

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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1. Purpose and Principles

Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College recognises its statutory and moral duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and expects all staff, governors, volunteers, trainee teachers, contractors and partners working within the College to share this commitment.

Safeguarding and Child Protection are at the forefront of the College's thinking.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. To carry out this responsibility effectively, all staff adopt a child-centred approach, ensuring that the child's best interests remain at the centre of decision-making. When considering safeguarding concerns, staff maintain the attitude that "it could happen here" (KCSIE) and respond appropriately to any signs of risk or harm.

The College is committed to:

- Creating and maintaining a secure, welcoming and inclusive environment for learners, staff and visitors across the College site, external activities, work placements and online learning platforms. The College will also support learners in developing the knowledge and skills needed to safeguard their own wellbeing.

- Recognising learners who may be experiencing, or who are vulnerable to, abuse, neglect, exploitation or other forms of harm, and responding promptly and appropriately in line with legal requirements and local safeguarding procedures.
- Ensuring that all employees, trainee teachers, governors, volunteers and contractors receive relevant safeguarding and child protection training, guidance and regular updates so they can effectively carry out their safeguarding duties.
- Upholding high standards of safeguarding practice throughout the College by providing strong leadership, conducting regular monitoring and quality assurance activities, delivering effective training, and promoting ongoing development and improvement.
- Demonstrating a clear commitment to protecting and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk, while working in partnership with parents/carers, employers, external agencies and other stakeholders to support this aim.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the governing body and takes into account the requirements of Working Together to Safeguard Children and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).

The policy should be read alongside the College's related policies and procedures, including those relating to child-on-child abuse, sexual violence and sexual harassment, staff conduct, Prevent, online safety, mental health, equality and diversity, whistleblowing, low-level concerns and attendance.

2. Legislative Framework: Safeguarding Legislation and Guidance

This policy is written with regard to the following legislation and guidance:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act (2004)
- Education Act (2002)
- Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act (2009)
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act (2026)
- Care Act (2014)
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015)
- (The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025) - Martyn's Law.
- Prevent Duty Guidance: England and Wales (2023)
- Human Rights Act (1998)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Data Protection Act (2018) and UK GDPR
- Domestic Abuse Act (2021)
- Sexual Offences Act (2003)

- Modern Slavery Act (2015)
- Serious Crime Act (2015)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- Protection of Freedoms Act (2012)
- Online Safety Act (2023)
- School Premises (England) (Regulations 2012)
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act (2026)
- Crime and Policing Act (2026)
- Benedict's Law (2026)

3. Key Definitions

a. **Safeguarding** (Keeping Children Safe in Education)

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge,
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online,
- preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development,
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

b. Child Protection is a part of safeguarding and refers to the activity undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. Child protection includes identifying concerns, making referrals to statutory agencies, sharing information appropriately and working with other professionals to ensure a child is protected from abuse or neglect.

c. Child: For the purposes of this policy, a child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. This definition applies regardless of the person's level of maturity, independence, educational setting or legal status.

4. Specific Roles & Responsibilities

4.1. Governors

- a. Governing bodies have a strategic leadership responsibility for the College's safeguarding arrangements and ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation.

- b.** Governing bodies must have regard to this guidance, ensuring policies, procedures and training in their college is effective and always comply with the law (KCSiE 2026).

With regard to safeguarding, the Governing Body is committed to ensuring that the College:

- Carries out reasonable checks, (in regards to extremism and other risks) on all visitors who are intending to work with children or address groups of children.
- Has a safeguarding policy which includes, amongst other things, the policy and procedures to deal with child-on-child abuse.
- Has a written plan in place that has a clear and agreed procedure to protect a child or children under child protection, a Child in Need and Looked After children.
- Has mandatory reporting of FGM.
- Practises safer recruitment including having one panel member of the interview panel who has attended safer recruitment training.
- Let students know that there are staff in the College who they can approach if they do not feel safe or if they are worried.
- Includes opportunities in the curriculum for students to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse, including online abuse, and to develop healthy relationships.
- Ensures staff are aware of and vigilant to the threat of radicalisation of young people and have the confidence to report their concerns to the Safeguarding team.
- Promotes the ethos of the “Prevent” agenda by encouraging free and open debate but challenging extreme views.
- Promotes strategies to achieve positive mental health.

In pursuit of these aims, the governing body will approve and annually review policies and procedures as well as receiving an annual safeguarding report.

- c.** The governor with specific responsibility for safeguarding issues will:
 - Provide constructive challenge and strategic oversight to support the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements.
 - Review safeguarding reports and receive regular updates on safeguarding matters.
 - Seek assurance that safeguarding duties and responsibilities are being carried out effectively and consistently.
 - Promote and support the continual development and enhancement of safeguarding practice within the College.

- Report significant safeguarding matters, concerns, and developments to the Board of Governors where appropriate.
- Ensure the College's filtering and monitoring systems in place are fit for purpose and that the College is compliant with the DfEs Filtering and Monitoring Standards.
- Liaise with appropriate agencies and the Chair of Governors where allegations of abuse are made against the Principal.

4.2. Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will discharge the duties set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (Annex B) including to:

- Take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place).
- Manage and oversee referrals relating to safeguarding and child protection concerns, including referrals to Children's Social Care, the Police, the Channel programme, and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), where appropriate, in accordance with local and national procedures.
- Maintain accurate, confidential and secure records of safeguarding concerns, actions taken and referrals made.
- Act as the main point of contact for safeguarding partners, local safeguarding partnerships, external agencies, schools, governors and other relevant organisations to ensure effective information sharing and collaboration.
- Provide leadership and guidance on safeguarding matters across the College, acting as a source of advice and support for staff.
- Ensure that all staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, at induction and through regular updates to enable them to carry out their responsibilities effectively.
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements, including the annual review of the Safeguarding Policy and related procedures, ensuring they remain compliant with statutory guidance and best practice.
- Work closely with the Principal, safeguarding team and relevant agencies on safeguarding investigations, child protection concerns and allegations involving staff members.
- Promote awareness of safeguarding risks, including those relating to online safety, and ensure that safeguarding education is embedded within the student experience through age-appropriate teaching and support.
- Ensure that safeguarding reporting procedures are clearly communicated and easily accessible to all learners.
- Champion the needs of vulnerable learners, including children in need, learners with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), young carers, and those

with social workers, ensuring that appropriate support, information sharing and academic interventions are in place to promote their welfare, progress and achievement.

