



**BIRKENHEAD SIXTH FORM COLLEGE**

**SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND  
PROCEDURES**

## Document Revision Record

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## Introduction

At Birkenhead Sixth Form College, we are committed to safeguarding children and young people and we expect everyone who works in our College to share this commitment. Adults in our College take all welfare concerns seriously and encourage children and young people to talk to us about anything that worries them.

We will always act in the best interest of the child. Birkenhead Sixth Form College recognises that young people and vulnerable adults have a fundamental right to be protected from harm and exploitation and students cannot learn effectively unless they feel safe. The College is committed to ensuring that best practice is adopted when working with all young people and vulnerable adults, offering them support and protection and accepts that it has a legal and moral responsibility to implement procedures, to provide a duty of care to young people, to safeguard their well-being and to protect them from abuse.

The policy applies to all staff, Governors and others who work in direct contact with learners in the College. Abuse may take place both outside and inside of the College setting. Everyone who is part of the College community is responsible for safeguarding, promoting and protecting the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults.

At Birkenhead Sixth Form College, students are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, through various teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.

The Safeguarding Policy sets out a framework that informs procedures related to the College's legal obligation to protect young people and vulnerable adults who are suffering forms of abuse as defined in the Children's Act 1989 and the Protection of Vulnerable Adults Scheme 2004. The policy also includes statutory guidance: Working together to Safeguard Children, July 2018 and the Government's Prevent Agenda. The policy has also been reviewed in light of the latest guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020).

The development and implementation of the policy is overseen by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The College has appointed a Governor and a senior member of staff as Designated Safeguarding Lead with deputy support to cover in periods of absence. Information posters are displayed around the College explaining the College's commitment to creating and maintaining a safe learning and working environment, and the procedures to follow in the event of any concerns or worries about safeguarding.

### **Safeguarding Team:**

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Vice Principal

Safeguarding Officers:

- Director of Learning Support and Safeguarding
- Human Resources Manager
- Designated Mental Health Lead
- Safeguarding Administrator
- Safeguarding Governor

## **1. Policy Statement**

Birkenhead Sixth Form College:

- Recognises that children and vulnerable adults have a fundamental right to be protected from harm and exploitation and students cannot learn effectively unless they feel safe.
- Is committed to ensuring that best practice is adopted when working with all children, young people and vulnerable adults, offering them support and protection and accepts that it has a legal and moral responsibility to implement procedures, to provide a duty of care to young people, to safeguard their well-being and to protect them from abuse.
- Will provide an environment which promotes self-confidence, a feeling of worth and the knowledge that students' concerns are listened to and acted upon.
- Local Governing Body (LGB) members, staff and volunteers at the College understand the importance of working in partnership with students, their families/carers and other agencies in order to promote and safeguard the welfare of children and young people.
- Is committed to following the WSCP (Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership) guidance and inter-agency procedures with regard to safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Will identify designated personnel to take responsibility, oversee and monitor safeguarding issues.

## **2. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Enable staff and volunteers to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.
- Afford protection to students.
- Promote a culture which makes the College a safe place to learn.

## **3. Aims**

- To keep students safe from harm or potential harm.
- The aim is for every student, whatever their background or their circumstances, to have the support they need to:
  - Be healthy
  - Stay safe
  - Enjoy and achieve
  - Make a positive contribution
  - Achieve economic well-being

- To raise awareness of all staff of the importance of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and their responsibilities for identifying and reporting actual or suspected abuse.
- To ensure that all students know that the College takes the safeguarding agenda very seriously and will follow the appropriate procedures for identifying and reporting abuse and for dealing with allegations against staff.
- To ensure that parents/carers/guardians are clear about the value the College places on safeguarding.
- To promote effective liaison with other agencies in order to work together for the protection of all students.
- To support students' learning in ways which will ensure they feel safe and confident.
- To take account of and inform policy in related areas such as bullying, behaviour and e-safety.

There are three main elements to the College's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy:

1. **PREVENTION** (positive and safe environment, careful and vigilant teaching, accessible pastoral care, support to students and good adult role models).
2. **PROTECTION** (agreed procedures are followed, staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection / safeguarding concerns).
3. **SUPPORT** (to students, staff and children who may have been abused or have been affected by the abuse of others).

#### 4. Definitions

**Children and Young People** these terms are interchangeable and refer to children who have not yet reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**Vulnerable Adults** – The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (s59) defines “vulnerable adult” as a person who is aged 18 and over and:

- Receiving social care service
- Receiving health service care
- Living in sheltered accommodation
- Detained in custody or under a probation order
- Requiring assistance in the conduct of his/her affairs
- Receiving a service or participating in an activity targeted at older people, people with disabilities (learning or physical) or with physical or mental health conditions.

This definition can include participants **whose particular circumstances make them vulnerable** for example because they are leaving (or recently left) care, they have inadequate housing or they are being supported to overcome a dependency on drugs or alcohol.

## 5. Scope

**The Policy** applies to all Governors, staff (including designated Senior Postholders as defined in the Instrument and Articles), agency staff and volunteers, contractors, consultants and those working under self-employed arrangements.

