, guardians and carers.

Colleges and colleges will support families by:

- sharing online safety information and guidance;
- raising awareness of emerging online risks and trends;
- providing information regarding filtering and monitoring arrangements;
- promoting age-appropriate use of technology and social media;
- signposting families to external support services and online safety resources where appropriate.

Parents, guardians and carers are encouraged to work collaboratively with the Trust in promoting safe, responsible and balanced use of digital technology both within and beyond the college environment.

29.1 EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES, ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND IMAGE-BASED ABUSE

The college recognises that rapid developments in technology continue to create new opportunities and safeguarding risks.

Emerging technologies may include:

- Artificial Intelligence (AI);
- generative AI tools;

- deepfake technologies;
- image manipulation applications;
- nudification applications;
- AI-generated sexual content;
- virtual and augmented reality environments.

These technologies may be used to facilitate:

- bullying and harassment;
- image-based abuse;
- sexual exploitation;
- coercive behaviour;
- reputational harm;
- misinformation and disinformation.

Staff should remain professionally curious regarding emerging technologies and their safeguarding implications. Any concerns relating to AI-generated abuse, exploitation, manipulated imagery, image-based abuse or online harm must be treated as safeguarding concerns, recorded on CPOMS and reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

30. SHARING NUDES AND SEMI NUDES

Sharing photos, videos and live streams online is part of daily life for many children and young people, enabling them to share their experiences, connect with friends and record their lives. Sharing nudes and semi-nudes means the sending or posting online of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams by young people under the age of 18. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums, or done offline between devices via services like Apple's AirDrop.

The term 'nudes' is used as it is most commonly recognised by young people and more appropriately covers all types of image sharing incidents. Alternative terms used by children and young people may include 'dick pics' or 'pics'. Other terms used in education include 'sexting', youth produced sexual imagery' and 'youth involved sexual imagery'.

The motivations for taking and sharing nudes and semi-nudes are not always sexually or criminally motivated. Such images may be created and shared consensually by young people who are in relationships, as well as between those who are not in a relationship. It is also possible for a young person in a consensual relationship to be coerced into sharing an image with their partner.

Incidents may also occur where:

- children and young people find nudes and semi-nudes online and share them claiming to be from a peer
- children and young people digitally manipulate an image of a young person into an existing nude online
- images created or shared are used to abuse peers e.g. by selling images online or obtaining images to share more widely without consent to publicly shame

All incidents involving youth produced sexual imagery will be responded to as follows:

- The incident will be referred to the DSL immediately, logged on CPOMS and the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate staff. If appropriate, there will be subsequent interviews with the young people involved.
- Parents, guardians and carers will be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless

there is good reason to believe that involving parents, guardians and carers would put the young person at risk of harm.

- At any point in the process, if there is a concern a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately in accordance with this policy.
- In some instances, it may be necessary to refer the matter to the police. Once a report is made to the police, the report must be recorded, and the police will investigate. This may include seizure of devices and interviews with the young people involved.

The UK Council for Internet Safety updates its advice on managing incidences of sharing nudes and semi-nudes in December 2020 – [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people \(updated March 2024\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/council-for-internet-safety-updates-its-advice-on-managing-incidences-of-sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes). The college will have regard to this advice when managing these issues.

31. DOMESTIC ABUSE

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduces a legal definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. Domestic abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse, between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. It includes people who have been or are married, are or have been civil partners, have agreed to marry one another or each have or have had a parental relationship in relation to the same child. It can include psychological, physical, sexual, financial, economic and emotional abuse.

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. This means children can also be victims of domestic abuse.

Any child can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in their home life. Experiencing domestic abuse can have a serious emotional and psychological impact on children, and in some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Where police have been called to a domestic violence incident where children are in the household and experienced that incident, the police will inform the LSO who will communicate this to the DSL. This ensures that the college has up to date safeguarding information about the child.

This process is called Operation Encompass. Operation Encompass operates in the majority of police forces across England. It helps police and colleges work together to provide emotional and practical help to children.

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.

All staff are aware of the impact domestic violence can have on a child. If any of our staff are concerned that a child has witnessed domestic abuse, they will report their concerns immediately to the DSL AND log on CPOMs.

32. CHILD ON PARENT VIOLENCE (CPV) OR ADOLESCENT TO PARENT VIOLENCE AND ABUSE (APVA)

The college recognises that children may display abusive behaviour towards parents, guardians, carers or family members.

This may include:

- verbal abuse;
- intimidation;
- threats;
- coercive behaviour;
- controlling behaviour;
- physical aggression.