4.3. Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs)

The College has a dedicated Safeguarding Team of 13 trained professionals responsible for leading and supporting safeguarding practice across the organisation. The team comprises the Principal, Vice Principal (Designated Safeguarding Lead), Assistant Principal, Safeguarding Manager, Guidance Directors, Safeguarding Officers, SENDCO and Office Manager.

The Vice Principal has lead responsibility for safeguarding as the DSL. All other members of the Safeguarding Team undertake the role of DDSLs and provide safeguarding support across the College.

All members of the team hold Level 3 Safeguarding training and undertake regular safeguarding updates, refresher training and specialist professional development to ensure that safeguarding practice remains effective, compliant with current statutory guidance and responsive to the needs of learners.

5. Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

5.1. Reporting Concerns

All staff with concerns about a safeguarding issue will follow the referral processes contained within appendix A of this policy.

Staff are mindful that early information sharing is vital for the effective identification, assessment, and allocation of appropriate service provision, whether this is when problems first emerge, or where a child is already known to local authority children's social care (such as a child in need or a child with a protection plan).

Staff are aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another, therefore staff are always vigilant and raise any concerns with their designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

Staff are aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the college and/or can occur between children outside of these environments (contextual safeguarding).

5.2. Recording Concerns

All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, are recorded in writing. Information is kept confidential and stored securely. Records include: a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern; details of how the concern

was followed up and resolved; a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

5.3. Managing Disclosures

Support for the child will be managed either internally via the College's own pastoral support processes; undertaking an early help assessment or making a referral for statutory services, for example as the child might be in need, is in need or suffering or likely to suffer harm.

All staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim is never given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor are they ever made to feel ashamed for making a report.

5.4. Information Sharing and Confidentiality

All staff know what to do if a child discloses that they are being abused, exploited or neglected. Staff know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and children's social care. Staff never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

When making decisions about sharing information, the College follows recognised information-sharing principles, which include:

- a.** Understanding that data protection legislation supports, rather than prevents, the lawful sharing of information where safeguarding concerns exist.
- b.** Being transparent wherever possible about how information may be used and shared.
- c.** Seeking consent when it is appropriate and safe to do so.
- d.** Ensuring that any information shared is relevant, necessary, proportionate, accurate, timely and transferred securely.
- e.** Giving due consideration to the safety, welfare and rights of those involved.
- f.** Maintaining a clear record of decisions, actions taken and the reasons for them.

While the College recognises the importance of privacy and confidentiality, safeguarding concerns cannot be treated as confidential where doing so may place a child, young person or other individual at risk of harm. Information will only be shared with those who need to know and will be handled in accordance with applicable legislation, including the Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025.

Where appropriate, individuals will be informed about how their information is being processed and shared. However, consent will not be sought, and information will not be withheld, where doing so may increase the risk of harm, compromise a safeguarding enquiry or prevent appropriate protective action from being taken.

Safeguarding records will be maintained securely, kept up to date and accessed only by authorised individuals. The College recognises that effective information sharing is essential for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Information will be shared in a timely manner where there is a safeguarding concern and in accordance with relevant data protection legislation. Safeguarding information will be shared on a need-to-know basis and only with those who require the information to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities. Decisions regarding information sharing will be proportionate, necessary and focused on the best interests and safety of the child or young person.

6. Vulnerability

6.1. Early Help/ Family Help

All staff are prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. If early help is appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead or deputy will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner. Any such cases will be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care for assessment for statutory services, if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

6.2. Mental Health

All staff are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, become safeguarding concerns, including leading to the risk of self-harm, eating disorders, suicidal ideation and suicide. Staff also recognise that mental health problems can be an indicator that a child has experienced, or is at risk of experiencing abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health condition. However, staff are well placed to observe learners on a day-to-day basis and to identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing poor mental health or may be at risk of developing a mental health concern.

To support learners' mental health and wellbeing, staff promote positive mental wellbeing, identify emerging concerns at the earliest opportunity, provide appropriate support, and liaise with or refer learners to specialist services where appropriate.

Where children have experienced abuse, neglect, exploitation or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. Staff are aware of the ways in which these experiences can affect a child's mental health, behaviour, attendance, relationships and educational outcomes, and will ensure that appropriate support is provided.

If a member of staff has a concern about a learner's mental health that is also a safeguarding concern, they will take immediate action by speaking directly to a member of the safeguarding team. The DSL or DDSL will assess the situation and liaise with relevant professionals and parents/carers, where appropriate. A Care and Welfare Plan may be implemented to support the learner's needs.

The DSL or DDSL will consider whether parents/carers should be informed about concerns relating to a learner's mental health in order to support their wellbeing, provided that doing so would not place the learner at increased risk of harm.

6.3. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Learners with Health Conditions

Staff recognise that children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and/or health conditions may be more vulnerable to safeguarding risks and can face additional barriers to identifying, reporting or communicating concerns about abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Staff are aware that behaviours, communication differences, mood changes or injuries may be incorrectly attributed to a learner's SEND or health condition without appropriate consideration of other possible explanations. Staff will remain professionally curious and consider whether such indicators may be signs of abuse, neglect or other safeguarding concerns.

Staff also recognise that learners with SEND or health conditions may be at increased risk of peer isolation, bullying and child-on-child abuse. They understand that such abuse may have a disproportionate impact on these learners and may not always be accompanied by obvious signs or disclosures.