They must acknowledge that:

- The young person's welfare is of paramount importance and all young people have the right to be protected from abuse.
- Governors, staff and volunteers will receive child protection training appropriate to their role.
- Young people who are being abused will only tell people they trust and with whom they feel safe and that any member of staff needs to be able to respond appropriately to any young person or vulnerable adult who discloses evidence of abuse.
- It is essential that all staff members' own practice and behaviour puts young people's welfare first and cannot be misconstrued in any way and does not contravene accepted good practice or the College's Staff Code of Practice.

## 6. The Role of the Local Governing Body (LGB) ensures:

- The College has a Safeguarding Policy and procedures in place that are in accordance with WSCP (Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership) guidance and locally agreed inter-agency procedures, and the policy is available to parents on request and is available online.
- The College operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on staff and volunteers who work with children or vulnerable adults.
- The College has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers that comply with guidance from WSCP (Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership) and locally agreed inter-agency procedures.
- A member of the College's senior management team is designated to take lead responsibility for child protection.
- Staff undertake appropriate safeguarding training.
- The Chair of governor is nominated to be responsible for liaising with the WSCB (Wirral Safeguarding Children Board) and / or partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Principal.
- Where services or activities are provided on the College premises by another body, the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding and liaises with the College on these matters, where appropriate.
- The College reviews its policies and procedures annually.

## **Curriculum**

The LGB believes that the curriculum is important in safeguarding and child protection and aims to ensure that curriculum development meets the following objectives:

- Developing self-esteem
- Developing communication skills
- Informing about all aspects of risk
- Developing strategies for self-protection
- Developing a sense of the boundaries between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour in adults and children and young people
- Developing non-abusive behaviour between students and in relationships
- How to respond to and report bullying
- Use of social and emotional aspects of learning to promote well-being.

### **7. The Designated Safeguarding Lead**

It will be the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to:

- Review and monitor the procedures and to seek the advice of WSCP (Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership) and to bring about a change in procedures, if necessary.
- Ensure that this policy is reviewed annually
- Ensure appropriate staff development is in place and all staff have a general awareness of safeguarding children and vulnerable adult protection issues.
- Manage referrals from school staff or any others from outside the school;
- Work with external agencies and professionals on matter of safety and safeguarding;
- Undertake training;
- Raise awareness of safeguarding and child protection amongst the staff and parents; and
- Ensure that child protection information is transferred to the pupil's new school
- Other senior staff are trained to support the Designated Safeguarding Lead in their absence.

### **8. Raising Safeguarding Awareness**

- Safeguarding information is provided for staff as part of their induction. All staff are required to undertake safeguarding training at the commencement of employment and on a three year rolling programme. The training will advise staff of College policy and procedures, how to recognise possible or potential abuse, how to report it and how the College is linked to external safeguarding authorities.
- All staff are regularly briefed on issues relating to safeguarding throughout the academic year.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead ensures that up to date information is displayed in prominent positions around College informing all students, staff and volunteers of the procedures for reporting safeguarding allegations or concerns.
- Student Development Tutors advise new students of the College Safeguarding Policy as part of their induction and tutorial programme and deliver agreed tutorial content throughout the year to promote and support the College's Policy.

## **9. Safer Recruitment and Selection**

The College ensures that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works in the College e.g. volunteers and staff employed by contractors. Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising 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. It also includes undertaking interviews and, where appropriate, undertaking Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) checks.

The College will ensure that:

- A DBS Enhanced Disclosure is obtained for new appointments to the College's workforce.
- All staff have their DBS renewed on a three year rolling programme.
- A single central record detailing a range of checks carried out on its staff is maintained and records demonstrating that staff have completed appropriate safeguarding training for their role.
- All new appointments to the College workforce who have lived outside the UK are subject to additional checks as appropriate.
- Supply staff have undergone the necessary safeguarding checks.
- Identity checks are carried out on all persons appointed.

Whilst in employment, staff must also notify the HR Manager immediately if they are arrested, charged with, convicted of or cautioned in relation to any criminal offence. Failure to do so may lead to disciplinary action in accordance with the College's Disciplinary Procedure.

Any arrests, convictions or cautions will be reviewed by the College and the employee and may lead to disciplinary action in accordance with the College's Disciplinary Procedure, up to and including dismissal without notice, depending on the circumstances of the offence.

As far as possible all information will be treated confidentially but may be discussed with the Line Manager, the Vice Principal with responsibility for HR and the Principal and relevant authorities as appropriate.

## **10. Partnership with Parents**

The College shares a purpose with parents/guardians/carers to keep children safe from harm and to have their welfare promoted and makes this statement in its Prospectus.

The College is committed to:

- working with parents positively, openly and honestly. It ensures that all parents are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. It respects parents/guardians/carers' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless permission has been given, or it is necessary to do so in order to protect a child/young person.
- sharing with parents/guardians/carers any concerns about their child/young person unless to do so may place a child at risk of harm.
- encouraging parents/guardians/carers to discuss any concerns they may have with the Director of Learning Support and Safeguarding or Designated Safeguarding Lead.