Where concerns are identified, staff should consider the wider safeguarding context and discuss concerns with the DSL. Appropriate support and referrals will be considered where necessary.

33. HONOUR-BASED ABUSE

‘Honour-based’ abuse (HBA) encompasses 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. All forms of Honour Based Violence (HBV) are abuse.

Abuse committed in the context of preserving ‘honour’ often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. Staff and the DSL are aware of this dynamic and will consider it when deciding what safeguarding action to take.

FGM is the collective name given to a range of procedures involving the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the practice is a criminal offence under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. The practice can cause intense pain and distress and long-term health consequences, including difficulties in childbirth. FGM is carried out on girls of any age, from young babies to older teenagers and adult women, so college staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators. Many such procedures are carried out abroad and staff should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns expressed by female students about going on a long holiday during the summer vacation period.

A forced marriage is a marriage in which a female (and sometimes a male) does not consent to the marriage but is coerced into it. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse.

Forced marriage is illegal. It is also illegal to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial ‘marriages’ as well as legal marriages. Children may be married at a very young age, and well below the age of consent in England. College staff receive training and should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns raised by a student about being taken abroad and not be allowed to return to England.

A forced marriage is not the same as an arranged marriage. In an arranged marriage, which is common in several cultures, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice of whether to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.

34. RADICALISATION AND EXTREMISM

The government defines extremism as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies

associated with terrorist groups.

Some children are at risk of being radicalised: adopting beliefs and engaging in activities which are harmful, criminal or dangerous. Islamic extremism is the most widely publicised form and colleges should also remain alert to the risk of radicalisation into white supremacy extremism.

College staff receive training to help to identify signs of extremism. Opportunities are provided in the curriculum to enable students to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and the college follows the DfE advice Promoting fundamental British Values as part of SMCS (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education) in Colleges (2014). [Advice template \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/312523/Advice-template-publishing.service.gov.uk.pdf)

35. ALTERNATIVE PROVISION

The college remains responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of students placed in alternative provision. Prior to placement, the college will undertake appropriate checks and obtain written confirmation that safeguarding arrangements, safer recruitment procedures and staff suitability checks have been completed. The college will maintain regular contact with the provider and monitor attendance, behaviour, welfare and educational progress. The DSL will ensure safeguarding information is shared appropriately and that any concerns arising within the placement are acted upon immediately. All placements will be reviewed regularly to ensure they continue to meet the child's educational, welfare and safeguarding needs.

36. PRIVATE FOSTERING ARRANGEMENTS

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative, cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16 or aged under 18 if the child is disabled. By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children's services as soon as possible. Where a member of staff becomes aware that a student may be in a private fostering arrangement, they will raise this with the DSL, log on CPOMs and the college should notify the local authority of the circumstances.

37. RELATED SAFEGUARDING PORTFOLIO POLICIES

This policy should be read alongside our other safeguarding policies.

38. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

38.1 LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse or neglect. The college ensures that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after legal status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child. The designated teacher for looked after children and the DSL have details of the child's social worker and the name and contact details of the local authority's virtual head for children in care.

38.2 CHILDREN WHO HAVE A SOCIAL WORKER

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Local authorities will share this information with us, and the DSL will hold and use this information to inform decision about safeguarding and

promoting the child's welfare.

38.3 WORK EXPERIENCE

The college has detailed procedures to safeguard students undertaking work experience, including arrangements for checking people who provide placements and supervise students on work experience which are in accordance with the guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)*.

38.4 CHILDREN STAYING WITH HOST FAMILIES

The college may arrange for students to stay with a host family during a foreign exchange trip or sports tour. Some overseas students may reside with host families during college terms and we will work with the local authority to check that such arrangements are safe and suitable.

It is not possible for colleges to obtain criminal record information from the DBS about adults abroad. Where students stay with families abroad, we will agree with partner schools and colleges a shared understanding of the arrangements in place. Staff will use their professional judgement to satisfy themselves that the arrangements are appropriate to safeguard the students, which will include ensuring students understand who to contact should an emergency occur, or a situation arise which makes them feel uncomfortable. We will also make parents, guardians and carers aware of these arrangements.

The college follows the guidance in Annex E of *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)* to ensure that hosting arrangements are as safe as possible.

38.5 CHILDREN IN KINSHIP CARE

Children living in kinship care arrangements may experience unique challenges and vulnerabilities. Staff should be aware that kinship care can include children living with grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles, family friends or other connected persons.

The college recognises that children in kinship care may require additional pastoral, emotional or safeguarding support. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will work with families, professionals and the Virtual College where appropriate to ensure children receive the support they need to achieve positive outcomes.