In addition, staff understand that some learners may experience communication barriers that make it more difficult to seek help or report concerns. Some learners may require intimate care, periods of medical isolation, or a greater degree of adult support, which may increase their vulnerability in certain circumstances.

Staff are also aware that some learners with SEND may experience difficulties in distinguishing between fact and fiction online, making them potentially more vulnerable to online harms, exploitation and manipulation.

6.4. Allergens

The College recognises Benedict's Law and is committed to ensuring that students with allergies are safeguarded through effective prevention, management, and emergency response procedures. The College will maintain appropriate allergy policies, individual

healthcare plans where required, staff training, and access to emergency medication in accordance with statutory guidance and good practice.

6.5. Gender-Questioning Learners and LGBT+ Learners

The College recognises that being LGBT+ is not, in itself, an indicator of risk or a safeguarding concern. However, learners who are LGBT+, or who are perceived by others to be LGBT+, may be vulnerable to bullying, harassment, discrimination, prejudice-based incidents and child-on-child abuse. Staff remain alert to these vulnerabilities and respond to any concerns in accordance with the College's safeguarding, behaviour and child-on-child abuse procedures.

Staff are aware of the importance of creating an environment in which all learners feel safe, respected and able to seek support. Staff will challenge inappropriate language, discriminatory behaviour, bullying, sexual harassment and harmful stereotypes wherever these occur.

The College recognises that some learners may question their gender and may require sensitive, individualised support. Staff understand that gender-questioning and LGBT+ learners may experience a range of emotional, social and mental health challenges and that each learner's circumstances should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Where a learner raises concerns or questions relating to their gender, staff will listen respectfully and respond sensitively. Any requests for support will be considered carefully, taking account of the learner's wellbeing, safeguarding needs, parental involvement, relevant professional advice, legal guidance and the rights and welfare of others.

The College will involve parents/carers in decision-making wherever appropriate and in the best interests of the learner. However, where involving parents/carers may place a learner at risk of harm, safeguarding procedures will be followed and advice sought from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL).

Confidentiality will be respected wherever possible. Information will be shared only with those who need to know in order to support the learner or fulfil safeguarding responsibilities. Where there are concerns regarding a learner's safety, welfare or wellbeing, information will be shared in line with safeguarding and information-sharing procedures.

The College will maintain accurate records in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements. Decisions relating to support for gender-questioning learners will be recorded appropriately, together with the rationale for any actions taken.

The College is committed to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and ensure that all learners are treated with dignity, respect and fairness.

The College recognises that requests relating to social transition, facilities, residential visits and participation in sport require careful and individual consideration. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis, taking account of safeguarding, wellbeing, parental involvement, relevant professional advice, the rights of others and current statutory guidance.

Practical Arrangements

a. Toilets

The College will ensure that toilet facilities are provided and managed in accordance with relevant legislation and statutory guidance including Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026). The College provides several self-contained, individual toilet facilities which may be used by any learner who wishes to access greater privacy. The availability and use of such facilities will not disadvantage any learner and will be reviewed regularly to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the College community.

b. Residential Accommodation

Where learners participate in residential visits, the College will ensure that accommodation arrangements are planned and managed in accordance with relevant legislation, statutory guidance and safeguarding requirements.

Decisions relating to sleeping and residential accommodation arrangements will be made on a case-by-case basis, taking account of the learner's age, needs, safety, privacy, dignity and wellbeing, as well as the rights and welfare of other learners.

The College will work, where appropriate, with the learner, parents/carers and relevant professionals to ensure that suitable arrangements are identified and that any safeguarding risks are appropriately assessed and managed.

Any requests relating to residential accommodation will be considered individually, with decisions based on the best interests of the learner, safeguarding considerations and the practical arrangements available. Alternative accommodation arrangements may be considered where these support the safety, wellbeing and dignity of all learners involved.

Any concerns relating to a learner's safety, welfare or wellbeing will be managed through the College's safeguarding procedures and overseen by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL).

c. Sport and Physical Exercise

The College recognises the importance of sport and physical activity in supporting learners' physical health, mental wellbeing, confidence and social development.

When considering participation in sport and other physical activities, the College will take account of safeguarding, safety, fairness, inclusion and the wellbeing of all learners. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the nature of the activity, any relevant legislation and guidance, the learner's individual circumstances, and the rights and needs of others participating.

Where appropriate, the College will work with learners, parents/carers and relevant professionals to identify suitable arrangements that support participation while ensuring the safety, dignity and welfare of all learners.

Any requests relating to participation in sport or physical education activities will be considered carefully and sensitively, with decisions based on the best interests of the learner, safeguarding considerations and any applicable legal or regulatory requirements.

Concerns relating to a learner's safety, wellbeing or welfare will be managed in accordance with the College's safeguarding procedures and overseen by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL).

6.6. Racism and Faith Based Prejudice

Staff recognise prejudice-based harm, including racism and faith-based prejudice and other forms of discrimination. They understand that racism and faith-targeted abuse can have a significant impact on a child's welfare, wellbeing, sense of safety and willingness to seek help. Staff also recognise that discriminatory behaviour, including racism and faith-targeted abuse, may constitute child-on-child abuse. As part of its safeguarding responsibilities, the College promotes an inclusive, respectful and anti-discriminatory culture that values diversity and fosters a sense of belonging for all members of the College community.

6.7. Safeguarding Adults at Risk

While many safeguarding responsibilities relate to children under the age of 18, the College also recognises its responsibilities towards learners aged 18 and over who may be adults at risk.

An adult at risk is a person aged 18 or over who has needs for care and support, is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and as a result of those needs may be unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation.

Where concerns are identified relating to an adult at risk, the College will take appropriate action in accordance with the Care Act 2014, local safeguarding procedures

and relevant statutory guidance. The College will work in partnership with the individual, Adult Social Care, health services and other agencies, where necessary, to promote the individual's safety and wellbeing.

