

Child protection and safeguarding policy



Reviewed by Jo Higham 11/07/25
Updated 11/07/25

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Important contacts

ROLE/ORGANISATION	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Jo Higham	0116 2625705 jhigham@moat.leicester.sch.uk
Deputy DSLs	Brian Killeen Iqbal Khalifa Jez Holdsworth Nilzam Sattar Nick Anderson Muhammed Faruk Hetal Sharma Merriam Ayari/Shenice Mundy Farzana Sayeed	0116 2625705
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Katherine Lockwood	Lado-allegations-referrals@leicester.gov.uk/ katherine.lockwood@leicester.gov.uk 01164542440
One Front Door	Social Care and Early Help	0116 4541004
Prevent Education Officer	Ailsa Coull	Ailsa.Coull@leicester.gov.uk
Chair of Governors	Jo Hollings	jhollings@moat.leicester.sch.uk

Introduction

1.1 No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. Moat Community College fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect and support students in college. The aim of the policy is to safeguard and promote our students' welfare, safety and health by fostering an honest, open, caring and supportive climate. The students' welfare is of paramount importance.

1.2 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined 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

- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Moat Community College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its students. We believe that:

- All children/young people have the right to be protected from harm
- Children/young people need to be safe and to feel safe in school
- Children/young people need support which matches their individual needs, including those who may have experienced abuse
- All children need to feel that they belong here
- All children/young people have the right to speak freely and voice their values and beliefs
- All children/young people must be encouraged to respect each other's values and support each other
- All children/young people have the right to be supported to meet their emotional, and social needs as well as their educational needs – a happy healthy sociable child/young person will achieve better educationally
- Schools can and do contribute to the prevention of abuse, victimisation, bullying, exploitation, extreme behaviours, discriminatory views and risk-taking behaviours
- All staff and visitors have an important role to play in safeguarding children and protecting them from abuse

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#), [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#) and the [Governance Handbook](#)

- › Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
- › [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#), which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least 1 person conducting an interview to be trained in safer recruitment techniques
- › [The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), 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
- › [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 2023](#), which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- › [The Human Rights Act 1998](#), which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) (ECHR)
- › [The Equality Act 2010](#), which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils (where we can show it's proportionate). This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there's evidence that they're being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment

3 Key processes

Our school procedures for safeguarding children are in line with the Leicester City Safeguarding Children's Board ([LSCP](#)), Multi Agency Child Protection/Safeguarding Procedures.

4 Prevention

4.1 The college adopts an open and accepting attitude towards children as part of its responsibility for pastoral care. Staff should work to ensure that children and parents will feel free to talk about any concerns and will see Moat 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 voice of the child is central to everything we do here at Moat.**

4.2 Our college will therefore:

- **Ensure that safeguarding and student voice is central to everything we do**

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Hold regular safeguarding assemblies for all students to enable them to understand how to stay safe online and in their daily lives.
- Ensure that children know that there are adults in the college whom they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
- Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for PSHE/Citizenship which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to know to whom they can turn for help.
- Include in the curriculum material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills.
- Give parents regular safeguarding updates in order to support them and their children.
- Operate safe recruitment procedures and make sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers who will work with children, including references and Disclosure and Barring Service and Children's Barred List checks.
- Ensure those responsible for recruitment e.g. principal, nominated governor, have successfully completed the required National College of College Leadership Safer Recruitment training and that other senior members of staff, if involved in leading on recruitment, have also successfully completed the training.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the need to maintain appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with students and parents and follow the codes of conduct in the Guidance for Safe Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children (DfE October 2015).

5 Roles and responsibilities of the governing body

5.1 The governing body must ensure they facilitate a whole school or college approach to safeguarding. This means ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

5.2 The governing body will ensure that:

- The college has a safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures in place.

- There is a senior member of the college's leadership team who is designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with safeguarding (Designated Safeguarding Lead).
- There are appointed deputies for child safeguarding, in the event of the unavailability of the DSL.
- The DSL and the appointed deputies for safeguarding undertake training for DSLs, in addition to inter-agency child safeguarding training, that is provided by, or to standards agreed by, the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), and has refresher training at two-yearly intervals.
- The principal, and all other staff and volunteers who work with children, undertake appropriate training which is kept up-to-date by refresher training at three-yearly intervals; and that new staff, temporary staff and volunteers who work with children are made aware of the college's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities. (Through the induction process).
- There are procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers.

- There is an individual member of the governing body who will champion issues to do with safeguarding children and child protection within the college, liaise with the DSL, and provide information and reports to the governing body, and that person is appropriately trained to discharge their responsibilities effectively.
- Will ensure that college creates a culture of safe recruitment and, as part of that, adopts recruitment procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children (Part three: Safer Recruitment, Keeping Children Safe in Education July 2015).
- Will ensure that at least 1 member of the Governing body has attended Safer Recruitment training delivered by Leicester City Council, HR Department and that training is refreshed no later than every 5 years.
- That the Chair of the governing body completes the annual Safeguarding in Education Check List – supporting schools to exercise their duties in relation to safeguarding & child protection and return the document to the local authority.
- All governors should receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction, and then at regular intervals.