## 11. Communication of the Policy and Procedure

The following statement is published on the College website.

*Birkenhead Sixth Form College recognises that members of staff and learners have an important role to play in safeguarding the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and preventing their abuse. The College has written a comprehensive Safeguarding Policy and Procedure to ensure that the welfare of the child and vulnerable adults is always placed at the centre of its activities. Anyone who would like to see a copy of this policy should contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead or access it through the College website. [www.bsfc.ac.uk](http://www.bsfc.ac.uk)*

## 12. Categories of Abuse

Please see Appendix 1.

## 13. Procedure for reporting concerns

When adults in the College have a concern about a child or young person they should complete the on-line email form that can be found on the student's Sapien page. This will be sent automatically to all safeguarding officers.

- All complaints, allegations or suspicions must be taken seriously.
- The procedures laid out in this document must be followed whenever an allegation is made that a young person/vulnerable adult has been abused.
- Promises of confidentiality should not be given as the matter may develop in such a way that these might not be able to be honoured.
- If the complaint comes directly from the young person/vulnerable adult, questions should be kept to the minimum necessary to understand what is being alleged. Leading questions must always be avoided.
- A full record of any conversations must be made immediately after any conversations with the young person/vulnerable adult and must include:
  - The date and time of the observation or disclosure
  - The young person/vulnerable adult's name
  - The young person/vulnerable adult's address
  - The age of the young person/vulnerable adult
  - The date and time of the alleged abuse
  - The place where the alleged abuse happened
  - Your name and the names of any other persons present
  - The name of the complainant
  - The nature of the alleged abuse
  - A description of any injuries observed
  - The account which has been given of the allegation
  - The exact words spoken by the young person/vulnerable adult
  - An objective record of the observation or disclosure

**Any such notes should be, as far as possible, verbatim rather than summarised and it should be factual in terms of what the young person/vulnerable adult has reported and should not be based on opinion or assumptions.**

Once a disclosure is made, staff are required to share this with the DSL using the e mail facility on the student's Sapien page. Any verbal conversations should be promptly recorded in writing and set out in the online email referral form. This will automatically be sent to the Safeguarding Officers in the College.

Some young people or adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities may need additional support. This may take the form of the young person/vulnerable adult's nominated carer or teacher being present at any interview to act as a facilitator or in an advocacy role. It should NEVER be assumed that a young person/adult with learning difficulties and or disabilities is not capable of providing credible evidence. The College will always respond in a positive manner to any legitimate requests for support from the appropriate agencies. The College regards parents/guardians/carers of learners under 19, Social Care, the Police and certain other government departments as authorised enquirers.

Where a learner who is not a child under the act is identified as being at risk the Designated Safeguarding Lead will make a decision on whether there is a need to involve outside agencies such as social care or the Police. Outside agencies should only be involved with the agreement of the alleged victim unless disclosure is necessary in the over-riding public interest and / or where the law is being broken (e.g. to protect others from serious harm). In the case of learners with learning difficulties, advice will be sought from the appropriate persons / agencies which could include the learner's tutor, case worker or Social Care Department.

#### **14. Responding to an Allegation**

It is understood that all staff (teaching staff, support staff and managers) of the College may come in contact with learners who are exhibiting 'a cause for concern'. No member of staff should take any independent action themselves but should observe the protocols set out in this section of the policy unless the individual is in crisis in which case action should be taken to stabilise the situation in consultation with relevant managers.

- Any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Safeguarding officers with responsibility for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults as soon as possible.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy should refer the matter to the WSCP (Local Safeguarding Children Partnership) or Integrated Front Door where they feel that the young person/vulnerable adult may be in need or may be at risk of suffering significant harm. A written record of the date and time of the report should be made and the report must include the name and position of the person to whom the report is made. Any digital copies of IFD referrals and Professional Responses will be uploaded to CPOMS. The telephone report must be confirmed in writing within 24 hours. The confirmation may be hand written, posted or faxed but a copy MUST be kept on file.
- The advice received from WSCP (Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership) on what action, if any, should be taken and a note kept of that conversation.

#### **15. Work Placements**

- Employers and training organisations will be asked to cooperate with the College in putting in place and subscribing to appropriate safeguards consistent with those in place within College.

- Where a placement is long term or meets the criteria laid out in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018' and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020' the College will ensure that additional safeguards are in place, these may include ensuring those staff arranging placements have had training in child protection.
- Training organisations will be asked to make a commitment to safeguarding learners' welfare by endorsing an agreed statement of principles.
- Vetting and DBS checking any person whose normal duties will include regular caring for, training, looking after or supervising a child in the workplace where that person has been specifically designated to have responsibility for such activities

## **16. Allegations about a Member of Staff**

### **This section refers to both employed staff and volunteers**

- Any suspicion, allegation or actual abuse of a child/adult by a member of staff must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible. If the Designated Safeguarding Lead cannot be contacted a member of the senior management team must be contacted. Reception staff are always aware of who the senior person in charge is.

