



# **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedure 2016**

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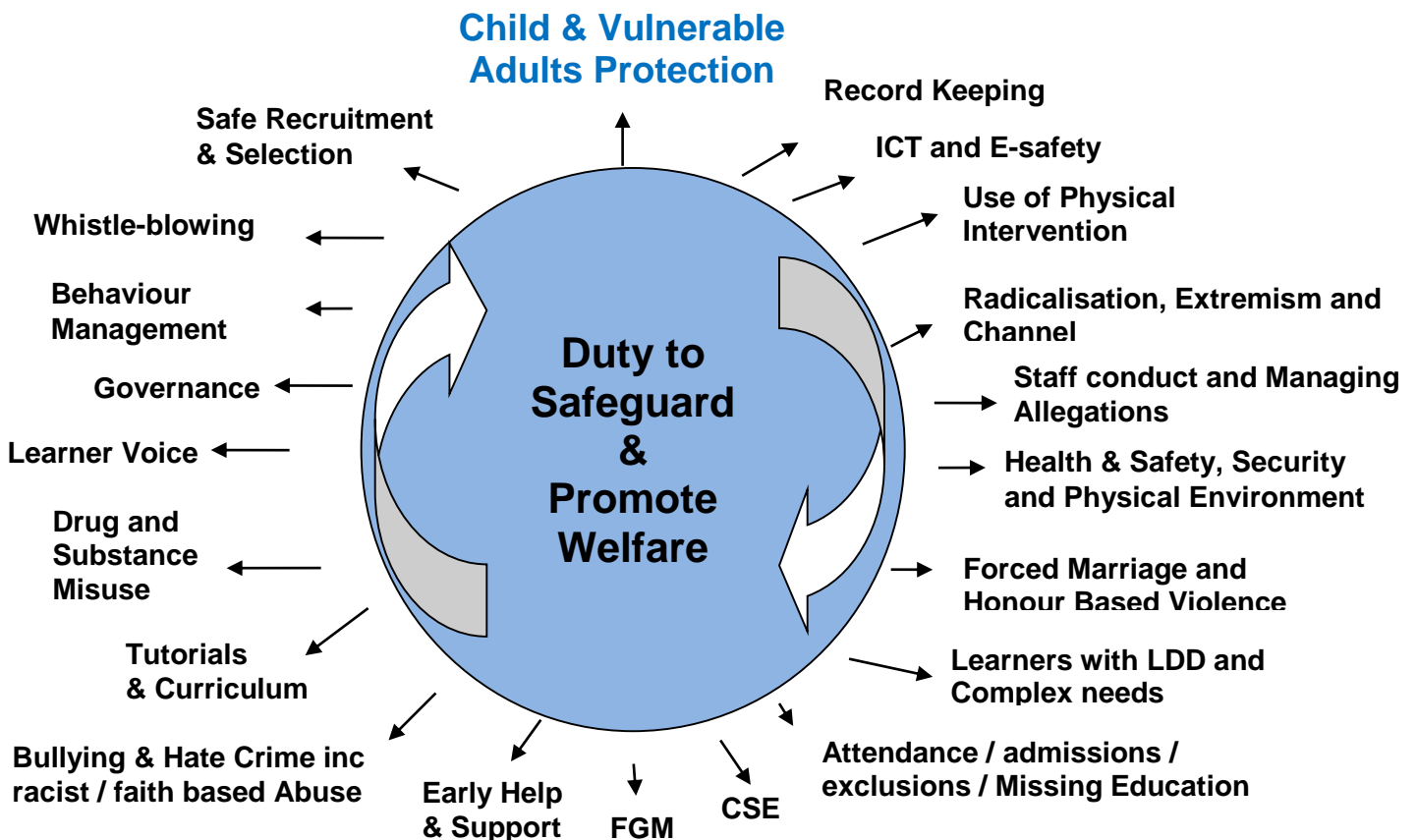
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## 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 Hopwood Hall College acknowledges that Child Protection is part of safeguarding and promoting welfare of our staff and students. As such this **Policy (Part A)** has been written to provide an overview of the college's position and arrangements in respect of Safeguarding and Child or Vulnerable Adults Protection and provides clear direction to staff and others about expected codes of behaviour in dealing with Safeguarding issues.
- 1.2 It also provides staff with clear **Procedures (Part B)** about the action staff should take in the event that they are concerned about a child, young person or vulnerable adult. This ensures that Safeguarding concerns and Child Protection / Vulnerable Adults referrals are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which prioritise the needs of the child or vulnerable adult.
- 1.3 A copy of the key terms and definitions have been included in Appendix 1: Glossary of terminology.
- 1.4 Safeguarding is an all-encompassing term used to describe many aspects of college life including:
- Learner health, safety and welfare;
  - Bullying;
  - Harassment and discrimination including hate crime and racist abuse;
  - Staff recruitment;
  - The use of physical intervention;
  - Meeting the needs of students with medical conditions and LLDD;
  - First aid;
  - Alcohol, drug and substance misuse;
  - Educational visits;
  - Intimate or personal care;
  - Internet or online safety including e-safety;
  - Extremism, radicalisation and Prevent;
  - The security and safety of the college campus or place of learning; and
  - Issues which may be specific to the local area or population, for example child sexual exploitation or gang activity.



- 1.5 This policy covers all college students whether they are based on or off campus in both classroom and work based learning. The policy will be reviewed at least annually and is linked with the following policies and procedures:
- Bullying & Harassment Policy;
  - Code of conduct;
  - Prevent Strategy;
  - External Speakers and Events Policy;
  - E-Safety Policy;
  - ICT Acceptable Use Policy;
  - Data Protection and Information Sharing Policy;
  - Health and Safety Policy;
  - Whistle Blowing Policy;
  - Safer Recruitment Procedures;
  - Staff Allegation Management Procedures;
  - Staff Professional Guidelines;
  - Complaints Procedures;
  - Teaching and Learning Policies;
  - Tutorial Policy;
  - Single Equality Scheme; and
  - Learning Support Policy.

## PART A: SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

### 2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Hopwood Hall College has a commitment to the well-being of both learners and staff (children/young people and those deemed to be vulnerable adults) and fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect and support them. The college has a moral and statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of all its students and endeavours to create and maintain a safe and welcoming learning environment where they are respected and valued. The college will identify where there are safeguarding concerns regarding its students and take action to address them in partnership with other organisations where appropriate.
- 2.2 There are two key principles that underpin safeguarding practices, these are:
- a) Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility:** for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part;
  - b) A child or vulnerable adults centred approach:** for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children, learners and vulnerable adults within the setting.
- 2.3 There are three main elements to our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy:
- **Prevention:** e.g. positive college atmosphere, teaching and pastoral support to learners.
  - **Protection:** By following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to safeguarding and Child Protection concerns/disclosures.
  - **Support:** To learners and staff and to children, young people and vulnerable adults who may have been abused.
- 2.4 This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004; the Education Act 2002, Children and Families Act 2014, Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, Disability Code of Practice 2014, Children and Family Act 2014, Mental Capacity Act 2005, Care Act 2015, Serious Crime Act 2015 and in line with statutory guidance: '*Working Together to Safeguard Children*' (2015), '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*' (DFE Revised May 2016 and affective from 5<sup>th</sup> September 2016), '*What to do if you are worried a child is being abused – Advice for practitioners*' and the *Prevent Duty 2015*. The policy also meets the procedures and protocols under

the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children's Board (RBSCB), Rochdale Safeguarding Adults Board (RBSAB) and the Greater Manchester Safeguarding Procedures which can be found at [www.rbscb.org](http://www.rbscb.org) and [www.rbsab.org](http://www.rbsab.org)

- 2.5 Hopwood Hall College takes seriously its responsibility under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements within our college to identify, assess, and support those children or young people who are suffering harm. Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places duties on the college and individuals to ensure their functions and services have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- 2.6 The College recognises that the Prevent agenda is fundamentally linked to the safeguarding of our students and staff and meets the Prevent Duty under the safeguarding arrangements within this policy and through its Prevent Strategy. The Prevent Strategy is written with reference to the Prevent Duty contained within Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 which states that specified authorities including Further Education Colleges, in the exercise of their functions, must have "*due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism*".
- 2.7 The policy applies to all adults: staff including temporary<sup>1</sup>, governors and volunteers at the college. Safeguarding is the responsibility of **all** adults and especially those working with children, young people and vulnerable adults. We recognise that all adults, have a full and active part to play in protecting our students from harm, and that the child or young person's welfare is our paramount concern. All staff believe that our college should provide a caring, positive safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual student.
- 2.8 The Principal and the Board of Governors recognise their responsibility in ensuring that arrangements are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of our students, as defined and required by the relevant statutory instruments.
- 2.9 **Policy Principles:**
- Welfare of the student is paramount;
  - All students have equal rights to protection regardless of age, sex, ability, culture, ethnicity, language, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender identity and socio-economic status. This policy will not discriminate either directly or indirectly against any individual on these grounds or any other protected characteristics;
  - Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and all staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a student is at risk of harm; and
  - Students and staff involved in safeguarding and child protection and vulnerable adult protection issues will receive appropriate support and/or training with regular safeguarding updates;
  - This policy must be read in conjunction with other college policies which details specific responsibilities for other aspects of safeguarding.
- 2.10 **Policy Aims:**
- To ensure all staff are informed and aware of the College's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedures to enable them to meet their safeguarding responsibilities and reporting possible cases of abuse;
  - To encourage self-awareness and an atmosphere in which learners find staff approachable to enable communication of any issues which may be affecting their lives;
  - To ensure consistent good practice in following procedures thereby ensuring staff respond appropriately and sensitively to Safeguarding and Child Protection issues;
  - To provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and feel confident, and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties, believing they will be effectively listened to;

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<sup>1</sup> Wherever the word "staff" is used, it covers ALL staff on site, including ancillary supply and self-employed staff, contractors, volunteers working with children etc, and governors

- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children, young people and vulnerable adults known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure we, the college, contribute to assessments of need and support packages for those children and young people;
- To provide support and promote clear lines of communication between all staff members;
- To develop a structured procedure within the college which will be followed by all members of the college community in cases of suspected abuse;
- To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police, Children Social Care, Adult Social Care and Channel;
- To ensure that all staff working within our college who have substantial access to children and young people have been checked as to their suitability, including verification of their identity, qualifications, and a satisfactory DBS check, and a central record is kept for audit; and
- To demonstrate the college's commitment with regard to safeguarding and child protection to students, parents and other partners.

### 3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 Safeguarding and child and vulnerable adult protection concerns could happen anywhere and **all staff** should be alert to possible concerns being raised in the college. **All adults** working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.
- 3.2 There are, however, key people within the college who have specific responsibilities under Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures. The roles and names of those carrying these responsibilities at Hopwood Hall College are listed below.
- 3.3 Safeguarding concerns regarding children, young people and vulnerable adults should be referred to one of the Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs) or Senior Designated Safeguarding Officers (SDSO). However, all staff may raise concerns directly with Children Social Care services if required.
- 3.4 The governing body understands and is committed to ensuring that the College fulfils its responsibility on safeguarding and child protection by ensuring that:
- a. there is a Safeguarding / Child Protection policy in place at the College as well as a staff behaviour policy (Staff Professional Guidelines);
  - b. the College operates safe recruitment procedures by ensuring that there is at least one person on every recruitment panel that has completed Safer Recruitment training and that a safeguarding question is asked to all applicants;
  - c. there are procedures for reporting and dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers and to make a referral to the DBS if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have had they not resigned;
  - d. a senior leader has Lead Designated Officer responsibility under their remit (SDSO);
  - e. all designated safeguarding officers (DSOs) undertake initial training with Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Board (RBSCB) and refresher training at least every 2 years;
  - f. all other staff have safeguarding training updated as appropriate;
  - g. the College provides a safe environment for young people and vulnerable adults;
  - h. the College identifies young people and vulnerable adults who are suffering, or at risk of suffering significant harm and takes appropriate action to see that they are kept safe;
  - i. any weaknesses in child protection and safeguarding are remedied immediately;
  - j. a member of the Governing Body is nominated to liaise with the LA on Child Protection issues and in the event of an allegation of abuse made against the Principal.
  - k. the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually and that it is available on the College website or by other means;
  - l. the governing body considers how the College raises awareness of issues relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults in the College;
  - m. enhanced DBS checks are in place for Governors;
  - n. the **Designated Governor** from the Corporation is **Daniel Nuttall**;
  - o. the **College Principal** has overall responsibility for Safeguarding and Child Protection and will ensure that reports to Governors are made at least annually.

- 3.5 The **Designated Governor** is responsible for liaising with the Principal and Senior Staff Member with Lead Responsibility over matters regarding safeguarding, including:
- ensuring that the College has procedures and policies which are consistent with the Local Safeguarding Board's procedures;
  - ensuring that the governing body considers the College policy on safeguarding each year;
  - ensuring that each year the Governing Body is informed of how the College and its staff have complied with the policy, including but not limited to, a report on the training that staff have undertaken and safeguarding incidents;
  - overseeing the liaison with external agencies in connection with allegations made against the Principal or Staff Member with Lead Responsibility. This will not involve undertaking any form of investigation, but will ensure clear and transparent communication between the parties and provide information to assist enquiries;
  - to assist in these duties, the Designated Governor shall receive appropriate training.
- 3.6 **Staff Member with Lead / Senior Responsibility - SDSO (Caroline Street and Nimisha Mistry)**  
The College has named senior member of staff and a member of the Senior Management Team with lead responsibility for Safeguarding and Child Protection. They will:
- Have a duty to take lead responsibility for raising awareness within the staff of issues relating to the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults, and the promotion of a safe environment for both learning and those being cared for within the College;
  - Ensure that Safeguarding and Child Protection concerns or allegations against adults working in the college are referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for advice, and that any member of the staff found not to be suitable to work with children will be notified to the DBS for consideration for barring;
  - Act as the specific person of contact for Prevent and Channel referrals. To take a lead role for concerns raised regarding extremism, radicalisation;
  - Provide and take a lead on single agency training to staff and governors;
  - Ensure policies and procedures are reviewed and updated;
  - Receive training in safeguarding and inter-agency working, as required by the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Board (RBCSB);
  - Provide reports to Governors at least annually with details of changes to policy and procedure, training undertaken by DSOs, and by all staff and governors, number and type of incidents / cases, and number of children on the child protection register;
  - Receive refresher training at least every 2 years;
  - Keep up to date with developments in safeguarding issues.
- 3.7 **Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs)**  
There are 3 Designated Safeguarding Officer that have specific responsibility for operational safeguarding and Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Protection arrangements. This role is carried out by the Student Support Managers: **Tracey Marrow, Nicola Metcalfe** and **Helen Redman**. The Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs):
- Receive training in safeguarding and inter-agency working, as required by RBSCB, and will receive refresher training at least every 2 years;
  - Know how to receive and make an appropriate referral;
  - Are available to provide advice and support to other staff on issues relating to safeguarding
  - Will deal with individual cases, including attending case conferences and review meetings as appropriate;
  - Ensure names and contact details of DSOs and a statement explaining the college's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse is clearly advertised in the college and are a part of student induction;
  - Support the Board with Borough wide training;
  - Act as designated teacher for Looked After Children (LAC). The named **Designated Teacher** at Hopwood Hall College is **Tracey Marrow**.
  - Act as lead person for SEN and LLDD. At Hopwood Hall College these are **Nicola Metcalfe** and **Helen Redman**.
  - Support with referrals to Channel. At Hopwood Hall College the lead person is **Nimisha Mistry**.

- Ensure all safeguarding issues / referrals are logged and reported centrally; and
- Will refer any concerns regarding potential bullying, harassment and extremism incidents to the Head of Student Support and Equality.

3.8 The staff members names with **lead responsibility** are responsible for:

- Overseeing the referral of cases of serious harm;
- Providing advice and support to other staff on issues relating to safeguarding;
- Maintaining a proper record of any safeguarding referral, complaint or concern (even where that concern does not lead to a referral);
- Ensuring that parents of young people and vulnerable adults within the College are aware of the College's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Liaising with agencies as appropriate;
- To ensure that appropriate arrangements / protocols are followed to safeguard them whilst undertaking college programmes;
- Ensuring that they or identified staff attend case conferences, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings, contribute to assessments, and provide a report which has been shared with parents;
- Ensure accurate, effective and timely record keeping;
- Ensuring that any young people on child protection plans who are un-expectedly absent from college for 2 or more consecutive days is referred to their key worker in the social care team;
- Ensuring that staff receive basic training in safeguarding issues and are aware of the College safeguarding procedures at induction and on a renewal basis;
- Ensuring safer recruitment procedures are in place (HR);
- Overseeing allegations made against members of staff;
- Provide support to staff working with children and young people who have or are suffering from harm, or who find themselves in stressful and upsetting situations from a safeguarding concern;
- Reporting annually to the governing body of the College on how the College has discharged its duties; and
- Reporting deficiencies in procedure to the governing body at the earliest opportunity.

3.9 **The Student Support Tutors (SSTs)** will act as **Deputy Designated Officer(s) (DDO)** for the College in the absence of the DSO. SSTs are appropriately trained and carry out those functions necessary to ensure the on-going safety and protection of students. In the event of the long-term absence of the designated person, the SSTs will assume all of the functions above.

3.10 **All staff** (employed, volunteers and College apprentices) and **governors** will receive training on Safeguarding and Child Protection during induction and periodically renewed to maintain their understanding of signs and indicators of abuse.

#### 4. DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE AND REPORTING CONCERNS

4.1 Sometimes a member of staff may have suspicions that a student is being abused or is at risk of significant harm. A student may also disclose to a member of staff that s/he is being abused. In these circumstances, the procedure outlined below should be followed:

- Reporting to Designated Staff – DSOs** - Staff should report any concerns, suspicions or disclosures immediately to one of the Designated Officers via the dedicated telephone numbers 07850 323 664 or 07917 233 738 and email address [safeguarding@hopwood.ac.uk](mailto:safeguarding@hopwood.ac.uk)
- Significant Concerns:** If a member of staff has significant concerns about a young person or vulnerable adult, s/he should call contact a Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately via the dedicated telephone number, who will consider and advise whether the concerns should be formally referred by the college.
- Disclosure of Abuse:** If a young person or vulnerable adult discloses abuse, or if abuse is suspected, staff should:
  - Listen carefully and stay calm;



- Question normally using open questions, and without pressure, in order to be sure that what the young person or vulnerable adult is saying is fully understood;
- Reassure them that by telling a member of staff, they have done the right thing;
- Inform them that the information must be passed on, but that only those who need to know about it will be told. Inform the young person or vulnerable adult to whom the matter will be reported; and
- Contact a Designated Safeguarding Officer via the dedicated safeguarding telephone numbers as soon as possible and always within 24 hours.

Staff should not:

- Ask leading questions;
- Try to investigate concerns or allegations;
- Discuss disclosure information with other members of staff; and
- Promise confidentiality.

**(d) Reporting to the Principal / SMT Lead** - The Designated Safeguarding Officer must notify the Principal or SMT Lead as soon as practicable of any serious high risk disclosure or suspicion being raised, and always within 24 hours.

**(e) Contact with Social Care** - The Designated Safeguarding Officer must report the matter Social Care or to the Police immediately by telephone and follow this up in writing within 24hrs.

4.2 The Designated Safeguarding Officer should discuss with the social worker:

- The action taken to inform the parents of the young person or vulnerable adult if appropriate. A note of that conversation should be made.
- The process for keeping the College informed of further action taken

4.3 **Under 16 College Learners** - In the case of a young person attending college from a school, the Designated Safeguarding Officer should liaise closely with the school's Designated Safeguarding Officer and keep the lead for 14-16 students informed fully at all stages.

## 5. SAFEGUARDING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

5.1 Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a student are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the students is paramount. The College's Allegation Management Policy and Whistle Blowing Policy enable staff to raise concerns or allegations in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place. The College Professional Guidelines outline behavioural standards expected by all staff.

5.2 When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed. Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not mandatory and requires careful consideration, nor is it automatic but, in some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that students are protected.

5.3 Allegations against staff should be reported to the DSO or Senior DSO in the first instance who will refer to the College Senior Lead for Safeguarding, the LADO and/or HR for investigation. Full guidance on dealing with allegations against staff can be found in the **College Allegations Management Policy**.

## 6. SAFER RECRUITMENT

6.1 The college endeavours to ensure that we do our utmost to employ 'safe' staff by following the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2016). Full guidance on safer recruitment can be found in the College Recruitment and Selection Policy.

6.2 Safer recruitment means that all applicants will:

- be asked questions relating to safeguarding through the application and/or interview process;
- provide two referees, including at least one who can comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children;
- provide evidence of identity and qualifications;
- be checked through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) as appropriate to their role;
- be interviewed.

## 7. STAFF TRAINING

- 7.1 The Principal, Governors and all staff working with young people and vulnerable adults will receive training adequate to familiarise them with safeguarding and child protection issues and responsibilities and the College policy and procedures, with refresher training at least every two years.
- 7.2 All new members of staff will undergo an induction that includes basic Safeguarding training and familiarisation with the college's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedure.
- 7.3 All staff sign via NETConsent to confirm they have read the College's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures, professional guidelines and Keeping Children Safe guidance annually.

## 8. PROCEDURES

- 8.1 Where it is believed that a child, young person or vulnerable adult is suffering from, or is at risk of significant harm, the College will follow the Rochdale Borough Multi-Agency Safeguarding Children procedures located at [www.rbscb.org](http://www.rbscb.org) and [www.rbsab.org](http://www.rbsab.org) Please also see the College Hub or ItsLearning pages for guidance on the college safeguarding procedure:  
<https://hub.hopwood.ac.uk/Safeguarding/SitePages/Home.aspx>

## 9. SUPPORTING LEARNERS 'AT RISK' AND EARLY HELP

- 9.1 Our College recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. This college may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Whilst at college, their behaviour may still be challenging and defiant and there may even be moves to consider exclusion from college.
- 9.2 It is also recognised that some children and young people who have experienced abuse may in turn abuse others. This requires a considered, sensitive approach in order that the child or young person can receive appropriate help and support. Risk assessments will be reviewed and considered by the college in order to support and manage any risks for the learner, other learners, staff and for the College. These referrals must be sent to the Lead DSO for discussion with the Principal.
- 9.3 The college will endeavour to support students, especially those with SEN, complex needs and belonging to a vulnerable group, through their learner journey and will provide support through the SSTs, DSOs, Student and College Services Team, College Counsellor, Learning Support Team, supportive policy interventions and a safe, inclusive and welcoming environment at the college. See the ***Learning Support Policy***.
- 9.4 The College has in place various mechanisms for Early Help which can be accessed on-site. These include:
- A named Student Support Tutor (SST) for each student who carries out weekly tutorials and progress reviews with students;
  - A free counselling provision with a drop in service;
  - A dedicated Learning Support Team;
  - Dedicated 'base rooms' that can be used as safe spaces;
  - A team of DSOs;
  - Social spaces for students;
  - College drop-in services such as Sexual health, Drugs and Alcohol and CAMHS.

## 10. E-SAFETY

- 10.1 Mobile phones and computers are a source of fun, entertainment, communication and education. However, some will use these technologies to harm others. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails, to enticing young people or vulnerable adults to engage in sexually harmful conversations online, webcam filming, photography or face-to-face meetings. Cyber-bullying by students, via texts and emails, will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying policy and/ or disciplinary procedures.
- 10.2 Full guidance on bullying and disciplinary procedures can be found in the Colleges Acceptable Use Policy, E-Safety Policy, Bullying & Harassment Policy and Student and Staff Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.

## 11. RECORD KEEPING, CONFIDENTIALITY AND SHARING INFORMATION

- 11.1 Well-kept records are essential to good Child Protection practice. The college is clear about the need to record any concerns held about a student within the college, the status of such records and when these records, or parts thereof, should be shared with other agencies. There is also a need to share important education and any Child Protection information at the point of a child's transition to another education establishment.
- 11.2 Hopwood Hall College recognises that all matters relating to Safeguarding and Child Protection are confidential and all information will be stored and handled in line with Data Protection Act 1998 principles. Information is:
- processed for limited purposes;
  - adequate, relevant and not excessive;
  - accurate;
  - kept no longer than necessary;
  - processed in accordance with the data subject's rights; and
  - secure.
- 11.3 Safeguarding Referral information and safeguarding concerns and any other related sensitive information will be stored electronically on the students ILP **ProMonitor** as a confidential comment and will be protected levels of access (Levels 1-3) and only made available to relevant individuals by role and grade. Information about a young person to others will be shared on a need to know basis only. The SSTs and DSOs will be responsible for adding safeguarding concerns and monitoring actions and interventions. The DSOs will also manage a safeguarding database to monitor all interventions and report data to SMT. This database is managed on a secure sever and only accessible by the Student Support Management Team (the DSO team).
- 11.4 Safeguarding records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that students and parents / legal guardians do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a student or parent/ legal guardian to see safeguarding records, they will refer the request to the Data Protection Officer.
- 11.5 The Data Protection Act does not prevent the sharing of safeguarding information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a student. Full guidance can be found in the Colleges Data Protection and Information Sharing Policy. All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- 11.6 All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child or young person to keep secrets which might compromise the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person.

## 12. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

- 12.1 The Colleges Compliments and Complaints Policy procedure will be followed where a student or parent / legal guardian raises a concern about poor practice towards a student that initially does not reach the threshold for Safeguarding action. Compliments and complaints are managed by the Student and

College Services Team. Full guidance on the complaints procedure can be found in the colleges Complements and Complaint Procedure.

### **13. REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 13.1 The College Senior Lead for Safeguarding will ensure that safeguarding reports and records are maintained securely and confidentially, that the College Senior Management Team, E&D Group and Governors are updated regularly on safeguarding incidents / reports made within college and that the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually and report to Governors and staff on relevant changes and updates.

### **14. DOCUMENT CONTROL**

Date of Policy: 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2016

SMT Approval Date: 7<sup>th</sup> September 2016

Date of EIA: 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2016

EIA Completed by: Nimisha Mistry

Date for Policy Review: August 2017 or as new relevant guidance is issued, whichever is earlier.

Version Control: Version 1

## PART B: CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURE

### 1. What Should Staff/Volunteers Do If They Have Concerns About A Child or Young Person in the College?

Education professionals who are concerned about a child's welfare or who believe that a child is or may be at risk of abuse should pass any information to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (**DSO**) in the college; this should *always* occur as soon as possible and certainly within 24 hours.

**The Designated Safeguarding Officers are: Tracey Marrow, Nicola Metcalfe and Helen Redman**  
**The Senior Designated Safeguarding Leads are: Nimisha Mistry and Caroline Street**  
**The Student Support Tutors (SSTs) can act as Deputy DSOs if required.**  
**The Governor responsible for Safeguarding is: Daniel Nuttall**

It is these colleagues who are responsible for taking action where the welfare or safety of children or young people is concerned. If staff are uncertain about whether their concerns are indeed 'Child Protection' then a discussion with their direct line manager will assist in determining the most appropriate next course of action<sup>2</sup>:

#### **Staff should never:**

Do nothing/assume that another agency or professional will act or is acting.  
Attempt to resolve the matter themselves.

### 2. What should the DSO consider right at the outset?

1. Am I dealing with 'risk' or 'need'? (By definition, a child at risk is also a child in need. However, what is the *priority / level and immediacy* of risk / need and consider the Children's Needs and Response Framework?)

2. Can the level of need identified be met:

- a. In or by the college or by accessing universal services/without referral to the MASS or other targeted services?
- b. By working with the child, parents and colleagues?
- c. By completion of a CAF with parents/carers/child & other professionals

- What resources are available to me/the college and what are their limitations?
- Is the level of need such that a referral needs to be made to the Multi-Agency Screening Service requesting that an assessment of need be undertaken? (**Section 17 Child in Need referral**)
- Is the level and/or likelihood of risk such that a Child Protection referral needs to be made (i.e. a child is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm)? (**Section 47 Child Protection referral**)
- What information is available to me: Child, Parents, Family & Environment?
- What information is inaccessible and, potentially, how significant might this be?
- Who do/don't I need to speak to now and what do they need to know?
- Where can I access appropriate advice and/or support?
- If I am not going to refer, then what action am I going to take? (e.g. time-limited monitoring plan, discussion with parents or other professionals, recording, etc)
- Does a Channel referral need to be carried out?

3. **Feedback to Staff Who Report Concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Officer:** The Designated Safeguarding Officer will decide which information needs to be shared, when and with whom. The primary purpose of confidentiality in this context is to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.

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<sup>2</sup> Detailed information on possible signs and symptoms of abuse can be found at [www.rbscb.org](http://www.rbscb.org) in the Rochdale Borough Multi-Agency Safeguarding Children procedures.

4. **Thresholds for Referral to the Multi-Agency Screening Service (MASS):** Where a Designated Safeguarding Officer considers that a referral to the MASS may be required, there are two thresholds for (and their criteria) and types of referral that need to be carefully considered:

**Is this a Child In Need?**

Under section 17 (s.17(10)) of the Children Act 1989, a child is in need if:

- a. S/he is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity to achieve or maintain, a reasonable standard of health or development, without the provision of services by a local authority;
- b. His/her health or development is likely to be impaired, or further impaired, without the provision of such services;
- c. S/he has a disability

**Is this a Child Protection Matter?**

Under section 47(1) of the Children Act 1989, a local authority has a duty to make enquiries where they are informed that a child who lives or is found in their area:

- a. is the subject of an Emergency Protection Order;
- b. is in Police Protection; or where they have
- c. there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.**

Therefore, it is the 'significant harm' threshold that justifies statutory intervention into family life. A professional making a Child Protection referral under s.47 must therefore provide information which clearly outlines that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.

5. **The Designated Safeguarding Officer will make judgment around 'significant harm', levels of need and when to refer. (Children's Needs and Response Framework)**

6. **Making Referrals to the MASS (Guidance for the Designated Safeguarding Officer)**

- 6.1 **Child In Need/Section 17 Referrals** The DSO should look with other services as part of the Early Help Strategy to complete a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and copy this to: [caf.team@rochdale.gov.uk](mailto:caf.team@rochdale.gov.uk)

- a. This is a request for assessment/support/services and, as such, you **must obtain the consent** of the parent(s) (and child/young person where appropriate), this should be identified on the CAF
- b. Where a parent/child/young person refuses to consent, you should make clear your ongoing plans and responsibilities in respect of support, monitoring etc, and the possibility of a Child Protection referral at some point in future if things deteriorate or do not improve. (This is not about threats or saying that this is inevitable but about openness and transparency in dealings with parents).

- 6.2 **Child Protection** Use the multi-agency referral form for referrals (MARF) to the Multi Agency Screening Service where it is considered that a child may be at risk of or suffering significant harm. If a CAF is in place then this information must form part of the CP referral and the DSL completes the front sheet of the multi-agency referral form.

- a. You **do not require the consent** of a parent or child/young person to make a Child Protection referral
- b. A parent should, **under most circumstances, be informed** by the referrer that a Child Protection referral is to be made. The criteria for not informing parents are:
  - I. Because this would increase the risk of significant harm to a child(ren), to another member in the family home or to a professional; or
  - II. Because, in the referrer's professional opinion, to do so might impede an investigation that may need to be undertaken;
  - III. Because there would be an undue delay caused by seeking consent which would not serve the child's best interests.

**See the Rochdale Borough Multi-Agency Safeguarding Children procedures on the RBSCB website for the occasions when parents/carers should not be informed.**

- 6.3 Fear of jeopardising a hard won relationship with parents because of a need to refer is **not** sufficient justification for not telling them that you need to refer. To the contrary, this lack of openness will do little to foster ongoing trust, particularly as the source of referrals will be disclosed to parents except in a limited number of circumstances. If you feel that your own or another adult's immediate safety would be placed at risk by informing parents then you should seek advice and/or make this clear on the referral or in any telephone contact with the Multi Agency Screening Service.
7. **The MASS Responses to Referrals and Timescales:** In response to a referral, the MASS may decide to:
- Provide advice to the referrer and/or child/family;
  - Refer on to another agency who can provide services;
  - Undertake an Assessment;
  - Convene a Strategy Meeting for referrals under Section 47 of the Children Act;
  - Provide support services under Section 17;
  - Convene an Initial Child Protection Conference;
  - Accommodate the child under Section 20 (with parental consent);
  - Make an application to court for an Order;
  - Suggest to referring agency that a CAF be completed.
8. **Feedback from the MASS:** The MASS has 24 hours within which to make a decision about a course of action in response to a referral. If you do not receive any (same day) verbal feedback following an urgent Child Protection referral, and where this places the college / a child(ren) in a vulnerable position, you should ask to speak to the relevant Team Manager at MASS (**0300 303 0440**) or the Out of Hours Service (**0300 303 8875**)
9. **Vulnerable Adult Concerns:** If the concern is regarding a vulnerable adult who maybe suffering harm, neglect or abuse, you must alert the DSO in the same way as you would for a child. The DSO will contact Rochdale's Adult Social Care team (0300 303 8886) and discuss the concerns. If appropriate, a referral forms will be completed and sent to the Adult Social Care Team. See full protocols on the RBSAB Website: [www.rbsab.org/professionals/multi-agency-policy-and-procedures](http://www.rbsab.org/professionals/multi-agency-policy-and-procedures)
10. **Channel:** Concerns regarding radicalization or extremism are safeguarding concerns and the Lead DSO Nimisha Mistry must be contacted for concerns to be passed on. The Lead DSO or SPOC for the College will make a referral into Channel and will await guidance on if the concern meets their thresholds. If appropriate, information on the student, their IT record and other information will be shared to assess risk and possible support required. Interventions can include a visit from the Channel Police or for the College to attend the Multi-Agency Channel Panel.
11. **Other Key Contacts:**
- Education Safeguarding Officer - 01706 925384
  - Education Welfare Service - Tel: 01706 925115
  - Multi Agency Screening Service - Tel: 0300 303 0440
  - Out of Hours, Emergency Duty Social Work Team - Tel: 0300 303 8875
  - Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) - Tel: 01706 925365
  - Safeguarding Unit – 0300 303 0350
  - Adult Safeguarding Team: - Tel: 0300 303 8866
  - Police Protection and Investigation Unit (PPIU) - Tel: 0161 856 4810 (Child Protection) and 0161 856 8757 (Domestic Violence)
  - Police: 101 or 999 (Emergency only)
12. **Risk Assessment 'Checklist'**
- Does/could the suspected harm meet the RBSCB Safeguarding Children definitions of abuse?
  - Are there cultural, linguistic or disability issues?
  - I am wrongly attributing something to impairment?
  - Does the chronology indicate any possible patterns which could/do impact upon the level of risk?
  - Are any injuries or incidents acute, cumulative, episodic?

- Did any injuries result from spontaneous action, neglect, or intent?
- Explanations consistent with injuries/behaviour?
- Severity and duration of any harm?
- Effects upon the child's health/development?
- Immediate/longer term effects?
- Likelihood of recurrence?
- Child's reaction?
- Child's perception of the harm?
- Child's needs, wishes and feelings?
- Parents'/carers' attitudes/response to concerns?
- How willing are they to co-operate?
- What does the child mean to the family?
- What role does the child play?
- Possible effects of intervention?
- Protective factors and strengths of/for child (i.e. resilience/vulnerability)
- Familial strengths and weaknesses?
- Possibilities? Probabilities?
- When and how is the child at risk?
- How imminent is any likely risk?
- How grave are the possible consequences?
- How safe is this child?
- What are the risk assessment options?
- What are the risk management options?
- What is the interim plan?



## APPENDIX 1: GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMINOLOGY

### TERMINOLOGY:

- a) **Child:** From aged 0 to anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday, including the unborn child;
- b) **Vulnerable adult** refers to someone who is, or may be in need of, care services by reason of mental or other disability, who is or maybe unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation;
- c) **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children:** is defined as protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. (*Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015*).
- d) **Child protection:** part of safeguarding and promoting welfare and refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.
- e) **The difference between Safeguarding and Child Protection:** Safeguarding is what we do for all children; and Child Protection is what we do for children or young people who have been harmed or are at significant risk of being harmed. This Policy includes the Child Protection Procedures, as well as links to other policies.
- f) **Staff:** refers to all those working for or on behalf of the College, full time or part time, in either a paid or voluntary capacity. Staff includes ancillary supply and self-employed staff, contractors, volunteers working with children, and governors.
- g) **Looked After Child:** sometimes referred to as 'LAC' is a child who is accommodated by the local authority; a child who is the subject of an Interim Care Order, Full Care Order or Emergency Protection Order; or a child who is remanded by a court into local authority accommodation or Youth Detention Accommodation. In addition where a child is placed for Adoption or the local authority is authorised to place a child for adoption, the child is a Looked After Child. Looked After Children may be placed with parents, foster carers (including relatives and friends), in Children's Homes, in Secure Accommodation or with prospective adopters.
- h) **Young Carer:** A young carer is a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person (of any age, except generally where that care is provided for payment pursuant to a contract or as voluntary work).
- i) **Parent Carer:** A person aged 18 or over who provides care for a disabled child for whom the person has parental responsibility.
- j) **Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP):** A single plan, which covers the education, health and social care needs of a child or young person with Special Educational Needs and Disability Care of Practice 2014.

### DEFINITIONS<sup>3</sup>

- a) **Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child or vulnerable adult. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children. There are 4 main categories of abuse: **Physical, Neglect, Sexual and Emotional:**
- b) **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

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<sup>3</sup> Taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015

be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

- a) **Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:
- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
  - protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
  - ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers);
  - ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment;
  - it may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

**Self-neglect:** this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

**Neglect and acts of omission** - Neglect is the failure of any person who has responsibility for the charge, care or custody of an Adult to provide the amount and type of care that a reasonable person would be expected to provide.

- b) **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 (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. ]

- c) **Emotional Abuse:** the persistent emotional mal-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent 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;
  - Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate;
  - Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction;
  - Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another;
  - Serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children;
  - Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

- d) **Financial Abuse:** Including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

In addition to definitions provided above, the following terms are some important to note in the wider context of safeguarding and child protection (NB this is not a definitive list) – **specific safeguarding issues and vulnerabilities:**

- e) **Psychological Abuse:** Including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation, or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

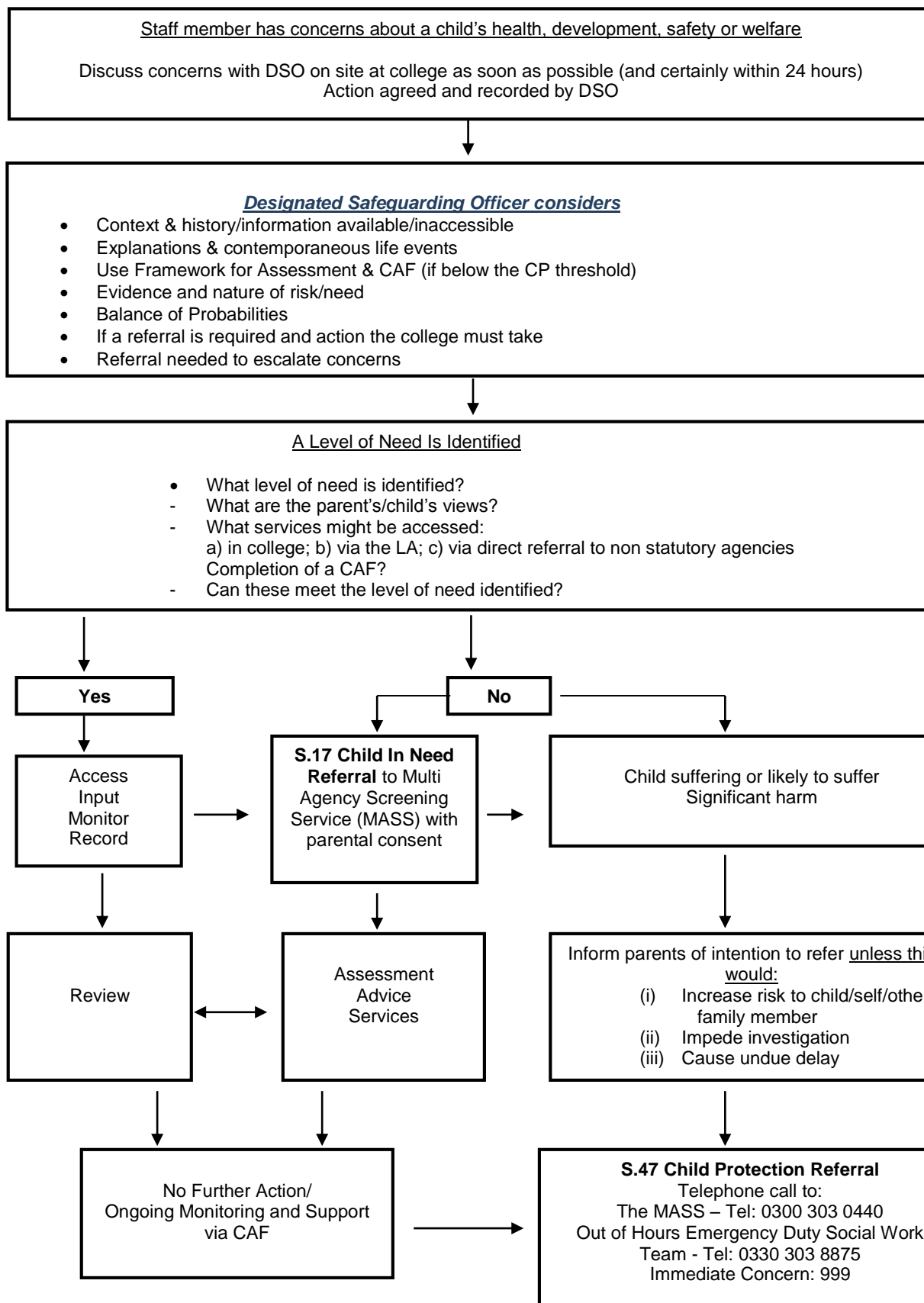
- f) Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE):** form of child abuse which involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator, who can come from any backgrounds, always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.
- g) Discriminatory Abuse / Hate Crime:** Including racist, homophobic, transphobic and sexist abuse or harassment, abuse or harassment based on disability, faith abuse or other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.
- h) Domestic Violence / Teenage relationship abuse:** any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to: psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional.
- i) Extremism / Prevent:** Government's strategy to stop people becoming involved in violent extremism or supporting terrorism, in all its forms. Prevent works within the non-criminal space, using early engagement to encourage individuals and communities to challenge violent extremist ideologies and behaviours. Prevent includes but is not confined to the identification and referral of those at risk of being drawn into terrorism into appropriate interventions. These interventions aim to divert vulnerable people from radicalisation.
- j) Radicalisation:** is the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.
- k) Female Genital Mutilation (FGM):** involves procedures that include the partial or total removal of the external female genital organs for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons. The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious health consequences, both at the time when the mutilation is carried out and in later life. Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon staff members, along with social workers and healthcare professionals, 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 failure to report such cases will be dealt with under the College's disciplinary procedures.
- l) Honour Based Violence (HBV):** is a collection of practices, which are used to control behaviour and exert power within families to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour. It is a violent crime or incident which may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family or community. Such violence can occur when perpetrators perceive that an individual has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their honour code. The individual is being punished for actually, or allegedly, undermining what the family or community believes to be the correct code of behaviour. So-called 'honour based violence' is a fundamental abuse of Human Rights. There is no honour in the commission of murder, kidnap and the many other acts, behaviour and conduct which make up violence in the name of honour.
- m) Forced Marriage (FM):** where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used. It is an abuse of human rights and can involve other categories of abuse eg sexual, trafficking, slavery and exploitation and it can involve violence and HBV. Forced Marriage is not the same as an arranged marriage and it cannot be justified on religious or cultural grounds.

- n) Fabricated or Induced Illness:** illness in a child which is fabricated by a parent or person in loco parentis. The child is often presented for medical assessment and care, usually persistently, often resulting in multiple medical procedures. Acute symptoms and signs of illness cease when the child is separated from the perpetrator. Local Safeguarding Children Boards have specific inter-agency procedures which cover this issue.
- o) Bullying including cyberbullying:** behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.
- p) Sexting:** when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video on their mobile phone, usually in a text message.
- q) Trafficking:** the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or a position of vulnerability, giving or receiving of payments or benefits, control over another for the purposes of exploitation.
- r) Missing:** a child or young person missing from education is defined as someone of compulsory school age (18 or under) who is not on a school roll, not being educated otherwise (e.g. at home, in independent schools or in alternative provision) or who has been out of any educational provision for four weeks or more. Our college follows Rochdale Council CME guidance which outlines Rochdale Borough Council's systems for identifying and maintaining contact with children missing from education and the steps taken to identify those at risk.
- s) Modern Slavery:** encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.
- t) Gangs and Youth Violence:** Violence involving young people where they can be the victim, the perpetrator, or both. Youth violence includes aggressive behaviors such as verbal abuse, bullying, hitting, slapping, or fistfighting. These behaviors have significant consequences but do not generally result in serious injury or death. Youth violence also includes serious violent and delinquent acts such as aggravated assault, robbery, rape, and homicide, committed by and against youth.
- u) Relationship Abuse:** unacceptable behaviour between two people. Relationship abuse can include violence, or physically forcing somebody to do something they don't want to but it can also be emotional and verbal, and could escalate to physical or sexual abuse.
- v) Peer on Peer Abuse:** abuse that is carried out by one young person or vulnerable adult onto a peer. Could constitute any of the above forms of abuse including sexting, self/group harm, being sexually touched/assaulted or being subject to initiation/hazing type violence. Allegations of abuse on peers will be investigated and not tolerated or passed off as "banter". Support work where possible will be offered to students.
- w) Restraint:** Unlawful or inappropriate use of restraint or physical interventions and/or deprivation of liberty is physical abuse. There is a distinction to be drawn between restraint, restriction, and deprivation of liberty. A judgement as to whether a person is being deprived of liberty will depend on the particular circumstances of the case, taking into account the degree of intensity, type of restriction, duration, the effect and the manner of the implementation of the measure in question.
- x) Young people and vulnerable adults who may be particularly vulnerable:** Some students within the college have an increased risk of abuse. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and

reluctance on the part of some people to accept that abuse can occur. To ensure that all of our students receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to those who are:

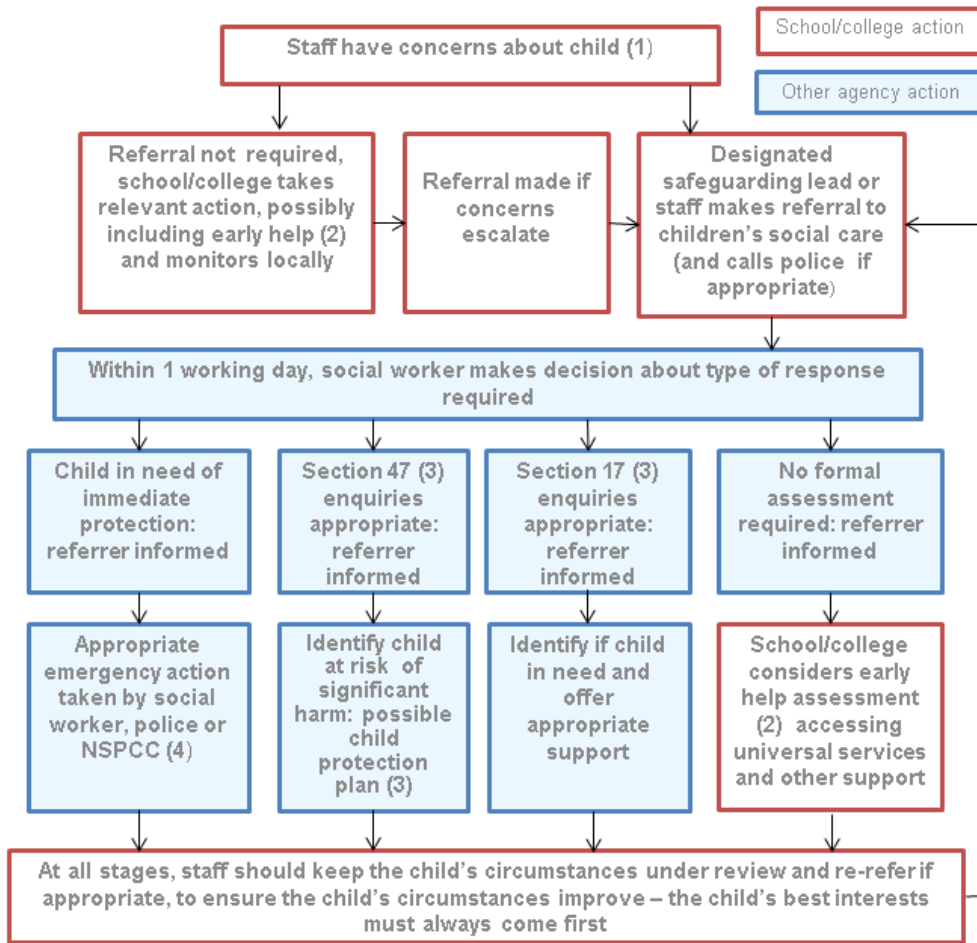
- living away from home (including Looked After Children);
- young carers
- young parents
- learners with disabilities or learning difficulties (LLDD);
- living in a domestic abuse situation;
- affected by parental substance misuse;
- asylum seekers;
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying ;
- living in temporary accommodation;
- live transient lifestyles;
- have mental health issues;
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations;
- involved directly or indirectly in sexual exploitation including prostitution and/or trafficking;
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion or sexuality; and
- at risk of radicalisation.

## APPENDIX 2: TAKING ACTION ON CHILD/YOUNG PERSON WELFARE/PROTECTION CONCERNS IN COLLEGE



**The Designated Safeguarding Officers are: Tracey Marrow, Nicola Metcalfe and Helen Redman**  
**The Senior Designated Safeguarding Leads are: Nimisha Mistry and Caroline Street**  
**The Student Support Tutors (SSTs) can act as Deputy DSOs if required.**

## Actions where there are concerns about a child



Taken from 'Keeping children Safe in Education 2016', DFE Statutory Guidance

## Basic Needs Triangle



## APPENDIX 3: TALKING AND LISTENING TO YOUNG PEOPLE OR VULNERABLE ADULT

### If a child/VA wants to confide in you, you **SHOULD**

- Be accessible and receptive;
- Listen carefully and uncritically, at the child's pace;
- Take what is said seriously;
- Reassure children that they are right to tell;
- Tell the child that you must share the information;
- Make sure that the child is ok ;
- Make a careful record of what was said (see *Recording*).

### You should **NEVER**

- Investigate or seek to prove or disprove possible abuse;
- Investigate, suggest or probe for information;
- Ask leading questions of children/young people
- Confront another person (adult or child) allegedly involved;
- Speculate or accuse anybody;
- Make promises about confidentiality or keeping 'secrets';
- Assume that someone else will take the necessary action;
- Jump to conclusions, be dismissive or react with shock, anger, horror, etc;
- Offer opinions about what is being said or the persons allegedly involved;
- Forget to record what you have been told;
- Fail to share the information with the correct person (the Designated Safeguarding Lead).

### Learners with communication difficulties, or who use alternative/augmentative communication systems

- While extra care may be needed to ensure that signs of abuse and neglect are interpreted correctly, any suspicions should be reported in exactly the same manner as for other children;
- opinion and interpretation will be crucial (be prepared to be asked about the basis for it and to possibly have its validity questioned if the matter goes to court).

### Recordings should

- State who was present, time, date and place (using full names and full job designation of staff);
- Be written in ink and be signed by the recorder;
- Be passed to the DSO or Senior DSO immediately (certainly within 24 hours);
- Use the child's words wherever possible;
- Be factual/state exactly what was said;
- Differentiate clearly between fact, opinion, interpretation, observation and/or allegation.

### What information do you need to obtain?

- Colleges have **no investigative role** in Child Protection (Police and Children's Social Care will investigate possible abuse very thoroughly and in great detail, they will gather evidence and test hypotheses – leave this to them!);
- Never prompt or probe for information, your job is to listen, record and share information;
- Ideally, you should be clear about what is being said in terms of **who, what, where and when**;
- The question which you should be able to answer at the end of the listening process is 'might this be a Child Protection matter?';
- If the answer is yes, or if you're not sure, record and share immediately with the DSO, Senior DSO, Principal or line manager.

### If you do need to ask questions, what is and isn't OK?

- **Never** asked closed questions i.e. ones which children can answer yes or no to e.g. Did he touch you?
- **Never** make suggestions about who, how or where someone is alleged to have touched, hit etc e.g. Top or bottom, front or back?
- If we must, use only '**minimal prompts**' such as 'go on ... tell me more about that ... tell me everything that you remember about that ... ..'



- Timescales are very important: **'When was the last time this happened?'** is an important question.

**What else should we think about in relation to disclosure?**

- Is there a place in college which is particularly suitable for listening to children e.g. not too isolated, easily supervised, quiet etc;
- We need to think carefully about our own body language – how we present will dictate how comfortable a child feels in telling us about something which may be extremely frightening, difficult and personal;
- Be prepared to answer the 'what happens next' question;
- We should never make face-value judgements or assumptions about individual children. For example, we 'know that [child.....] tells lies';
- Think about how you might react if a child DID approach you in college. We need to be prepared to offer a child in this position exactly what they need in terms of protection, reassurance, calmness and objectivity;

Think about what support **you** could access if faced with this kind of situation in the college.