All staff are expected to report concerns relating to adults at risk in the same way as other safeguarding concerns and seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

6.8. Young Carers

Staff are alert to the needs of young carers and understand that caring responsibilities can have a significant impact on a learner's attendance, attainment, engagement, wellbeing and educational outcomes. Early identification of young carers is encouraged and takes place at the start of each academic year. Staff remain vigilant throughout the year, recognising that a learner's circumstances may change and that caring responsibilities can arise at any time.

Support for young carers is provided by all staff as part of the College's commitment to promoting learner welfare and removing barriers to learning. However, one of the College's DDSLs has lead responsibility for coordinating support for young carers and, where appropriate, liaising with external agencies, health services and the local authority to secure additional advice and support.

Where a young carer's circumstances give rise to safeguarding concerns or unmet support needs, appropriate action will be taken, including referral to relevant internal support services or external agencies where appropriate.

7. Attendance (Children Missing Education and Children Absent from Education)

Children Missing Education (CME) are children who are not on a school or college roll and are not receiving suitable education otherwise.

Children Absent from Education are learners who remain on roll but do not attend regularly. Persistent or prolonged absence can be an important indicator of safeguarding concerns and may increase the risk of a child becoming missing from education.

The College recognises that poor attendance and absence from education may be associated with a range of safeguarding issues, including neglect, child criminal exploitation (CCE), child sexual exploitation (CSE), county lines activity, mental health concerns, substance misuse, forced marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM). In some cases, absence may indicate increased vulnerability for children who are already receiving support from Children's Social Care, including those who are subject to a Child Protection Plan, are Children in Need, or are Looked After Children.

Early identification and intervention are essential to reduce risk, address barriers to attendance and ensure that learners receive the support they need.

The College maintains effective attendance monitoring procedures and ensures that registers are completed accurately and promptly. Concerns relating to a student's attendance or welfare are reported to the Guidance Director, Safeguarding Manager, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or an appropriate member of the safeguarding team.

Where a student is identified as being missing from education, the College will work with the Local Authority and other relevant agencies to establish the student's whereabouts and wellbeing. The College will undertake reasonable enquiries before removing a student's name from the admission register, in accordance with statutory requirements.

8. Child-on-Child Abuse

The College believes that all children and young people have the right to learn in a safe, supportive and inclusive environment. Learners should be free from harm, abuse, intimidation and exploitation by both adults and their peers. The College recognises that some learners may exhibit behaviours that adversely affect the safety, wellbeing or learning of others, and such behaviour will be addressed in line with the College's Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

Child-on-child abuse can occur both inside and outside of an educational setting, including online. All staff are trained to recognise the signs and indicators of child-on-child abuse and understand their responsibilities for responding appropriately to concerns and disclosures.

Child-on-child abuse may take many forms and can include, but is not limited to:

- Bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based bullying and discriminatory bullying)
- Discriminatory behaviour, including racism, faith-targeted abuse, and other prejudice-based incidents
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (also known as teenage relationship abuse),
- Physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm, it may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
- The consensual or non-consensual creation, sharing or possession of nude or semi-nude images and videos, including AI-generated imagery (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery), and livestreams (N.B. images may be self-

generated by the child, taken or created by another person, or digitally altered or wholly generated using AI, including 'deep fakes' or 'deep nudes';

- Coercing, pressuring or forcing another person to engage in sexual activity without consent;
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission;
- Initiation, hazing or other abusive rituals (this may also include an online element).

The College recognises that addressing inappropriate behaviour at an early stage, even where it may appear low-level, can help prevent the escalation of harmful, abusive or violent behaviours.

Staff understand that learners may not always feel able or ready to report abuse. Some may not recognise their experiences as abuse, may fear the consequences of reporting, or may be experiencing circumstances that make disclosure particularly difficult. Staff will therefore remain vigilant and provide opportunities for learners to seek support in a safe and supportive manner.

All concerns, allegations or disclosures relating to child-on-child abuse must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. Appropriate action will be taken in response to the concern, which may include support for those involved and referral to Children's Social Care, Adult Social Care, the Police, or other relevant agencies where necessary.

The College adopts a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment. Staff are expected to challenge inappropriate behaviours and language that may be abusive, harmful or discriminatory. Behaviour should never be dismissed as "banter", "part of growing up", "having a laugh" or "boys being boys", as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, misogyny, an unsafe environment for children and normalised abuse, where children may stop reporting it.

The College will respond to incidents of child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment in accordance with Part Five of Keeping Children Safe in Education and other relevant safeguarding guidance.

9. The Prevent Duty, Radicalisation and Extremism

The College recognises that children and young people may be vulnerable to radicalisation and extremist influences. Protecting learners from these risks forms part of the College's wider safeguarding responsibilities.

The College is committed to meeting its duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and the Prevent Duty. The aims of Prevent are to:

- Tackle the ideological causes of terrorism;
- Support individuals who may be vulnerable to radicalisation; and
- Support the rehabilitation and disengagement of those involved in terrorism.

9.1. Definitions

Radicalisation is the process through which a person comes to support terrorism or extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

Extremism is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance that seeks to undermine the rights and freedoms of others or weaken democratic values and institutions.

9.2. Recognising Concerns

There is no single indicator that a learner may be vulnerable to radicalisation. Vulnerability can arise from a combination of factors, including personal circumstances, experiences, peer influences, online activity, and exposure to extremist narratives.

Staff remain vigilant to significant changes in behaviour, presentation, attitudes, online activity, or social groups and report any concerns in line with safeguarding procedures.

Martyn's Law: The College is committed to promoting a safe and secure environment and recognises the principles of Martyn's Law (The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025). The College will take proportionate steps to assess risks, develop emergency response procedures, train relevant staff, and work with appropriate agencies to ensure preparedness for security-related incidents, including acts of terrorism.