On being notified of any such matter the Designated Safeguarding Lead shall:

- Take such steps, as s/he considers necessary to ensure the safety of the child/adult in question and any other person who is considered at risk.
- Immediately notify the Principal or, in his absence the Deputy Principal and the Human Resources Manager. The Principal will, following College procedures, inform the member of staff that s/he may be suspended on full pay pending an investigation. The staff member's representative will also be informed. The length of any suspension will be in line with College policies and will be as short as is possible while ensuring the safety of the child. N.B. Suspension should not necessarily be an automatic response to an allegation and all allegations should be dealt with quickly, fairly and consistently. After being informed of an allegation against a member of staff, the Principal will consult the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day.
- Report the matter to the Wirral's LSCP (Local Safeguarding Children Partnership).
- Ensure that the person who reported the original concern completes a report of the matter as set out above.
- Any investigation relating to a member of staff will follow the College's laid down procedure for investigations, after agreement from the Wirral's LSCP (Local Safeguarding Children Partnership).
- Following an investigation the College will take a view on how to proceed in line with its disciplinary policies dependent on the outcome of the investigation.
- Where it is subsequently found that an allegation has been made maliciously, the College may refer the matter to be dealt with under the College's disciplinary procedures.
- Throughout the process, the HR department will ensure that contact is maintained with the member of staff and offer appropriate support.

- If the Designated Safeguarding Lead is the subject of the allegation or complaint, the matter must be reported directly to the Principal or Deputy Principal.
- If the Principal is subject to any such allegation or complaint, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will contact the Chair of the Local Governing Body who is the Governor nominated to be responsible for liaising with Wirral's LSCP (Local Safeguarding Children Partnership).

## 17. Record Keeping

- DfE guidance says that the Designated Safeguarding Lead should keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of referrals and concerns. These are kept separately from academic records, in a confidential e-system, CPOMS. This e-system is accessible only by appropriate senior staff members. They are exempt from records available for examination by parents or young people unless subject to a court order.
- The College promotes high quality record keeping in respect of all concerns about young people's welfare. The procedure for making referrals is to email the safeguarding team from the student's Sapien page. Referrals should be completed in a timely manner and include all relevant information such as dates, times, others involved, witnesses etc. There is a facility to up-load relevant documents with the referral. Referrals are acknowledged by the Safeguarding Administrator.
- If a young person transfers to another College or other educational establishment, the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy should forward the child protection records to a named person at the receiving College / establishment under separate cover from the academic records. The file should be marked '*confidential, to be opened by addressee only.*' This should be followed up with a telephone call to establish safe receipt.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead should retain a copy of the child protection records, which should be stored securely and accessible only by appropriate senior staff members.
- The College will ensure that it keeps up-to-date personal data records of all young people by regularly reminding parents to inform of any change in family circumstances.

## 18. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

The College recognises that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.

- The Principal or Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy will disclose personal information about a young person to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

However, all staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard young people. When considering sharing information staff will:

- Remember that the Data Protection Regulations are not a barrier to sharing information, it provides the framework
- Be open and honest with the person from the outset about how information may be shared
- Seek advice, and will not fail to share information because they are unsure what to do
- Share with consent where appropriate and respect the wishes of those who refuse consent unless it is believed that there is a risk of harm to a young person if the information is not shared

- Consider safety and well-being of the young person and base information sharing decisions on this
  - Ensure all information shared is necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure. Ensure any third party or hearsay information is identified and consent to share it is given
  - Keep a record of the decision and reasons for it, record what has been shared, with whom and the purpose.
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a young person to keep secrets which might compromise the young person's safety or well-being or that of another.
  - The College will always undertake to share its intention to refer a young person to Wirral's Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP) with their parents/guardians/ carers unless to do so could put the young person at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, the College will consult with WSCP (Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership).
  - The College's approach is based on the guidance document 'Information sharing: Advice for Practitioners providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers ' (DfE, 2018).

## **19. Whistle Blowing**

Staff should be aware that young people may feel unable to express concerns in an environment where staff are reluctant to do so. All staff should therefore feel free to voice concerns about the attitude and actions of their colleagues in accordance with the Whistle Blowing Policy.

## **20. Safer Working Practice for Staff**

### **1. Interviewing Students**

All staff should be aware of the potential risks (i.e. false allegations against staff) of interviewing a young person alone, particularly if the young person has an experience of sexual/emotional abuse. Interviewing individual students is an integral part of our work and therefore staff should exercise their own professional judgement and a degree of caution in these situations. All staff should try to ensure that they do not place themselves in any compromising situations where allegations could potentially be made against them.

Suggested protective measures to consider:

- ask another person (teacher/tutor or young person's friend – as appropriate to the content) to sit in on the interview:
- sit in a room where it is possible to be observed through a window or glass-panelled door:
- do not close the door of the room, if you are not clearly visible from outside the room.

