

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures

Abbey College Manchester

01/09/2026

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Key College contacts

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Abbey DLD Colleges Ltd Chairman	Tim Haynes Email: tim.haynes@abbeydld.co.uk Telephone number: 0207 487 6000 enquiries@adcl.co.uk
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Key external contacts

Designated Officer(s) of the local authority	Majella O'Hagan Manchester Town Hall Extension Albert Square PO Box 532 Manchester M60 2LA Telephone number: 0161 234 1214 Email: quality.assurance@manchester.gov.uk
Greater Manchester children's social care department¹	Manchester Children's Services 102 Manchester Road Chorlton Manchester Telephone number: 0161 234 5001 Email: mscreply@manchester.co.uk Out of hours emergency: 0161 234 5001
Greater Manchester adult social care department	Telephone number: 0161 234 5001 Email: mcsreply@manchester.gov.uk
Greater Manchester Safeguarding Partners²	Manchester Children's Services 102 Manchester Road Chorlton Manchester Telephone number: 0161 234 5001 Email: mscreply@manchester.co.uk Out of hours emergency: 0161 234 5001
NSPCC FGM Helpline	0800 028 3550 fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk

¹ If you think a child or young person is at risk or being abused or neglected, contact the children's social care team at the child's home local council. If you do not know where they live, contact the College's local council's team, the NSPCC or the Police for advice

² If an independent school is to be named by local Safeguarding Partners as a 'relevant agency' it will have a legal duty to cooperate with the arrangements for their area.

FGM reporting - non-emergency police contact number	101
Police	999
College's Police liaison officer	69042 Cromblehome I'd like to contact an officer directly Greater Manchester Police (gmp.police.uk)
Prevent partners and advice about extremism	Name: Samiya Butt Telephone number: 020 7340 7264 Email: S.butt@manchester.gov.uk Non-emergency DfE advice 020 7340 7264 counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk
UK Safer Internet Centre	0344 381 4772 helpline@saferinternet.org.uk
NSPCC whistleblowing helpline	Weston House 42 Curtain Road London EC2A 3NH Telephone: 0800 028 0285 Email: help@nspcc.org.uk https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/
Report Abuse in Education helpline	A dedicated helpline for children and young people who have experienced abuse at school, and for worried adults and professionals that need support and guidance, including for non-recent abuse. 0800 136 663 or email help@nspcc.org.uk
Disclosure and Barring Service	Helpline: 0300 200190 Barring referrals: dbsdispatch@dbs.gov.uk
Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership	Bolton Safeguarding Children Partnership Westhoughton Town Hall Market Street Westhoughton BL5 3AW

	Email: boltonsafeguardingchildren@bolton.gov.uk Phone: 01204 337479
Bury Integrated Safeguarding Partnership	18-20 St Mary's Place Bury BL9 0DZ Phone: Bury Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Team on 0161-253-5678 or outside of office hours the Emergency Duty Team on 0161-253-6606 Email: childwellbeing@bury.gcsx.gov.uk
Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership	1st Floor Westfields Middlewich Road Sandbach Cheshire CW11 1HZ CESCP@cheshireeast.gov.uk Phone: 0300 123 5012 LADO phone: 01606 288931
Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool and Lancashire Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP)	children.cypsafeguarding@lancashire.gov.uk Phone: 0300 123 6720 or out of hours 0300 123 6722 (8pm - 8am)
Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership (RBSCP)	RBSCP Floor 4, Number One Riverside Smith Street Rochdale OL16 1XU rbsb.admin@rochdale.gov.uk Tel: 0300 303 0350
Salford Safeguarding Children Partnership	Salford Safeguarding Children Partnership Sutherland House 303 Chorley Road

	Swinton M27 6AY Email: sscp@salford.gov.uk Phone: Bridge Partnership - 0161 603 4500 (Monday to Friday from 8:30am - 4:30pm) Emergency Duty Team (EDT) - 0161 794 8888
Stockport Safeguarding Children Partnership	Safeguarding Children Unit Sanderling Building Birdhall Lane Cheadle Heath Stockport SK3 0RF https://www.stockport.gov.uk/contacting-the-massh Phone: 0161 217 6028 (Out of Hours 0161 718 2118)
Tameside Safeguarding Children Partnership	https://www.tameside.gov.uk/childabuse Phone: 0161 342 4101 (Monday to Friday during office hours) 0161 342 2222 (outside office hours and weekends and public holidays)
Trafford Strategic Safeguarding Partnership	Trafford Strategic Safeguarding Partnership Trafford Council Trafford Town hall Talbot Road Stretford M32 0TH Sophie Triantafillou Safeguarding Board Manager Email: Sophie.Triantafillou@trafford.gov.uk Tel: 0161 912 2089 Morgan Adams - Safeguarding Support Officer Email: morgan.adams@trafford.gov.uk

	Tel: 0161 911 8687 Fax: 0161 912 3424
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1 Aims

- 1.1 This is the Safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures of Abbey College Manchester
- 1.2 The aims of this policy are as follows:
 - 1.2.1 to actively promote the well-being of students³;
 - 1.2.2 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children⁴, staff and others who come into contact with the College and to protect them from harm;
 - 1.2.3 to have clear procedures in place for dealing with and referring concerns about the welfare of any individual and / or allegations of abuse, neglect and / or exploitation;
 - 1.2.4 to raise awareness about how to report concerns and how they will be investigated, whether they are current or historic in nature;
 - 1.2.5 to raise staff awareness about the College's safeguarding expectations;
 - 1.2.6 to ensure staff are competent to carry out their safeguarding responsibilities and feel supported in this role;
 - 1.2.7 to ensure consistent good safeguarding practice throughout the College, to include the promotion of a zero tolerance approach to child-on-child sexual violence and harassment in which students are confident to report it and staff are confident to identify and respond to it; and
 - 1.2.8 to promote a whole college culture of safety, equality and protection.
- 1.3 Every student should feel safe and protected from any form of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- 1.4 All staff should understand the indicators of abuse neglect and exploitation and understand specific safeguarding risks so that they can identify them and report any concerns about children. The indicators and key safeguarding risks for the College community are set out in Appendix 1.
- 1.5 Members of the College community (to include alumni) should also feel able to raise any safeguarding concerns, whether current or non-recent, safe in the knowledge that they will be supported, the matter will be handled sensitively and appropriate action taken.
- 1.6 Anyone about whom a concern is raised should feel confident that they will be supported and the matter will be handled sensitively and that appropriate action will be taken.
- 1.7 This policy forms part of the College's whole college approach to promoting child safeguarding and wellbeing, which seeks to involve everyone at the College to ensure that the best interests of students underpins and is at the heart of all decisions, systems, processes and policies.

³ This wording reflects the requirements in part 8 paragraph 34 of the ISSR. Well-being means well-being within the meaning of section 10(2) of the Children Act 2004(a): the physical and mental health and emotional well-being; protection from harm and neglect; education training and recreation; contribution made by students to society; social and economic well-being.

⁴ This wording reflects the requirements in part 3 paragraph 7 of ISSR.

- 1.8 Although this policy is necessarily detailed, it is important to the College that our safeguarding policies and procedures are transparent, clear and easy to understand for staff, students, parents and carers. The College welcomes feedback on how we can continue to improve our policies.

2 Scope and application

- 2.1 This policy applies to the whole College.
- 2.2 This policy applies at all times including where students or staff are away from the College, whether they are on college-arranged activities or otherwise, and whether or not the College is open. It will therefore apply out of College hours and in the holidays.
- 2.3 This policy applies to core College activities and to out of hours and commercial⁵ activities run by the College. Where a Third Party is using the premises, the College will ensure that there is a written agreement in place confirming they have adequate safeguarding procedures.
- 2.4 This policy is designed to address the specific statutory obligations on the College to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- 2.5 A 'Child' is someone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday, however in practice this policy applies to all young people studying or living within the College's accommodation.

3 Regulatory framework

- 3.1 This policy has been prepared to meet the College's responsibilities under the following legislation:
- 3.1.1 Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014;
 - 3.1.2 *National minimum standards for boarding schools* (Department for Education (DfE), September 2022);
 - 3.1.3 Education and Skills Act 2008;
 - 3.1.4 Children Act 1989;
 - 3.1.5 Children Act 2004;
 - 3.1.6 Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006;
 - 3.1.7 Children and Social Work Act 2017;
 - 3.1.8 Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (**UK GDPR**);
 - 3.1.9 Equality Act 2010;
 - 3.1.10 Human Rights Act 1998; and
 - 3.1.11 Care Act 2014⁶.

⁵ Paragraphs 166-167 of KCSIE 2025 requires the College to make sure there are adequate safeguarding arrangements in place for commercial activities, even if they do not involve students. The arrangements for such activities and their management may differ from in school arrangements and appropriate detail should be included here or in an Appendix.

⁶ To take account of pupils aged 18 or over.

3.2 This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

3.2.1 Statutory guidance:

- (a) Keeping children safe in education (DfE, September 2025) (**KCSIE**);
- (b) Working together to safeguard children 2023 (DfE, updated February 2024) (**WTSC**);
- (c) Prevent Duty guidance for England and Wales (HM Government, December 2023);
- (d) Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation (HM Government, July 2020);
- (e) Children missing education (DfE, August 2024);
- (f) Relationships education, relationships and sex education and health education guidance (DfE, September 2021);
- (g) Channel duty guidance: protecting people susceptible to radicalisation (HM Government, October 2023, updated December 2023); and
- (h) PACE Code C 2019.

3.2.2 Non-statutory advice:

- (a) What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners (HM Government, March 2015);
- (b) Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (DfE, May 2024);
- (c) Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff (DfE, February 2024);
- (d) Working together to improve school attendance (DfE, August 2024);
- (e) Meeting digital and technology standards in education (DfE, maintained);
- (f) Plan technology for your school (HM Government, September 2024);
- (g) Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (DSIT and UKCIS, March 2024);
- (h) Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools (DfE, in force from September 2022);
- (i) Teaching online safety in schools (DfE, January 2023);
- (j) Generative AI: product safety expectations (DfE, January 2025);
- (k) Harmful online challenges and online hoaxes (DfE, February 2021);
- (l) Multi-agency practice principles for responding to child exploitation and extra-familial harm (TCE support programme);

- (m) Child sexual exploitation: definition and a guide for practitioners local leaders and decision makers working to protect children from child sexual exploitation (DfE, February 2017);
 - (n) Forced marriage resource pack (Home Office, May 2023);
 - (o) Virginity testing and hymenoplasty: multi-agency guidance (DHSC, updated April 2024);
 - (p) Educate Against Hate (HM Government, maintained);
 - (q) Managing the risk of radicalisation in your education setting (DfE, September 2023);
 - (r) Equality Act 2010: advice for schools (DfE, June 2018);
 - (s) After-school clubs, community activities and tuition: safeguarding guidance for providers (DfE, September 2023);
 - (t) Sponsorship Duties (UKVI, October 2023); and
 - (u) Mobile phones in schools: guidance (DfE, February 2024)
- 3.2.3 Greater Manchester Safeguarding Partners referral / threshold procedures / guidance.
- 3.3 The following College policies, procedures and resource materials are relevant to this policy:
- 3.3.1 Staff / other code of conduct
 - 3.3.2 Staff acceptable use and social media policy
 - 3.3.3 Whistleblowing policy
 - 3.3.4 Safer recruitment policy
 - 3.3.5 Online safety policy
 - 3.3.6 Behaviour policy
 - 3.3.7 Anti-bullying policy
 - 3.3.8 Acceptable use policy for pupils
 - 3.3.9 Mobile phone use policy for pupils
 - 3.3.10 Attendance policy
 - 3.3.11 Visitors and security policy
 - 3.3.12 Risk assessment policy for pupil welfare
 - 3.3.13 Missing pupil policy
 - 3.3.14 Policy on special educational needs and learning difficulties
 - 3.3.15 Disability policy

- 3.3.16 Health and safety policy
- 3.3.17 Relationships education/relationships and sex education policy
- 3.3.18 Policy on the administration of medicines and supporting pupils with medical conditions
- 3.3.19 Supporting pupils' mental health policy]; and
- 3.3.20 Educational guardianship policy

4 **Publication and availability**

- 4.1 This policy is published on the College website.
- 4.2 This policy is available in hard copy on request.
- 4.3 A copy of the policy is available for inspection from reception during the College day.
- 4.4 This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.
- 4.5 This policy and all policies referred to in it are also available to staff via the College's intranet.

5 **Definitions**

- 5.1 Where the following words or phrases are used in this policy:
 - 5.1.1 References to the **Proprietor** are references to the Board of Governors;
 - 5.1.2 References to **working days** mean Monday to Friday, even if a boarding college or the College is open on Saturdays when the College is open during term time. The dates of terms are published on the College's website. If referrals to an external agency are required outside term time, references to **working days** are to the days on which the relevant external agency is working;
 - 5.1.3 **Safeguarding** is the protection of people from harm.
 - 5.1.4 **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** is defined in KCSIE 2025 as:
 - (a) providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge;
 - (b) protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online;
 - (c) preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
 - (d) ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
 - (e) taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

- 5.1.5 **Child** means a child under the age of 18. This Policy which applies to all registered students whether they are under or over 18 years with adjustments as appropriate to reflect their age.
- 5.1.6 **CSC** means Children's Social Care and includes, depending on the context, the team based in the local authority where the College is located and, where appropriate, the team based in the local authority where the child is resident.
- 5.1.7 **DSL** means the College's Designated Safeguarding Lead. References to the DSL include the Deputy DSL (**DDSL**) where the DSL is unavailable.
- 5.1.8 **Designated Officer** means designated officer at the local authority (often referred to as the LADO). The designated officer(s) has overall responsibility for oversight of the procedures for dealing with allegations, for resolving any inter-agency issues, and for liaison with the three safeguarding partners
- 5.1.9 **Local Safeguarding Partners** means the three safeguarding partners (local authority, Integrated Care Board and the chief officer of police for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area) who make arrangements to work together with appropriate relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs. References to **harmful sexual behaviour** in this policy refer to problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviours expressed by children and young people under the age of 18 years old that are developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage, may be harmful towards self or others, or abusive towards another child, young person or adult.
- 5.1.10 Reference to **staff** includes all those who work for or on behalf of the College, regardless of their employment status, including contractors, supply staff, volunteers and Governors unless otherwise indicated.
- 5.1.11 **Senior Leadership Team (SLT)** comprises the Principal, Assistant Principal SENCO, Assistant Principal Academic, Assistant Principal Director of Operations and DSL (Assistant Principal Boarding and Pastoral).

6 **Responsibility statement and allocation of tasks: the College's approach to safeguarding leadership**

- 6.1 The Proprietor has overall responsibility for all matters which are the subject of this policy, including:
 - 6.1.1 legal responsibility to ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of students at the College, having regard to relevant guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
 - 6.1.2 strategic leadership responsibility for the College's safeguarding arrangements; and
 - 6.1.3 specific responsibilities to facilitate a whole college approach to safeguarding, set out in more detail in Part 2 of KCSIE.
- 6.2 The Proprietor:
 - 6.2.1 appoints a Board level lead on safeguarding matters, whose contact details are set out in the College contacts list at the front of this policy;

- 6.2.2 ensures that all members of the governing body receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training, both on induction and thereafter regularly updated. Training should be consistent with KCSIE and Local Safeguarding Partner guidance;
- 6.2.3 ensures it discharges its legal responsibilities under the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010, having regard for the implications for safeguarding that such responsibilities can have;
- 6.2.4 ensures that appropriate arrangements are in place for the whole Board to discharge their function, including appropriate consideration of safeguarding matters at Board meetings and a holistic annual review of safeguarding. The Safeguarding Governor reports to the Board on safeguarding matters at every Board meeting (minimum of four per year) and submits an annual safeguarding review/report at the first Board meeting of the academic year; and
- 6.2.5 establishes appropriate delegation arrangements at College level, led by the Principal and DSL, to enable the College to discharge its safeguarding duties effectively.
- (a) The College has Safeguarding Team comprised of the DSL and a number of DDSLs. These include the Heads of Years, Senior Houseparent Student Services and Learning Centre supervisor.
- 6.3 To ensure the efficient discharge of its responsibilities under this policy, the Proprietor has allocated the following tasks:

Task	Allocated to	When / frequency of review
Keeping the policy up to date and compliant with the law and best practice	Marc Gerard Cronin	As required, and at least termly
Monitoring the implementation of the policy, relevant risk assessments and any action taken in response and evaluating effectiveness ⁷	Marc Gerard Cronin	As required, and at least termly
Seeking input from interested groups (such as students, staff, parents) to consider improvements to the College's processes under the policy	Marc Gerard Cronin	As required, and at least annually
Formal annual review of the College's safeguarding policies and procedures and their implementation.	Proprietor	At least annually

⁷ Please note that responsibilities for safeguarding across the College's operation should be clear and may be shared with others e.g. for trading activities or due diligence of hirers / contractors. This Policy should reflect the College's arrangements.

Task	Allocated to	When / frequency of review
Assessing the adequacy of safeguarding arrangements for those who use or hire premises	Laura Cronin & Marc Gerard Cronin	Before commencement of arrangement and thereafter at least annually

6.4 Principal

- 6.4.1 The Principal is responsible for the overall management of the College and for the management of concerns and allegations about staff.
- 6.4.2 The Principal ensures that the College's policies and procedures, adopted by the governing body and proprietor (particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect) are understood, and followed by all staff.⁸

6.5 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- 6.5.1 The DSL is a senior member of staff of the College's leadership team with the necessary status and authority to take lead responsibility for all ⁹ aspects of safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place) throughout the College.
- 6.5.2 The DSL has the appropriate status and authority within the College to carry out the duties of the post, and the time, funding, training, resources and support to enable them to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings (and / or to support other staff to do so) and to contribute to the assessment of children. The name and contact details of the DSL are set out in the College contacts list at the front of this policy. The main responsibilities of the DSL are set out in Annex C of KCSIE.
- 6.5.3 The DSL will also liaise with the Principal to inform them of issues relating to any police investigations and the statutory requirements for children to have an appropriate adult. The role of the appropriate adult is to safeguard the rights, entitlements and welfare of juveniles to whom the provisions of PACE Code C and any other code of practice apply.
- 6.5.4 The DSL will take lead responsibility for students who are looked after children.
- 6.5.5 The Assistant Principal SENCO Swill also undertake the role of senior mental health lead and is responsible for developing a holistic approach to promoting and supporting the mental wellbeing of students and staff. Please refer to the College's Well-Being Mental Health Policy for further details on routes to escalate these issues and referral and accountability systems.

⁸ Paragraph 76 KCSIE 2024

⁹If the College has appointed others to lead certain aspects of the College's safeguarding function, for example its commercial activities or its wider charitable safeguarding function, then details should be added here

6.5.6 The DSL will undertake the role of senior attendance champion with overall responsibility for student attendance and for liaising with students' Parents and external agencies in that regard.¹⁰

6.5.7 If the DSL is unavailable the activities of the DSL will be carried out by the Deputy DSL. The Deputy DSL's details are also set out in the College contacts list at the front of this policy.

7 Specific safeguarding duties in relation to children

7.1 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility.

7.2 The College is committed to acting in the best interests of the child so as to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. The College requires everyone who comes into contact with children and their families to share this commitment.

7.2.1 The College will:

- (a) understand its role in the safeguarding partner arrangements [Manchester Safeguarding Partnership](#) and operate safeguarding procedures in line with locally agreed multi-agency safeguarding arrangements put in place by the Greater Manchester Safeguarding Partners
- (b) be alert to signs of abuse whether in college, within the child's family or from outside, and take immediate¹¹ steps to protect individuals from any form of abuse, neglect or exploitation whether from an adult or another child;
- (c) include opportunities within the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise, and stay safe from abuse;
- (d) promote the systems in place for children to confidentially report abuse, ensuring they know their concerns will be treated seriously, they can safely express their views and give feedback;
- (e) take active steps to promote, monitor and analyse college attendance;
- (f) allow staff to determine how best to build trusted relationships with students which facilitate communication within the parameters of the staff code of conduct;
- (g) deal appropriately with every suspicion or complaint of abuse and support children who have been abused in accordance with appropriate education, child protection and / or welfare plans;
- (h) design and operate procedures which, so far as possible, ensure that staff students and others are not prejudiced by malicious, false, unsubstantiated or unfounded allegations;

¹⁰ While pupil attendance is the responsibility of all staff, the DfE expects schools to have in place a designated attendance champion in the SLT with clearly assigned responsibilities. If the DSL does not take on this role we recommend they are a member of the SLT so that they have the authority, capacity and support to influence and lead strategic change within the setting. If the DSL does not take on this role please amend the policy to ensure that it reflects the College's custom and practice.

¹¹ Paragraph 85 of the statutory guidance 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' (July 2025) states "If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately."

- (i) prepare staff to identify children who may experience vulnerability¹² and may benefit from early help and encourage them to be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for children with the indicators listed in KCSIE or WTSC;
- (j) take a whole-college public health / preventative approach to harmful sexual behaviour;¹³
- (k) be alert to risks online and take reasonable steps to protect children from online harm, including in its approach to filtering and monitoring;
- (l) put in place appropriate security protection measures to safeguard information systems and review the effectiveness of these procedures;
- (m) take appropriate action to meet the Cyber security standards in order to improve resilience against cyber attacks;
- (n) be alert to children who are at potentially greater risk of harm (both online and offline) including children who need a social worker and children requiring mental health support;
- (o) consider its approach to protecting children where there is a significant gender imbalance in the College;
- (p) be alert to the needs of students with physical or mental health conditions, special educational needs or disabilities, which could be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation, and where additional barriers can exist when detecting abuse or neglect;
- (q) encourage a culture of listening to students and victims of abuse and taking account of their wishes and feelings in any measure put in place and actions taken by the College to protect them;
 - (i) College has various means in which students voices can be heard. There is a College Representative Council and each form has a means of representation. There are also a number of smaller councils that work with the Heads of Year on specific issues. The college uses online forms to take the views of students and to monitor awareness, for example, of the Safeguarding Team. Within boarding each wing has a forum and the wider community are asked about their wellbeing as well as issues such as the food menu.
- (r) operate robust and sensible health and safety procedures and operate clear and supportive policies on drugs, alcohol and substance misuse;
- (s) assess the risk of students being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, based on an understanding of the potential risk in the local area;
- (t) identify students who may be susceptible to extremist ideology and radicalisation and know what to do when they are identified; and

¹² This wording has been inserted to reflect the findings of the National Children's Bureau's research 'From Trait to State' in relation to the concept of vulnerability and reflect the approach taken in care provision

¹³ A specific Lucy Faithfull Foundation recommendation, but rooted in KCSIE 2025

- (u) consider and develop procedures to deal with any other safeguarding issues which may be specific to individual students in the College or in the local area.
- (v) ensure that appropriate policies and procedures are in place to safeguard students which it sponsors to study in the UK under the Student or Child Student immigration route.¹⁴

7.3 Staff may follow the College's Whistleblowing policy to raise concerns about poor or unsafe safeguarding practices at the College or potential failures by the College or its staff to properly fulfil its safeguarding responsibilities. Such concerns will be taken seriously. The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns about child protection failures internally (see the front of this policy for the relevant contact details). Staff may also report concerns direct to the College's Local Authority if they consider that the College has failed to deal with concerns appropriately.

8 Pupils aged 18 or over

8.1 It is not uncommon the College to have pupils in roll who each the age of 18, 19, 20 or 21 in the course of their education. The College's safeguarding responsibilities extend to all members of the College community and its safeguarding policies, procedures and codes of conduct apply to all pupils, including those aged 18 or over. The College acknowledges its duty of care to these pupils and the need to consider their specific needs and rights, as well as the need to manage any risk they may present to others, with reference to differences in legal status, maturity, or life experience, for example. Where a pupil who is aged 18 or over presents safeguarding concerns, the College will consider whether they are, or may be, an "adult at risk" under the provisions of the Care Act 2014. If so, it will follow appropriate safeguarding procedures, including referrals to the relevant local authority's safeguarding adults board, where relevant.

9 Reporting obligations of staff

9.1 Reporting obligations generally

- 9.1.1 Staff members should maintain an attitude of "**it could happen here**" where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a student, staff members should always act in the **best** interests of the student.
- 9.1.2 Staff should be aware that students may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and / or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful e.g. a child may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened due to their vulnerability, disability and / or sexual orientation or language barrier. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse, neglect and exploitation so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of protection.
- 9.1.3 All staff have a duty to:
 - (a) report any concerns they may have about the safety and / or well-being of students;

¹⁴ Specific safeguarding duties are included at section 13 of the UK Visas and Immigration Student Sponsorship duties guidance which can be found here: [Student sponsor guidance](#)

- (b) report any concerns they may have about the safety and / or well-being of other persons associated with the College;
- (c) report any safeguarding concerns about staff or anyone else associated with the College; and
- (d) follow up on any such reports to ensure that appropriate action is or has been taken.

9.1.4 The procedures for doing so are set out below. If staff are unsure about the appropriate process to use, they should not hesitate to exercise professional curiosity and speak to the DSL, any member of the SLT or directly to children's social care (whether the College's local authority or that local to the child's home address) or police in their absence for guidance.

9.2 What to do if staff have a concern about a student's welfare

9.2.1 If staff have **any concern about a student's welfare**, they should follow the procedures in this policy and report their concern to the DSL (or the DDSL in the DSL's absence) **immediately**.

- (a) The contact details of the DSL and DDSL are set out in the contacts list at the front of this policy;
- (b) See Appendix 2 for guidance about what to do when receiving a disclosure and paragraph 24 below relating to recording a concern.

9.2.2 A concern about a child is not defined and should be interpreted broadly. It may relate to a recognition that a child would benefit from extra support, to an emerging problem or to a potentially unmet need, or may reflect a concern that a child may be deemed to be "in need" or at "immediate risk of harm" as defined by the Children Act 1989.

9.2.3 Teachers must report known cases of female genital mutilation (**FGM**), virginity testing, hymenoplasty and sexual abuse to the police.¹⁵ See Appendix 1 for further information about FGM and this reporting duty. All other staff should refer FGM concerns to the DSL.

9.2.4 If the concern involves an **allegation or concern raised about a member of staff**, supply staff, contractors or volunteers¹⁶ this must be reported in accordance with the procedures set out in Appendix 4 and parts 1 and 4 of KCSIE.

9.2.5 What if the DSL is unavailable?

- (a) The DSL or the DDSL should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns and may be contacted on their mobile phones in relation to any safeguarding concerns out of College hours.
 - (i) The DSL has a college mobile and is available at all times, DDSLs are contactable via Teams and the Assistant Principal SENCO also has a

¹⁵ Virginity testing and hymenoplasty became illegal in 2022 and the Government is introducing a new law which will create a legal requirement for anyone in regulated activity relating to children in England to report if they are made aware a child is being sexually abused. Refer to paragraph 84 of the statutory guidance 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' (July 2025).

¹⁶ This is defined above but given new focus on supply staff, volunteers and contractors in KCSIE 2023 it has been expressly stated

college mobile. The Assistant Principal Head of Operations is also contactable via mobile as is the Principal.

- (b) If in exceptional circumstances the DSL and DDSL are unavailable, staff must not delay taking action. Staff should speak to their line manager or a member of the SLT and should be taken from children's social care. Their contact details are set out at the front of this policy.
- (c) Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, a referral to children's social care and / or police should be made immediately. Staff should be aware of the process for making referrals direct to children's social care and / or the police in these circumstances. See section 12 below for further details on making a referral.
- (d) Any action taken by a member of staff pursuant to this requirement should then be shared with the DSL or DDSL, or a member of the SLT, as soon as is practically possible.

9.3 Action by the DSL

- 9.3.1 On receipt of a report of a concern, the DSL will consider the appropriate course of action in accordance with the appropriate Local Safeguarding Partners procedures and referral threshold document. Such action may include:
 - (a) managing any support for the Student internally via the College's own pastoral support processes, seeking advice from children's social care where required (see 10 below);
 - (b) undertaking an early help assessment (which generally requires parental consent) (see 11 below); or
 - (c) making a referral for statutory services (see 12 below).
- 9.3.2 The views of the child will be taken into account when considering the appropriate course of action, but will not be determinative.
- 9.3.3 Where the concern relates to the welfare of a Student who is aged 18 or over, the DSL will consider whether it is necessary to refer such concerns to the Safeguarding Adults Board rather than, or in addition to, children's social care.
- 9.3.4 If it is decided that a referral is not required, the DSL will keep the matter under review and give ongoing consideration to a referral if the student's situation does not appear to be improving.

10 Managing support for students internally

- 10.1 The College has a framework for the identification, assessment, management and review of risk to student welfare, so that appropriate action can be taken to reduce the risks identified. See section 23 and the College's Risk assessment policy for pupil welfare or policy.
- 10.2 The College will ensure that appropriate advice and consultation is sought about the management of safeguarding issues, including advice from CSC where necessary.

11 Early help assessment

- 11.1 Early help, also known as early intervention, is support given to a family when a problem first emerges. It can be provided at any stage of a child or young person's life to parents, children or whole families, and is generally supported by CSC in consultation with the family.¹⁷
- 11.2 The College understands that providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later.
- 11.3 The College's safeguarding training includes guidance about early help processes and prepares all staff to identify children who may benefit from early help. Staff are mindful of specific safeguarding issues and those students who may face additional safeguarding challenges and/or varying resilience levels from time to time. Staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:
- 11.3.1 is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs;
 - 11.3.2 has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan) (**EHCP**);
 - 11.3.3 has a mental health need;
 - 11.3.4 is a young carer;
 - 11.3.5 is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines;
 - 11.3.6 is frequently missing / goes missing from education, home or care;
 - 11.3.7 has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit;
 - 11.3.8 is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation;
 - 11.3.9 is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
 - 11.3.10 has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending;
 - 11.3.11 is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse;
 - 11.3.12 is misusing alcohol or other drugs themselves;
 - 11.3.13 is at risk of "honour based" abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage;
 - 11.3.14 is a privately fostered child; or
 - 11.3.15 is student from overseas without any adult family members in the United Kingdom.
- 11.4 A member of staff who considers that a student may benefit from early help should keep a written record of their concerns and in the first instance discuss this with the DSL (see paragraph 24 below and Appendix 2 for further guidance). The DSL will consider the

¹⁷ KCSIE 2024 contains a longer definition (see para 497)

appropriate action to take in accordance with the child's Safeguarding Children Partners menu of early help services and their referral threshold document and will support staff in liaising with parents and other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate.

11.5 If early help is appropriate, staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment and will be supported by the DSL in carrying out this role. In some cases College staff may be required to take a lead role.

11.6 The matter will be kept under review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care for assessment for statutory services if the student's situation appears to be getting worse, or does not appear to be improving.

12 Making a referral

12.1 **Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, a referral to children's social care in line with local reporting procedures (and if appropriate the police) should be made immediately.**

12.2 The contact details for the College's CSC team are set out at the front of this policy.

12.3 Anyone can make contact with CSC to discuss concerns before a referral is made. This includes professional as well as a child themselves, family members and members of the public. The child's local safeguarding partners will have a threshold of need framework and guidance which will provide more information which can support decision making in relation to contacting CSC.

12.4 Statutory assessments

12.4.1 Children's social care may undertake a statutory assessment under the *Children Act 1989* into the needs of the child. It is likely that the person making the referral will be asked to contribute to this process. Statutory assessments include:

- (a) **Children in need:** *A child in need is a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled.* Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.
- (b) **Children suffering or likely to suffer significant harm:** Local authorities have a duty to make enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 if they have reasonable cause to suspect that *a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.*

12.4.2 The threshold document published by Local Safeguarding Partners includes the criteria, including the level of need, for when a case should be referred for assessment and for statutory services under section 17 and 47.

12.5 Anybody can make a referral. Staff required to make a direct referral may find helpful the flowchart set out on page 24 of KCSIE and the flowcharts set out in Chapter 3 of WTSC for information about the likely actions and decisions required.

12.6 Parental consent is usually expected for referrals to statutory agencies, unless this may expose the child to additional harm or is not considered to be in the child's best interests, as

staff will need to have access to certain information about the child and the safeguarding concern in order to make the referral. In general terms, this information will comprise:

- 12.6.1 personal details of the child including the child's developmental needs;
 - 12.6.2 detailed information about the concern;
 - 12.6.3 information about the child's family and siblings including the capacity of the child's parents or carers to meet the child's developmental needs and any external factors that may be undermining their capacity to parent.
- 12.7 If the referral is made by telephone, this should be followed up in writing.
 - 12.8 If the referral is made by someone other than the DSL, the DSL should be informed of the referral as soon as possible.
 - 12.9 Confirmation of the referral and details of the decision as to what course of action will be taken should be received from the local authority within one working day. If this is not received, the DSL (or the person that made the referral) should contact children's social care again.
 - 12.10 Following a referral, if the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the local escalation procedures should be followed to ensure that the concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves.

13 Allegations against students - child-on-child abuse

- 13.1 Allegations against students should be managed and reported in accordance with the procedures set out in this policy in Appendix 3. If harmful sexual behaviour is alleged to have occurred, the DSL will have regard to Part 5 of KCSIE and take into account the local response of the police and children's social care to these issues. The views of the alleged victim will be taken into account but will not be determinative.
- 13.2 All those involved in such allegations will be treated as being at risk and in need of support and the safeguarding procedures in accordance with this policy will be followed. Appropriate support will be provided to all students involved, including support from external services as necessary.

14 Extra-familial harm

- 14.1 Safeguarding incidents and / or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the College and / or can occur between children outside the College, inside and outside of home and online.
- 14.2 All staff, including the DSL, should consider the context within which such incidents and / or behaviours occur, for example where wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that may be a threat to their safety and / or welfare, and should record these appropriately.
- 14.3 Children's social care, or adult social care where appropriate, should be informed of all such information to allow any assessment process to consider all available evidence and the full context of any abuse.
- 14.4 Extra-familial harm: all staff, but especially the DSL (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms

including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationships abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, and county lines and radicalisation.

15 Risk assessment

- 15.1 Where a concern about a student's welfare is identified, the risks to that student's welfare will be assessed and appropriate action will be taken to reduce the risks identified.
- 15.2 The format of risk assessment may vary and may be included as part of the College's overall response to a welfare issue, including the use of individual student welfare or safety plans (such as behaviour, healthcare and education plans, as appropriate). Regardless of the form used, the College's approach to promoting student welfare will be systematic and student focused.
- 15.3 The Principal has overall responsibility for ensuring that matters which affect student welfare are adequately risk assessed and for ensuring that the relevant findings are implemented, monitored and evaluated.
- 15.4 Day to day responsibility to carry out risk assessments under this policy will be delegated to the DSL who has been properly trained in, and tasked with, carrying out the particular assessment.

16 What to do if staff have a safeguarding concern about someone else's welfare

- 16.1 Staff who have safeguarding concerns about the welfare of others or any other safeguarding issue not expressly covered by this policy, should report them.
- 16.2 In the absence of an express procedure about reporting, they should report such concerns to their line manager or the DSL in the first instance.

17 Allegations made and or / concerns raised about staff and others in College

- 17.1 The College has a policy and procedures for managing allegations made and / or concerns raised about any adult working for, or on behalf of, the College, whether paid or unpaid, or any Other Adult (as defined in 2.3 of Appendix 4) which may affect the safety and welfare of children.
- 17.2 The procedures in this policy apply to staff who pose a risk of harm to children or may behave in a way that indicates that they may be unsuitable to work with children. They also apply to low level concerns that do not meet the harms threshold.¹⁸ The procedures aim to strike a balance between the need to protect children from abuse and the need to protect staff from malicious, unfounded, false, or unsubstantiated allegations. The policy and procedures are set out in Appendix 4 and follow the guidance in Parts 1 and 4 of KCSIE.
- 17.3 The College will follow its employment procedures for dealing with any other safeguarding concern raised about staff, involving external agencies as appropriate.
- 17.4 Detailed guidance is provided to staff to ensure that all staff are clear on the rules of conduct and the expectations of the College in relation to contact with students, parents, colleagues and any other person who comes into contact with the College. This guidance is contained

¹⁸ As defined in Part 4 of KCSIE

in the Staff Conduct Policy and includes details of additional safeguarding arrangements where staff engage in one-to-one teaching and meetings with students.

18 Informing parents

- 18.1 Parents will normally be kept informed, as appropriate, of any action to be taken under these procedures. However, there may be circumstances when the DSL will need to consult the Principal, the Designated Officer(s), children's social care, the police and / or the student (if they are considered to be of sufficient maturity and understanding) before discussing details with parents.
- 18.2 In all cases, the DSL will be guided by the Greater Manchester Safeguarding Partners referral threshold document. [Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures \(Children's\) - Manchester Safeguarding Partnership](#)
- 18.3 See also Appendix 4 for details about the disclosure of information where an allegation has been made against a member of staff.

19 Additional reporting

- 19.1 In addition to the reporting requirements explained above, the College will consider whether it is required to report safeguarding incidents to any other regulatory body or organisation, including but not limited to:

19.1.1 Health and Safety Executive

- (a) The College is legally required under RIDDOR to report certain incidents to the Health and Safety Executive. Please see the College's Health and Safety Policy for further details about this.

19.1.2 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

- (a) A referral to the DBS will be made promptly if the criteria are met. See Appendix 4 for further details.

19.1.3 Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA)

- (a) The College is under a duty to consider whether it is appropriate to make a referral to the TRA where it has ceased to use the services of a teacher because the teacher has been guilty of serious misconduct (or might have ceased to use the services of a teacher for that reason had the teacher not ceased to provide those services). The College may also, at its discretion, make a referral to the TRA where the duty to consider doing so has not yet arisen. See Appendix 4, for more details.

19.1.4 Insurers

- (a) The College will consider whether it is necessary to report a safeguarding incident to the relevant insurers. It may be necessary to report to a number of insurers as there may be concurrent cover under existing and historic policies.

- (b) Care should be taken to ensure this is done before renewal to ensure that the College complies with its duties under the Insurance Act 2015. If the College is in any doubt with regard to the correct insurer and / or policy and / or if it is unable to locate the relevant insurer, professional advice should be sought.

19.1.5 Boarding Schools Association (BSA)

- (a) The College will report safeguarding matters to the BSA as required by their Safeguarding Charter.

19.1.6 UK Visas and Immigration

- (a) In the event that a student holding a Student or Child Student visa sponsored by the College under the Points Based System goes missing, the College will report to UKVI if the student misses ten consecutive expected contact points.
- (b) Each time the College's attendance register is completed it is treated as a contact point for these purposes.
- (c) The College will also ensure that any changes to the care or living arrangements which are in place for a student holding a Child Student visa sponsored by the College meet the requirements of the Immigration Rules and UKVI's Student Sponsor Guidance. Where a change to a student's living or care arrangements do not comply with those requirements then this must be reported to UKVI including the details of the steps that are being taken to rectify the situation.
- (d) Where a pupil holding a Child Student visa sponsored by the College will be cared for in a private foster care setting, the College will notify the local authority in the area where the pupil will be living as soon as the College becomes aware that the child has arrived in the UK or, if the private foster care arrangement begins after the pupil arrived in the UK, as soon as it becomes aware of the change.
- (e) The report will be made by the College's Level 1 user via the Sponsor Management and in accordance with prevailing UKVI guidance.

20 Safer recruitment and supervision of staff

- 20.1 The College is committed to practising safer recruitment in checking the suitability of staff (including staff employed by another organisation). See the College's separate Safer recruitment policy.
- 20.2 The College maintains a single central register of appointments for all staff.
- 20.3 The College's protocol for ensuring that visiting speakers are suitable and appropriately supervised is set out in the College's separate Visiting Speakers policy.

21 Use of mobile electronic devices and smart technology

- 21.1 The College's policy on the use of mobile technology, including phones and cameras, in the College, is as follows:

- 21.1.1 The College has adopted a policy to prohibits all students using mobile electronic devices during lessons, but not the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtimes;
 - 21.1.2 the College's Acceptable use policy for students sets out the expectations on students from Year 10 to Year 13.;
 - 21.1.3 all staff should use mobile devices and cameras and other electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities in accordance with the guidance set out in the staff Staff Conduct Policy;
 - 21.1.4 parents of all students may bring mobile devices onto the premises but may only take photographs during events such as plays, concerts or sporting events for personal use. Parents should be reminded that the publication of such images (including on personal social networking sites even where access to the image may be limited) may be unlawful.
- 21.2 The College allows access to the internet onsite. Appropriate internet safety measures are taken to manage associated risks, including use of filters and monitoring of usage, the use of generative AI and cyber attacks.
- 21.3 The College's approach to online safety is set out in the College's Online safety policy and Acceptable use policy for pupils.

22 Training

- 22.1 The College ensures that regular guidance and training is arranged on induction and at regular intervals thereafter so that staff understand what is expected of them by this policy and have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their roles¹⁹.
- 22.2 The level and frequency of training depends on the role of the individual member of staff.
- 22.3 The College maintains written records of all staff training.
- 22.4 All training will be carried out in accordance with Greater Manchester Safeguarding Partners procedures where possible.

22.5 Induction

- 22.5.1 All staff, including temporary staff and volunteers, will be provided with induction training that includes (and where relevant includes the provision of copies of):
- (a) this policy;
 - (b) the role, identity and contact details of the DSL and his / her Deputy;
 - (c) the Behaviour, discipline and exclusions policy for students;
 - (d) the Anti-bullying policy, which includes details of the College's policy on cyberbullying and prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying ;

¹⁹ To reflect good practice the College may wish to check that its policies and procedures include reference to training provided to its staff to ensure that they have a basic understanding of safeguarding, including the identity of the College's DSL

- (e) the staff Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct] including the [Whistleblowing policy / ADC IT acceptable use policy / Staff conduct policy / Low level concerns policy / Staff social media policy];
- (f) the safeguarding response to children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and / or prolonged periods;
- (g) the College's approach to online safety which includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring as well as information on cyber security;
- (h) safeguarding training in accordance with Greater Manchester Safeguarding Partners' procedures including guidance on managing a report of child-on-child harmful sexual behaviour;
- (i) where determined appropriate by the Proprietor, a copy of Annex A of KCSIE for those staff not working directly with children; or
- (j) a copy of Part 1 and, where appropriate, Annex B of KCSIE for College leaders and those who work directly with children; and
- (k) appropriate Prevent duty training.

22.6 Safeguarding training

- 22.6.1 Staff not working directly with children will receive a copy of this policy and, where determined appropriate by the Proprietor, Annex A of KCSIE and will be required to confirm that they have read and understand these;
- 22.6.2 College leaders and all staff working directly with children will receive a copy of this policy and Part 1 and where appropriate, Annex B of KCSIE, and will be required to confirm that they have read and understand these.²⁰
- 22.6.3 Members of the SLT (including the Principal) and the Nominated Safeguarding Governor will receive a copy of this policy and be expected to read all of KCSIE.
- 22.6.4 The Principal and all staff members will undertake appropriate safeguarding training which will be updated at least annually and following consultation with the Safeguarding Partners²¹. In addition, all staff members will receive informal safeguarding and child protection updates including online safety via email, ebulletins and staff meetings on a regular basis and at least annually.
- 22.6.5 Staff development training will also include training on online safety which should, amongst other things, include an understanding of the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place in the College, measures in place to combat cybercrime, the College's approach to the use of generative AI by students and for educational purposes, searching students for prohibited and banned items, and Prevent duty training assessed as appropriate for them by the College.
- 22.6.6 Additionally, the College will make an assessment of the appropriate level and focus for staff training and responsiveness to specific safeguarding concerns such as

²⁰ VWV plus offer a package of different courses including safeguarding and KCSIE part 1. Please let us know if you would like any further information remove when the next version of KCSIE is in force.

²¹ How regular the training should be undertaken must be in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Partners' advice. This sentence should be completed as appropriate.

radicalisation, child-on-child abuse, harmful sexual behaviour²², child criminal and child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, cyberbullying, prejudiced-based and discriminatory bullying and mental health and to ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children and children in kinship care safe.

- 22.6.7 All boarding staff will receive enhanced safeguarding training relevant to the boarding context.
- 22.6.8 All Governors receive safeguarding training (including online safety) on induction.²³ This training will equip with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the College's safeguarding policies in place are effective and support a robust whole college approach to safeguarding. This training will be regularly updated.
- 22.6.9 The Nominated Safeguarding Governor and the Chair of Governors will receive additional appropriate training to enable them to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities. As part of that training the Nominated Safeguarding Governor will be expected to read the entirety of KCSIE. All other Governors will be expected to read Part 2 of KCSIE.
- 22.6.10 The College has mechanisms in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities and to ensure that they have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience to safeguard children effectively, including staff meetings and professional development reviews. This includes information on how staff can report concerns occurring out of hours / out of term time and should, where appropriate, refer to the College's risk assessment for out of hours /out of term safeguarding arrangements.
- 22.6.11 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**
- (a) The DSL and Deputy DSL will undertake training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training includes inter-agency working and Prevent awareness training and will be updated at least every two years.
 - (b) In addition, their knowledge and skills will be refreshed at regular intervals, at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role. For further details about the training of the DSL, see Annex C of KCSIE.
 - (c) Prevent duty training will be consistent with the Government's Prevent training for schools. See Educate Against Hate (HM Government, maintained) for further details.

22.6.12 Teaching students about safeguarding

²² The College should be aware of the research conducted by the Lucy Faithful Foundation, Everyone's Safer, and ensure that teachers and safeguarding leads are provided with ongoing training, emotional support and practical tools to manage harmful sexual behaviour confidently and consistently. The Lucy Faithful Foundation and the Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse have useful training, guides and templates

²³ Governors or trustees should also consider assigning a digital link role within the governing body or board of trustees in line with the DfE's [Digital leadership and governance standards](#) as well as to assign an individual within the governing body or board of trustees who focuses on pupil attendance issues.

- (a) The College teaches students about safeguarding through the curriculum and PSHE. This includes guidance on adjusting behaviour to reduce risks, particularly online and when travelling, building resilience to protect themselves and their peers, fostering healthy and respectful relationships with others and providing information about who they should turn to for help.
- (b) The College recognises that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for children, and a more personalised or contextualised approach for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some SEND children might be needed.
- (c) Students are taught about harmful sexual behaviours, including sexual violence and sexual harassment, through relationships education / relationships and sex education and PSHE education appropriate to their age and stage of development. The content will be relevant, include scenario-based learning²⁴ and It will tackle issues such as: healthy and respectful relationships, boundaries and, consent, stereotyping prejudice and equality, body confidence and self-esteem, promoting healthy and positive masculinities,²⁵ how to recognise abusive relationships, including coercive and controlling behaviour, concepts and laws relating to sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so-called "honour based" violence and how to access support, what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.
- (d) Where lessons are delivered by external agencies, the College should agree in advance of the session how a safeguarding concern would be dealt with by the external visitor.²⁶
- (e) Students are given the opportunity to talk about safeguarding issues within the classroom environment and provide feedback on the content and effectiveness of training given.²⁷ Students are made aware of the processes by which any concerns they have can be raised, including the processes for reporting a concern about a friend or peer, and how any report will be handled. The College's concerns and complaints procedure for students sets out in writing what students should do if they have a worry or complaint.
- (f) The safe use of technology is a focus in all areas of the curriculum and key ICT safety messages are reinforced as part of assemblies and tutorial / pastoral activities so that students learn how to keep themselves safe on-line and when accessing remote learning. The Proprietor of the College has ensured appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place and meet the DfE's filtering and monitoring standards (see the Online safety policy) and is mindful that this should not lead to unnecessary restrictions on learning.

²⁴ Recommended in [Everyones_safer_year_3_report.pdf](#)

²⁵ Recommended in [Everyones_safer_year_3_report.pdf](#)

²⁶ The July 2025 update to the statutory guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), and Health Education introduces more rigorous expectations around the use of external organisations and materials. Schools must ensure all resources and contributors are subject to thorough vetting processes, with safeguarding arrangements agreed in advance of any engagement. Please refer to paragraph 84.

²⁷ Recommended in [Everyones_safer_year_3_report.pdf](#)

- (g) The College keeps in regular contact with parents and carers to reinforce the importance of students being safe online and make them aware of the systems in place to filter and monitor online use and the sites students will be expected to access during learning.

23 Monitoring and review

- 23.1 The DSL will ensure that the procedures set out in this policy and the implementation of these procedures are updated and reviewed regularly, working with the Proprietor as necessary and seeking contributions from staff. The DSL will update the Senior Management Team regularly on the operation of the College's safeguarding arrangements.
 - 23.2 Any safeguarding incidents at the College will be followed by a review of these procedures by the DSL and a report made to the Proprietor. Where an incident involves a member of staff, the Designated Officer(s) will be asked to assist in this review to determine whether any improvements can be made to the College's procedures. Any deficiencies or weaknesses with regards to safeguarding arrangements at any time will be remedied without delay.
 - 23.3 This policy will be updated whenever needed to ensure that it remains up to date with safeguarding issues as they emerge and evolve, including in relation to lessons learnt.
 - 23.4 The Proprietor will also undertake an annual review of this policy and the College's safeguarding procedures, including an update and review of the effectiveness of procedures and their implementation and the effectiveness of inter-agency working. It will also undertake an annual review of its approach to online safety and filtering and monitoring provision, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks its students face.
 - 23.5 The DSL will work with the Nominated Safeguarding Governor to prepare a written report commissioned by the Proprietor. The written report should address how the College ensures that this policy is kept up to date; staff training on safeguarding; referral information; issues and themes which may have emerged in the College and how these have been handled, including lessons learned; and the contribution the College is making to multi-agency working in individual cases or local discussions on safeguarding matters. The Proprietor should also consider independent corroboration, such as:
 - 23.5.1 inspection of records or feedback from external agencies including the Designated Officer(s);
 - 23.5.2 reports of ISI inspections;
 - 23.5.3 the outcome of any relevant complaints, claims or related proceedings; and
 - 23.5.4 press reports.
 - 23.6 The Proprietor will review the report, this policy and the implementation of its procedures and consider the proposed amendments to the policy before giving the revised policy its final approval. Detailed minutes recording the review by the Proprietor will be made.
- ## **24 Record keeping**
- 24.1 All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing. This will also help if / when responding to any complaints about the

way a case has been handled by the College. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. Concerns and referrals will be kept in a separate child protection file for each child. These should include:

- 24.1.1 a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern;
 - 24.1.2 details of how the concern was followed up and resolved; and
 - 24.1.3 a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.
- 24.2 The information created in connection with this policy may contain personal data. The College's use of this personal data will be in accordance with data protection law. The College has published on its website privacy notices which explain how the College will use personal data.
- 24.3 All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the College's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.
- 24.4 Insofar as student records are concerned:
- 24.4.1 Staff are trained on the College's safeguarding record keeping systems. Guidance on record keeping is set out in Appendix 2.
 - 24.4.2 The DSL is responsible for managing all child protection files in accordance with KCSIE.
- 24.5 **Information sharing and multi-agency working**
- 24.5.1 The College will treat all safeguarding information with an appropriate level of confidentiality, only involving others where appropriate. The College will always act in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of others.
 - 24.5.2 The College understands that information sharing is essential for effective safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, including their educational outcomes. Fears about sharing information will not stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of students, which is always the College's paramount concern. Schools and colleges have clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes and the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 provide a framework to ensure that personal information is shared appropriately.
 - 24.5.3 When the College intends, as a result of a professional or legal duty, or otherwise, to share safeguarding information, the College will always seek to inform the pupil, their parent(s) or carer(s) about what information sharing has taken (or will take) place, why and how the information will be used, unless doing so could put a child or others at further risk of harm, or could compromise effective safeguarding arrangements, including police investigations.
 - 24.5.4 When the College receives a request for safeguarding information (e.g. a subject access request from a parent or a request from the police), the College will carefully consider its response to make sure that any disclosure is in accordance with its obligations under the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. Where a request for safeguarding information is received from a parent for an individual aged under 18, the College may be exempt from providing that data where complying with the

request would not be in the best interests of the child. The College will also have regard to its data protection policies. The College's Data Protection Lead will work to determine what should be disclosed.

24.5.5 The College will co-operate with children's social care, and where appropriate the police, to ensure that all relevant information is shared for the purposes of early help assessments, and assessments and child protection investigations under the Children Act 1989.

24.5.6 Where allegations have been made against staff, the College will consult with the Designated Officer(s) and, where appropriate, the police and children's social care, or adult social care where appropriate, to agree the information that should be disclosed and to whom.

24.5.7 While the College will share information with those involved where and when it is appropriate to do so, they may be unable to for reasons of data protection and confidentiality, for example because to do so may pose a risk of harm to others or because it has been prohibited by external agencies.

25 Version control

Date of adoption of this policy	1 st September 2025
Date of last review of this policy	9 th September 2025
Date for next review of this policy	12 th December 2025
Policy owner (SMT)	Designated Safeguarding Lead
Policy owner (Proprietor)	Abbey DLD Group of Colleges

Appendix 1 Forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation and specific safeguarding risks

1 Abuse, neglect and exploitation

- 1.1 Staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label and in most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another, therefore staff should always be vigilant and always raise any concerns with the DSL (or deputy).
- 1.2 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.

2 Indicators of abuse and neglect

- 2.1 **Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including when 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. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.
- 2.2 **Physical abuse:** 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.
- 2.3 **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 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 and prejudiced-based or discriminatory bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.
- 2.4 **Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in

the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. 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 child-on-child abuse) in education and all staff should be aware of it. The College policy and procedures can be found in Appendix 3.

- 2.5 **Neglect:** 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 affluent neglect or neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

3 Signs of abuse

- 3.1 Possible signs of abuse include, but are not limited to:
- 3.1.1 the student says he / she has been abused or asks a question or makes a comment which gives rise to that inference;
 - 3.1.2 there is no reasonable or consistent explanation for a student's injury, the injury is unusual in kind or location or there have been a number of injuries and there is a pattern to the injuries;
 - 3.1.3 the student's behaviour stands out from the group as either being extreme model behaviour or extremely challenging behaviour, or there is a sudden or significant change in the student's behaviour;
 - 3.1.4 the student asks to drop subjects with a particular teacher and seems reluctant to discuss the reasons;
 - 3.1.5 the student's development is delayed, the student loses or gains weight or there is deterioration in the student's general well-being;
 - 3.1.6 the student appears neglected, e.g. dirty, hungry, inadequately clothed;
 - 3.1.7 the student is reluctant to go home, or has been openly rejected by his / her parents or carers; and
 - 3.1.8 inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff or any other person working with children, for example inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role or responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images.
- 3.2 Mental health problems can also be a sign of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

- 3.3 The Greater Manchester Safeguarding Partners can provide advice on the signs of abuse and the DfE advice What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (March 2015) provides advice in identifying child abuse. The NSPCC website is also a good source of information and advice.

4 Specific safeguarding issues

- 4.1 Statutory guidance acknowledges the following as specific safeguarding issues:
- 4.1.1 sponsored pupils (see section 5 below);
 - 4.1.2 boarding pupils (see section 6 below);
 - 4.1.3 child abduction and community safety incidents;
 - 4.1.4 children and the court system;
 - 4.1.5 children missing from education (see section 7 below);
 - 4.1.6 children with family members in prison;
 - 4.1.7 elective home education (EHE) (see section 8 below);
 - 4.1.8 child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation (see section 9 below);
 - 4.1.9 county lines (see section 10 below);
 - 4.1.10 serious violence (see section 11 below);
 - 4.1.11 modern slavery and the national referral mechanism;
 - 4.1.12 cybercrime; (see section 12 below)
 - 4.1.13 domestic abuse (see section 13 below);
 - 4.1.14 homelessness;
 - 4.1.15 mental health;
 - 4.1.16 so-called "honour-based" abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced marriage) (see sections 14, 15 and 16 below);
 - 4.1.17 preventing radicalisation (see section 17 below);
 - 4.1.18 child-on-child abuse (see Appendix 3);
 - 4.1.19 sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (see Appendix 3);
 - 4.1.20 upskirting (see section 21 below).
- 4.2 Further advice and links to guidance on these specific safeguarding issues can be found in Annex A of KCSIE. Staff should be particularly aware of the safeguarding issues set out below.

5 Sponsored Pupils

- 5.1 Some of our pupils hold visas (typically Child Student visas) which are sponsored by the College under a licence granted by UKVI. These pupils may be living far away from their families, having to adapt to what may be a very different culture, and may also encounter difficulties in communicating in English or reaching their parents due to time zone differences. The College recognises the additional safeguarding risks associated with these pupils and the additional duties imposed by virtue of its status as a licensed sponsor. In addition to the requirements set out in KCSIE and the NMS for Boarding Schools, the College will ensure that appropriate and safe care arrangements are in place, in line with Immigration Rules and UKVI's Student Sponsor Guidance. There is respect for diversity and sensitivity to race, culture and religion, alongside the other protected characteristics.

6 Boarding Pupils

- 6.1 In line with KSCIE and the NMS for Boarding Schools, we will ensure that boarding accommodation is safe, secure, and subject to 24-hour supervision, with clear boundaries that respect pupils' privacy while enabling staff to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities. Boarding pupils are expected to sign in and out, to abide by an age-appropriate curfew and have daily welfare checks and regular opportunities to meet privately with pastoral staff and information is shared appropriately with the DSL who retains overall responsibility for the welfare of these pupils while they are in our care. The DSL will manage any concerns with reference to the pupil's home local authority safeguarding arrangements and will liaise with parents and /or a named guardian, where appropriate.
- 6.2 We recognise that these pupils may face additional safeguarding challenges due to their separation from their parents and carers and as a result of living away from home. For these children, the risk of bullying (both in person and online), child on child abuse, inappropriate relationships and emotional isolation is greater and strong allegiances or blind spots can develop which risk creating a dynamic of power and control that can be abused. We have clear rules of acceptable conduct for staff and pupils which relate to the boarding context and include reference to local risks outside the College grounds. We provide additional training on maintaining effective relationships and on how to recognise and report behaviour of concern to boarding staff and pupils. Boarders are empowered to raise concerns and make suggestions for changes and improvements, which are taken seriously, and we offer a range of ways for concerns to be reported, which include access to an independent listener, separate from the College, if preferred. Unless specifically agreed in advance, the College is not responsible for exeat weekends, half-term and holiday arrangements, particularly accommodation.
- 6.3 The College ensures that arrangements for international boarders who may have additional language or cultural needs are specifically considered, whether or not their place is sponsored by the College.

7 Children who are absent from education

- 7.1 Children being absent from school, particularly repeatedly and / or for prolonged periods and children missing education, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of FGM, so

called "honour based" abuse or risk of forced marriage. College attendance registers are carefully monitored to identify any trends. Action should be taken in accordance with this policy if any absence of a student from the College gives rise to a concern about their welfare.

- 7.2 Where reasonably possible the College will hold more than one emergency contact for each Student.
- 7.3 The College shall inform the local authority of any student who is going to be added to or deleted from the College's admission register outside of standard transition times in accordance with the requirements of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.
- 7.4 This will assist the local authority to:
 - 7.4.1 fulfil its duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are missing from education; and
 - 7.4.2 follow up with any child who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse, neglect or radicalisation or involvement with serious violent crime.
- 7.5 The College shall provide the local authority with the names and addresses of all students of compulsory school age who:
 - 7.5.1 fail to attend College regularly; or
 - 7.5.2 have been absent for a continuous period of ten school days where their absence has been recorded with one of more of the codes statistically classified as unauthorised (G,N,O and/or U). The frequency will be determined by the local authority, but no less frequently than once per calendar month;
 - 7.5.3 have been recorded with code I (illness) and who the College has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness in a school year.

8 Elective Home Education (EHE)

- 8.1 Where a parent expresses their intention to remove a student from school with a view to educating at home, the College will work with the local authority and other key professionals to coordinate a meeting with parents where possible, ideally before a final decision has been made. This is to ensure parents have considered what is in the best interests of their child. This will be particularly important where a child has SEND, is vulnerable, and / or has a social worker.

9 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child criminal exploitation (CCE)

- 9.1 Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse where an individual or group (adult or another child) takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity:
 - 9.1.1 in exchange for something the victim needs or wants e.g. money, gifts or affection; and / or

- 9.1.2 for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator; and / or
- 9.1.3 through violence or threat of violence to victims (and their families).
- 9.2 Children 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.
- 9.3 CSE and CCE can affect children of any sex and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.
- 9.4 International students may be particularly vulnerable to trafficking, particularly those who are or will be in the UK without their parent(s) or legal guardian, and schools which hold a Child Student sponsor licence may be targeted by traffickers as a means of facilitating a child's entry to the UK for the purposes of CSE or CCE.
- 9.5 The victim may have been exploited even if the activity appears consensual.
- 9.6 CCE can include children being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.
- 9.7 Some of the following can be indicators of both CSE and CCE, including children who:
 - 9.7.1 appear with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions;
 - 9.7.2 associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
 - 9.7.3 suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
 - 9.7.4 misuse drugs and alcohol;
 - 9.7.5 go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; or
 - 9.7.6 regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.
- 9.8 Children who have been exploited will need additional support to help maintain them in education.²⁸
- 9.9 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.
- 9.10 The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology, including through generative AI. CSE can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity and may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through

²⁸ For more information and resources see Baroness Casey's June 2025 National Audit on Group-based CSE and abuse, [The Children's Society](#) and [The Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse](#).

others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media). The above CCE indicators can also be indicators of CSE, as can children who:

9.10.1 have older boyfriends or girlfriends; or

9.10.2 suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant.

10 County lines

10.1 County lines²⁹ is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move store and sell drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

10.2 Children are 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 and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

10.3 Number of the indicators for CSE and CCE as detailed above (and in Annex B of KCSIE) may also be applicable to children involved in county lines.

10.4 Additional reporting duties:

10.4.1 if a child is suspected to be at risk of, or involved in county lines, a safeguarding referral should be considered alongside consideration of availability of local services / third sector providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation;

10.4.2 where a student may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs, a referral to the National Referral Mechanism³⁰ should be considered.

11 Serious violence

11.1 Indicators which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violence crime may include:

11.1.1 Increased absence from school;

11.1.2 a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups;

11.1.3 a significant decline in performance;

²⁹ See the Home Office's [Preventing youth violence and gang involvement](#) and its [Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines](#) guidance for more information.

³⁰ For further information and a definition of trafficking, see: [National Crime Agency - modern slavery and human trafficking](#) and the DfE and Home Office guidance: [Trafficking: safeguarding children](#)

- 11.1.4 signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries;
- 11.1.5 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.
- 11.2 Staff should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence e.g. being male, having frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery. Further advice for schools is provided in the Home Office's Preventing youth violence and gang involvement and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.

12 Cybercrime

- 12.1 Cybercrime is a criminal activity committed using computers and / or the internet. It's broadly categorised as either "cyber-enabled" (crimes that can happen off-line but enabled at scale and speed online e.g. fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs, child sex abuse and exploitation) or "cyber-dependent" (crimes that can only be committed by using a computer).
- 12.2 Cyber-dependent crimes include:
 - 12.2.1 unauthorised access to computers (illegal hacking) e.g. accessing a school's computer network to look for test papers or change grades awarded;
 - 12.2.2 denial of Service (**Dos** or **DDos**) attacks or "booting" - attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic;
 - 12.2.3 making, supplying or obtaining malware e.g. viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with intent to commit further offence.
- 12.3 Children with particular skills and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime.
- 12.4 The College will put in place appropriate measures to meet the Cyber security standards in order to combat cyber attacks and improve cyber resilience.
- 12.5 The DSL (or deputy) should consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme if they have concerns. This is a nationwide programme which intervenes when 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.

13 Domestic abuse

- 13.1 Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional.
- 13.2 Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see hear or experience the effects of abuse at home and / or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate

relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of this can have a detrimental and long term impact on their health, well-being, development and ability to learn.

13.3 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. Exposure to 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.

13.4 Further advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped can be found in Annex B of KCSIE. This includes details about Operation Encompass which operates in all police forces across England, helping schools and police work together to provide emotional and practical help to children.

14 **So-called "honour-based" abuse**

14.1 All forms of so-called "honour-based" abuse are abuse (regardless of motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves additional risk factors such as a wider network of family or community pressure and the possibility of multiple perpetrators which should be taken into account when deciding what safeguarding action to take. Staff should speak to the DSL if they have any doubts.

14.2 If appropriate, the DSL will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care.

15 **Female genital mutilation (FGM)**

15.1 FGM is a form of so-called "honour-based" abuse. It 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.

15.2 There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM. Guidance on the warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 38-43 of the Multi-agency statutory guidance on FGM (HM Government, July 2020) (pages 61-63 focus on the role of schools).

15.3 All staff must be aware of the requirement for teachers 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. The report should be made orally by calling 101, the single non-emergency number. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining students. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate.

15.4 If the teacher is unsure whether this reporting duty applies, they must refer the matter to the DSL in accordance with this policy. See the Home Office guidance

Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation - procedural information (January 2020) for further details about the duty.

- 15.5 Guidance published by the Department for Health also provides useful information and support for health professionals which will be taken into account by the College's medical staff. The National FGM Centre has also produced FGM guidance to help schools understand their role in safeguarding girls, engaging parents and teaching about FGM.

16 Forced marriage

- 16.1 Forced marriage is also a form of so-called "honour-based" abuse. Forcing a person into 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 communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage.
- 16.2 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.
- 16.3 Guidance on the warning signs that forced marriage may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 39-44 of the Multi-agency guidelines: handling case of forced marriage (HM Government, April 2023).
- 16.4 Staff should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns. Pages 79-84 of the Multi-agency guidelines: handling case of forced marriage (HM Government, April 2023) focus on the role of schools in detecting and reporting forced marriage and the Forced Marriage Unit can be contacted on 020 7008 0151 or fmu@fco.gov.uk for advice and information.

17 Radicalisation and the Prevent duty

- 17.1 The College has a legal duty to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.
- 17.2 The College aims to build students' resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling them to challenge extremist views. Being drawn into terrorism includes not just violent extremism but also non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists exploit. The College is committed to providing a safe space in which children, young people and staff can understand and discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, understand the risks associated with terrorism and develop the knowledge and skills to be able to challenge extremist arguments.
- 17.3 The College has adopted the government's definitions for the purposes of compliance with the Prevent duty:

- 17.4 **Extremism:** *"vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs."*
- 17.5 **Radicalisation:** *"the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups."*
- 17.6 **Terrorism:** *"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 made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause."*
- 17.7 Although there is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology, there are possible indicators that should be taken into consideration alongside other factors and contexts. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media) and settings (such as the internet).
- 17.8 It is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. College staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the DSL making a Prevent referral.
- 17.9 Prevent referrals may be passed to a multi-agency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages. Guidance on Channel is available at: Channel duty guidance: protecting people susceptible to radicalisation (HM Government, October 2023) The DfE and Home Office's briefing note The use of social media for online radicalisation (DfE, July 2015) includes information on how social media is used to radicalise young people and guidance on protecting students at risk.
- 18 **Child-on-child abuse**
- 18.1 All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse) and that it can happen both inside and outside of school or online.
- 18.2 The College's policy and procedures for dealing with child-on-child abuse can be found in Appendix 3 below.
- 19 **Online safety**
- 19.1 All staff should be 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.

- 19.2 It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. An effective, whole school approach to online safety empowers a school to protect and educate students, and staff in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate.
- 19.3 The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:
- 19.3.1 **content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.
 - 19.3.2 **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.
 - 19.3.3 **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
 - 19.3.4 **commerce:** risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If pupils, students or staff are at risk, it should be reported to the Anti-Phishing Working Group.

20 Sharing nudes and semi-nude images and videos

- 20.1 Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and / or videos can be signs that children are at risk.
- 20.2 "Sharing nudes and semi-nudes" means the taking and sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams by young people under the age of 18 online. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums. It can also involve sharing between devices offline e.g. via Apple's AirDrop. This is also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery. This includes the sharing of digitally manipulated or AI-generated nude and semi-nude images.
- 20.3 The College treats all incidences of sharing nudes and semi-nude images as safeguarding matters to be actioned in accordance with this policy.
- 20.4 Members of staff must not intentionally view any nude or semi-nude images which are reported to them, or copy, print or share the images under any circumstances. In referring any incident of sharing images, members of staff should describe the content of the images as reported to them.
- 20.5 The DSL may in exceptional circumstances view images with the prior approval of the Principal and only where:
- 20.5.1 it is the only way to make a decision whether to involve other agencies, as there is insufficient information available as to its contents;

- 20.5.2 it is necessary to report the image to a website, app or suitable reporting agency to have it taken down, or to support the student or parent in making a report; or
- 20.5.3 a student has reported the image directly to a member of staff in circumstances where viewing the image is unavoidable or images have been found on the College's devices or network.
- 20.6 Where viewing an image is unavoidable:
 - 20.6.1 viewing should take place on College premises wherever possible;
 - 20.6.2 the image should be viewed by a person of the same sex as the person alleged to be shown in the image (where this is known);
 - 20.6.3 a senior member of staff should be present to monitor and support the person viewing the image. This member of staff should not view the image;
 - 20.6.4 full details of the viewing must be recorded in the College's safeguarding records, including who was present, the date and time, the nature of the image and the reasons for viewing it;
 - 20.6.5 any member of staff who views an indecent image should be given appropriate support.
- 20.7 If any devices need to be confiscated (whether in order to view the image(s) or to pass evidence to the appropriate authority), they should be turned off and locked away securely until they are required.
- 20.8 If an electronic device that is prohibited by the College rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable grounds to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, or that it contains a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, the device will be given to the police.
- 20.9 If external agencies do not need to be involved, the College must consider the deletion of any images. Students should be asked to delete images themselves and to confirm that this is done. Members of staff should not search devices to delete images.
- 20.10 If images have been shared online and cannot now be deleted by the person who shared them, the College should consider reporting the images to the relevant web host or service provider (if an option is provided), or contacting the Internet Watch Foundation or ChildLine (if the website does not provide this option).
- 20.11 Where a student receives unwanted images, the College should advise the Student and his / her parents of options that may be available to block the sender or to change the student's mobile phone number or email address.
- 20.12 The UK Council for Internet Safety's advice note Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (DCMS and UKCIS, March 2024) contains details of support agencies and provides further information for schools on how to responding to incidents of sharing nudes and semi-nudes.

21 Upskirting

- 21.1 Upskirting typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. Anyone of any gender can be a victim.
- 21.2 Upskirting is a criminal offence. Attempting to commit an act of upskirting may also be a criminal offence e.g. if actions are taken to do something that is more than merely preparatory to committing the offence such as attempting to take a photograph on a telephone or camera but failing to do so because of lack of storage space or battery.
- 21.3 The College will treat incidences of upskirting as a breach of discipline and also as a safeguarding matter under the College's child protection procedures.
- 21.4 All matters relating to upskirting images and devices which may have been used in connection with an allegation of upskirting will be dealt with in a similar manner to sharing sexual images / sexting.

22 Special educational needs and disabilities or physical health issues

- 22.1 The College welcomes students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and will do all that is reasonable to ensure that the College's curriculum, ethos, culture, policies, procedures and premises are made accessible to everyone. See the College's policy on special educational needs and learning difficulties and disability policy.
- 22.2 Additional barriers can exist when detecting the abuse or neglect of students with SEND or certain medical or physical health conditions that can create additional safeguarding challenges for those involved in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of this group of children. The College is mindful in particular that:
 - 22.2.1 assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the student's condition without further exploration;
 - 22.2.2 students with SEND or certain health conditions may be more prone to peer group and isolation and can be disproportionately impacted by bullying (including prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying) without outwardly showing any signs;
 - 22.2.3 some students may be unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content (including AI generated content) and can repeat the content / behaviour in college without understanding the consequences; and
 - 22.2.4 there may be communication barriers which are difficult to overcome to identify whether action under this policy is required.
- 22.3 The College should consider providing extra pastoral support and attention for these Students, along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place.

23 Looked after children and previously looked after children

- 23.1 The Proprietor ensures that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children safe and the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status, for example:
- 23.1.1 whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order;
 - 23.1.2 contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility;
 - 23.1.3 information about a child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him / her.
- 23.2 The DSL maintains these details, including contact details of the child's social worker. See 6.5.4 in the policy for the DSL's role in relation to students who are looked after children.

24 Care leavers

- 24.1 The DSL maintains details of the local authority personal advisor appointed to guide and support care leavers and liaises with them as necessary regarding any issues of concern.

25 Children who are lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBT)³¹

- 25.1 The College recognises that students who are or perceived to be LGBT are vulnerable to being targeted by other children.
- 25.2 LGBT inclusion is taught as part of the statutory relationships education /RSE / PSHE curriculum.
- 25.3 All staff are aware of these vulnerabilities and the College endeavours to provide a safe space to speak out or share concerns.

³¹ This paragraph 25 will need to be reviewed following the publication of revised guidance on gender questioning children which the DfE within KCSIE 2025 has confirmed will be published 'soon'

Appendix 2 Concerns about a child - guidance for staff

1 Receiving a disclosure

- 1.1 Listen carefully and keep an open mind. Do not take a decision as to whether or not the abuse has taken place.
- 1.2 Do not ask leading questions, i.e. a question which suggests its own answer. Use "tell me, explain to me, describe to me" (**TED**) questioning. It is particularly important not to continue questioning a student if they disclose something which suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed - the Police will need to take the lead on investigating and your questioning might compromise possible criminal proceedings.
- 1.3 Take the student to the Medical Room for assessment if there is a medical need and do not examine the injury yourself.
- 1.4 Reassure the student they are being taken seriously and they will be supported and kept safe so that no victim will be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment and no victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- 1.5 Do not give a guarantee of absolute confidentiality. Explain the need to pass on the information in accordance with this policy so that the correct action can be taken.
- 1.6 Keep a sufficient written record of the conversation (see 2 below). All other evidence, for example, scribbled notes, mobile phones containing text messages, clothing, computers, must be kept securely with the written record.
- 1.7 Pass on the record when reporting the concern in accordance with this policy.

2 Recording a concern

- 2.1 Staff must record all concerns in writing and consistently with the College's system for recording safeguarding concerns.
- 2.2 Records should be factual and signed and dated, with the name of the signatory clearly printed in writing. Records should include:
 - 2.2.1 the student's details: name; date of birth; address and family details;
 - 2.2.2 date and time of the event / concern / conversation;
 - 2.2.3 a clear and comprehensive summary of the event/concern / conversation;
 - 2.2.4 details of how the concern was followed up and resolved,
 - 2.2.5 a note of any action taken and by whom, decisions reached and the outcome;
 - 2.2.6 the name and position of the person making the record.
- 2.3 The College has an electronic recording system, MyConcern, which should be completed and passed on when reporting the matter in accordance with this policy. Staff can access this system through their log in details. The record can be

completed after an initial discussion with the DSL and completed with the DSL where appropriate.³²

3 Use of reasonable force

- 3.1 There are circumstances when it would be appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard students. "Reasonable" in these circumstances means using no more force than is needed.
- 3.2 Staff should refer to College's Behaviour, discipline and exclusions policy and the Staff Conduct Policy for more detailed guidance about the use of reasonable force.

³² The CSA Centre has produced a 'Signs and Indicators' template that you may find useful.

Appendix 3 Dealing with allegations of child-on-child abuse

1 Child-on-child abuse

- 1.1 Children of any age can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse) and this can happen inside and / or outside school and / or online. This includes, but is not limited to:
- 1.1.1 bullying (including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
 - 1.1.2 abuse within intimate personal relationships between peers (teenage relationship abuse);
 - 1.1.3 physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates and / or encourages physical abuse);
 - 1.1.4 sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (including grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia under or over clothes, flicking bras, unwanted kisses or embraces) possibly with an online element which encourages sexual violence;
 - 1.1.5 sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
 - 1.1.6 causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
 - 1.1.7 consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images (also known as "sexting" or "youth produced sexual imagery") means the taking and sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams by young people under the age of 18 online. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums. It can also involve sharing between devices offline, for example via Apple's AirDrop. This includes the sharing of digitally manipulated or AI-generated nude and semi-nude images;
 - 1.1.8 upskirting, typically involving taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;
 - 1.1.9 initiation / hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may include an online element);

2 The College's approach to child-on-child abuse

- 2.1 Staff understand that, even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse at the College, it does not mean it is not happening; it may be the case that it is just not

being reported. Staff understand the importance of reporting any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse to the DSL (or the DDSL in the DSL's absence).

- 2.2 Such behaviour is never accepted and should be considered as both a safeguarding issue and potentially a disciplinary one. The College will adopt a zero-tolerance approach to abuse.³³ Downplaying certain behaviours (by, for example, dismissing sexual harassment as "banter", "having a laugh" or "part of growing up" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and its worst to a culture that normalises abuse.
- 2.3 All staff should challenge inappropriate behaviour between students and anyone who suffers, witnesses or hears of abuse of any form between students is asked to report it in accordance with this policy and / or the College's behaviour and discipline and anti-bullying policies, so that appropriate action can be taken.
- 2.4 Appropriate action will involve supporting all members of the College community who may be involved as a priority. This may require investigation by the College or other agencies. Until investigations have been undertaken and findings made, the College will work on the basis that the allegations may or may not be true and undertake careful risk assessment of the welfare of those involved to determine how best to manage the situation. This should be undertaken whether or not the incident is alleged to have occurred at the College, or when the student involved was under the College's care and whether or not the student is under 18, as an issue which may impact student welfare. Disciplinary action will follow separately, if appropriate.
- 2.5 The College will ensure students impacted by child-on-child abuse are made aware of appropriate support resources that are available to them.

3 Sexual violence and sexual harassment (SVSH)

- 3.1 Where the misconduct may constitute sexual violence ³⁴ (rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault ³⁵ or causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent) or sexual harassment (unwanted conduct of a sexual nature), it should be reported to the DSL and will be managed in accordance with this policy. SVSH is never acceptable.
- 3.2 Whilst any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment should be taken seriously, staff are aware that it is more likely that girls will be the victims of SVSH and more likely it will be perpetrated by boys.
- 3.3 SVSH can occur between two or more children of any age or sex from primary to secondary stage. It can also occur online. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. SVSH exists on a continuum and may overlap. Addressing inappropriate behaviour (even where it seems to be relatively innocuous) can be an important intervention

³³ This wording reflects KCSIE, but schools should be aware of the research undertaken by the Lucy Faithfull Foundation, Everyone's Safer which concludes that these approaches may deter disclosure, particularly when students fear harsh sanctions or feel their peers will be stigmatised and consider how to address this

³⁴ When referring to sexual violence the statutory guidance refers to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described above

³⁵ Sexual assault covers a very wide range of behaviour so a single act of kissing someone without consent or touching someone's bottom / breasts / genitalia without consent, can still constitute sexual assault).

which helps to prevent problematic or abusive behaviour in the future by setting and enforcing clear expectations of behaviour, supporting victims and encouraging them and others to speak out and facilitating targeted support for those demonstrating harmful sexual behaviour.

- 3.4 The 2021 Ofsted report concluded that whether or not schools are aware of reported instances of SVSH in their community, it is likely to be occurring. The College acknowledges this and that children are likely to report such matters, if at all, to people they trust. All staff are therefore trained to identify signs of abuse and on how to respond to a report.

4 Management of allegations of child on child SVSH

4.1 The initial report

- 4.1.1 The College recognises that it is not easy for children to tell staff about abuse. Staff are trained in signs of abuse and required to look out for them and act upon them; and to respond to all reports of abuse, however they are reported and whether they are made by victims directly or third parties.
- 4.1.2 The College acknowledges that the initial response is incredibly important and may impact not just the management of that issue, but others of SVSH. Staff are also trained in how to receive a report. Where possible they should be accompanied by the DSL or other member of staff.
- 4.1.3 They should:
- (a) listen carefully and respectfully, reassuring the person making the report that they are being taken seriously and offer support without promising confidentiality or making a judgement about its veracity;
 - (b) where possible they should ask open questions about whether student(s) have been harmed, the nature of the harm or if they may be at risk of harm;
 - (c) where there is an online element, considering the searching, screening and / or confiscation of devices and the UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people. The key consideration is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child;³⁶
 - (d) explain the next steps and how the report will be progressed;
 - (e) make a written record of the report (recording the facts as the child has presented them);
 - (f) inform the DSL (or deputy) as soon as practically possible, if they are not involved in the initial report and then only share the report with those necessary in order to progress it.

³⁶ College staff can search students with their co-operation for any item. If a student refuses to co-operate staff may use reasonable force to search students if they have reasonable grounds for suspecting a student is in possession of a prohibited item or is likely to be used to commit an offence or cause personal injury or damage to property. The decision to use reasonable force should be made on a case by case basis. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation> for further information.

4.2 DSL's considerations

- 4.2.1 Reports of SVSH are often complex and require difficult professional decisions to be made. Further disclosures may follow and the facts may be difficult to establish. These decisions are made on a case by case basis taking all of the circumstances into account, in the best interest of the students involved. The College's response is led by the DSL who will always have regard to Part 5 of KCSIE in the management of the issue.

4.3 College's considerations

4.3.1 The College will consider:

- (a) the victim's wishes in terms of how they want to proceed. Victims should be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions made about investigation and support, but their wishes will not always be determinative as the College may have to take action to protect other children;
- (b) the nature of the alleged incident (including whether it was a one-off or sustained pattern), whether a crime may have been committed and whether harmful sexual behaviour³⁷ has been displayed;
- (c) the ages and developmental stages of the children involved and any imbalance between them;
- (d) if there is an intimate personal relationship between the children;
- (e) whether there are any ongoing risks to those involved;
- (f) the time and location of any incident, and any action required to make the location safer;
- (g) the wider context.

- 4.3.2 Before deciding how best to support and protect those involved the College will undertake immediate risk and needs assessments. These will be undertaken in cases of sexual violence and considered otherwise. Where appropriate, they will be discussed with those involved and their parents. This may involve suspension pending investigation. Risk and needs assessments will be recorded and kept under review in the knowledge that police investigation and criminal proceedings can take several months to conclude.

- 4.3.3 The College will make a proportionate response to these matters in light of the circumstances and the factors identified above. And decide, if any, further action is appropriate.

- 4.3.4 The College will do all it reasonably can to protect the anonymity of children involved in sexual violence or sexual harassment. Amongst other things, this

³⁷ Hackett's sexual behaviours across a continuum table - which helps to identify whether sexual behaviours are normal, inappropriate, problematic, abusive or violent may be helpful here as well as the Lucy Faithfull Foundation [HSB toolkit](#) which provides support advice and information on how to prevent HSB..

will mean carefully considering, based on the nature of the report, which staff should know about the report and any support that will be put in place for the children involved.³⁸

5 Investigations and findings

- 5.1 The College will record the findings of investigations undertaken by the police and / or the CPS, and if the police decide not to take any further action, will consider whether investigation should be undertaken or commissioned by the College to enable it to determine, whether or not it is likely that the allegations are substantiated, unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious. There may be circumstances where this is not appropriate, as it may prejudice a possible future investigation, for example if a victim does not currently wish to make a victim statement. In those circumstances the College should consider whether a limited investigation is appropriate. The concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for these should be recorded.
- 5.2 The College should continue to support those involved, with reference to the range of support options set out in Part 5 of KCSIE and should also consider whether further referral, restorative response and / or disciplinary action may be appropriate against either the perpetrator where concerns are substantiated and/ or harmful sexual behaviours identified or the victim where concerns were found to be deliberately invented or malicious.

³⁸ The Lucy Faithfull Foundation and the Home Office have developed [Shore Space](#), an online confidential chat service supporting young people who are concerned about their own or someone else's sexual thoughts and behaviour which schools may find helpful.

Appendix 4 Raising allegations and low level concerns

1 Key contact information

- 1.1 Below is the key contact information you may need to raise an allegation or low level concern under this policy.

Safeguarding champions	Jenny Nute Email: jennifer.nute@abbeymanchester.co.uk Telephone (term time): 0161 8172700 Mobile number (term time): 07977 731475 Marc Gerard Cronin Email: marc.cronin@abbeymanchester.co.uk Telephone number (term time): 0161 8172700 Mobile number (term time): 07387108946 Chloé McLaughlin Email: chloe.mclaughlin@abbeymanchester.co.uk Telephone (term time): 0161 8172700 Nicola Lees-Bruce Email: Nicola.lees-bruce@abbeymanchester.co.uk Telephone (term time): 0161 8172700 Alex Deetlefs Email: alex.deetlefs@abbeymanchester.co.uk Telephone (term time): 07814069398 Mobile number (term time): 07814069398 Holiday contact number: 07814069398 (excluding Christmas and Summer breaks). Keith Burgess Email: keith.burgess@abbeymanchester.co.uk Telephone (term time): 0161 8172700
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	Jonathan Syson Email: jonathan.syson@abbeymanchester.co.uk Telephone (term time): 0161 8172700 Karen McLean Email: karen.mclean@abbeymanchester.co.uk Telephone (term time): 0161 817 2700
DSL	Jenny Nute Email: jennifer.nute@abbeymanchester.co.uk Telephone (term time): 0161 8172700 Mobile number: 07977 731475
Head of College	Marc Gerard Cronin Email: marc.cronin@abbeymanchester.co.uk Telephone number (term time): 0161 8172700 Mobile number (term time): 07387108946
Executive Principal	James Kidd Email: James.Kidd@dld.org Telephone number: 0207 935 8411
Nominated Safeguarding Governor(s)	John Withers Email: john.withers@abbeydld.co.uk Telephone number: 07799 661137
LADO	Majella O'Hagan Telephone number: 0161 234 1214 Email: quality.assurance@manchester.gov.uk

2 Purpose and application

- 2.1 **Purpose:** the College takes safeguarding extremely seriously. It is of paramount importance that we maintain an open and transparent culture in which all concerns

about adults are shared promptly, responsibly and with the right person. We recognise the importance of ensuring adults who work with, or otherwise come into contact with children, do so in a way that is consistent with our values, culture and expected standards of behaviour. We also recognise that concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources. The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for all concerns to be raised, recorded and dealt with effectively by the College.

- 2.2 **Application:** the Policy applies to all adults working in or on behalf of the College (whether on a paid or unpaid basis), including governors, supply staff, volunteers and contractors (**Staff**).
- 2.3 **Other adults:** although this policy directly relates to those who work for the College, the College recognises that its safeguarding role extends to the protection of everyone associated with it, including adults who do not work for the College. Should concerns be raised about people who are not Staff or students, then they should be reported to the Principal or DSL who will take appropriate action and co-operate with the relevant agencies as appropriate.
- 2.4 **Statutory guidance:** this policy has regard to the following statutory guidance:
 - 2.4.1 *Keeping children safe in education* (September 2025) (**KCSIE**). Part Four of KCSIE deals with allegations made and concerns raised about staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors, who are all adults working for, or on behalf of, the College. It distinguishes between two categories of concerns / allegations that can be raised about Staff. These are:
 - (a) concerns that do not meet the harm threshold, otherwise known as "low level concerns"; and
 - (b) allegations that may meet the harm threshold.
 - 2.4.2 *Working together to safeguard children 2023* (**WT**), which requires policies to be put in place setting out the process, including timescales for investigation and what support and advice will be available to individuals against whom allegations have been made. WT requires schools to have regard to KCSIE in order to fulfil their duties in respect of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

3 Key Staff duties

- 3.1 **Staff behaviour:** all Staff must comply with the College's Code of Conduct which sets out appropriate and expected standards of behaviour.
- 3.2 **Duty to report:** as a member of Staff, you must immediately follow this policy to report **any** concerns you have about the conduct of a member of Staff or any other adult (which could include adults not employed by the College). This includes any concern however it arises, for example, behaviour you have witnessed, a concern raised with you by a colleague, student, parent or another adult, or as a result of checks or information brought to your attention.
- 3.3 **Duty to self-refer:** you must refer yourself to the Principal where, for example, you have found yourself in a situation which could be misinterpreted, which might

appear compromising to others, and / or on reflection if you believe you have behaved in such a way that may fall below the standards expected of you.

- 3.4 **A culture of sharing:** All Staff have a positive obligation to support the College's culture of openness and sharing without fear of reprisal.

4 **What needs to be reported?**

- 4.1 **Reporting all concerns:** all concerns must be raised whether they are considered to be "low level" concerns or conduct which may meet the harm threshold.

- 4.2 **Low level concerns:** a low level concern is any concern, no matter how small, and even if no more than a sense of unease or a "nagging doubt", that a member of Staff may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with expected professional standards and / or the staff Code of Conduct, whether inside or outside of work. No concern is too small or minor to raise under this policy.

- 4.3 **Concerns that meet the harm threshold:** allegations that may meet the harm threshold are those that might indicate a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in their present position, or in any capacity with children, for example where the individual has:

- 4.3.1 behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child; and / or
- 4.3.2 possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; and / or
- 4.3.3 behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children; and / or
- 4.3.4 behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children. This includes behaviour that may have happened outside the College which creates a transferable risk.

- 4.4 **Definition of Harm:** it is important to understand the types of conduct that may be harmful to children, and to recognise that harm may not be limited to the most obvious types of physical abuse. There is no single legal definition of harm but to assist your understanding of what may amount to "harm" you should consider the following:

- 4.4.1 the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 which does not give a definition of harm, encouraging people to apply a "normal, everyday meaning";
- 4.4.2 the Children Act 1989 defines:
 - (a) "harm" as "ill-treatment or the impairment of health or development [including, for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another]";
 - (b) "ill-treatment" as including "sexual abuse and forms of ill treatment which are not physical";
 - (c) "health" as "physical or mental health".

5 How to raise concerns and allegations

- 5.1 • **Raising low level concerns:** Where you have a low level concern in respect of any member of Staff, you must report the matter immediately. You can raise this with the Principal or with the DSL. [The contact details are at section 1 of this policy.]
- 5.2 • **Duty of the DSL to refer concerns to the Principal:** the Principal remains the ultimate decision-maker in respect of all low level concerns. Save for in cases involving the Principal or the DSL must therefore promptly report any concern raised with them to the Principal. Wherever possible the DSL must speak to the Principal in person about the concern as soon as possible after the concern is raised, and always on the same day the concern is raised. If it is not possible to speak to the Principal in person about the concern, DSL must email the Principal with a summary of the concern on the same day the concern is raised.
- 5.3 **Concerns about Staff:** where you have a concern about the conduct of a member of Staff (other than the Principal) whether this is a low level concern or an allegation of harm that may meet the harm threshold you must raise this immediately with the Principal.
- 5.4 **Concerns involving the Principal and conflicts of interest:** where you identify a concern about the Principal, you must report the matter immediately to the Chair of Governors without first notifying the Principal. Where there is a conflict of interest in raising the concern with the Principal you must report the concern directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (**LADO**), without first notifying the Principal. Details of the LADO can be found at the start of this policy.
- 5.5 **Concerns involving Governors:** where you identify a concern about a Governor, you must report the matter immediately to the Chair of Governors or the Nominated Safeguarding Governor. If either the Chair of Governors or the Nominated Safeguarding Governor is the subject of an allegation, you must report the matter to the other.
- 5.6 **Concerns involving individuals / organisations using College premises:** where the College receives an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using the premises for the purposes of running activities for children (e.g. community groups, sports associations, or service providers that run extra-curricular activities) it will follow its own safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO.
- 5.7 **Reports to the DSL:** If it is not possible for you to make a report to the Principal or Chair of Governors or Nominated Safeguarding Governor, you must instead immediately make a report to the DSL. The DSL will take action in accordance with these procedures and will as soon as possible inform the Principal or, where appropriate, the Chair of Governors and the Nominated Safeguarding Governor.

6 The College's response to concerns and allegations

- 6.1 **Appropriate action:** the College will ensure that appropriate action is taken to address concerns that are raised under this policy.
- 6.2 **Assessing concerns:** The Principal (or, if the concern relates to the Principal, the Chair of Governors or the Nominated Safeguarding Governor will determine

whether the concerns raised are low level or potentially meet the harm threshold. The DSL, Principal, the Chair of Governors and the Nominated Safeguarding Governor have all been trained to assess concerns, and to record and address them appropriately.

- 6.3 **Low level concerns:** If the College determines the concern is a low level concern, then the College will address the concern as appropriate. This will usually involve making the individual aware of the concern against them, undertaking any investigation that may be required and may include giving management guidance and advice or invoking the College's capability or disciplinary procedures.
- 6.4 **Borderline cases:** the Principal, (or, if the concern relates to the Principal, the Chair of Governors or the Nominated Safeguarding Governor may take advice from the LADO in borderline cases in order to establish whether the concern is a low level concern or an allegation that potentially meets the harm threshold. This may include conducting an initial "no names" conversation with the LADO about whether the harm threshold is met.
- 6.5 **Referral:** where the Principal (or, if the concern relates to the Principal, the Chair of Governors) considers the concerns raised potentially meet the harm threshold, the Principal (or, if the concern relates to the Principal, the Chair of Governors or the Nominated Safeguarding Governor) will make a report to the LADO before further action is taken. The Principal (or, if the concern relates to the Principal, the Chair of Governors) may also seek advice from the LADO as appropriate. Where a LADO referral is appropriate, this will be made within one working day of the allegation being reported in accordance with this policy.
- 6.6 **Responding to an allegation that may meet the harm threshold:** where an allegation is made that may meet the harm threshold, the College will take advice from and co-operate with the LADO, the police, and any other external body that may be involved in the response to the allegation. The College will follow its internal procedures in order to investigate and respond to the allegation when it is appropriate to do so, and will keep the LADO informed of the action it is taking.
- 6.7 **Case Manager:** where an investigation is deemed necessary into an allegation of conduct that may meet the harm threshold, a "Case Manager" will be appointed by the College to lead the investigation. The Case Manager will be either the Principal or a person with appropriate authority appointed by the Principal. Where the Principal is the subject of an allegation, the Case Manager will usually be either the Chair of Governors or the Nominated Safeguarding Governor.

7 **Disclosure of information about concerns and allegations**

- 7.1 **Informing the individual of a concern:** the College will in most cases inform the individual concerned about any low level concern that is raised about them.
- 7.2 **Informing the individual of an allegation where appropriate:** the Case Manager will consult with the LADO in order to agree if and when it is appropriate to inform the individual of the allegation.
- 7.3 **Communication and support for the individual subject to an allegation:** if and when it is appropriate to inform the individual of the allegation against them, the Case

Manager will also offer appropriate pastoral support and will keep the individual informed of the timescales for the investigation under this procedure and the factors which may affect it. In all cases, the investigation will be concluded as soon as reasonably practicable.

- 7.4 **Informing the child's parents / carers where appropriate:** the Case Manager will agree with the LADO when and how the parents or carers of the child / children involved will be informed of the allegation if they do not already know of it. The Case Manager will also agree with the LADO what information shall be shared with the parents / carers of the child / children as the case progresses. The timing and extent of disclosures, and the terms on which they are made, will be dependent upon and subject to the laws on confidence and data protection and the advice of external agencies.
- 7.5 **Reporting restrictions:** the College is mindful of and will comply with the reporting restrictions under section 141 Education Act 2002 which prevent the identification of a teacher who is the subject of such an allegation in certain circumstances.
- 7.6 **Involvement of external agencies:** where the LADO(s) advises that a strategy discussion is needed, or the police or children's social care need to be involved, the Case Manager will not inform the individual subject to the allegation, or the parents or carers until these agencies have been consulted and it has been agreed what information can be disclosed.
- 7.7 **Concerns about supply staff and contractors:** where a concern / allegation has been made in respect of a member of supply staff or a contractor, the concern / allegation may be notified to their employer. Where a Case Manager has been appointed to investigate an allegation, the Case Manager will consult with the LADO before sharing any information with the individual's employer.

8 **Referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA)**

- 8.1 **Report to the DBS:** the College is under a legal duty to make a referral to the DBS where:
- *an individual has applied for a position at the School despite being barred from working with children; and /or*
 - *an individual has been removed by the School from working in regulated activity (whether paid or unpaid), or has resigned prior to being removed, because they have:*
 - *satisfied the harm test (as defined in section 35 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006);*
 - *committed relevant conduct (as defined in Schedule 3 to the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006); or*
 - *been cautioned for, or convicted of, a relevant offence (as defined in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 1 to The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Prescribed Criteria and Relevant Offences) Regulations 2009).*
- 8.2 **Report to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA):** the College is under a duty to consider whether it is appropriate to make a referral to the TRA where it has ceased to use the services of a teacher because the teacher has been guilty of serious

misconduct (or might have ceased to use the services of a teacher had the teacher not ceased to provide those services). The College may also, at its discretion, make a referral to the TRA where the duty to consider doing so has not yet arisen. The Teaching Regulation Agency will consider whether to impose a prohibition order on that person which prevents them from undertaking teaching work in future.

9 Record keeping

- 9.1 **Records of low level concerns:** low level concerns will be recorded in writing. The record of the concern will be retained so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified and addressed. Records of low level concerns that have been addressed with an individual will usually be kept on the individual's personnel file. In addition all low level concerns, including those that have not been addressed formally under the College's procedures, will also be stored securely in a central file (**Concerns and Allegations Record**).
- 9.2 **Recording low level concerns:** the Concerns and Allegations Record will set out the name of the individual involved (if an individual is named), a brief description of the concern and the context in which it arose, any investigation that has been carried out, and the outcome / result of the investigation into the concern. The name of the individual who has raised the concern should also be noted. Where that individual wishes to remain anonymous the College will try to accommodate this as far as reasonably possible, but cannot guarantee anonymity in all circumstances.
- 9.3 **Records of allegations that may meet the harm threshold:** details of allegations that may meet the harm threshold will be recorded both on the individual's personnel file and the Concerns and Allegations Record. The individual's personnel file and the Concerns and Allegations Record will include a summary of the allegation, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, a note of any action taken in response to the allegation.
- 9.4 **Storage and security of Concerns and Allegations Record:** the Concerns and Allegations Record will be stored securely in the Safeguarding Office and will be accessible by the Principal, the Chair of Governors, the Nominated Safeguarding Governor and the DSL only.
- 9.5 **Malicious or false low level concerns and allegations:** details of low level concerns and allegations found to be malicious or false will be removed from personnel records and the Concerns and Allegations Record.
- 9.6 **Retention of records:** in line with the College's information and records retention policy, information stored on staff personnel files about low level concerns and allegations that may meet the harm threshold, and the Concerns and Allegations Record, will be retained by the College indefinitely. The College may in future be required to produce this information if it is notified of an allegation of historic abuse relating to a current or former member of staff, if a former member of staff is accused of committing safeguarding offences elsewhere or if a former member of staff is the subject of safeguarding allegations arising elsewhere.

10 References

- 10.1 **Low level concerns:** low level concerns will not be disclosed in a reference unless they were addressed formally and resulted in a sanction under the College's disciplinary or capability policies and procedures and it is otherwise appropriate to disclose them.
- 10.2 **Allegations that meet the harm threshold:** allegations that meet the harm threshold will be disclosed in a reference if the allegation was found to be substantiated (including any cases in which any disciplinary sanction has expired). The College will not disclose information about allegations that were found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated, or malicious.

11 Questions

- 11.1 **Contact:** please contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead if you have any questions about this policy.