Roles and responsibilities of the principal

The principal of the college will ensure that:

- The policies and procedures adopted by the governing body are fully implemented, and followed by all staff.
- Sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the DSL and other staff to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in inter-agency meetings and contributing to the assessment of children.
- All staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner.
- All staff are made aware that they have an individual responsibility for referring child protection concerns, promptly and using the proper channels.
- All staff are made aware of their right to whistle blow.
- All staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner. (Whole school approach and child centred practice).
- The Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and other relevant policies are updated annually, ratified by the governing body annually and that relevant policies be available publicly either via the college website, parents evening, open days or by other means.
- That the principal has attended safer recruitment training delivered by Leicester City Council, HR Department and that training is refreshed no later than every 5 years; and that at least 1 member of the governing body has attended Safer Recruitment training.
- That regular external visitors/providers such as cleaners, caterers have shown the college a copy of their H & S and child protection guidelines as best practice and where applicable; and that the college has a statement in main reception notifying external visitors who the Colleges DSL is and what to do if they have any concerns about a child's welfare

- The DSL's undergo child protection training which is updated regularly, with advice from the LSCB, Safeguarding in Education and in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education, July 2015, Annex B
- New members of staff, temporary or permanent including volunteers are given a full induction that includes safeguarding and child protection guidelines.
- That staff undergo and attend whole college training at least every two years (INSET).
- All staff are made aware of their right to whistle blow, have a copy of the whistleblowing procedures and are well versed with the procedures.

Roles and responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The responsibilities of the DSL:

- **Ensure and lead an effective culture of safeguarding and belonging in the college.**
- Provision of information to the local authority on how the governing body discharges its duties regarding safeguarding and child protection.
- Liaison with the governing body and the local authority on any deficiencies brought to attention of the governing body and how these should be rectified.
- Referral of cases of suspected abuse or allegations to Social Care and Safeguarding. Act as a source of support, advice and expertise within the education setting.
- Ensure action to help children should not be delayed if the Designated Safeguarding Lead happens not to be available. The DSLs have, through CPOMs up to date information on all cases and referrals. There is effective communication between the team with regular meetings and information sharing.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the college's safeguarding and child protection policy especially new or part-time staff who may work with different educational establishments.
- Ensure all staff have safeguarding induction and update training and are able to recognise and report any concerns immediately they arise.
- Work with the governing body to review and update annually the college's safeguarding and child protection policy.
- Ensure that reports of abuse involving children with SEND will require close liaison with the SENCO

Managing referrals – The DSL (**along with the deputy DSLs**) will deal with all safeguarding concerns raised/allegations of abuse within the college, refer all cases of suspected abuse **meeting the threshold of harm** to children's social care and;

- Refer all cases in relation to allegations against staff members to the LADO including disclosure and barring.
- Seek advice from the police if a crime has been committed.
- Liaise with the principal re. issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations.

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- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.

Training - The DSL will receive appropriate training carried out every two years, and undertake wider safeguarding training in order to;

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention.
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so;
- Support other staff members who attend strategy meetings and/or case conferences so that they too can contribute to these effectively.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the college's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff.
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers.

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Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals;

- Written records of concerns are kept on CPOMS, even if there is no immediate need for referral and are monitored.
- All child protection records are marked as such and kept securely locked, and if these are stored electronically, that they are differently password protected from the students' other files, and accessible only by the principal/DSLs.
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses.

Raising Awareness

The DSL will ensure the college's policies are known and used appropriately;

- Ensure all staff, including supply teachers, visiting professionals working with students in the college and volunteers are informed of the names of the DSLs and the college's procedures for safeguarding children.
- Act as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns and liaise with other agencies and professionals (where appropriate).
- Ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the college in this.
- Link with the local LSPCB to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.
- Where children leave the college ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main student file, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.
- Be able to access the contents of the LSPCB procedures and any updates are made accessible to all staff within the school.
- Support staff and volunteers who may find safeguarding issues upsetting or stressful by enabling them to talk through their anxieties and to seek further support from the college.
Ensuring that any student currently subject to a child protection plan who is absent without explanation on a number of occasions to their key worker in

Children's Social Care.

- Providing, with the principal, an annual report for the governing body, any Safeguarding in Education Check Lists provided by the LA, any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by the DSL and by all staff and governors.

6. Liaison with other agencies: contributing to safeguarding work with families

The college will:

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- Work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate with enquiries regarding child protection matters.
- Attend and contribute to child protection conferences and core groups and provide reports as required.
- Contribute to assessments and the implementation of Early Help plans.
- Be proactive in communicating with Social Care and Safeguarding any significant changes/developments including exclusion or any other absence that raises concern.

7. Record keeping

9.1 The college will keep detailed written and online (via CPOMS) safeguarding records including when there are concerns about children that do not reach the threshold for referral to Social Care and Safeguarding.

9.2 All safeguarding records will be kept securely and confidentially and will be separate from the student file.

9.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for maintaining and monitoring all safeguarding records.

8. Transfer of records

The DSL will ensure that when children move college the child protection records are transferred in accordance with the Leicester City Education Safeguarding procedures.

9. Confidentiality and Information sharing

The college will ensure confidentiality protocols are adhered to and information shared on a need-to-know basis.

10 Support to students and college staff

10.1 Support for students

Moat Community College recognises that children, who are abused, neglected, bullied or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and view the world in a positive way. For such children college may be one of the few stable, secure and predictable components of their lives. Other children may be vulnerable because, for instance, they have a disability, are in care, or living away from home. The college **will support these children and their families.**

10.2 Moat Community College recognises that some children display abusive behaviour and that these children must be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.

10.3 Complaints or concerns raised by students will be taken seriously and followed up in accordance with the college's complaints process.

10.4 Support for staff

As part of their duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people staff may hear information that will be upsetting. Where a member of staff is distressed as a result of this, he/she should in the first instance speak to the DSL about the support he/she requires. The DSL will seek to arrange the necessary support.