### **2. Transporting Students**

Situations often arise, which require a member of staff to take a young person home. Staff should be aware of the risks involved in this; when a young person has to be taken home, a male teacher should not normally transport a girl in his car unless he is accompanied by a female colleague. It may be better for female staff to carry out this task so that male staff can be protected from false allegations. No staff should be alone with a student in this situation.

### **3. Use of Technology**

All staff in the College will use technology to support and promote the learning and welfare of young people. However certain safeguards should be remembered:

- Telephone - Staff will NOT give any young person their personal telephone numbers (mobile or home) and will not contact the young person on the young person's mobile phone either by voicemail or by texting unless this is in line with the College's policy in respect of making contact.
- Communication by technology should only take place using approved College systems, including Microsoft Teams, and communication of a personal nature must not be conducted with young people.
- Use of Internet: Staff will NOT access or expose young people to unsuitable material on the internet. Staff will ensure that they follow the College's ICT Policy about access to and use of the internet.

### **4. Social Networking Sites**

A member of staff should be aware that where potentially compromising information is posted on social networking sites, there is a danger that it may be accessed by colleagues and/or young people, and as a result seriously impact upon that colleague's professional standing. For example, if a member of staff posted information about an aspect of their private life relating to areas of sexual behaviour, alcohol, drug misuse, violence or anything illegal would be considered inappropriate.

Should any inappropriate information be posted by a member of staff and it became common knowledge, then professional relationships (those of mutual respect, professional distance, acting as a role model etc.) with students could be compromised. This would be considered as a serious disciplinary offence by the College. It would also be considered that such an incident would be deemed to have brought the profession and/or the College into disrepute.

It may be considered that for people working in the front line of public service that the best advice would be not to use social networking websites. However, if a member of staff chooses to do so they should be aware of potential pitfalls. Staff are strongly advised that they should:

- Be highly circumspect about the information that is posted in public view; criticising the College, colleagues and young people will be considered a serious disciplinary offence
- Take steps to ensure that there are appropriate access restrictions in force on personal internet content
- Ensure that they do not engage with young people online or become 'friends' on social sites

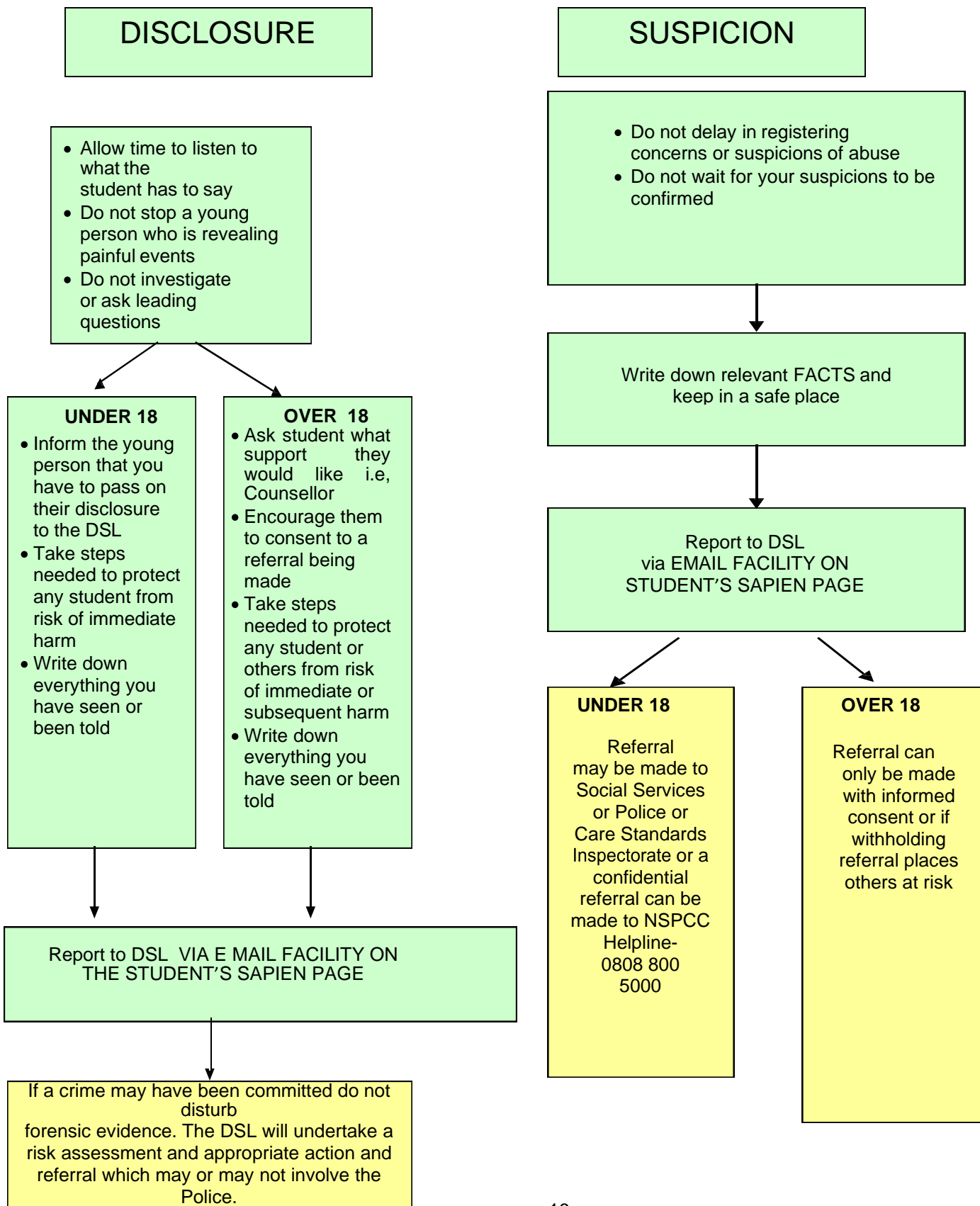
## **21. Safety**

### **The College must ensure that:**

- All sites are clean and a safe environment for young people, staff and visitors.
- All staff have access to the Safeguarding Policy and Procedure and know who the Designated Safeguarding Lead is.
- All incidents are recorded in accordance with Health & Safety procedures.
- All staff and students wear photograph ID badges at all times.
- All visitors must report and sign in at reception and will be issued with visitor badges.
- An accurate and up to date student record system is in place and confidentiality of data is maintained.
- Regular audits of all equipment (first aid kits, fire extinguishers, telephones etc) is carried out.
- Regular fire drills / inspection are undertaken.
- There is a designated person in charge on site at all times to deal with emergencies and ensure the safety of young people whilst on site.

# SAFEGUARDING AT BIRKENHEAD SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

## ACTION GUIDELINES FOR STAFF RECEIVING DISCLOSURE/SUSPICION





## **Appendix 1 CATEGORIES OF ABUSE**

### **Children**

#### **Physical Abuse**

This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, 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.

#### **Emotional Abuse**

This is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless and unloved, inadequate, or valued only so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions which are beyond the child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve 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 ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

#### **Sexual Abuse**

This involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape) or non-penetrative acts.

They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic materials, or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

#### **Neglect**

This is the persistent failure to meet the 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 and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failure to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Children are at risk of sexual exploitation through the internet and, particularly social media. Young people may be groomed to share indecent images with others on the internet, who may be adults posing as teenagers. The prevalence of 'sexting' is a significant factor.

### Warning Signs

- Going missing for periods of time; or returning home late.
- Disengagement from education.
- Poor school attendance (including truancy and school excursions).
- Appearing with unexplained gifts: clothes, jewellery, trainers, phones, money.
- Associating with others involved in sexual exploitation.
- Frequently in the company of older people, particularly boyfriends or girlfriends.
- Poor sexual health.
- Mood swings/poor anger control/changes in emotional well-being.
- Drug and alcohol misuse (often a method of increasing compliance)
- Inappropriate sexualized behavior, especially around strangers.
- Association with 'risky' adults.
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers)
- Chronic tiredness.
- Secretive behavior.
- Low- level crime, e.g. shoplifting.
- Self-harm
- Talking about visiting different areas, especially at night.
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being

The following vulnerabilities will increase the risk of child sexual exploitation but it must be remembered that not all children with these indicators will be exploited. Child sexual exploitation can occur without any of these issues.

- Having a prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse
- Lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic violence or parental substance misuse; mental health issues or criminality, for example)
- Recent bereavement or loss
- Social isolation or social difficulties
- Absence of a safe environment to explore sexuality
- Economic vulnerability
- Homelessness or insecure accommodation status
- Connections with other children and young people who are being sexually exploited
- Family members or other connections involved in adult sex work
- Having a physical or learning disability
- Being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories)
- Sexual identity

## **Peer on Peer Abuse**

The College is aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying);
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence and sexual harassment;
- gender-based violence
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and
- initiation-type violence and rituals.

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”. Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse. This could for example include girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation-type violence.

The College believes that all students have a right to attend College and learn in a safe environment. Students should be free from harm by adults in the school and other students. We recognise that some students will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others and their behaviour will be dealt with under the College’s disciplinary process.

Occasionally, allegations may be made against students by others in the College, which are of a safeguarding nature. Safeguarding issues raised in this way may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. All reports of peer on peer abuse are treated seriously at the College and will be investigated and dealt with, as appropriate, under the College’s disciplinary process.

## **Sexting**

In cases of ‘sexting’ the College follows guidance given to schools and colleges by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) published in 2017: ‘Sexting in schools and colleges, responding to incidents, and safeguarding young people’. Peer-on-Peer Abuse is most often used to mean sexual abuse between peers and can start with inappropriate sexual misconduct, for example, sexual touching of another young person and sexting.

Sexting is a significant issue for older teenagers and involves the sharing of indecent images of themselves with others. In cases of ‘sexting’ the College follows guidance given to schools and colleges by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) published in August 2016: ‘Sexting in schools and colleges, responding to incidents, and safeguarding young people’.