39. CPOMS REPORTING AND RECORDING

CPOMS is the means of recording safeguarding concerns about a child; however, it is NOT a substitute for immediately passing on a child protection concern to the DSL. If a member of staff identifies an immediate child protection concern, they must act in accordance with the Child Protection Procedures and alert the DSL immediately about the nature of the concern.

Staff will then log this concern on CPOMS in accordance with training.

Staff will log significant events on CPOMS; this includes, but is not limited to, any information, which may have an impact on the welfare of a child, i.e. parent lost job, parents separated, significant bereavement, parent in prison or a piece of information regarding significant wider family members.

ALL behaviour incidents, SEND information, contacts with parents/carers/guardians, Welfare and First Aid MUST be logged.

Staff will log all 'contact with parent/carer/guardian', particularly if it may affect the welfare of a child, example, parent displaying violent/aggressive/discriminatory behaviour, parent informing college/college of changes in behaviour/child worried about college or social relationships.

There are occasions whereby staff come to know about incidents outside of college either through direct observation or by a third party. This must be recorded as it may have an impact on the welfare of a child e.g. social media issues, parent/carer seen being physically/verbally inappropriate with their child, parent seen using substances/excessive alcohol use, child seen having contact with parent/carer/guardian, which college are aware is unsuitable/explicitly not allowed.

Depending on the nature of the incident, this may need to be considered in the context of the current knowledge of the family (i.e. if the child/ren are on a child protection plan).

Telephone calls with agencies, social workers and parents/carers/guardians must be recorded on CPOMS. The CPOMS record must be treated as a chronology of events and must contain any information pertaining to the child and family. Records should contain:

- the concern raised;
- actions taken;
- decisions made;
- rationale for decisions;
- outcomes achieved.

Additional Recording Expectations

Records must clearly demonstrate:

- the voice of the child;
- wishes and feelings;
- lived experiences;
- assessment of risk;
- professional analysis;
- rationale for decision-making;
- actions taken;
- outcomes achieved.

Safeguarding records should provide a clear chronology demonstrating intervention, review and impact.

40. SAFEGUARDING PARTNERS

The following 3 safeguarding partners are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education (and defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). They will make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:

- The local authority (LA)
- Integrated Care Boards (ICBs)
- The chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

The designated safeguarding lead and any deputies should liaise with the 3 safeguarding partners and work with other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026). 'NPCC - When to call the police' should help designated safeguarding leads understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do.

41. KEY CONTACTS

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Hannah Ives Tel: 01895 250975 Mob: 07919115892

Email: hives@hilling.gov.uk

Child Protection Adviser to Colleges and Deputy LADO Nicole Diamond Tel: 01895 250010

Mobile: 07943097366 Email: ndiamond@hillingdon.gov.uk

Prevent Lead and Stronger Communities Manager Fiona Gibbs Email: fgibbs@hillingdon.gov.uk

Axis Email: Axis@hillingdon.gov.uk / 01895277 177

42. USEFUL CONTACTS

Stronger Families Hub (MASH): 01895 556006 strongerfamilieshub@hillingdon.gov.uk

NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline: 0800 028 0285 help@nspcc.org.uk

Channel Helpline (Prevent): 0207 340 7264 counter.extremism@education.gov.uk

National Domestic Abuse 24 hour Helpline: 0808 2000 247

43. THE ROLE OF THE LEAD SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

- Referring cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies.
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise within a School / College when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
- Liaise with the Principal of the College concerned to inform them of any issues and ongoing investigations and ensure there is always cover for this role.
- Attends regular and appropriate child protection training.
- Recognises how to identify signs of abuse and when it is appropriate to make a referral.
- Ensures a working knowledge of how Safeguarding Partners operate, the conduct of a child protection case conference, and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
- Ensures each member of staff has access to and understand the child protection policy, in particular new or part-time staff who may work with different educational establishments.
- Ensures all staff have induction training covering child protection and are able to recognise and report any concerns immediately they arise.
- Will keep detailed, accurate and secure written records of referrals/concerns.
- Maintain safeguarding knowledge and skills through regular training, safeguarding updates, multi-agency learning and continuous professional development in accordance with statutory guidance and safeguarding partnership expectations.
- Ensures the Trust's child protection policy is implemented and embedded in each School and College within the Trust
- Ensures the Trust's child protection policy is updated and reviewed annually and works with the Academy Board regarding this.
- Ensures parents, guardians and carers see copies of the child protection policy which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made and the role of each College in this process to avoid conflict later.

- Where children leave a college or college, ensure their child protection file is copied / transferred for the new establishment as soon as possible, but transferred separately from main student file.

44. THE ROLE OF THE ACADEMY BOARD

The Academy Board receives regular assurance regarding safeguarding culture, student voice, attendance, vulnerable groups, safeguarding compliance and the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements across the Trust.

- The Academy Board receives regular safeguarding assurance reports from the Lead Safeguarding Officer, Executive Leaders and Designated Safeguarding Leads, enabling governors and trustees to maintain effective oversight of safeguarding arrangements and to provide appropriate challenge and support to college leaders.
- The Academy Board reviews attendance, persistent absence and severe absence data on a regular basis, ensuring that attendance is understood and monitored as a safeguarding indicator and that vulnerable students are identified and supported through appropriate intervention and multi-agency working where necessary.
- The Academy Board scrutinises safeguarding, child protection and welfare data, including trends, patterns, emerging risks, referrals, child protection activity and contextual safeguarding concerns, to ensure that safeguarding arrangements are effective and responsive to the changing needs of children and families.
- The Academy Board monitors child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment, sexual violence, bullying, discriminatory incidents and harmful behaviours to ensure that colleges maintain a culture of safety, respect, inclusion and accountability, and that concerns are addressed promptly and effectively.
- The Academy Board receives regular information regarding Family Help, Early Help, Child in Need and Child Protection activity to ensure children and families receive appropriate support at the earliest opportunity and that safeguarding interventions are achieving positive outcomes.
- The Academy Board monitors online safety incidents, emerging digital risks, cyber safeguarding concerns and the effectiveness of online safety education, ensuring that students are protected from inappropriate, harmful or illegal content and online exploitation.
- The Academy Board receives assurance that filtering and monitoring systems remain effective, proportionate and compliant with statutory requirements and ensures that formal reviews of filtering and monitoring arrangements are completed and documented at least annually.
- The Academy Board monitors compliance with safer recruitment requirements, ensuring that robust recruitment, selection, vetting and induction procedures are consistently applied across the Trust and that all statutory safeguarding checks are completed and recorded appropriately.
- The Academy Board reviews safeguarding training compliance across the Trust to ensure that all staff, governors, trustees, volunteers and contractors receive appropriate safeguarding, child protection and online safety training in accordance with statutory guidance and local safeguarding partnership expectations.
- The Academy Board receives assurance regarding safeguarding audits, reviews, quality assurance activities and compliance monitoring undertaken across Trust schools and colleges and ensures that identified actions, recommendations and improvement priorities are implemented, monitored and evaluated effectively.

- The Academy Board actively promotes a culture of safeguarding, professional curiosity and continuous improvement and seeks assurance that the voice of the child, early identification, timely intervention and multi-agency working remain central to safeguarding practice across all schools and colleges within the Trust.
- The Academy Board ensures that safeguarding remains a key strategic priority across the Trust and that safeguarding practice reflects current legislation, statutory guidance, local safeguarding arrangements, emerging risks and national safeguarding developments, including Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and Working Together to Safeguard Children.

The Academy Board will provide effective challenge and support to ensure safeguarding remains a strategic priority across the Trust.

Reviewed by:

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APPENDIX ONE

A) INDICATORS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child (this used to be called Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).

Emotional abuse

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

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, 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.

Indicators of abuse

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons, it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead and log on CPOMs.

It is the responsibility of staff to report their concerns. It is not their responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

A child who is being abused, neglected or exploited may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- be concerned about changing for PE or swimming
- look unkempt and uncared for
- change their eating habits
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- appear fearful
- be reckless with their own or other's safety
- self-harm
- frequently miss college, arrive late or leave the college for part of the day
- show signs of not wanting to go home
- display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- challenge authority
- become disinterested in their college work
- be constantly tired or preoccupied
- be wary of physical contact
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol
- display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age
- acquire gifts such as money or a mobile phone from new 'friends'.

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DSL to decide how to proceed.

APPENDIX TWO

B) Professional Curiosity

Professional curiosity is an essential safeguarding skill and involves actively seeking to understand a child's lived experience, asking questions, exploring concerns and respectfully challenging information where safeguarding risks may not be immediately apparent.

Staff should remain alert to:

- disguised compliance;
- inconsistent explanations;
- unexplained changes in behaviour;
- barriers to engagement;
- indicators of neglect, abuse or exploitation.

Professional curiosity should inform all safeguarding decision-making and support the early identification of risk.

C) Abuse, neglect and exploitation

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

All college and college 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, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation.

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.