9.3. Responding to Concerns

Any concerns relating to radicalisation, extremism or terrorism must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL).

The DSL will assess concerns and, where appropriate, make a referral to Prevent or seek advice from relevant agencies. Information sharing relating to Prevent concerns will be managed in the same way as other safeguarding concerns.

9.4. Training and Awareness

All staff receive Prevent training and regular updates as part of the College's safeguarding programme. Staff with designated safeguarding or Prevent responsibilities receive additional training appropriate to their role.

The College promotes a culture of respect, inclusion, critical thinking and open discussion, helping learners to build resilience to extremist influences both online and offline.

9.5. Learner Awareness and Resilience

The College is committed to supporting learners to understand the risks associated with radicalisation, extremism and terrorism. Through the curriculum, tutorial programme, enrichment activities, online safety education and the promotion of British Values, learners are encouraged to develop critical thinking skills, evaluate information from a range of sources and challenge misinformation, prejudice and extremist narratives. Learners are supported to understand how radicalisation can occur both online and offline and are encouraged to seek support or report concerns about themselves or others. By promoting respect, inclusion and open discussion, the College aims to build learners' resilience to harmful influences and help them become safe, responsible and active members of society.

9.6. Channel

Channel is a voluntary multi-agency programme that provides early support to individuals who may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Where appropriate, Prevent referrals may be considered by a Channel Panel to determine what support is required.

9.7. Online Safety and Artificial Intelligence

The College recognises that extremist content may be shared through social media, online platforms and emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI). Through its online safety and Prevent programmes, the College supports learners to critically evaluate online information, identify misinformation and challenge extremist narratives.

10. Online Safety including Artificial Intelligence

The College recognises that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding concerns. In instances of Child Sexual Exploitation, radicalisation, sexual predations, technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm. All staff are aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues.

Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life. Children can also abuse their peers online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content. Incidents of sexual harassment between learners via mobile or smart technology will be managed in the same way as the College's approach to other forms of child-on-child abuse.

Learners need to be protected from the following:

- Content – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material – including extreme sexual or physical violence, pornography and misogynistic influencers, deepfakes, racist or radical and extremist views, and sharing images.
- Contact – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, for example commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults, generative Artificial Intelligence applications simulating adults posing as children.
- Conduct – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm for example making, sending and receiving explicit images or online bullying, explicit images generated using Artificial Intelligence.
- Commerce – being a victim of online gambling, phishing, financial scams, etc.

Learners and staff receive education, training and guidance on online safety risks, including cyberbullying, online abuse, sexual exploitation, grooming, radicalisation, misinformation, disinformation, harmful content, the misuse of artificial intelligence, and the sharing of nude or semi-nude images. Any concerns identified through filtering, monitoring or other online activity are managed in accordance with the College's safeguarding procedures.

Staff ensure that they establish safe and responsible online behaviours, working to local and national guidelines and acceptable use policies which detail how new and emerging technologies may be used.

Communication with children both in the 'real' world and through web based and telecommunication interactions take place within explicit professional boundaries. This includes the use of computers, tablets, phones, texts, e-mails, instant messages, social media such as chat-rooms, forums, blogs, websites, gaming sites, digital cameras, videos, web-cams and other handheld devices. (Given the ever-changing world of technology it should be noted that this list gives examples only and is not exhaustive).

The college shares its Acceptable Use of IT Agreement with all learners and parents/carers which includes information regarding Smoothwall Monitoring and Filtering to safeguard and protect all learners.

10.1. Filtering and Monitoring

The College operates filtering and monitoring systems to:

- Prevent access to harmful or inappropriate online content.
- Identify potential safeguarding concerns.
- Support the early identification of learners who may be at risk.
- Enable timely safeguarding interventions.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and IT Network Team review these arrangements at least annually to ensure they remain effective and responsive to emerging technologies and risks.

Filtering and monitoring form an important part of the College's approach to online safety and safeguarding. In line with the Department for Education's Filtering and Monitoring Standards for Schools and Colleges, the College uses Smoothwall to help protect learners and staff from harmful online material while supporting effective teaching and learning.

The College determines an appropriate level of monitoring based on the needs of its learners and ensures its monitoring arrangements cover, as a minimum, the following areas:

- **Bullying:** Any behaviour that involves the repeated use of force, threat or coercion to abuse, intimidate or aggressively dominate others.
- **Child sexual exploitation:** Manipulative or coercive behaviour towards a child that encourages them to engage in a coercive/manipulative sexual relationship, including encouraging to meet.
- **Discrimination:** Any unjust or prejudicial treatment of people with protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010.
- **Drugs/substance abuse:** Any evidence of drug misuse or promotion of illegal drug use.
- **Extremism:** Content that encourages terrorism or terrorist ideologies, including intolerance or signs of violence.
- **Illegal:** Any content that is illegal. For example, extremist content or child abuse images.
- **Pornography:** Content that includes explicit imagery or sexual acts and misogynistic influencers.
- **Self-harm:** Content that encourages or exhibits deliberate self-harm.
- **Suicide:** Anything that might suggest the user is considering suicide.
- **Violence:** Anything that displays or promotes the use of physical force intended to hurt or kill.

A summary of the identified roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems can be found in appendix E.

10.2. Cyber Crime

Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer).

Cyber-dependent crimes include;

- unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded;

- denial of Service (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources; and,
- making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

Children with particular skill and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime.

If there are concerns about a student in this area, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy), will consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.

11. Allegations about Staff

This relates to when there is an allegation that a person who works with children 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 s/he is unsuitable to work with children
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

If an allegation is made about a member of staff (including supply staff, trainee teacher or volunteers), the matter should be reported immediately to the Principal/Designated Safeguarding Lead. Allegations concerning the Principal must be reported immediately to the Chair of Governors, who will take appropriate action in accordance with statutory guidance and local procedures.

If a concern or an allegation requires immediate attention outside normal office hours then the Children's Services Duty Team or local police should be contacted; the Designated Officer at the Local Authority should be informed the next working day.

No internal enquiries should be instigated until the external investigations are completed. During external investigation, suspension of a member of staff may be appropriate. Any suspension would take place at the discretion of the Principal, according to the Staff Disciplinary Procedures. Overall compliance with the procedures will be monitored and evaluated by the Darlington Safeguarding Partnership. Instances of non-compliance will be identified and followed up.

The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education.

12.Low-Level Concerns

A low-level concern is any concern that an adult may have acted in a manner that is inconsistent with the College's Staff Code of Conduct, including conduct outside of work. It does not meet the threshold for an allegation and is not considered serious enough to warrant referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

As part of its whole-college approach to safeguarding, the College promotes an open and transparent culture in which all concerns relating to adults working in or on behalf of the College, including agency staff, trainee teachers, volunteers, contractors and governors, are addressed promptly, appropriately and proportionately.

Any low-level concern should be reported to the Principal or Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will consider the information and, where appropriate, undertake further enquiries in liaison with the Human Resources Manager. The Principal/Designated Safeguarding Lead may also seek advice from the LADO where necessary. Staff are not expected to determine whether a concern constitutes a low-level concern, meets the threshold for an allegation, or requires referral to the LADO; all concerns should be reported and assessed through the appropriate procedures.

The College seeks to create an environment in which staff feel confident to self-report if they have found themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted, misunderstood, or where their behaviour may have fallen below expected professional standards.

Records of all low-level concerns will be maintained and reviewed to identify any patterns of concerning behaviour, enabling appropriate action to be taken where necessary and helping to safeguard learners and staff.

13.Abuse of Position of Trust – Sexual Offences Act 2003

Staff must maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times, avoid any behaviour that could be misinterpreted, and report and record any incident that may give rise to concern.

In addition, staff should understand that it is a criminal offence for a person aged 18 or over to engage in a sexual relationship with a young person under the age of 18 where they are in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual.

This means that any sexual activity between a member of College staff and a student under the age of 18 may constitute a criminal offence, regardless of whether the student is above the age of consent.

- A member of staff does not need to have direct teaching, supervision, or day-to-day contact with a student for a position of trust to exist.
- These requirements apply to all staff, volunteers, agency workers, contractors, and governors working on behalf of the College.

14. Whistleblowing

The College promotes a culture of openness, transparency and accountability. Staff, volunteers and contractors are encouraged to raise concerns about poor, unsafe or inappropriate practice, including safeguarding concerns, without fear of disadvantage or reprisal.

Through the College's Whistleblowing Policy, all staff are made aware of the procedures available to report concerns relating to safeguarding practice, conduct, wrongdoing or failures in procedures. Concerns raised in good faith will be taken seriously, treated appropriately and investigated in accordance with the College's policies and procedures.

15. Safer Recruitment

The College is committed to maintaining a safe learning environment through the implementation of robust safer recruitment and selection procedures designed to deter, identify and reject unsuitable applicants from working with children, young people and adults at risk.

The College ensures that at least one member of every interview panel has successfully completed appropriate safer recruitment training.

All appointments are made in accordance with current legislation, statutory guidance and safeguarding requirements. Recruitment processes include a range of pre-employment checks, appropriate to the role, to assess an applicant's suitability to work in an educational setting. These checks may include:

- Verification of identity;
- Confirmation of qualifications and employment history;
- Satisfactory references;
- Right to work checks;
- Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks;
- Children's Barred List checks, where applicable;
- Prohibition from Teaching checks, where applicable;
- Section 128 checks, where applicable; and
- Any other checks required by law or statutory guidance.

Safeguarding considerations are embedded throughout the employment lifecycle, including advertising, shortlisting, selection, appointment, induction, probation and ongoing employment.

By maintaining rigorous recruitment and vetting procedures, the College seeks to safeguard learners, promote their welfare and minimise the risk of harm within the College community.

16. Training and Induction

The College places significant importance on ensuring that all staff, governors, volunteers, agency workers and contractors understand their safeguarding responsibilities and have the knowledge, skills and confidence required to fulfil their role in protecting children, young people and adults at risk.

All staff receive Level 1 Safeguarding and Prevent training on induction and annual refresher training thereafter to ensure they have the skills and knowledge necessary to safeguard learners effectively.

Safeguarding, child protection and Prevent responsibilities form an integral part of the induction process for all new staff.

In addition, staff receive regular safeguarding communications, updates and briefings to ensure they remain informed of legislative changes, local priorities, emerging safeguarding concerns and current best practice.

Those with specific safeguarding responsibilities, including the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads and the Governor with responsibility for safeguarding, undertake Level 3 safeguarding training and access regular updates to support them in carrying out their duties effectively.

Training is appropriate to individual roles and responsibilities and may include a range of safeguarding topics, including:

- Child protection;
- Adult safeguarding;
- Prevent and the protection of learners from radicalisation and extremism;
- Online safety;
- Mental health and wellbeing;
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment;
- Child-on-child abuse;
- Child criminal exploitation (CCE) and child sexual exploitation (CSE);
- Domestic abuse;
- Contextual safeguarding;
- Professional boundaries and conduct; and

- Information sharing and record keeping.

17. Appendices

17.1. Appendix A: Disclosure of Abuse of Guidance (Child Protection)

Recognising and responding to an incident

There is a number of sources from which a disclosure might arise including from:

- A student or an adult
- A parent/carer
- A member of the public
- A disciplinary investigation

If you are informed about possible abuse of a child or vulnerable adult and believe that the individual is at risk of significant harm you must follow the guidelines given below.

Responding to a complaint/incident – safeguarding children

The person to whom a disclosure is made or concern reported should not question the student/complainant or investigate the matter further. If you are in this situation you should:

- Stay calm
- Treat the matter seriously
- Listen carefully to what the young person/complainant is telling you. If you need to clarify a point by all means do so, but it is not your responsibility to interview individuals regarding abuse.
- Avoid asking leading questions and keep an open mind – do not put words into the student's/complainant's mouth.
- Communicate with the student (if the complainant) in a way that is appropriate to the student's age, understanding and preferred language or communication style.
- Reassure the child/complainant making the disclosure that they have done the right thing by telling you.
- Inform the child/complainant that you must pass the information on, but that only those who need to know about it will be told. Inform them of to whom you will report the matter.
- Make a written record of the information, where possible using the student's/complainant's own words, including:
 - When the alleged incident(s) took place – time & date
 - Where the alleged incident(s) took place
 - Who was present

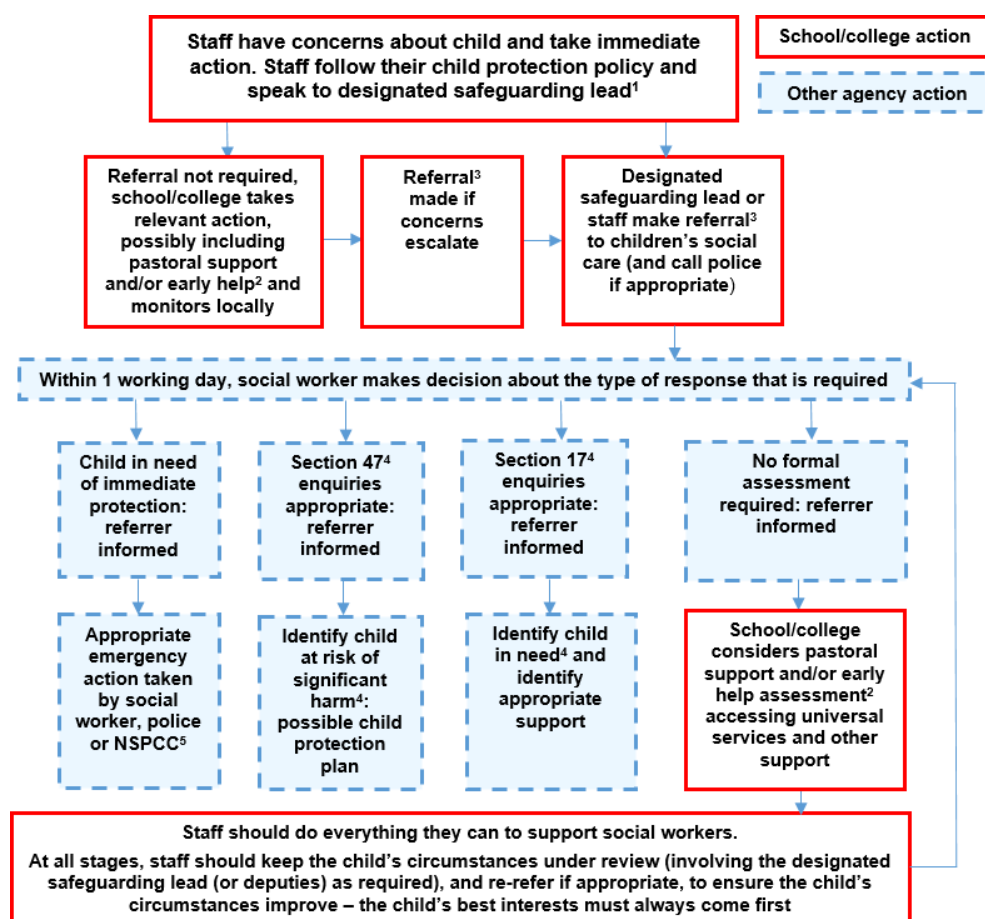
- What was said to have happened
- Sign and date the written record
- Report the matter immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If the DSL is not available in College, make your report to one of the designated Deputies with responsibility for safeguarding children or directly to the Principal.

The matter will then be referred to the relevant Local Authority's social services using the appropriate referral forms and procedures.

When/if a student is interviewed or invited to a meeting with the police on the College premises, an Appropriate Adult will be present during this interview/meeting.

17.2. Appendix B: Referral Flowchart

The College will follow the below referral process as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026).



17.3. Appendix C: Types of Abuse

The College will follow the below referral process as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026).

Abuse (KCSiE 2026): a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. Children may also cause harm to other family members, often referred to as child to parent or care giver abuse.

Physical abuse (KCSiE 2026): a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. 26. Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include verbal abuse, such as persistent criticism, belittling, or name-calling, as well as not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse (KCSiE 2026): involves forcing causing 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 penetration with an object) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. 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 in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it. Children are more likely to know their abuser than not.

Neglect (KCSiE 2026): 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 caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

17.4. Appendix D: Specific Safeguarding Risks

- a. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)** are both forms of abuse and occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

CCE: Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others. Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence, or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to. It is not possible for a child to consent to being exploited, abused or trafficked. They may not recognise that this is happening to them.

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

CSE: this is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse 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 clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways

or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet. CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

- b.** 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 forms 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 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.
- c. Serious Violence:** All staff are aware of indicators which may signal that children are at risk from or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from College, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of

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

- d. 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. It includes where a child sees, hears, or experiences its effects (KCSiE). 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. The government will issue statutory guidance to provide further information for those working with domestic abuse victims and perpetrators, including the impact on children.

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 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, 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.

- e. FGM:** FGM is the responsibility of all staff. FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers: Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases may face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining learners, but the same definition of what is meant by “to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out” is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies.

Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the College’s designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) and involve children’s social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures.

- f. Forced Marriage:** Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some perpetrators use perceived cultural practices as a way to coerce a person into marriage. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.
- g. Modern Slavery:** This encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including: sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs. Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in the Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance. Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- h. Homelessness:** Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child’s welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any

deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity.

Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

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

In most cases college staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16- and 17-year-olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support.

Children's services will be the lead agency for these young people and the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances.

17.5. Appendix E: Filtering and Monitoring Roles and Responsibilities

A summary of the identified roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems can be found here:

Role	Responsibilities	Name/Position
Responsible Governor	Strategic responsibility for filtering and monitoring and need assurance that the standards are being met.	Safeguarding Governor
Senior Leadership Team Member	Responsible for ensuring these standards are met and: - procuring filtering and monitoring systems - documenting decisions on what is blocked or allowed and why - reviewing the effectiveness of your provision - overseeing reports	DSL & IT Network Manager DSL DSL & IT Network Manager DSL

	Ensure that all staff: • understand their role • are appropriately trained • follow policies, processes and procedures • act on reports and concerns	DSL DSL DSL DSL
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Lead responsibility for safeguarding and online safety, which could include overseeing and acting on: • filtering and monitoring reports • safeguarding concerns • checks to filtering and monitoring systems	DSL DSL IT Network Team
IT Service Provider	Technical responsibility for: • maintaining filtering and monitoring systems • providing filtering and monitoring reports • completing actions following concerns or checks to systems	IT Network Team IT Service Provider IT Network Team

17.6. Appendix F: Contact Details of Services

Useful contact details for Social Services and Prevent team

Guidance from the Children's Initial Advice Team can be sought by the designated College

Safeguarding Officers on 01325 406252.

The Emergency Duty Team's contact number is: 01642 524552

For learners over 18, the Adult Contact Team will be contacted on 01325 406111

Contact details for other Local Authorities are:

North Yorkshire: 01609 780780

County Durham First Contact: 03000 267979

Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership (Children's Hub) Hartlepool: 01429 284284

Stockton: 01642 130080

Middlesbrough: 01642726004

Redcar & Cleveland: 01642 130700

Prevent contacts

Due Diligence and Counter Extremism Group (DDCEG) Helpline - (020 7340 7264) For school staff and governors to raise concerns relating to extremism directly and in confidence.

Police

Non-urgent enquiries: 101

Emergency calls: 999

Prevent Team (office hours): 0191 375 2234

Police Prevent Officers, Billy Campsie

National referral form <https://www.durham.police.uk/Report-It/Terrorism/Prevent.aspx> The referral form should be e-mailed to FIMUNorth@CTPNE.police.uk

Joseph Rob, Channel Chair, Head of Service – Children's Front Door and Early Intervention

The Local Authority Designated Officer for Darlington is Shirley Saunders: 01325 405 319 (designatedofficer@darlington.gov.uk)

Records will be kept centrally and securely by the Lead Safeguarding Officer who will share necessary, relevant and accurate information in a proportionate and timely manner to safeguard and secure the well-being of individual children. Multi-agency working and confidentiality are vital and, wherever it is possible and safe to do so, consent will be sought before information is shared with other agencies or with other educational providers.

If a student moves to another college or school, the Lead Safeguarding Officer will ensure that their child protection file is transferred as soon as possible. This will be sent separately from the main student record; there will be secure transit and confirmation of receipt will be obtained.

17.7. Appendix G: Supporting Documents

Abuse

- [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#) – DfE advice
- [Domestic abuse: Various Information/Guidance](#) - Home Office (HO)
- [Faith based abuse: National Action Plan](#) - DfE advice
- [Relationship abuse: disrespect nobody](#) - Home Office website
- [Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy](#) – Home Office policy paper
- [Together we can stop child sexual abuse](#) – HM Government campaign

Bullying

- [Preventing bullying including cyberbullying](#) - DfE advice

Children missing from education, home or care

- [Children missing education](#) - DfE statutory guidance
- [Child missing from home or care](#) - DfE statutory guidance
- [Children and adults missing strategy](#) - Home Office strategy

Children with family members in prison

- [National Information Centre on Children of Offenders](#) - Barnardo's in partnership with HM Prison and Probation Service

Child Exploitation

- [Trafficking: safeguarding children](#) - DfE and HO guidance
- [Care of unaccompanied and trafficked children](#) – DfE statutory guidance
- [Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims](#) – HO statutory guidance

Drugs

- [Drug strategy 2017](#) - Home Office strategy
- [Information and advice on drugs](#) - Talk to Frank website
- [Drug and Alcohol education — teacher guidance & evidence review](#) – PSHE Association website

(so called) “Honour Based Abuse” including FGM and forced marriage

- [Female genital mutilation: information and resources](#)- Home Office guidance
- [Female genital mutilation: multi agency statutory guidance](#)
- DfE, DH, and HO statutory guidance
- [Forced marriage](#) - Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) statutory guidance
- [FGM resource pack](#) – HM Government guidance

Health and Well-being

- [Fabricated or induced illness: safeguarding children](#) - DfE, DH, HO
- [Rise Above: Free PSHE resources on health, wellbeing and resilience](#) - Public Health England
- [Medical-conditions: supporting pupils at school](#) - DfE statutory guidance
- [Mental health and behaviour](#) - DfE advice

Homelessness

- [Homelessness: How local authorities should exercise their functions](#) - Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government guidance

Private fostering

- [Private fostering: local authorities](#) - DfE statutory guidance

Radicalisation

- [Prevent duty guidance](#) - Home Office guidance
- [Prevent duty: additional advice for schools and childcare providers](#) - DfE advice
- [Educate Against Hate website](#) - DfE and Home Office advice
- [Prevent for FE and Training](#) - Education and Training Foundation (ETF)

Violence

- [Serious violence strategy](#) - Home Office Strategy
- [Factors linked to serious violence and how these factors can be used to identify individuals for intervention](#) – Home Office
- [Youth Endowment Fund](#) – Home Office
- [Gangs and youth violence: for schools and colleges](#) - Home Office advice
- [Ending violence against women and girls 2016-2020 strategy](#) - Home Office strategy
- [Violence against women and girls: national statement of expectations for victims](#) - Home Office guidance