## **Upskirting**

Upskirting is taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is now a criminal offence.

## **Adults**

### **Physical abuse**

This includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, rough handling or unnecessary physical force either deliberate or unintentional, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions.

### **Sexual Abuse**

This includes rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent to, or was pressured into consenting. Sexual abuse can occur between people

of the same sex and it can also occur within a marriage or any long-term relationship. A relationship of trust should exist between a member of staff or a volunteer and the person for whom they are caring, it would be seen as a betrayal of that trust, and therefore abusive, for that member of staff or volunteer to have a sexual relationship with the person they are caring for.

### **Psychological Abuse**

This includes emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

### **Financial or Material Abuse**

This includes theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property, enduring power of attorney, or inheritance or financial transactions, or the inappropriate use, misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

### **Neglect and Acts of Omission**

This includes ignoring or withholding medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition, clothing and heating.

### **Discriminatory Abuse**

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

### **Self-Neglect**

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

### **Students with Additional Learning Needs**

The College recognizes that children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges because there may be assumptions that indicators of possible abuse, such as behaviour, mood and injury, relate to the student's disability without further exploration; students with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying without outwardly showing any signs; and difficulties may arise in overcoming communication barriers. At the College, we identify students who might need more support to be kept safe or to keep themselves safe by compiling details of their Additional Learning Support needs on the College Sapien system, which is accessible to all staff. There is also a designated and specialist Learning Support team with a designated area in the College known as the Learning Assistance Base (LAB).

### **Honour based Violence (HNV) including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage.**

So-called 'honour-based' violence (HBV) 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 so called HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Abuse committed in the context of preserving 'honour' often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. Where staff are concerned that a child might be at risk of HBV, they must contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead as a matter of urgency

### **Forced Marriage**

The tradition of arranged marriages has operated successfully within many communities and many countries for a very long time. A clear distinction must be made between a forced and an arranged

marriage. In arranged marriages, the families of both spouses take a leading role in choosing the marriage partner but the choice whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the young people. In forced marriage, one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage or consent is extracted under duress. Duress includes both physical and emotional pressure.

#### Possible Indicators of Forced Marriages

- Truancy
- Decline in performance or punctuality
- Low motivation at school
- Poor exam results
- Being withdrawn from school by those with parental responsibility
- Unplanned holidays abroad
- Not allowed to attend extracurricular activities

What to do if you are concerned that a student is being forced to marry:

- Immediately contact the DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

If the student insists on talking to you:

- Tell someone when and where you are meeting students
- Make sure you can meet them in a private place where there is a telephone
- Have a 'story' ready about how you are providing support with learning in case you are challenged by the family
- Listen to what the student has to say and write it down
- Do not question apart from to clarify
- Inform the student you have to talk to a senior member of staff but that it will remain confidential
- Provide the opportunity for them to talk to the Force Marriage Unit on 0207 008 0151

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

Female Genital Mutilation is the non-medical, partial or total removal of the external female genital organs.

There is a mandatory duty to notify the police if you discover that Female Genital Mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. If you have concerns, please liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Risk Factors for Female Genital Mutilation include:

- Low level of integration into UK society.
- Mother or sister who has undergone FGM.
- Girls who are withdrawn from PSHE.
- Visiting female elder from the country of origin.
- Being taken on a long holiday to the country of origin.
- Talk about a 'special' procedure to become a woman.

#### **County Lines**

County lines is the organized criminal distribution of drugs from the big cities into smaller towns and rural areas using children and vulnerable people. Although cannabis is occasionally linked to the county lines organizations, it is harder drugs that provide the focus: heroin, cocaine and amphetamines. The main county line gangs operate from Liverpool and have been identified in the Wirral using boys, typically 15

and 16 but sometimes younger, with girls pulled into the gang who are often the subject of high level sexual violence.

### **Serious Crime**

All staff should be aware of indicators which may signal that students are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. This may include increased absence from College, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in well-being, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that students have been approached by, or are involved with individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs. All staff should report any concerns to the safeguarding team.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Challenging Radicalisation and Extremism**

#### **Introduction**

As part of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, colleges have a duty to 'prevent people being drawn into terrorism. This has become known as the 'Prevent Duty'. Where staff are concerned that students are developing extremist views or show signs of becoming radicalized, they should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead has received training about the Prevent Duty and tackling extremism and is able to support staff with any concerns they may have.

The College is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all its staff and students; an environment where there is mutual respect, tolerance and understanding of those with different faiths and beliefs. The College recognises that in order to achieve this aim everyone must take responsibility. All members of staff, regardless of their role in College, are expected to uphold and promote the fundamental principles of:

- Democracy
- The Rule of Law
- Individual Liberty
- Mutual Respect
- Tolerance of those with different Faiths and Beliefs

The College uses the curriculum to ensure that students understand how people with extreme views share these with others, especially using the internet. The College is committed to ensuring that our students are offered a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Teaching the College's core values alongside the fundamental British Values supports quality teaching and learning, whilst making a positive contribution to the development of a fair, just and civil society

#### **Policy Statement**

The College will not tolerate extremist activity of any sort which creates an environment for the radicalisation of individuals regardless of which extremist ideology it is based upon.

The College aims to protect vulnerable individuals from being radicalised or exposed to extremism, by identifying who they are and providing them with support.

#### **Radicalisation**

The Institute of Strategic Dialogue defines radicalisation as "the process through which an individual changes from passiveness or activism to become more revolutionary, militant or extremist, especially where there is intent towards, or support for, violence."

Driving factors behind radicalisation can include:

- Lack of integration and/or polarisation
- Identity crises and/or isolation
- Political and/or democratic disenfranchisement
- Discrimination
- Foreign policy and/or international crises or disputes
- Political movements
- Ideologies and/or faith.

## **Extremism**

Extremism is defined as the holding of extreme political or religious views.

Young people in the UK are potentially vulnerable to engagement with extremist ideologies or to targeting by extremist organisations. The College should be aware of the risks and familiar with the support networks and processes in place to protect vulnerable individuals from becoming radicalised.

CONTEST is the government's counter terrorism strategy with the aim of stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

The Prevent strategy (part of Contest):

- responds to the ideological challenge we face from terrorism and aspects of extremism, and the threat we face from those who promote these views.
- provides practical help to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensures they are given appropriate advice and support through the Channel process.
- works with a wide range of sectors (including education, criminal justice, faith, charities, online and health) where there are risks of radicalisation that we need to deal with.

The strategy covers all forms of terrorism, including far right extremism and some aspects of non-violent extremism.

It is important to remember that Islamist ideology should not be confused with traditional religious practice. It is an ideology which is based on a distorted interpretation of Islam, which betrays Islam's peaceful principles.

## **Indicators**

There are a number of behaviours which may indicate a person is at risk of being radicalised.

- Spending increasing time in the company of other suspected extremists.
- Changing their style of dress or personal appearance to accord with the group.
- Their day to day behaviour becoming increasingly centred on an extremist ideology, group or cause.
- Loss of interest in other friends and activities not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause.
- Possession of materials or symbols associated with an extremist cause.
- Attempts to recruit others to the group or cause.
- Communication with others that suggest identification with a group, cause or ideology.
- Using insulting derogatory names for another group.
- Increase in prejudice-related incidents committed by that person- these may include physical or verbal assault, provocative behaviour, damage to property, derogatory name calling, possession of prejudice related materials, prejudice-related ridicule or name calling, inappropriate forms of address, refusal to cooperate, attempts to recruit to prejudice-related organisations, condoning or supporting violence towards others.



More specific information can be found in the DCFS document '*Learning together to be safe: A Toolkit to help schools contribute to the prevention of violent extremism*'.

College staff should also be alert to:

- Disclosures by students of their exposure to the extremist actions, views or materials of others outside College, such as in their homes or community groups, especially where students haven't actively sought them out.
- Graffiti symbols, writing or art work promoting extremist messages or images.
- Students accessing extremist material online, including through social media sites.
- Parental reports of changes in behaviour, friendships or actions and requests for assistance.
- Reports of issues affecting learners in other schools or colleges locally.
- Students voicing opinions drawn from extremist ideologies and narratives.
- Use of extremist or 'hate' terms to exclude others or incite violence.

### **College Ethos and Practice**

There is no place for extremist views of any kind in the College, whether from internal sources – students, staff or governors, or external sources.

As a college we recognise that extremism and exposure to extremist materials and influences can lead to poor outcomes for learners and that if we fail to challenge extremist views we are failing to protect our staff and students.

Any prejudice, discrimination or extremist views, including derogatory language, displayed by students or staff will always be challenged and where appropriate, dealt with in line with the College Disciplinary Policy and Staff Code of Practice.

If there are any concerns relating to radicalisation and extremism, these should be raised with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

## **Appendix 3**

### **Private Fostering**

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. (\*Close family relatives is defined as a 'Grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half siblings and step parents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins).

There is a duty on teachers to inform Children's Services where they become aware of such an arrangement.

Most frequently, young people are in foster care for the following reasons:

- Children from other countries sent to live in the UK with extended family.
- Host families for language schools.
- Parental ill-health.
- Where parents who have moved away, but the child stays behind (e.g. to stay at the same school to finish exams).
- Teenagers estranged from their families.

## **Appendix 4**

### **Children Missing Education**

Knowing where children and young people are during school hours is an extremely important aspect of Safeguarding. Missing College can be an indicator of abuse and neglect and may also raise concerns about child sexual exploitation. Our Attendance Officers monitor attendance carefully and address poor or irregular attendance without delay. We will always follow up with parents/carers when students are not in College. This means we need to have at least two up to date contact numbers for parents/carers. Parents should remember to update the College as soon as possible if the numbers change.

In response to the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018) the College has:

1. Staff who understand what to do when children do not attend regularly
2. Appropriate policies, procedures and responses for students who go missing from education (especially on repeat occasions).
3. Staff who know the signs and triggers for travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