11 Action taken by the local authority

11.1 The local authority should make a decision, within one working day of a referral being made, about the type of response that is required and should let the referrer know the outcome. This will include determining whether:

- the child requires immediate protection and urgent action is required;
- whether the child is in need, and should be assessed under section 17; • there is reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, and whether enquiries must be made and the child assessed under section 47;
- any services are required by the child and family and what type of services; and
- further specialist assessments are required in order to help the local authority to decide what further action to take.

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

11.3 If social workers decide to carry out a statutory assessment, staff should do everything they can to support that assessment (supported by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) as required).

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

12 Contextual safeguarding

12.1 For many years extra-familial issues have presented a risk of significant harm to the welfare of young people, and from 2015 a lot of research went into the places young people frequent, and the risks that they presented. It is now known as Contextual Safeguarding, approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse.

12.2 Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent child relationships. Therefore, Moat Community College engages with many safeguarding partners in order to protect our students from these risks, in particular in the online space. This is a critical part of our safeguarding practices. We use the CS website www.contextualsafeguarding.org.uk as this provides us with valuable tools and resources to support our students and their families.

13 Keeping children safe in out of school settings

15.1 Where the governing body provides services or activities directly under the supervision or management of college staff, the college's safeguarding arrangements will apply.

15.2 Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, the governing body should seek assurance in writing 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.

14 Alternative Provision

14.1 The cohort of students in Alternative Provision often have complex needs, it is important that governing bodies and AP proprietors are aware of the additional risk of harm that their students may be vulnerable to. We have a deputy DSL who works closely with AP providers and students in order to ensure they are safe.

14.2 We undertake all of the necessary checks in line with the [Alternative Provision Guidance](#) which was updated in February 2025.

15 Working with parents/carers

Moat Community College will:

15.1 Ensure that parents/carers have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the college and staff for safeguarding. This information is on our website, and parents receive a safeguarding newsletter from the DSL every half term.

15.2 Talk to parents where concerns have not met the threshold of harm, but where there is an issue in the home that needs resolving, even when the situation may be sensitive or difficult to discuss.

15.3 Develop supportive relationships with parents/carers, but make sure the young person's voice is heard and understood.

16 Staff actions if concerns are raised

16.1 If a member of staff has concerns about the welfare of a student then they need to:

- Be familiar with this policy and its procedures.
- Know who the DSL and deputies are.
- Inform the DSL in writing of concerns, dated and signed.
- With a disclosure, inform the child that they will need to pass the information on.
- Reassure the child that this is a safe space.
- Maintain confidentiality.

16.2 If a member of staff has concerns about the behaviour of another member of staff, governor, visitor or volunteer the principal should be informed immediately. The principal should carry out an urgent, initial consideration in order to establish whether there is substance to the concern.

If the actions raise concerns, the principal will notify the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) team who will advise about any action to be taken.

If the concerns are about the behaviour of the principal, then the chair of governors should be informed.

17 Early support: Early Help assessment – EHA

17.1 All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help, and be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- has a special education need (regardless if they have an EHCP)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care
- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from school or is attending Alternative Provision
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
- is at risk of honour based abuse, Forced Marriage or FGM
- is a privately fostered child

17.2 If Early Help is appropriate, a member of the safeguarding team will work with the relevant safeguarding partners to support the young person and their family. If the situation does not improve or there are more concerns, the member of the team will escalate the concern to One Front Door.

18 Mental Health

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

18.2. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe young people day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

18.3 Where young people have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

18.4. If staff have a mental health concern about a young person that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, by speaking to the DSL or a deputy.

18.5 We have a college Mental Health Framework and a team of Mental Health First Aiders, led by the Senior Mental Health Lead. The MH first aiders and lead work closely with the

safeguarding team and offer support to students who need it. We also have two external counsellors.

19 Safeguarding students who are vulnerable to extremism

19.1 CONTEST is the UK's strategy for countering terrorism, and the Prevent strategy sits within that guidance. The Prevent strategy requires schools to safeguard children, young people and families from violent extremism. There have been several occasions both locally and nationally in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise vulnerable young people to hold extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.

19.2 The Prevent statutory duty was revised in 2023 for England and Wales, and it requires schools and colleges to have a Prevent risk assessment and action plan. This is a working document that will be updated frequently to reflect the current situation, and threat level, and it will be reviewed annually.

19.2 Moat Community College values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs/ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Both students and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

19.3 The current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation. Moat Community College is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation is viewed as a safeguarding concern.

19.4 Moat Community College seeks to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to religious ideologies, or to far right/neo Nazi/white supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist extremist and animal rights movements.

19.5 When any member of staff has concerns that a student may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the DSL in the first instance

19.6 Numerous factors can contribute to and influence the range of behaviours that are defined as violent extremism, but most young people do not become involved in extremist action. For this reason, the appropriate interventions in any particular case may not have any specific connection to the threat of radicalisation, for example they may address mental health, relationship or drug/alcohol issues.

- The college works closely with the Prevent Education Office: Ailsa Coull.
- Staff fully understand how to raise a concern using the appropriate channels.

20 Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

20.1 Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns.

20.2 Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism 98 should be considered. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

20.3 It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys, as boys do not see themselves as victims and are often more reluctant to report anything.

21 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Trafficking

21.1 CSE involves young people receiving something in exchange for sexual acts. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from seemingly consensual relationships to serious gang and group exploitation.

21.2 Staff should be aware that sexual exploitation can take many forms and that students may not exhibit external signs of abuse.

21.3 Staff are vigilant for the less obvious signs, such as lots of new electronic equipment, when before there was none, seeming to have extra money to spend, moving away from established friendship groups etc.

21.4 The DSL regularly attends the most up to date training on CSE and CCE, and shares this with staff.

21.5 The safeguarding team follow guidance and procedures as outlined in 'Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland' available on the LSCP website.

21.6 Staff are aware that if a disclosure is raised in reaction to CSE, that it will be reported straight to the DSL/SLT or Duty & Advice in their absence

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online.

22 Child-on-child abuse

25.1 All staff should be aware that young people can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse). This is most likely to include but might not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children physical abuse, such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- upskirting, and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

23 Domestic Violence and abuse

23.1 The definition of domestic violence and 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.” The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

23.2 If the college receives an Operation Encompass notification, or a child/parent makes a disclosure of domestic violence we will report the concerns to One Front Door and will seek guidance where necessary. Where a parent discloses DV to the college we can support them in making a call to the police/One Front Door.

23.3 In all cases, the member of the safeguarding team dealing with the concern will work closely with the child (and sometimes the parent affected where necessary/appropriate).

23.4 In cases where siblings are involved from our feeder schools we work closely with their DSL to ensure all children are supported in the best way.

24 Children Missing from Education

24.1 A Child Missing from Education forms part of the wider [LSCB procedures18 \(Chapter 2\)](#) for children who are absent from school, or go missing from home, care and education and includes families who go missing.

24.2 A student missing from education on a number of occasions is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect or they could be involved in criminal activities.

24.3 Should a student go missing from college, our college’s admin staff will inform the DSL. The DSL will consider further actions and/or support should it be required and to ensure they help identify any risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation and to help prevent the risks of them going missing in future. This will usually involve contacting the family, the police and One Front Door.

24.4 Where a child is no longer coming to college where the parent/carer has removed them, we will ensure that appropriate steps are taken and measures are in place, i.e. we will follow our college guidelines to ensure that, as far as possible, parents/carers provide us with information with regard to home schooling, a move out of the area or other plans, so that we can notify the local authority and Educational Welfare Officer as soon as is possible.

24.5 All relevant partner agencies/services will be notified including Education Welfare, correct forms will be completed and student folders/information will be passed on to the appropriate person (where applicable).

25 Children who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or gender questioning

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

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

25.2: When supporting a gender questioning child, the college will take a cautious approach and consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with the child's parents (other than in the exceptionally rare circumstances where involving parents would constitute a significant risk of harm to the child), including any clinical advice that is available and how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying. We will refer to the [Guidance for Schools and Colleges in relation to Gender Questioning Children](#), when deciding how to proceed. Risks can be compounded where children lack trusted adults with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and create a culture where they can speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

26 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

26.1 Definition of FGM:

"Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises of all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs whether for cultural or non-therapeutic reasons."

(World Health Organisation-1997)

The UK Government has written advice and guidance on FGM that states;

"FGM is considered child abuse in the UK and a grave violation of the human rights of girls and women. In all circumstances where FGM is practised on a child it is a violation of the child's right to life, their right to their bodily integrity, as well as their right to health. The UK Government has signed a number of international human rights laws against FGM, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child."

"Girls are at particular risk of FGM during school summer holidays. This is the time when families may take their children abroad for the procedure. Many girls may not be aware that they may be at risk of undergoing FGM."

UK communities that are most at risk of FGM include Kenyans, Somalis, Sudanese, Sierra Leoneans, Egyptians, Nigerians and Eritreans. However women from non-African communities that are at risk of FGM include Yemeni, Kurdish, Indonesian and Pakistani women.”

26.2 Procedures in place at Moat Community College:

1. A robust attendance policy that does not authorise holidays, extended or otherwise.
2. FGM training for the safeguarding team and disseminated training for all staff at the front line dealing with the children.

26.3 Indications that FGM may have taken place:

- Prolonged absence from school with noticeable behaviour change – especially after a return from holiday.
- Spend long periods of time away from the class during the day.
- A child who has undergone FGM should be seen as a child protection issue. Medical assessment and therapeutic services to be considered at the strategy meeting.

26.4 Indications that a child is at risk of FGM:

- The family comes from a community that is known to practice FGM.
- In conversation a child may talk about FGM.
- A child may express anxiety about a special ceremony.
- The child may talk or have anxieties about forthcoming holidays to their country of origin.
- Parent/Guardian requests permission for authorised absence for overseas travel or you are aware that absence is required for vaccinations.
- If a woman has already undergone FGM – and it comes to the attention of any professional, consideration needs to be given to any child protection implications e.g. for younger siblings, extended family members and a referral made to social care or the police if appropriate.

27 Forced Marriage/Honour Based Abuse

27.1 A ‘forced marriage’ is a marriage conducted without the full consent of both parties and often involves threats from family members and/or emotional pressure. **This is not cultural it is safeguarding.**

27.2 The government’s definition of a forced marriage is;

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used. It is an appalling and indefensible practice and is recognised in the UK as a form of violence against women and men, domestic/child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights.

27.3 In February 2023 the law changed and child marriage became a crime. Any marriage under the age of 18 in England and Wales is considered a forced marriage.

27.4 College staff receive up to date training and are aware of the importance and impact on a student who is involved in such situations.

27.5 HBA (Honour Based Abuse) has no legal definition at the moment. It is currently defined as “an incident or crime which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of a family and/or community.” It differs from other forms of abuse as it is often committed with some degree of approval and or collusion from family/community members.

27.6 In such cases, disclosures and concerns relating to forced marriage/honour based abuse will be reported directly to the DSL and the police due to the impact it could have on the student in the wider community. Information will be sought from One Front Door where appropriate.

28 Sexting

28.1 Sexting is the action or practice of sending sexually explicit photos, videos or messages via mobile phones.

28.2 Passive sexting refers to a recipient of these messages, and active sexting refers to the sender. With the development of AI, schools are facing challenges involving AI generated images and nudification apps.

28.3 The safeguarding team will deal with every incident on an individual basis, and will take a holistic approach, looking at the whole situation. We will assess risk and intention. We will refer to the Brook Traffic Light system as a guide to whether the behaviour involved is deemed appropriate to the age group. Parents will be informed in all cases, but it is the decision of the team as to whether police need to be involved. However, we will always advise parents that if they feel they want to contact police then they should do so.

28.4 It is important that all staff are aware that people involved in sharing indecent images of a person under the age of 18 may be committing a criminal offence, this comes under the Protection of Children Act (1978), Section 160 Criminal Justice Act (1988) and the proposed Police and Crime Bill (2025).

28.4 The DSL leads assemblies on sexting, and we reinforce the message to our students that we are not judging or blaming them, they need our support.

29 Private Fostering

29.1 Under the Children Act, 1989, the local authority has a duty to make sure a private fostering arrangement that the child/young person is in provides for their needs and safeguards his/her welfare.

If a member of Moat's staff, governor or volunteer becomes aware that a child/young person may be living in a private foster arrangement it is the responsibility of that person to report the details to the college's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who will then make further enquiries to try and establish the circumstances.

29.2 The DSL Lead should seek advice from Children's Social Care as to whether the child/young person is in a privately fostered arrangement under the regulations. If this is confirmed upon taking this advice a referral will be made by the DSL to Children's Social Care.

Essential information for making a referral includes:-

- Full names and dates of birth for the child
- Address and daytime phone numbers for the current carer including mobiles
- The child's address and phone number;
- Whereabouts of the child (and siblings);
- Child and family's ethnic origin;
- Child and family's main language;
- Actions taken and people contacted;
- Special needs of the child, including need for an accredited interpreter, accredited sign language interpreter or other language support;
- A clear indication of the family's knowledge of the referral and whether they have consented to the sharing of confidential information; • The details of the person making the referral.

30 Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes in to the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, this does not, and should not, replace a referral to One Front Door.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live.

31 Sexual violence and harassment

Sexual violence

It is important that Moat Community College staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Sexual harassment

When referring to sexual harassment we mean 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline.

Sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- sexual "jokes" or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes (schools and colleges should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- online sexual harassment.

This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:

- non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos;
- sexualised online bullying;
- unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media; and
- sexual exploitation; coercion and threats

31.1 In 2021 Ofsted conducted a rapid review on harmful sexual behaviour in schools, and following this KCSIE 2021 and 2022 to include guidance on sexual violence and harassment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two or more children of any age and sex. It can occur also through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face-to-face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable.

31.2 At Moat Community College we provide a safe space where students feel that they can come and report any incidents of sexual harassment and violence. Through our PDE curriculum we address topics such as consent and healthy relationships.

31.3 All staff should be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment. It should never be passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “a part of growing up” or “boys being boys”. Failure to do so can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.
- recognising, acknowledging, and understanding the scale of harassment and abuse and that even if there are no reports it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported.
- challenging physical behaviour (potentially criminal in nature) such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

31.4 Whilst any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment should be taken seriously, staff should be aware it is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment and more likely it will be perpetrated by boys. Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are also three times more likely to be abused than their peers.

31.5 The DSL and deputy DSLs will deal with each incident on a case by case basis, treating the situation sensitively and swiftly. This will involve meeting with parents, and may involve contacting the police and One Front Door if deemed necessary.

32 Online Safety and the Use of Mobile Technology

At Moat we recognise the importance of safeguarding students from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, and we understand that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. We live in a fast-changing world in terms of technology, and the introduction of AI, and we need to adapt our policy and practice to deal with any safeguarding concerns as they arise.

To address this, our college:

- Has robust processes (including filtering and monitoring systems) in place to ensure the online safety of students, staff, volunteers and governors. (Our systems are in line with the DfE standards for filtering and monitoring).
- Informs the DSL of any concerns with students and what they might search online in the college
- Protects and educates the whole college community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as ‘mobile phones’)
- Has a “never seen or heard” policy for mobile phones for students
- Establishes clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate

Has created a new AI policy which takes into account the safeguarding risks associated with this new technology

The 4 key categories of risk

Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the following categories of risk:

- › **Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, fake news (misinformation, conspiracy and disinformation), racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation and extremism
- › **Contact** – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as peer-to-peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes
- › **Conduct** – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, such as 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

To address the risks above, we will:

- › Educate students about online safety as part of our curriculum. For example:
 - The safe use of social media, the internet and technology
 - Keeping personal information private
 - How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online
 - How to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring pupils are encouraged to do so, including where they're a witness rather than a victim
- › Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying, the risks of online radicalisation, and the expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring. All staff members will receive refresher training as required and at least once each academic year
- › Educate parents/carers about online safety via our website, communications sent directly to them and during parents' evenings. We will also share clear procedures with them so they know how to raise concerns about online safety
- › Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras, for example that:
 - Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use, but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present
- › Make all students, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and governors aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology
- › Explain the sanctions we will use if a student is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones

Make sure all staff, students and parents/carers are aware that staff have the power to search students' phones, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#)

33. The use of AI

The online world is changing rapidly and we have to regularly tweak and update our online policies to incorporate the latest technology. A new policy for the safe use of AI has been created and shared with all stakeholders. This will be under review throughout

t the year.

34. Opportunities to teach safeguarding

At Moat we teach our students how to keep themselves and others safe. Relevant topics are included in our PDE curriculum and our Relationships and Sex Education. Further to this we hold regular assemblies on safeguarding issues such as contextual safeguarding, CSE, CCE, DA, extremism and online safety. We refer to the CTLP briefing and the Violence Reduction Network for up to date information, and we also use the newly developed POL-Ed resources to support the curriculum content.

35. Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass operates in all police forces across England. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when the police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, whether the children have witnessed this incident or not, the police will inform the DSL and the principal before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the college has up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable immediate support to be put in place, according to the child's needs. Following an OE notification, we will:

- Add the details to CPOMS and alert the relevant deputy DSL for that year group
- Check in with the student and make sure they are okay
- Take any further action as necessary

36. Attendance and safeguarding

At Moat we recognise that there is often a link between attendance and safeguarding concerns. We have due regard to [Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024](#) in our efforts to maintain high levels of college attendance. Where there are safeguarding concerns staff work take a multiagency approach and all key parties involved work closely together in order to secure the best outcomes for the student.

37. Safer recruitment

We follow all legal requirements regarding:

- The recruitment and selection process
- Pre-appointment and vetting checks, regulated activity and recording of information
- Other check that may be necessary for staff, volunteers and others, including the responsibilities on schools and colleges for children in other settings
- How to ensure the ongoing safeguarding of children and the legal reporting duties on employers

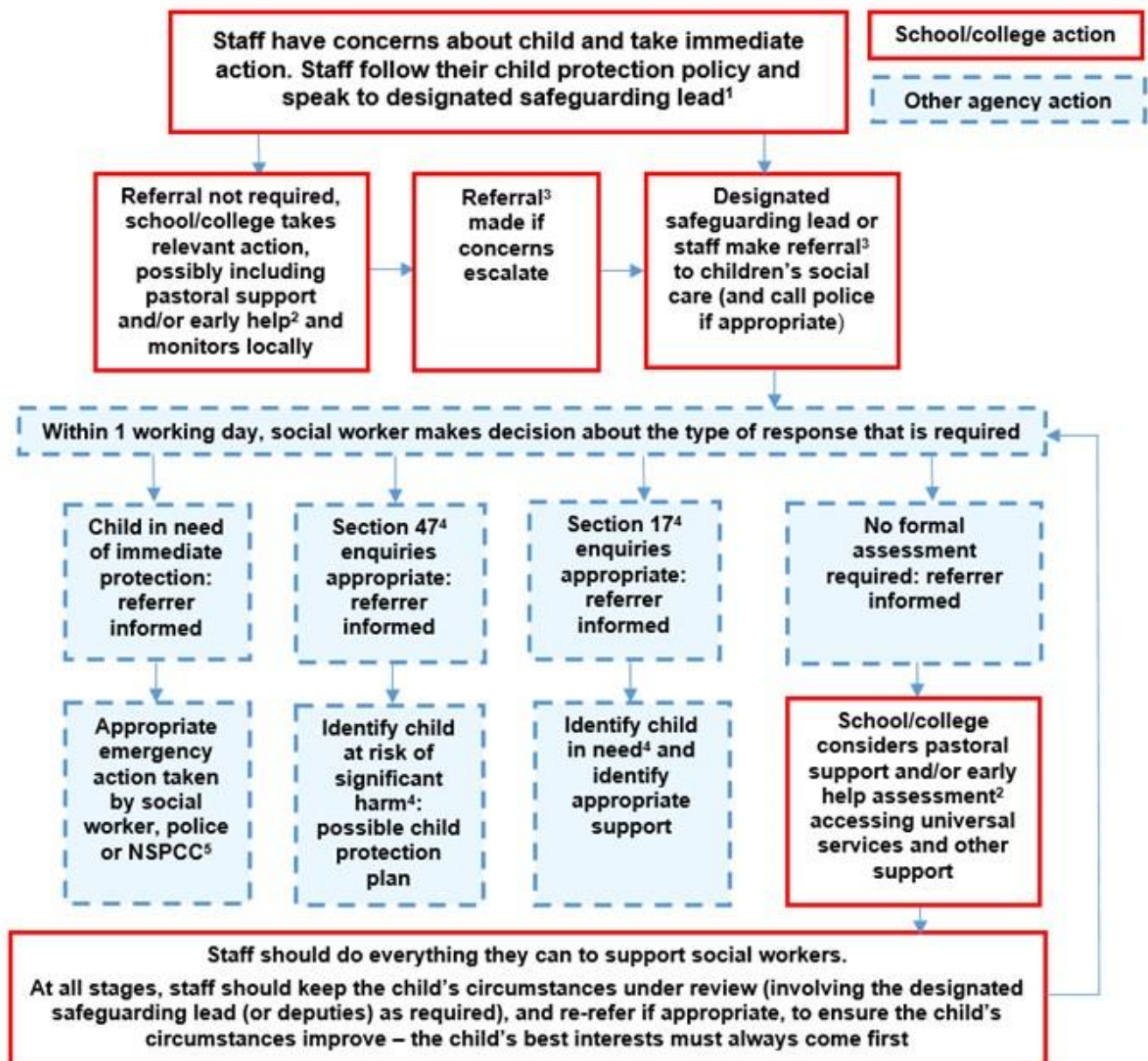
38. Links to other policies

The governing body's legal responsibility for safeguarding the welfare of children goes beyond child protection. The duty is to ensure that safeguarding permeates all activity and functions. This policy therefore complements and supports a range of other policies, for instance:

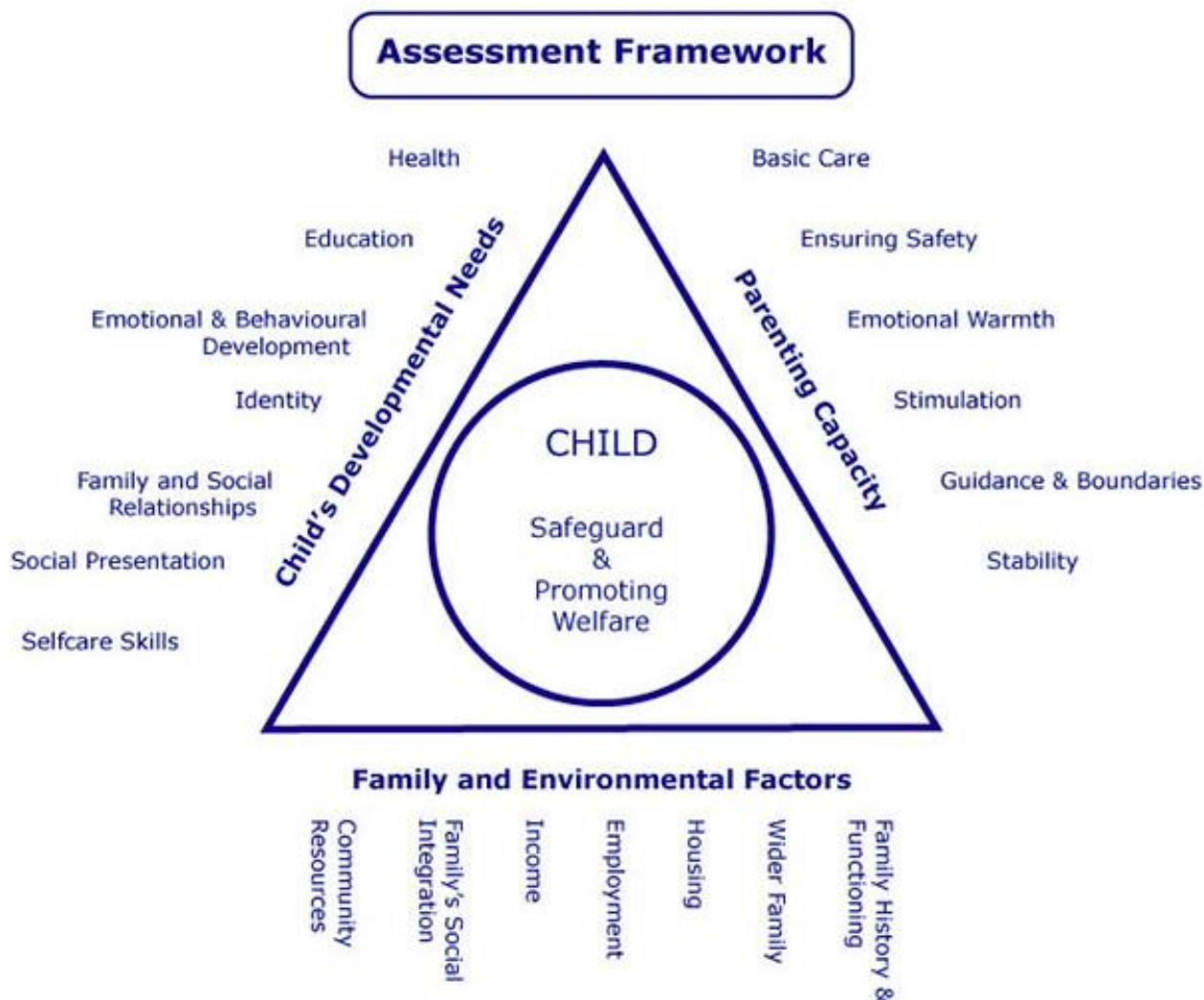
- Behaviour management, including drug use
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Racist incidents
- Preventing extremism and radicalisation
- Anti-bullying
- Physical interventions/restraint
- Special educational needs
- Trips and visits
- Work experience and work-related learning placements
- First aid and the administration of medicines
- Health and safety
- Sex and relationship education
- Site security
- Equal opportunities
- AI
- ICT and e-safety
- Extended college activities

The above list is not exclusive and when undertaking development or planning of any kind the college will need to consider the implications for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare.

Appendix 1 - Actions where there are concerns about a child



Appendix 2: The Assessment Framework (used by the safeguarding team to explain risk of harm)



Appendix 3

These appendices are based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Types of abuse

Abuse, including neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by 1 definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

Physical abuse 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.

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Emotional abuse 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
- › Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate
- › 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
- › Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- › Serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children

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
- › 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 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)
- › Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Exploitation:

Any child can be at risk of sexual or criminal exploitation, but those more at risk tend to be those who have suffered other abuse, have additional needs or have been permanently excluded from education. Possible signs are:

- Being away from home more and being in places they wouldn't usually be
 - Keeping unsociable hours, being secretive about where they have been and who with, looking very tired
 - Spending time with older people
 - Hanging around with groups of people who are not their usual friends, possibly witnessing them getting into unknown cars
 - Committing low level/violent crime
 - Being in trouble with the police/in possession of drugs or stolen goods
 - Increased phone activity
 - Getting a high number of texts or phone calls and being very secretive about who it is
 - Changes in emotional wellbeing
 - Being angry, anxious, aggressive or frightened, acting out of character
 - Going missing from school, deterioration in school performance
 - Disengaging with staff/lessons, truanting lessons or missing school
-
- Unexplained injuries
 - New and expensive possessions
 - Having money, new clothes or possessions and unable to explain where they got them from

5. Responses From Parents

Research and experience indicates that the following responses from parents may suggest a cause for concern across all four categories:

- Delay in seeking treatment that is obviously needed;
- Unawareness or denial of any injury, pain or loss of function (for example, a fractured limb);
- Incompatible explanations offered, several different explanations or the child is said to have acted in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development;
- Reluctance to give information or failure to mention other known relevant injuries;
- Frequent presentation of minor injuries;
- A persistently negative attitude towards the child;
- Unrealistic expectations or constant complaints about the child;
- Alcohol misuse or other drug/substance misuse; • Parents request removal of the child from home; or
- Violence between adults in the household.

Appendix 4 - Procedure to follow in cases of possible, alleged or suspected abuse or serious causes for concern about a child

School staff are in a unique position to identify and help children who may be being abused. Although all schools are required to have a named designated teacher with responsibility for co-ordinating child protection, this should not diminish the role all staff have in protecting children. Child abuse usually comes to the attention of school staff in one of four ways:

- a direct allegation from the child being abused,
- a third party's (e.g. friend, classmate) report,
- through the child's behaviour
- or through observation of an injury to the child.

When a child makes a disclosure, or when concerns are received from other sources, do not:

- investigate,
- ask leading questions,
- examine children,
- or promise confidentiality.

You may ask questions of a clarifying nature – such as ‘who, what, where, when, how?’ or use the acronym TED – ‘Tell me’, ‘Explain it to me’, ‘Describe it to me.’

Remember, the way in which you talk to the child may have an effect on any subsequent legal proceedings. You need to be open and non-judgemental. Children making disclosures should be reassured and, if possible at this stage, should be informed what action will be taken next.

As soon as possible write a dated and timed note of what has been disclosed or noticed, said or done and report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). It is important to act swiftly to avoid delays.

As a general guide, it is important to remember the following:

SECRETS - A child’s trust can place a heavy responsibility on school staff, particularly if they want the abuse to remain a secret. You should tell the child that if he or she is being hurt you will need to tell other people. The child may need to be reassured that you will only speak to those who need to know and that they will treat the matter confidentially.

LISTEN - Listen carefully to the child. Take what he or she says seriously as it is rare for a child to make entirely false allegations.

REASSURE - Reassure the child that he or she was right to tell and is not to blame for what happened, but do not promise confidentiality.

RECORD - As soon as possible after talking with the child, make a written record of what was said at the time, when and where the conversation took place and who was present. This must be accurate and not interpretation or assumption. Note any colloquial/slang words used by students and any language/behaviour inappropriate for the child’s age – do not convert them into proper terms. Remember this may be used in any subsequent legal proceedings so note down too, how the child was behaving and the way in which they told you what was happening. This may indicate how the child was feeling.

For injuries in specific areas, record the location accurately – DO NOT take photographs or examine the child yourself.

REMEMBER - It takes courage and determination for a child to tell an adult that they are being, or have been, abused. When they do tell someone, it is usually a person who they feel they can trust and whom they feel is reliable. For reasons of confidentiality, only those people who need to know about the abuse should be told, and conversations about the child should always be held in private.

If the concern involves the conduct of a member of staff or volunteer, a visitor, a governor, a trainee or another young person or child, the principal must be informed asap; if the concern is in reaction to the principal, you must speak to the chair of governors. If you feel you cannot speak with your chair of governors, you must use your whistleblowing procedure and contact Duty & Assessment/LADO for advice and support.

Appendix 4 – Allegations about a member of staff/volunteer

1. Inappropriate behaviour by staff/volunteers could take the following forms:

- **Physical**

For example the intentional use of force as a punishment, slapping, use of objects to hit with, throwing objects or rough physical handling.

- **Emotional**

For example intimidation, belittling, scapegoating, sarcasm, lack of respect for children's rights, and attitudes that discriminate on the grounds of race, gender, disability or sexuality

- **Sexual**

For example sexualised behaviour towards students, sexual harassment, sexual assault and rape.

- **Neglect**

For example failing to act to protect a child or children, failing to seek medical attention or failure to carry out an appropriate risk assessment.

2. If a child makes an allegation about a member of staff, governor, visitor or volunteer the principal should be informed immediately. The principal should carry out an urgent initial consideration in order to establish whether there is substance to the allegation. The principal should not carry out the investigation him/herself or interview students.

3. The principal must exercise, and be accountable for, their professional judgement on the action to be taken, as follows:

- If the actions of the member of staff, and the consequences of the actions, raise credible child protection concerns the principal will notify the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Team.

- The LADO Team will liaise with the chair of governors and advise about action to be taken, and may initiate internal referrals within children's social care to address the needs of children likely to have been affected.

- If the actions of the member of staff, and the consequences of the actions, do not raise credible child protection concerns, but do raise other issues in relation to the conduct of the member of staff or the student (s), these should be addressed through the school's own internal procedures.

- If the principal decides that the allegation is without foundation and no further formal action is necessary, all those involved should be informed of this conclusion, and the reasons for the decision should be recorded on the child protection file.

4. Where an allegation has been made against the principal, then the chair of governors takes on the role of liaising with the LADO team in determining the appropriate way forward. For details of the procedure, please refer to the LSCB Website and refer to your whistleblowing procedures.