



**SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION  
POLICY  
2024 - 2025**

## CONTENTS

		<b>Page</b>
1	Important Contacts and Introduction	3
2	Definitions	6
3	Accountability	9
4	Role and Responsibilities of Staff	12
5	Role and Responsibilities of Designated Safeguarding Lead	13
6	Role and Responsibilities of Governing Body and Designated Governor	15
7	Early Intervention	16
8	Procedures regarding safeguarding concerns	17
9	Process to follow if a child makes a disclosure	18
10	Confidentiality	19
11	Recording, Maintenance and Transfer of Records	19
12	Allegations Management	20
13	Whistleblowing	22
14	Escalation	22
15	Proactive Safeguarding	23
16	Safeguarding Young People who are Vulnerable to Extremism	24
17	Policy Review	25

	<b>Appendices</b>	<b>Page</b>
1	Signs and indicators of abuse and specific safeguarding issues	26
2	Halton Levels of Need	43
3	Referral Flowchart	44

	Annex – Response to COVID-19	45
--	------------------------------	----

## IMPORTANT CONTACTS

ROLE/ORGANISATION	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Julia Withersby	0151 257 2800 Extension 1224 <a href="mailto:julia.withersby@riversidecollege.ac.uk">julia.withersby@riversidecollege.ac.uk</a>
Deputy DSL	Donna Elston	0151 257 2128 Extension 1018 <a href="mailto:donna.elston@riversidecollege.ac.uk">donna.elston@riversidecollege.ac.uk</a>
Chair of Governors	Neil McGrath	c/o Catherine Shaw, Clerk 0151 257 2800 Extension 1004 <a href="mailto:catherine.shaw@riversidecollege.ac.uk">catherine.shaw@riversidecollege.ac.uk</a>
Governor responsible for safeguarding	Tom McInerney	c/o Catherine Shaw, Clerk 0151 257 2800 Extension 1004 <a href="mailto:catherine.shaw@riversidecollege.ac.uk">catherine.shaw@riversidecollege.ac.uk</a>
Channel Helpline	Jess Livingstone Channel Coordinator for Mersey side and Cheshire	07562171177 I
Halton Borough Council's Head teacher of the Virtual School	Benjamin Holmes	Benjamin.holmes@halton.gov.uk
Halton Borough Council's Safeguarding Children in Education Officer	James Jordan	James.Jordan@halton.gov.uk
Local Authority Designated Officer	Michelle McPherson	<a href="mailto:LADO@halton.gov.uk">LADO@halton.gov.uk</a> and/or <a href="mailto:safeguarding.adminteam@halton.gov.uk">safeguarding.adminteam@halton.gov.uk</a>

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The College fully recognises its duty toward safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002.
- 1.2 The Governing body 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 who are suffering, or likely to suffer, harm.
- 1.3 The aim of this policy is to establish a “whole college” approach to Safeguarding Children, in order to:
  - Protect children from maltreatment
  - Prevent impairment of children’s health or development
  - Ensure that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care undertaking; and
  - Taking action to enable all children to have the best out comes
  - Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems arise
  - Protecting children from maltreatment, inside or outside the home, including online

- 1.4 The College will endeavor to prevent abuse and neglect by ensuring that the ethos and atmosphere of the College is conducive to a safe environment. Pupils and parents/carers should feel supported and able to report safeguarding concerns to any member of staff. Staff should feel that they are supported by colleagues and the senior management team and the governing body and are able to report and seek advice and guidance on any safeguarding concerns, including those regarding colleagues or themselves. The college remains vigilant around all concerns raised including low level concerns.
- 1.5 Safeguarding children and young people will be reflected throughout the curriculum including planned enrichment events and the ASPIRE sessions.
- 1.6 As part of our safeguarding ethos, the College encourages students to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. The College ensures that partisan political views are not promoted in the teaching of any subject in the College and, where political issues are brought to the attention of the pupils, reasonable practical steps will be taken to offer a balanced presentation of opposing views to students. Further information regarding this is contained in Section 15.
- 1.7 The College will protect children at risk of abuse, exploitation and neglect by having safeguarding procedures in place that reflect current legislation, guidance, national and local priorities and best practice.
- 1.8 The College also ensures that safer recruitment practices are followed when recruiting staff at all levels across the College, including volunteers. Induction and continuous staff training on safeguarding children relevant to role and responsibilities is also provided.
- 1.9 The College will make key decisions regarding information sharing in line with guidance and data protection and will always seek to gain parent's consent but will always consider the principles of section 1 of the Children Act 1989 whereby the child's needs are paramount.
- 1.10 This policy has been developed in consultation with Halton Safeguarding Children Board in accordance with the principles established by:

Education Act 2002

Children Act 1989

Children Act 2004

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

Childcare Act 2006; Childcare (Disqualification) Regulation 2009

Children and Families Act 2014

Children and Social Work Act 2017

Voyeurism Offences Act 2019

Data Protection Act 2018; General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018

and with reference to the following key documents and statutory guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (last updated 2024)
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006; effective 31st August 2018

- Prevent Duty Guidance 2015 (updated 2021)
- The Prevent Duty; Departmental advice for FE Colleges and childcare providers 2019 (revised Home Office 2021)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for Practitioners 2015
- Information sharing; Advice for Practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers 2018
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in Colleges and colleges 2018 (updated 2021)
- UKCIS Sexting in Colleges and Colleges; Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people
- Child sexual exploitation: Definition and a guide for practitioners, local leaders and decision makers working to protect children from child sexual exploitation
- Teacher Standards 2012
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges DfE, 2021
- Schools COVID-19 operational guidance DfE 2021
- Guidance for Safer working practice 2019 and Addendum 2020
- HCYPSP Online Procedures – Child Exploitation
- Halton Assessment Toolkit and Screening tools
- Halton Safeguarding Procedures and Guidance

1.11 This policy should be viewed alongside the following College policies which have relevance to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children:

- Whistleblowing Policy
- Staff Behaviour Policy / Code of Conduct
- Allegations Management Policy
- Safer Recruitment and Retention Policy
- Behaviour / Rewards Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Use of Physical Intervention / Restraint Policy
- First Aid / Medications Policy / Intimate Care Policy
- Drugs and Substance Misuse Policy
- Attendance / Children Missing Education Policy
- E-Safety / Acceptable Use Policy
- Trips and Visits
- Health and Safety Policy
- Low level concerns policy

1.12 Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and, as such, this policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the College. An allegation, disclosure or suspicion of abuse, or an expression of concern about abuse, could be made to any member of staff, not just those with a teaching or welfare-related role. Similarly, any member of staff may observe or suspect an incident of abuse. The College continues to look out for low level concerns and deals with them in accordance to guidance.

1.13 This policy applies to all staff (including paid staff and volunteers, permanent/temporary/ancillary/supply contracts), governors and students on placement or work experience.

- 1.14 This policy replaces the previous Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy from 2023/24 and is reviewed on an annual basis.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment inside or outside the home, including online
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes
- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as they emerge

### 2.1 Child

A child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change their status or entitlements to services or protection.

### 2.2 Child Protection

Part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

### 2.3 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. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

### 2.4 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.

## 2.5 Emotional Abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment 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. 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 participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve 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.

## 2.6 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 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.

## 2.7 Sexting

Also known as youth produced sexual imagery is the sharing of sexual imagery (Nudes/Semi nudes/videos) by children.

## 2.8 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.

- 2.8.1
- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17-year olds who can legally consent to have sex
  - can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual

- can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity
- can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence
- may occur without the child or young person’s immediate knowledge (through others copying videos or images they have created and posting on social media, for example)
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults
- The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse
- Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

2.8.2 Child Criminal Exploitation is also abuse of a child. This form of abuse often accompanies CSE as described above. The definition of Child Criminal Exploitation is

Child criminal exploitation is common in county lines and occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.”

Criminal exploitation of children is broader than just county lines, and includes for instance children forced to work on cannabis farms or to commit theft.

2.8.3 The College follows the Pan-Cheshire Contextual safeguarding strategy (available from the hcypsp safeguarding website).

Where there are concerns about possible CE, the College will complete the Contextual safeguarding assessment tool and then submit the completed tool to Halton iCART.

## 2.9 Extremism

Extremism is defined in the Counter Extremism Strategy 2015 as “the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for the death of members of our armed forces as extremist.” Extremism goes beyond terrorism and includes people who target the vulnerable – including the young – by seeking to sow division between communities on the basis of race, faith or denomination; justify discrimination towards women and girls; persuade others that minorities are inferior; or argue against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society.

## 2.10 Signs and Indicators of Abuse

Further information regarding the signs and indicators of abuse can be found in Appendix 1. Included within Appendix 1 is information regarding the definitions and indicators of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), sexting, Female Genital

Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, Honour-Based Abuse (HBA), peer on peer abuse, sexual violence and sexual harassment, vulnerabilities to extremism and children missing education. It is important to note that forced marriage that takes place before a person is 18 is a crime.

#### 2.11 Private Fostering

Private fostering must be considered when a child under the age of 16 (or 18 if the young person has a disability) has been living with individuals who are not their parents or close relatives for 28 days or more.

### 3. ACCOUNTABILITY

3.1 All staff, volunteers and governors working in the College are responsible for the operation of this policy.

3.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead for the College is: Julia Withersby, Assistant Principal HR.

In her absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Donna Elston, Head of Student Support, Kingsway.

Safeguarding Officers are:

- Anna Hopwood – Kingsway
- Mandy Davies – Kingsway
- Amy Clarke – Kingsway
- Rachel Bailey – CRMZ
- Helen Maddison – Cronton
- Jayne Barker – Cronton
- Katie Peacock – Cronton

3.3 All members of staff have a legal duty to report any disclosure, allegation or suspicion of abuse to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or, in their absence, their Deputy. This must be done immediately following the disclosure or suspicion is made or arises. A referral form can be found on-line should also be completed, which is then held centrally by the Safeguarding team in a confidential manner.

- 3.4 The Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy and/or Safeguarding team member has a duty to make a referral to Children's Social Care, whenever there is reason to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. Where a professional disagreement occurs between workers when working with children and families, the HSCB Escalation Policy should be referred to.
- 3.5 Parents will be informed of any referrals made to Children's Social Care and consent will be gained.  
Parents will not be contacted when this would put the child at increased risk of significant harm (e.g. in case of suspected Fabricated or Induced Illness, Sexual Abuse where a family member is the suspected perpetrator, FGM or Forced Marriage). Any decision not to inform parents/carers should be recorded on the Children's Social Care referral form with the reasons for such a decision and a copy should be kept in the Child Protection File for that child.
- 3.6 The Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy or Safeguarding team member may contact Children's Social Care for advice, if unsure as to whether a referral is appropriate.
- 3.7 The welfare of the child/children concerned, including the welfare of any other children who may be at risk, must always take precedence over confidentiality.
- 3.8 The Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy or relevant Safeguarding team member will make every effort to attend any meetings resulting from the safeguarding process to which the college is invited.
- 3.9 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that the College is represented by an appropriate member of staff should a Child Protection Conference be convened. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that this member of staff is fully briefed as to the expectations regarding attending the conference, including the decision-making requirement. Reports using the agreed Local Authority Conference template will always be submitted to Conference in advance and shared fully with parents prior to the Conference.
- 3.10 The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for ensuring that any actions agreed at such meetings are progressed and followed up.
- 3.11 The Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies must complete Level 3 safeguarding training relevant to their role, including Working Together to Safeguard Children. This level of training must be updated at least every two years, with further safeguarding training to be accessed on a minimum of an annual basis. This is to ensure designated staff have appropriate, up to date knowledge and skills which will enable them to identify concerns and make decisions that support the safety of the College community.
- 3.12 All staff working in the college must be given access to a copy of the Safeguarding/Child Protection policy immediately upon starting work at the college as part of their induction.
- 3.13 All staff working in the College must undergo full Level 2 Basic Awareness in Safeguarding training appropriate to their role as part of their induction and at a minimum of every three years thereafter. All staff will also receive further safeguarding update training on a minimum of an annual basis.

- 3.14 The Governing Body will undergo Safeguarding training specific to their role and responsibilities at a minimum of every three years. The Designated Governor for Safeguarding will attend appropriate Roles and Responsibilities training at least every two years.
- 3.15 A summary of safeguarding cases and pertinent safeguarding issues that have been dealt with by the College will be reported to the Board of Governors on at least an annual basis. All reporting to the Board of Governors will be anonymised and will contain enough detail to allow appropriate scrutiny and oversight.
- 3.16 The Board of Governors shall be responsible for ensuring that the College has up to date policies in place with respect to Safeguarding Children, which include procedures for handling allegations against adults working with children whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.
- 3.17 The Board of Governors will ensure that the College operates safer recruitment procedures including:
- at least one member of every recruitment panel having completed approved Safer Recruitment training
  - appropriate DBS checks completed for staff (including Barred List checks and teacher prohibition and relevant overseas checks where appropriate)
  - where appropriate, checks made regarding specific staff whose duties fall within the Childcare
  - (Disqualification) Regulation 2009
  - the maintenance of an accurate Single Central Record
- 3.18 Equality Statement
- Some children have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face. We give special consideration to children who:
- Have special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities (see section 9)
  - Are young carers
  - May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
  - Have English as an additional language
  - Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence
  - Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
  - Are asylum seekers
  - Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs
  - Are looked after or previously looked after
  - Are at risk of exploitation.

#### **4. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF**

- 4.1 All staff will read and understand part 1 and Annex A of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and review this guidance at least annually.
- 4.2 Through regular contact with children, all staff across the college community are well placed to identify concerns and have individual responsibility for reporting such concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a Deputy.
- 4.3 Staff will ensure that they are able to recognise possible indicators of abuse and neglect (see Appendix 1 for further information) and know who to report their concerns to.
- 4.4 Staff will report any safeguarding concerns to a Safeguarding officer without delay and in a timely fashion. Verbal reporting of concerns will then be followed up in writing as soon as possible but always within 24 hours. Rather than thinking "what if I'm wrong?" staff are encouraged to think "what if I'm right?" and always that "It could happen here" in relation to any safeguarding concerns.
- 4.5 Staff will ensure that they record their concerns using the College's standard recording format (on -line) in a contemporaneous fashion, clearly noting the difference between fact and opinion and where the information has come from. The voice of the child will be made clearly evident.

- 4.6 Staff will ensure that concerns relating to a child remain confidential and are only shared with the Safeguarding Officer.
- 4.7 Staff will co-operate with safeguarding enquiries made by Children's Social Care in relation to our pupils.
- 4.8 Staff will develop effective links with other agencies in the interests of child welfare.
- 4.9 Staff will ensure that they attend full Level 2 Basic Awareness in Safeguarding training appropriate to their role at least every three years and will attend further updated training annually. This includes training regarding the Prevent Duty and/or any training that reflects the need of the local and surrounding communities.
- 4.10 Staff will ensure that they are familiar with and understand all College safeguarding related policies and procedures.
- 4.11 Staff will provide a safe environment in which children can learn and will have a belief that "it could happen here".
- 4.12 Staff are aware that teachers should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties
- 4.13 Staff understand that it may be appropriate to discuss with the Deputy Principal matters outside of work, which may have implications for the safeguarding of children in the workplace. This includes information about themselves. