



SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

2023/24

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SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Responsibility

**SMT member: Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
(For details see Appendix 2)**

Together with: All Staff

Aim

Hereford Sixth Form College has a statutory and moral duty to ensure that the College functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people receiving education and training at the College. All our learners have the right to feel safe and protected whilst at College. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and the best interests of the child or young person are paramount. Everyone who comes into contact with children, young people and their family and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children and young people.

The College has a duty to work with local safeguarding partnerships in order to ensure that safeguarding procedures are effective and support and protect our learners during their time at the College. This policy and the accompanying procedures are in line with the Herefordshire Safeguarding Childrens Partnership procedures. There are three local safeguarding partners jointly leading the partnership which are: Herefordshire Council: Represented by the Director of Children's Services, West Mercia Police: Represented by the Superintendent Policing Commander for Herefordshire Local Policing Area and the Herefordshire Clinical Commissioning Group: Represented by the Head of Safeguarding & Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Adults and Children.

The College is aware of its duties to report and refer safeguarding concerns as appropriate and in line with the Herefordshire Safeguarding Childrens Partnership guidance threshold guidance which can be accessed through the link below:

Right Help Right Time Levels of Need Framework

This threshold document includes: the process for the early help assessment and the type and level of early help services to be provided and the criteria, including the level of need, for when a case should be referred to the Herefordshire Multi-agency Service Hub (MASH) team for assessment, Guidance regarding making a referral can also be accessed via the link above

The MASH team staff, following a referral made, will gather information from every agency and use this to decide the most appropriate intervention to respond to the child's identified needs. The MASH team can immediately

trigger a response when required which means they are able to respond to a child's needs quickly and effectively.

In the case of a student living outside of Herefordshire the appropriate local safeguarding children partnership board's guidance and referral process will be accessed, referred to and followed in order to report safeguarding and child protection concerns to the appropriate children's social care team/safeguarding partnership.

The College is aware that they will also may have vulnerable adults who we may need to support to keep them safe from harm and significant harm.

The Care Act 2014 informs us of the safeguarding duties which apply to an adult who is over 18 years of age, who:

- Has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs); and
- Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

(Source: [Care and support statutory guidance](#) page 229)

Thus all adult students who meet the above criteria may be defined as an Adult at Risk.

In circumstances where there is concern that this adult may be at risk of harm or significant harm, advice and an appropriate referral may be made to the Herefordshire Safeguarding adult board for support and action or the Adult safeguarding board in the local authority in which that young person resides. A link to the Herefordshire Safeguarding Adult board website is detailed below:

[Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Board](#)

It is important for guidance that this policy is read in conjunction with the Code of Conduct for Staff and other key safeguarding related policies which are detailed at the end of this Policy. Copies of related policies are available for staff to access through the [Staff Portal](#). **Staff development includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities (inc in relation to filtering and monitoring) at induction with at least, annual updates.**

Policy Scope

Throughout this policy, reference is made to "children and young people". This term is used to mean "those under the age of 18" but the governing body recognises that some adults are also vulnerable to abuse as detailed above.

The Working Together to Safeguard Children Guidance Policy 2018 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>) and Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2023 ([Keeping children safe in education 2023](#))

and the accompanying procedures are key statutory documents for safeguarding children in schools and colleges. Their major aim is to encourage

a consistent approach and a standard of good practice in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and will be fully regarded when carrying out Hereford Sixth Form College's duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

For the purpose of this policy safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as: protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

(Source: *Keeping Children safe in Education*).

Child Protection is defined as –

- the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. (*Working Together, DfE 2018*)

Hereford Sixth Form College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its children. We believe that:

- all children/young people have an equal right to be protected from harm
- children/young people need support which matches their individual needs, including those who may have experienced abuse
- all children/young people have the right to speak freely and voice their values and beliefs
- where there is a safeguarding concern, governing bodies, proprietors and school or college leaders should ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide
- 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
- schools or colleges can and do contribute to the prevention of abuse, victimisation, bullying, exploitation, extreme behaviours, discriminatory views and risk-taking behaviours which may be perceived to be 'risky'
- all staff, volunteers and visitors have an important role to play in safeguarding children and protecting them from abuse
- the college/service have a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment

Safeguarding Adults at risk

The College is committed to working together with other professionals and agencies in promoting and safeguarding adult students at risk and their welfare and safeguarding them from abuse and neglect.

Adults' safeguarding legislation and government guidance says that with regard to adults at risk safeguarding means:

- Stop abuse and neglect wherever possible;
- Prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs;
- Safeguard adults in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they live; and
- Promote an approach that concentrates on improving life for the adults concerned. (*Care Act 2014*).

The Role of the Local Governing Board

The Local Governing Board is committed to ensuring that the College:

- provides a safe environment for children and young people to learn in;
- identifies children and young people who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm;
- takes appropriate action to see that such children and young people are kept safe, both at home and at the College.

In pursuit of these aims, the Local Governing Board will receive an annual monitoring safeguarding report from the designated safeguarding lead and approve and annually review the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures with the aim of:

- raising awareness of issues relating to the welfare of children and young people and the promotion of a safe environment for the children and young people learning within the College;
- aiding the identification of children and young people at risk of significant harm, and providing procedures for reporting concerns;
- establishing procedures for reporting and dealing with low level concerns regarding staff and managing allegations of abuse against members of staff;
- ensuring the safe recruitment of staff.

In developing the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures, the Local Governing Board has taken account of guidance issued by the Department for Education, government legislation and information released by other relevant bodies and groups. The procedures have been developed in co-operation with the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Board. The College will refer concerns that a child/young person may be in need or may be at risk of significant harm to

Children's or Adults Social Care, the police authorities or to other appropriate agencies and in line with local procedures and protocols. In the case of the student living outside Herefordshire referrals would be made to the appropriate local authority in whose area they reside.

Designated Senior Members of staff with Lead Responsibility for Safeguarding and Child protection issues (for summary see Appendix 2):

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is ***John Pratt***

A member of the College Senior Management Team, John has a key duty to take lead responsibility for raising awareness within the staff of issues relating to the welfare of children and young people, and the promotion of a safe environment for the children and young people learning within the College. **He takes lead responsibility for child protection and safeguarding, including filtering and monitoring systems.**

He has received training in safeguarding children issues and inter-agency working, as required by the Safeguarding Children and Young People in Herefordshire Partnership, and will receive refresher training at least every year. He has undertaken Prevent Awareness training. He will keep up to date with developments in Safeguarding and Child protection issues and ensure that her knowledge and skills are refreshed (via e-bulletins, meeting with other Designated Safeguarding Leads and taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals as required but at least on an annual basis. This will allow her to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to her role.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:

- overseeing the referral of cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies including Local Safeguarding Children's Partnerships and Adults safeguarding team depending on where the student resides; support other designated staff in making referrals to the Local Authority when appropriate;
- referring cases to the Channel Programme where there is a concern of radicalisation in collaboration with the Single Point of Contact for Prevent;
- referring cases where a crime has been committed to the Police as required;
- liaise with the Senior Mental Health Lead and mental health support team where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health
- consider and put in place early help support for students and undertake as appropriate assessments under the Early Help processes.
- liaise with the Principal to inform her of issues especially ongoing enquiries under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations;
- providing advice and support to other staff on issues relating to safeguarding children and child protection concerns;
- providing and developing systems to ensure that the safeguarding team maintains proper records of any Safeguarding and child protection

- referral, complaint or concern (even where that concern does not lead to a referral). These records will be kept in a secure designated area;
- ensuring that parents of children and young people within the College are aware of the College's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy by making it available publicly via the College website or on request from reception;
 - liaising with Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Board and other appropriate agencies with regards to safeguarding concerns;
 - liaising with secondary schools to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for student transition to College including liaising with them to ensure the transfer of any safeguarding files for individual students;
 - ensuring that when children leave the College their child protection file is transferred to the new educational establishment as soon as possible. The file will be transferred separately from the main student file with secure transfer and confirmation of receipt obtained;
 - in collaboration with the Employer Engagement (Work Experience/Voluntary Work Advisor, liaising with employers and training organisations that receive children or young people from the College on placements to ensure that appropriate safeguards are put in place;
 - ensuring that staff undertake appropriate universal training in safeguarding children issues and have access to and are aware of and understand the College safeguarding and Child Protection procedures;
 - supporting relevant staff (usually the Pastoral and safeguarding support team) to consider early help support for students and undertake assessments under the Early Help processes.
 - be aware of students who have a social worker and providing support and guidance to staff in order to consider any adjustments required to support this cohort of students so they are able to reach their potential.
 - help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues with teachers and school and college leadership staff.
 - Where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child making a referral in collaboration with the Principal, to the disclosure and barring service as required.

At the end of each academic year, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will provide an annual report to the governing body setting out how the College has discharged its duties. He is responsible for reporting deficiencies in procedure or policy identified by the Safeguarding Children and Young People Partnership (or others) to the Board at the earliest opportunity.

Deputy designated staff members with responsibility for safeguarding and child protection issues and concerns:

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are:

Matt Bunston (Safeguarding and Pastoral Support Manager)
Phil Tranter (Vice Principal)

Gemma Cosgrove-Ball (Lead Tutor)
Jane McDonnell (Lead Tutor)
Jade Finney (Lead Tutor)
Trish Donnelly (Lead Tutor)
Pippa Denman (Head of Learning Support).

John Pratt is the Single Point of Contact for the Prevent Duty and is a member of the Herefordshire Channel Panel and represents the four post-16 colleges at the Herefordshire Prevent Steering Committee.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads:

- work with and reports to the designated safeguarding lead with regards to their safeguarding work within the college;
- know how to make an appropriate referral to the local safeguarding Children Partnership or to the Local Safeguarding Adults Board and make these referrals as appropriate when managing safeguarding and child protection concerns for students;
- refer cases to the Channel Programme where there is a concern of radicalisation in collaboration with the Designated Safeguarding Lead/ Single Point of Contact for Prevent;
- contribute to maintaining a log of all initial reports of safeguarding and child protection concerns (even when these concerns do not lead to a referral) and any referrals made. These records are kept in a designated secure area;
- are available to provide advice and support to other staff on issues relating to safeguarding children and young people;
- have particular responsibility to be available to listen to children and young people studying at the College;
- will deal with individual cases, including attending Child Protection case conferences, core group review meetings and Child in Need meetings as appropriate;
- have also received training in safeguarding children issues and inter-agency working as required by Herefordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership appropriate to their role as a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and will receive refresher training every year.
- consider and put in place early help support for students and undertake as appropriate assessments under the Early Help processes.

It is important to recognise that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young persons is **everyone's responsibility**. Everyone who comes in contact with students at the college and their families has a role to play in identifying safeguarding concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. As part of the wider safeguarding team, a team of Personal Tutors/Lead Tutors works collaboratively with the directors of studies, teaching and support staff to support students with personal welfare and lower level safeguarding concerns in order that all students can flourish and reach their outcomes whilst they are at the college. A diagram to illustrate pastoral and safeguarding support at HSFC can be found in Appendix 1

Designated Governor

The local governing body at Hereford Sixth Form College has nominated a named Governor to have special responsibility for safeguarding children and young people's issues, ***Danielle Thompson***.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead holds the Designated Governor's contact details.

The Designated Governor is responsible for liaising with the Principal and Designated Safeguarding Lead over matters regarding safeguarding children and young people at the College including:

- ensuring that the College has procedures and policies which are consistent with the Safeguarding Children and Young People in Herefordshire Partnership's procedures;
- ensuring that the governing body considers and reviews at the College policy on safeguarding children and young people on an annual basis;
- ensuring that each year the governing body is informed as to how the College and its staff have complied with the policy;
- Ensuring that the College has appropriate IT filters and monitoring systems in place and review their effectiveness.

To assist in these duties, the Designated Governor has undertaken appropriate training.

The Designated Governor in collaboration with Hereford Sixth Form College's Chair of Governors is responsible for overseeing the liaison between appropriate agencies such as the police, social services, as defined by the Safeguarding Children and Young Peoples Partnership, in the event of any allegation against the Principal. This will not involve undertaking any form of investigation but will ensure good communication between the parties and provide information to assist enquiries.

Types of abuse and neglect:

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

(Source: Keeping Children Safe in Education)

The Local Governing Board recognise that there are a variety of categories or abuse and safeguarding issues and concerns which staff, volunteers and governors need to be aware of in order for them to fully fulfil their safeguarding roles and responsibilities. Details of the categories of abuse and specific

safeguarding concerns can be found in Appendix 3 of this policy for reference and use by staff.

Children with special educational needs and disabilities

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

These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- being more prone to peer group isolation than other children;
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs;
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers;
- may not feel ready or know how to tell someone they are being exploited, abused or neglected and they may not recognise their experiences as harmful.

To address these additional challenges, the college has a range of extra pastoral support for children with SEN and disabilities.

Children Looked after, care leavers, previously looked after children and those students who have an allocated social worker

When dealing with looked after children, care leavers and previously looked after children, the college recognises that it is important that all agencies work together and prompt action is taken when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.

At Hereford Sixth Form College we also recognise that when a child has a social worker, it is an indicator that the child may be more at risk than most students. This may mean that they may be more vulnerable to further harm, as well as facing educational barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and poor mental health. We take these needs into account when making plans to support pupils who do have a social worker.

The College has a designated teacher appointed to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after, a care leaver or have been previously in looked after care. The responsibility of the designated teacher is also to promote the educational achievement of children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales. Details of the designated teacher can be seen in Appendix 2.

The designated teacher has undertaken appropriate training and attends regular training meetings throughout the academic year in order for them to be effective and has the relevant qualifications and experience to undertake the role.

Responding to concerns regarding the welfare of a child/young person

If a member of staff has concerns regarding the safety or welfare of a child/young person they will report those concerns to the student's Lead Tutors or the Safeguarding and Pastoral Support Manager. If further action or clarification is required the Lead Tutors or the Safeguarding and Pastoral Support Manager will speak to the child/young person and their parents/carers unless to do so would compromise the safety or wellbeing of the child/young person.

The member of staff can raise a safeguarding concern and create a record of the concern by opening a safeguarding concern for any student on the staff portal, detailing information regarding the nature of the concern, and sending this to the student's Lead Tutor or the Safeguarding and Pastoral Support Manager so that appropriate action can be taken. For those members of staff who do not have access to the staff portal they will be required to complete Form 1 in order to report a safeguarding concern for action and consideration and so that a formal record of that concern can be kept. A copy of Form 1 can be found in Appendix 6.

Should the child/young person be deemed to be in need, or it is suspected that a child/young person may be suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, then a referral will be made by the student's Lead Tutors or the Safeguarding and Pastoral Support Manager/Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead to the appropriate social care team which will be dependent on the student's age and their locality and the Police if appropriate depending on the nature of the concern.

See **Appendix 4** for flow chart summarising action to be taken when dealing with a safeguarding/child protection concern.

In exceptional circumstances such as in an emergency or a genuine concern that appropriate action has not been taken, staff members can speak directly with children's social care through contacting the MASH team on (01432) 260800 or the Adult team on (01432) 260100. If the student is at risk of immediate danger or harm then the Police should be called. For alternative local authority areas staff members can use the following link to access referral information: www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council

If a member of staff feels unable to raise an issue with the Designated Safeguarding persons or feels that their concerns are not being addressed, other **whistleblowing procedures** are open to them.

The College has its own internal **whistle blowing procedures** which can be accessed on the staff area of the VLE. However if a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with the College, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them which can be accessed via the following link : [Advice on Whistleblowing](#); and the [NSPCC's what you can do to report abuse dedicated helpline](#) is also available as an alternative route for staff. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

Dealing with a disclosure of abuse and procedure for reporting concerns

In summary, College staff hearing an allegation from a child that abuse has, or may have, occurred should:

- **RECEIVE** what is said;
 - accept what is said – you do not need to decide whether or not it is true;
 - listen without displaying shock or disbelief.
- **REASSURE** the student;
 - acknowledge his/her courage in telling;
 - not promise confidentiality;
 - remind him/her that he/she is not to blame – avoid criticising the alleged perpetrator;
 - not promise that “everything will be alright now” (it might not be).
- **REACT** and respond to the student but do not interrogate him/her;
 - avoid leading questions but ask open ended ones (such as Tell me..., Explain..., Describe... etc.);
 - clarify anything you do not understand;
 - explain what you will do next.
- **RECORD** the discussion;
 - make a record of what was stated as soon as possible – during the interview if you can;
 - include:
 - Name of student
 - Time;
 - Date;
 - Place;
 - the student’s own words as to what was said
 - describe observable behaviour;
 - do not destroy your original notes – they may be needed later on and should be passed to the DSL/DDSL.
 - Summarise details of the safeguarding concern by opening a safeguarding concern against the students profile from the staff portal, including the appropriate Lead Tutors in the concern.
- **SUPPORT** the student:
 - consider what support is needed for the student; ensure you are supported – such interviews can be extremely stressful.

- Support can be accessed through the Safeguarding and Pastoral Support Manager or College Counselling service
- Immediately talk to the student's Lead Tutors or to the Safeguarding and Pastoral Support Manager/Deputy Designated Safeguarding lead if they are not available to pass on the concerns and your record of the concerns raised.

Early help and the Early Help Assessment

It is most important that children/young people who are in need of extra services are identified early and helped before things reach crisis point and provide early help. Early help means providing support as soon as the problem emerges at any point in a child's life.

The College works with a range of early help agencies and has access to internal early help services also including counselling services, a student mental health and well being advisor, college chaplain and physical wellbeing manager. The College has an early help offer which can be accessed on the college website.

The Early Help Assessment (EHA) is a process to support the child/young person and their family, identify what help and support is needed and enables a co-ordinated family support plan to be drawn up. The EHA covers all aspects that affect a child's development from health, education and social development, through to housing and family relationships. The Lead Tutors or Safeguarding and Pastoral Support Manager will consider in each case whether undertaking an EHA would be appropriate to support the student with safeguarding issues and concerns identified. This will be monitored by the Designated Safeguarding Lead on a weekly basis. More information on instigating an EHA with the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership is available by accessing the following link:

[Early help for families - Herefordshire Safeguarding \(herefordshiresafeguardingboards.org.uk\)](http://herefordshiresafeguardingboards.org.uk)

[Behaviour and support – Herefordshire Council](#)

If the student lives in an alternative local authority area, the local safeguarding children's partnership procedures where they reside will be followed.

If early help or any other support is appropriate, the case will be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care if the child's situation does not appear to be improving.

Escalation procedures

If appropriate action has been taken, but there are concerns about the response of another agency following a referral, the College is able to refer to the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children and Young People Partnership

guidance which supports the resolution of case disagreements and further information and guidance regarding this process can be accessed via the West Mercia procedures for resolution of disagreements with professionals which can be accessed via the following link:

Professional Differences Policy Multi-Agency Resolution Protocol/Guidance - New June 2020

Information Sharing

Research and experience have shown that keeping children/young people safe from harm requires professionals and others to share information about a child/young person's health and development, and exposure to possible harm. It is therefore important that, should a member of staff have concerns regarding a child/young person's welfare, the student's Lead Tutors or the Safeguarding and Pastoral Support Manager is informed in order to ensure that support is given to the child/young person in a timely manner.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

Government guidance with regards to information sharing can be accessed through the following link:

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

Reporting and dealing with an allegation against a member of staff, a Governor or a volunteer

Allegations that meet the harms threshold:

Staff, governors and volunteers should be aware that abuse is a serious matter that can lead to a criminal conviction. Should concerns arise regarding any allegation of abuse by a staff member Part 5 of the statutory guidance: **Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2023)** must be followed and the specific local safeguarding children's Partnership guidance initiated.

If a member of staff has any concerns with regards to the conduct of another member of staff, they should consult the College Whistle Blowing Policy and Procedures for guidance. These procedures are intended to provide a structure for the handling of allegations of suspected malpractice by members of staff of the College.

The principal guidelines in dealing with any allegation against a member of staff, a Governor or a volunteer are as follows:

1. All allegations of abuse of students by staff, governors or volunteers will be taken seriously and treated in accordance with the local safeguarding children Partnership procedures in line with the statutory guidance: Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023). Herefordshire

Safeguarding Children Partnership guidance for dealing with an allegation and the LADO referral form and guidance documents can be accessed through the following link:

[LADO / Managing Allegations \(procedures.org.uk\)](https://www.procedures.org.uk)

These procedures will be used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that anyone working in the college that provides education for children under 18 years of age, including governors and volunteers has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
 - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
 - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; or
 - behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (which may include behaviour that may have happened outside of College, that might make an individual unsuitable to work with children. This is known as transferable risk)
2. In the first instance, where allegations of abuse are made against a member of staff, governor or volunteer and if staff members have concerns about another staff member, then this should be referred to the **Principal**. Where there are concerns about the Principal this should be referred directly to the Chair of Governors.
 3. The Principal will report without delay and seek an initial discussion with the Designated Officer (LADO) to discuss the allegation. The purpose of this initial discussion is to consider the nature and content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action.
 4. The Designated Officer will advise on three strands in the consideration of an allegation: (i) a police investigation of a possible criminal offence; (ii) enquiries and assessment by Children's Social Care concerning whether the student is in need of protection; (iii) consideration of disciplinary action in respect of the individual, which includes guidance regarding the possible suspension of a member of staff/volunteer.
 5. Hereford Sixth Form College's Head of Human Resources will ensure that the person who is the subject of the allegation is informed of the allegation and the subsequent progress of the case and ensure that there is effective appropriate support for them. If the person is a member of a union, he/she should be advised to make contact with that body at the outset.
 6. Hereford Sixth Form College will ensure that every effort is made to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.
 7. Hereford Sixth Form College will ensure that any allegation will be followed through regardless of whether the subject of the allegation chooses to resign or ceases to provide his/her services.
 8. Hereford Sixth Form College will **not** enter into so called 'compromise agreements' (by which the person against whom an allegation of abuse has been made agrees to resign, the College agrees not to pursue disciplinary action and both parties agree a form of words to be used in a reference).

9. Hereford Sixth Form College will work under the direction of the Designated Officer and engage fully with strategy discussion and information-sharing protocols.
10. If the allegation is substantiated Hereford Sixth Form College will ensure that the relevant authorities have been notified (usually via the Designated Officer) including a referral to the DBS for anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult; where the harm test is satisfied in respect of that individual; where the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence; and that individual has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity or would have been removed had they not left.
11. If the outcome concludes that the person who has been suspended can return to work, Hereford Sixth Form College will consider how best to facilitate this, including consideration of supportive measures to deal with stress issues.
12. If an allegation is determined to be false, the Designated Officer should refer the matter to Children's Social Care to determine whether the child concerned is in need of services or may have been abused by someone else.
13. At the conclusion of the case Hereford Sixth Form College management and governors will consider the lessons of the case and how they should be acted upon.

Concerns that do not meet the harms threshold: Low Level Concerns:

Concerns may arise which do not meet the harms threshold in several ways and from a number of sources. For example: suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken.

The College encourages and promotes an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school or college (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

What is a low level concern?

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold set out in paragraph 338 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023.

A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour cited in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 may include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children;
- having favourites;
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone;
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or,
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

It is crucial that any such concerns, including those which do not meet the harm threshold (see Part Four - Section one), are shared responsibly with the Principal who will record concerns and take action to deal with them appropriately depending on the nature of the concern. This approach to managing and acting upon low level concerns will not only create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which the college's values and expected behaviour which are set out in the staff code of conduct are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff, but also to protect those working in or on behalf of schools and colleges from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

How to share a Low Level Concern:

1. In writing to the Principal, outline the details of the concern and the context.
2. If the person sharing the concern wishes to remain anonymous, this will be respected as far as possible but the individual's name must be noted;
3. The concern will be kept confidential and stored in a secure place in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (UKGDPR) and the Data Protection Act, 2018.
4. The Low Level Concern will be retained until at least the subject leaves employment.
5. If there are concerns about supply staff or contractors these should be reported to their employer to ensure that any pattern of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

Staff are also encouraged to self-refer if they feel they have been in a situation which could be misinterpreted as being compromising or if they feel that they may have behaved in a way that falls below the expected standards of professionalism.

6. Records of low level concerns will be kept under review by the Principal so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. The record should include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and action taken. The name of the individual sharing their concerns should also be noted, if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible. Where a pattern of

such behaviour is identified, the college will decide on a course of action, either through its disciplinary procedures or where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harms threshold, in which case it would be referred to the LADO.

Safer recruitment - recruitment and selection procedures:

The College's recruitment and selection procedures should take account of the following:

- they should apply to **all staff and volunteers** who may work with children;
- the post or role should be clearly defined;
- the key selection criteria for the post or role should be identified;
- vacancies should be advertised widely in order to ensure a diversity of applicants;
- documentary evidence of academic/vocational qualifications should be required;
- professional and character references should be obtained;
- **In addition, as part of our shortlisting process we do carry out an online search as part of due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the college might want to explore with the applicant at interview. We will inform shortlisted candidates that online searches will be done as part of due diligence checks. See Part two - Legislation and the Law for information on data protection and UK GDPR**
- reasonable verification should be made of previous employment history;
- a variety of selection techniques should be used (e.g. qualifications, previous experience, interview, reference checks);
- DBS checks should be made (whilst maintaining sensitive and confidential use of the applicant's disclosure) in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023 guidance, a summary of which can be seen in Appendix 6; Governors are required to have an enhanced criminal records certificate from DBS.
- In addition to obtaining the DBS certificate anyone who is appointed to carry out teaching work will also require an additional check to ensure that they are not prohibited from teaching;
- For those whose role is deemed to be a management position, a section 128 check will be carried out to ensure that they have not been prohibited or restricted from taking part in the management of an independent school, including academy or free schools. This check will include governors and such staff positions as follows: head teacher, any teaching positions on the senior leadership team, and any teaching positions which carry a department headship.
- Safer recruitment training will be undertaken to ensure awareness of the College's duties and responsibilities with regards to safer recruitment and selection by a member of the recruitment panel.

Should it be necessary and appropriate for a member of staff to begin working at the College before their Enhanced DBS Disclosure has been received then a Risk Assessment will be carried out. If the Principal agrees that the risk is '**MINIMAL**' then the Head of Department and the Employee will be informed

of the restrictions of their employment until the check has been received which could be one or more of the following:

- (i) The employee should be supervised by the Head of Department or another member of staff at all times.
- (ii) The employee should not be allowed to work 1:1 with a student (or must be supervised if unavoidable).
- (iii) The employee must not work in a closed room (i.e. the door should be left open).
- (iv) The employee should wear his/her identity badge at all times.
- (v) The employee should not work at a time when students are in College (i.e. cleaning staff).

Any employee with an assessed risk of **MEDIUM or HIGH** would not be allowed to begin work. For those supervised volunteers whose work would not be classified as being in “regulated activity” * but who may be partaking in College activities with students/staff, the College will ensure that, in line with the law and as stated in the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in education (Sept 2023):

- There will be supervision by a person who is in regulated activity
- The supervision will be regular and day to day
- The supervision will be “reasonable in all circumstances to ensure the protection of children”

(*The full legal definition of regulated activity is set out in Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. HM Government have produced a factual note on Regulated Activity in relation to Children: scope. Regulated activity includes: a) teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children if the person is unsupervised, or providing advice or guidance on well-being, or driving a vehicle only for children, b) work for a limited range of establishments (known as ‘specified places’, which include schools and Colleges), with the opportunity for contact with children, but not including work done by supervised volunteers; Work under (a) or (b) is regulated activity only if done regularly. Source: Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) : Department for Education)

Following an employee’s initial employment checks upon commencing employment with the College; they are required to disclose to the Principal immediately if they have been convicted or cautioned of any new offences during the period of employment. Additionally, they must inform the College of any pending investigation or action from the police or any court that might reasonably be agreed as impacting upon their suitability to undertake their role. Failure to do so may lead to disciplinary action which may place their employment with the College at risk.

All staff must abide by the Staff code of conduct a copy of which is always accessible on the VLE and is distributed to staff when updated on an annual basis.

Training and development

All new members of staff will be required to complete a safeguarding and child protection training session and will receive a copy of the College’s Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures, Staff Code of Conduct as well as a copy of Keeping Children safe in Education Part 1 (Sept 2023) including Annex A at induction. All members of staff receive a copy of this information on an annual basis to keep them informed of any changes to safeguarding practices and procedures.

In addition to the training undertaken by the designated staff and by the Governor with special responsibility for safeguarding children and young people's issues, the Principal and all staff working with children will receive training to familiarise them with safeguarding and child protection issues and their responsibilities and the College procedures and policies. Staff will receive updates via email, staff meetings and e-bulletins to keep their skills up to date at least on an annual basis to provide them with the skills and knowledge to safeguard children and young people effectively.

Safer Recruitment training is available to all relevant staff and governors who are involved in the recruitment process.

Educating students – The Curriculum

At Hereford Sixth Form College students are taught about safeguarding, including online, through various teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. Children are taught to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it. The Impact tutorial programme has allocated compulsory group tutorial sessions where personal, social, health and economic development topics can be delivered and explored with students. The programme covers topics designed to promote and support their personal well-being including: Equality & Diversity; Internet Safety; Safe Relationships; Sexual Health; Mental Health; Drugs & Alcohol Awareness and Healthy Living as well as careers education

Monitoring and review

Hereford Sixth Form College will be responsible for monitoring this policy. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and reported to the Corporation for approval

Other related College policies and procedures:

- Peer on Peer Abuse Policy
- Complaints against the College Procedures
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Health and Safety Policy and Procedures
- Data Protection Policy
- Access to College Information Policy
- Disciplinary (Senior Post holders) Procedures
- Disciplinary (Staff) Procedures
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Procedures
- Prevent Strategy
- Whistle Blowing Policy and Procedures
- First Aid Policy and Procedures
- Substance Misuse Policy and Procedures
- Trips and Visits Policy and Procedures

- Work Experience Policy and Procedures
- Tutorial Policy and Procedures
- Exclusion Policy and Procedures
- Student behaviour, absence and review Policy and Procedures
- Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedures
- Health, Well-being and Fitness to study Protocol
- Run, Hide, Tell Procedures
- IT Acceptable Usage Policy and Procedures
- Online Safety Policy and Procedures (Staff and Learner documents)

(Awaiting approval by governors at the October 2023 Local Governing Body meeting)

Distressed or disruptive students - physical contact:

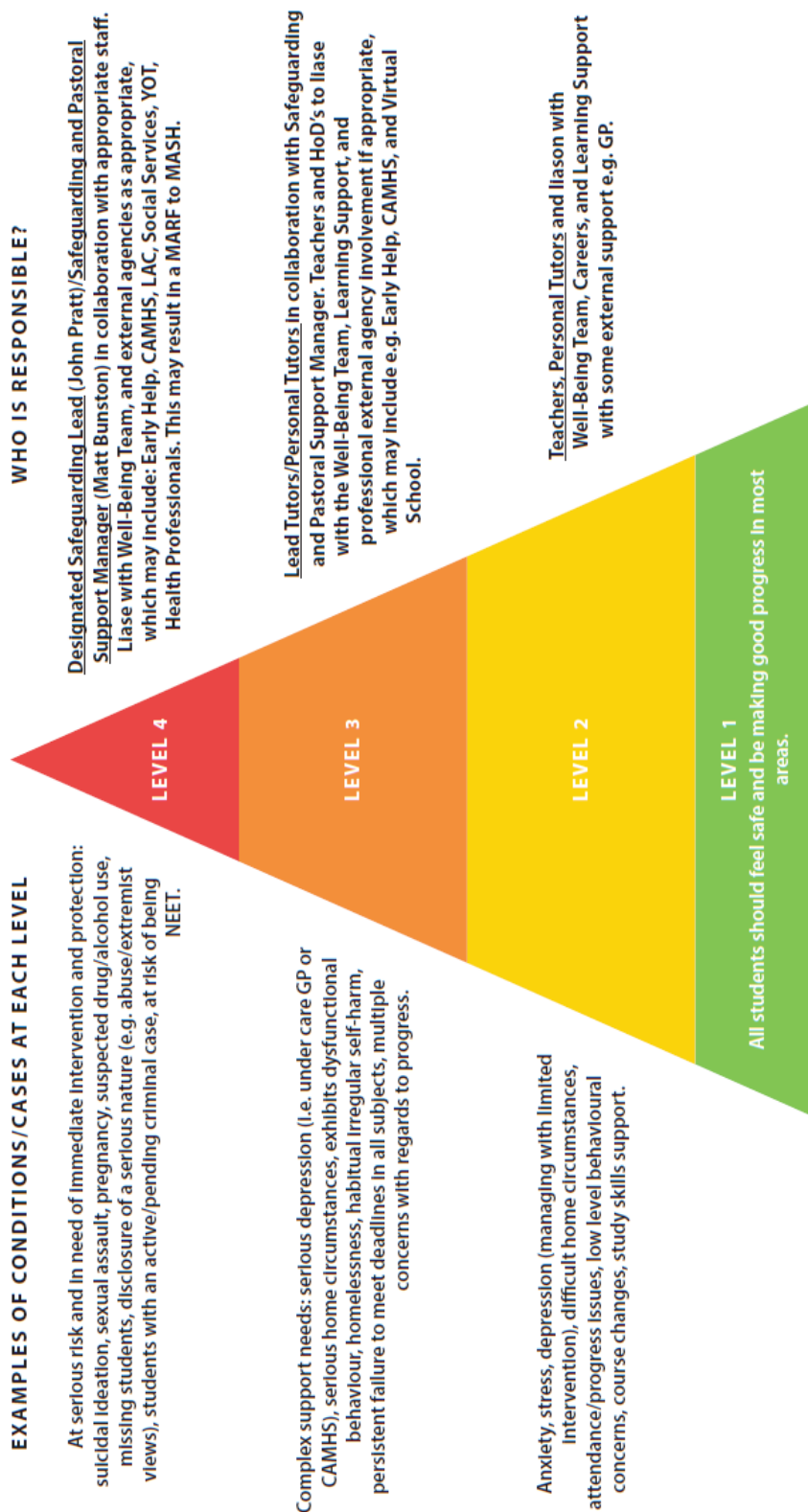
It is not necessary for members of staff or volunteers to have physical contact with any student, outside their job description even when the student is distressed, and this should be avoided at all times.

If dealing with a challenging student:

- Try to defuse the situation before it escalates.
- Never compromise your own safety;
- If you have to use reasonable physical restraint to prevent a student harming themselves or another, report this immediately to your line manager.
- Contact reception in the case of a fight breaking out.

Pastoral and Safeguarding Support at Hereford Sixth Form College

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SUPPORT AND INTERVENTION



DESIGNATED PERSONS WITH RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION ISSUES

Designated Safeguarding Lead:

John Pratt
Telephone Ext: 224
Email: jpp@hereford.ac.uk

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads:

Matt Bunston
(Safeguarding and Pastoral Support Manager)
Tel Ext: 234
Email: matt.bunston@hereford.ac.uk

Phil Tranter (Vice Principal)
Tel Ext: 240
Email: pjt@hereford.ac.uk

Gemma Cosgrove-Ball (Lead Tutor) g.cosgrove-ball@hereford.ac.uk
Jane McDonnell (Lead Tutor) j.mcdonnell@hereford.ac.uk
Jade Finney (Lead Tutor) j.finney@hereford.ac.uk
Trish Donnelly (Lead Tutor) t.donnelly@hereford.ac.uk
Tel Ext: 238

Pippa Denman (Head of Learning Support) p.denman@hereford.ac.uk
Tel Ext: 204

Nominated Governor:

- Danielle Thompson d.thompson@hereford.ac.uk

Designated lead teacher with responsibility for children looked after/care leaver:

- Helen Osborn (Academic Progress Manager)
hmo@hereford.ac.uk

Single Point of Contact for Prevent (SPOC) is:

- John Pratt

Types of Abuse and Neglect and specific safeguarding issues:

The College recognises the term 'victim' to refer to those who have been subjected to abuse whilst also acknowledging that not every victim will recognise themselves as such. We use the term 'Perpetrator' and 'alleged perpetrator' and also acknowledge that in some circumstances, abusive behaviour will have also been harmful to the perpetrator and as such appropriate support will be put in place, in accordance with advice from the local authority's safeguarding board (Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023)

Sexual Abuse:

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue (also known as peer on peer abuse) which the college is aware of and guidelines with dealing with such cases are detailed later in this appendix and within the College Peer on Peer abuse Policy,

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:

- may involve the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development;
- may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person;
- may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate;

- may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children; these may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction;
- may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another;
- may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

(It should be noted that some form of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child although it may also occur alone.)

Neglect:

Involves 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, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Additional forms of abuse/Safeguarding concerns:

It must also be noted that there are a number of other safeguarding concerns which may impact on the well-being, health and safety of a child or young person and which may result in the child being in need or at risk of harm or significant harm. As detailed in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019 and these safeguarding issues may cover any of the following areas:

(N.B. Hyperlinks have been included to relevant government guidance notes etc. in each of the following safeguarding areas bullet pointed below, for reference and use)

- **Bullying including cyber bullying**
- **Domestic abuse**
- **Drugs**
- Fabricated or induced illness
- **Faith abuse**
- **Female genital mutilation** - Female genital mutilation refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The practice is illegal in the UK. FGM is practised in at least 28 African countries as well as other countries in the Middle East and Asia. Staff need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already suffering FGM. Under the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2023) if a teacher or member of staff in the course of their work in the profession, discovers

that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out or has concerns that an act of FGM may be carried out, on a girl under the age of 18 the teacher must report this to the Police. In College this can be done with the support of the Safeguarding and Pastoral Support Manager.

- **Forced marriage** Since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages. **The right to choose: gov guidance on forced marriage - 2023 Forced Marriage Guidance**
- **Honour based abuse:** So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so called HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Where staff are concerned that a child might be at risk of HBA, they must contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead as a matter of urgency.
- **Gangs and youth violence**
- **Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VWAG)**
- **Hate Crime**
- **Mental Health**
- **Missing Children and adults**
- **Children and the courts**
- **Children with family members in prison**
- **Private fostering**
- **Preventing Radicalisation and the Prevent duty** (see info below)
- **Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people**
- **Relationship abuse**
- **Homelessness**
- **Trafficking**

Abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another. Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside college and/or can occur between children outside the school or college. All staff should consider the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Additional information regarding contextual safeguarding is available here: **Contextual Safeguarding**. The College will assess the risks and issues in the wider community when consider the well-being and safety of its pupils.

Further information on Preventing Radicalisation

The Counter–Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on Sixth Form Colleges to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.” This duty is known as the Prevent Duty.

The Lead Tutors for Operational delivery of Prevent - related duty (See Appendix 1) is the single point of contact for Prevent and is a member of the Local Authority Prevent Panel.

A separate Prevent Strategy has been compiled to encompass our responsibilities with regards to the Prevent Duty and can be accessed on the College VLE (Staff Policies and Procedures: Safeguarding - Prevent Strategy).

Children and young people are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk is part the colleges safeguarding approach.

- Extremism - is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.
- Radicalisation - refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.
- Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

Young people and vulnerable groups may be particularly targeted by groups who may promote violent extremist activity.

Indicators of vulnerability may include:

- identity crisis – the child is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society
- personal crisis – the child may be experiencing family tensions; a sense of isolation; and low self-esteem; they may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging
- personal circumstances – migration; local community tensions; and events affecting the child’s country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy;
- unmet aspirations – the child may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life

- experiences of criminality – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement / reintegration
- Special Educational Need – children may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others

However, this list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing the above are at risk of radicalisation for the purposes of violent extremism.

Any College member of staff who may have identified signs of radicalisation should report these concerns to the student's Lead Tutors or the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

Further information on Child Sexual exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation:

We know that different forms of harm often overlap, and that perpetrators may subject children and young people to multiple forms of abuse, such as criminal exploitation (including county lines) and sexual exploitation.

In some cases the exploitation or abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example, money, gifts or affection), and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage, such as increased status, of the perpetrator or facilitator.

Children and young people can be exploited by adult males or females, as individuals or in groups. They may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, it is important that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim. Whilst the age of the child may be a contributing factor for an imbalance of power, there are a range of other factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation, including, sexual identity, cognitive ability, learning difficulties, communication ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Some of the following can be indicators of both child criminal and sexual exploitation where children:

- appear with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions;
- associate with other children involved in exploitation;
- suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- misuse drugs and alcohol;
- go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education

CSE can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be

accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Some additional specific indicators that may be present in CSE are children who:

- have older boyfriends or girlfriends; and
- suffer from sexually transmitted infections, display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development or become pregnant.

Further information on signs of a child's involvement in sexual exploitation is available in Home Office guidance: Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners

Further information on County lines and serious violence

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools (mainstream and special), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children's homes and care homes. Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

A number of the indicators for CSE and CCE as detailed above may be applicable to where children are involved in county lines. Some additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines are children who:

- go missing and are subsequently found in areas away from their home;
- have been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime)
- are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs;
- are exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection;
- are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a 'trap house or cuckooing' or hotel room where there is drug activity;
- owe a 'debt bond' to their exploiters;
- have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.

All staff should be aware of the indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-

harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation (see paragraphs 33-35 of KCSIE 2023)

There are certain factors as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 which may increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's [Advice to schools and colleges on gangs and youth violence - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-to-schools-and-colleges-on-gangs-and-youth-violence)

Further information is available in the regional guidance of the West Midlands Child Protection Procedures:

<https://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/pkpzs/regional-safeguarding-guidance/children-affected-by-gang-activity-and-youth-violence> .

Further guidance is available in the Home Office's publication: '[County Lines: criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults](#)'.

Further information on Peer on Peer Abuse (Child on Child)

All our staff are aware that this can happen in college, outside college or online.

All students in the college have a right to learn in a safe and secure environment. We recognise that some students will at time negatively affect the learning and well-being of other students within the college and their behaviour will be dealt with in accordance with College policies and procedures. Occasionally the college is aware that allegations can be made against students by other students in the College which are of a safeguarding nature.

Children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer-on-peer abuse). This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to: bullying (including cyberbullying); physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse; up skirting, which typically involves 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; sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2023 15).

Staff must recognise these different forms of peer-on-peer abuse and they should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up"

Students should be encouraged to tell someone in authority if they are being abused by a peer, or if they witness peer-on-peer abuse.

It is recommended that:

- Staff should follow the procedures outlined in the College's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy alongside the Peer-on-Peer abuse Policy.
- Staff and students should encourage the person being allegedly abused by a peer to talk to someone who they feel comfortable with which in the first instance may be a personal tutor or the student's Lead Tutors. The College Well-being Team can also offer confidential support and advice.
- The person being abused will be supported. Where appropriate the alleged abuser will be supported to recognise the antisocial nature of the behaviour depending on the nature of the allegation.
- Those students who demonstrate peer-on-peer behaviours will be subject to the College's Disciplinary Procedures.
- Where the alleged incident is of a serious nature it may be necessary to involve the police and/or external agencies and risk assessments completed.
- Anyone can make a complaint about peer-on-peer abuse to the police.

The College take concerns of this nature very seriously. Staff should be clear as to the procedure with regards to peer-on-peer abuse and all concerns of this nature must be reported to the student's Lead Tutors/Safeguarding and Pastoral Support Manager/DSL/DDSL for investigation and to determine appropriate support, action and referrals/reports to external agencies which may need to be made.

The College has also devised a separate Peer on Peer Abuse Policy which should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy when dealing with reported incidences of peer-on-peer abuse. The Peer-on-Peer abuse policy is accessible on the HSFC Safeguarding Microsoft team and on the VLE in Staff documents and Policies for access by all staff.

A dedicated Tutorial lesson is delivered to students to enable them to understand this issue and how the law on child abuse is there to protect them, rather than to criminalise them.

Further information on Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur both online or offline and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff need to be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk and evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are greater at risk.

As stated in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 staff should be aware of the importance of:

- Making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- Not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh”, or “boys being boys”; and
- Challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature) such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

What is sexual violence?

Sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 which includes rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault.

What is sexual harassment?

‘Unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online or offline. Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list sexual harassment can include:

- Sexual comments (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 and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- Online sexual harassment which may be standalone or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment which may include non-consensual sharing of sexual images or videos, sexualised online bullying, unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media; and sexual exploitation; coercion and threats.

If staff have a concern a child or a child makes a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment to them they should report it to the student’s Lead Tutors/DSL/DDSL. The College will deal with all cases reported of this nature in line with part five of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 and specific government guidance links to which are highlighted below:

Sexual violence and sexual harassment in schools and colleges

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

The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT. Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced, and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff. All students who declare that they are LGBTQI+ will have as their named, trusted adult, their Personal Tutor. LGBT inclusion is part of the statutory Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education curriculum and there is a range of support available to help schools counter homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and abuse and will be reflected in the College's Tutorial programme.

Children with special educational needs, disabilities, or health issues

Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline. We ensure their child protection policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children

These can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration
- These children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children
- The potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs, and
- Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.
- Cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so. Any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will therefore require close liaison with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Head of Learning Support who is a DDSL).

WE consider extra pastoral support and attention for these children, along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place.

- **SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 years**, and
- **Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions**. And from specialist organisations such as:
 - The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information and Support Services (SENDIASS). SENDIASS offer information, advice and support for parents and carers of children and young people with SEND. All local authorities have such a service: **Find your local IAS service (councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk)**

Youth Produced sexual Imagery

Youth produces sexual imagery is the sending or posting of sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs via mobile devices or the internet by under 18s.

This includes:

- a person under 18 creating a sexual image of themselves and sharing it with another person under 18
- a person under 18 sharing an image of another person under 18 with another person under 18 or an adult
- a person under 18 in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under 18

It does not include:

- a person under 18 sharing adult pornography
- a person under 18 sharing sexual texts without sexual imagery
- adults sharing sexual imagery of under 18s. (This is child sexual abuse and must always be reported to police.)

The Law

“Making, possessing, and distributing any imagery of someone under 18 which is indecent is illegal. This includes imagery of yourself if you’re under 18.”

Indecent is not definitively defined in law, but images are likely to be considered indecent if they depict:

- a naked young person
- an image which displays genitals, and
- sex acts including masturbation.
- indecent images may also include overtly sexual images of young people in their underwear

These laws were not created to criminalise young people but to protect them. Although sharing sexual images of themselves is illegal and risky, it is often the result of curiosity and exploration. We believe young people need education, support and safeguarding not criminalisation.

The National Police Chief’s Council has made clear that incidents of youth produced sexual imagery should be treated primarily as a safeguarding issue. However, the Police may need to be involved in cases to ensure that there is a thorough investigation including collection of evidence. If a young person has shared imagery consensually, such as when in a romantic relationship or as a joke, and there is no intended malice it is usually appropriate for the school to manage the incident directly. In contrast, any incidents with aggravating factors, for example, a young person sharing someone else’s imagery without consent and with malicious intent, should generally be referred to police and/or children’s social care.

Assessing the risks

The circumstances of incidents can vary widely. If at the initial review stage a decision has been made not to refer to police and/or children's social care, the DSL/DDSL should conduct a further review (including an interview with the young people involved) to establish the facts and assess the risks.

When assessing the risks the following should be considered:

- why was the imagery shared?
- was the young person coerced or put under pressure to produce the imagery?
- who has shared the imagery?
- where has the imagery been shared?
- was it shared and received with the knowledge of the pupil in the imagery?
- are there any adults involved in the sharing of the imagery?
- what is the impact on the young people involved?
- do the young people involved have additional vulnerabilities?
- does the young person understand consent?
- has the young person taken part in this kind of activity before?

Searching devices, viewing and deleting imagery:

Viewing the imagery

College staff should not view youth produced sexual imagery unless there is good and clear reason to do so. Wherever possible, responses to incidents should be based on what DSL/DDSL have been told about the content of the imagery.

If a decision is made to view imagery, the DSL/DDSL would need to be satisfied that viewing:

- is the only way to make a decision about whether to involve other agencies (i.e. it is not possible to establish the facts from the young people involved)
- is necessary to report the image to a website, app or suitable reporting agency to have it taken down, or to support the young person or parent in making a report
- is unavoidable because a young person has presented an image directly to a staff member or the imagery has been found on a school device or network

If it is necessary to view the imagery then the DSL/DDSL should:

- never copy, print or share the imagery; this is illegal and never ask the student to send copy of the images

- discuss the decision with the Principal
- ensure viewing is undertaken by the DSL/DDSL or another member of the safeguarding team with delegated authority from the Principal
- ensure viewing takes place with another member of staff present in the room, ideally the Headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team.
- This staff member does not need to view the images
- wherever possible ensure viewing takes place on school or college premises, ideally in the Principal or a member of the senior leadership team's office
- wherever possible ensure that images are viewed by a staff member of the same sex as the young person in the imagery
- record the viewing of the imagery in the school's safeguarding records including who was present, why the image was viewed and any subsequent actions and ensure the safeguarding recording procedures for the school are followed

The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized, a teacher who has been formally authorised by the Headteacher can examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all colleges and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.

If during a search a teacher finds material which concerns them and they reasonably suspect the material has been, or could be, used to cause harm or commit an offence, they can decide whether they should delete the material or retain it as evidence of a criminal offence or a breach of school discipline. They can also decide whether the material is of such seriousness that the police need to be involved.

Further details on searching, deleting and confiscating devices can be found in the DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation advice (note this advice is for schools only)

Detailed information and specific advice about dealing with incidences of Youth produced sexual imagery can be accessed via the link below:

[**Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people**](#)

Further information on domestic abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government

definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be “personally connected” (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act). Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of peer on peer abuse is sometimes referred to as ‘teenage relationship abuse’. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of ‘domestic abuse’ (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support. The Act’s provisions, including the new definition, will be commenced over the coming months.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. The College understands that experiencing domestic abuse can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as ‘teenage relationship abuse’. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of ‘domestic abuse’ (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, the College will follow safeguarding procedures and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support (Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023).

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 police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the key adult (usually the DSL) in College before the child or children arrive at College 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. Operation Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding procedures. Where appropriate, the police and/or schools should make a referral to children's social care if they are concerned about a child's welfare.

Further information regarding online safety

As the College increasingly works online it is essential that children and young people are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. The College recognises the importance of identifying potential risks in the ICT environment and understands that there is a responsibility for all staff to create a positive digital culture and has therefore developed mechanisms to identify, intervene and escalate any safeguarding concerns or issues.

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

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism.
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes'.
- conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
- commerce - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>)

(Source: Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023)

The College has ensured that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to safeguard students working within college. Esafe software is installed on all College devices to ensure the College meets their requirements as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2023) with regards to the monitoring and filtering of IT systems. Students are also taught in group tutorial sessions about a wide range of safeguarding issues and concerns including how to stay safe online. The College has a separate student focused Online safety policy.

When students have been asked to learn online at home the college has taken due consideration of the DFE advice to support schools and colleges do so

safely: safeguarding in schools colleges and other providers and safeguarding and remote education.

The staff code of conduct and Online Safety policy and procedures (Staff) has been adapted to include specific guidance for staff regarding providing remote education and safer working practices.

The Department for Education has published [filtering and monitoring standards](#) which set out that schools and colleges should:

- Identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems.
- Review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually.
- Block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning.
- Have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet their safeguarding needs

We review the standards and discuss with IT staff and service providers what more needs to be done to support schools and colleges in meeting this standard.

[The Prevent duty Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers](#) and Home Office Additional guidance on filtering and monitoring can be found at: UK Safer Internet Centre: “appropriate” filtering and monitoring.

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/teachers-and-school-staff/appropriate-filtering-and-monitoring>.

South West Grid for Learning (swgfl.org.uk) have created a [tool](#) to check whether a school or college’s filtering provider is signed up to relevant lists (CSA content, Sexual Content, Terrorist content, Your Internet Connection Blocks Child Abuse & Terrorist Content) and using this tool, we review and monitor the effectiveness of monitoring and filtering procedures in the college. Regular staff development will reflect this.

Inter-familial harm

The College recognises the potential harm to siblings following incidents of abuse and the DSL or the Safeguarding and Pastoral Support Manager will share concerns with other agencies, as appropriate.

Further information regarding Mental Health

All staff are 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.

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

Where children 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 vital that staff are aware of how these experiences, can impact on children's mental health, behaviour and education.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action and report appropriately to access early help/external agency support.

The College's Mental Health Lead and Student Mental Health and Well-Being Advisor is Rosie Webley Tel Ext: 222 r.webley@hereford.ac.uk

Using the College for non-College related activities:

Where the College estate is used for non-college activities, those providers are expected to meet the guidance in **Keeping Children Safe in Out of School Settings** (see paragraph 167).

If the College receives allegations related to an incident that 'happened when an individual or organisation was using the premises for the purposes of running activities for children...we will follow College safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO if appropriate. (see paragraph 377)

This is reflect in the College's *Lettings Policy and Procedures*.

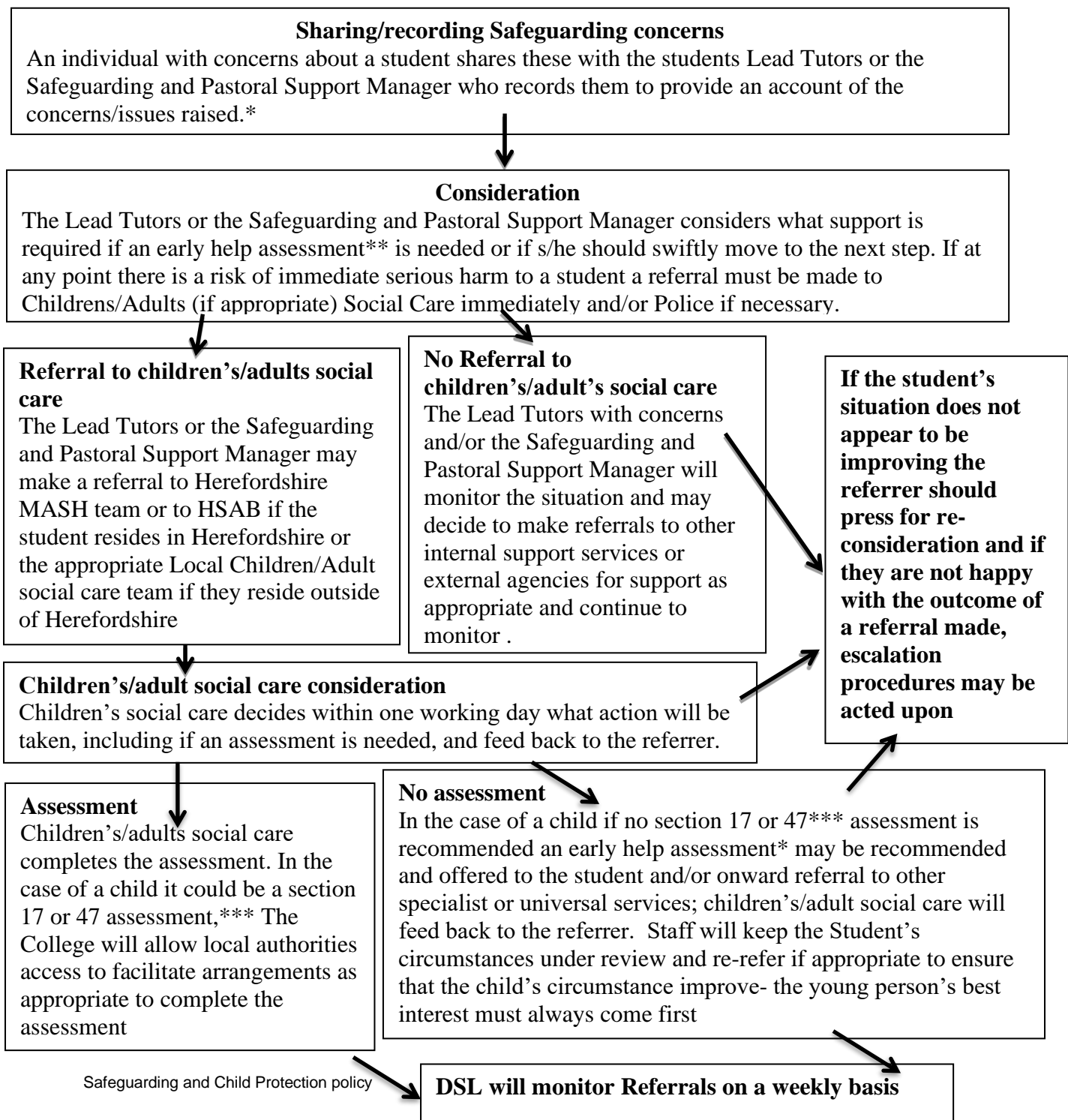
Acting on Safeguarding/Child Protection concerns raised

Key:

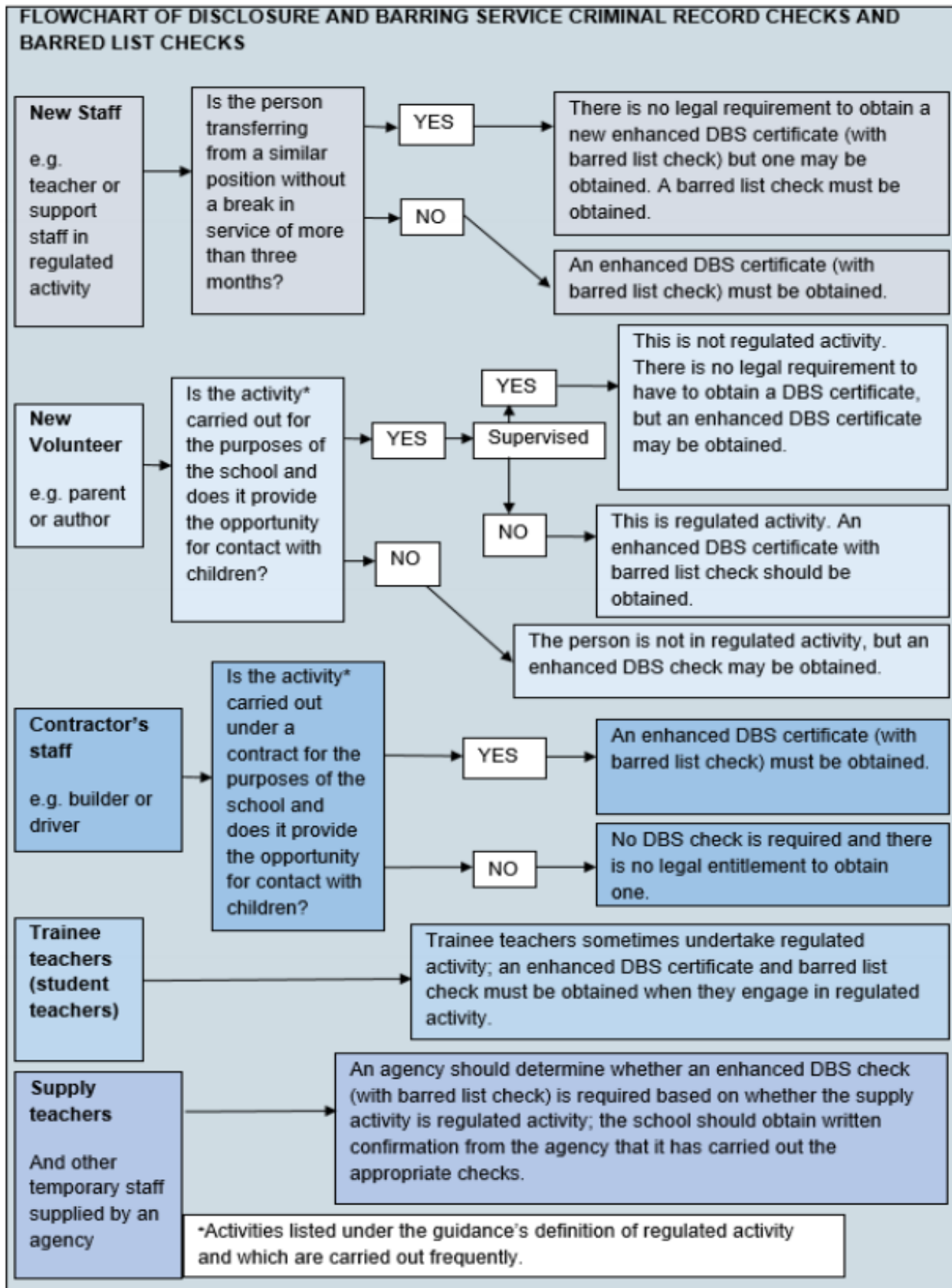
*In cases which involve an allegation of abuse against a staff member see page 11-12 of this policy for guidance which explains action the College will take in respect of the staff member.

**Where a family will benefit from coordinated support from more than one agency an inter-agency assessment may be completed (Early Help Assessment) with permission of the student. This assessment will be used to identify support needs of the student and the family to prevent further escalation of the situation

***Where there are more complex needs, help may be provided under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 (Children in Need). Where there are Child Protection concerns local Authority services must make enquiries and decide if any action must be taken under section 47 of the Children Act 1989.



Appendix 5



** Including Governors

(Source: Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2023)

Initial report of a Safeguarding concern- Form 1

To be completed by the reporting member of staff or student.

To be signed and dated by them and passed to the Designated Person (Students Lead Tutors/DSL/DDSL) for secure keeping:

Student number:

Staff name:

Date and time:

Facts – Who? What? Where? When?

In the case of disclosures, statements made in student's words where possible

Observations (How did the student present? Any other observations?)

Agreed actions with the student (reassure the student, say who this be shared with)

Check that your statement is clear before signing it and passing it on to the Designated Person

Staff Signature:

Date:

Useful Contacts, Resources and Websites:

Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership:
<https://herefordshiresafeguardingboards.org.uk/hscb> (01432) 260119

Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Board:
[HSAB Website](#)
Email - admin.sbu@herefordshire.gov.uk (01432) 260100.

Herefordshire Multi-agency Safeguarding hub (MASH)
In office hours: MASH (01432) 260800
Out of office hours: Emergency Duty Team (01905) 768020
Early Help hub: (01432) 260261

West Mercia Police:
Call 101 or 999 if student at risk of immediate significant harm

Designated Officer (LADO-Terry Pilliner) (01432) 261739
Email: lado@herefordshire.gcsx.gov.uk

Report child abuse to your local council:
www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council

NSPCC (nspcc.org.uk)
Helpline: 0808 800 5000

Wellbeing information and signposting for Herefordshire
<https://www.wisherefordshire.org/>

Guidance links:

- ***[Working together to Safeguard Children 2018](#)***
- ***[Keeping children safe in education 2023](#)***
- ***[What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners 2015:](#)***
- ***[Care and support statutory guidance - issued under the Care Act 2014:](#)***
- ***[Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners \(July 2018\)](#)***

Ofsted – www.ofsted.gov.uk

Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) www.acas.org.uk

Childline – www.childline.org.uk

Direct Gov for information relating to legislation – www.direct.gov.uk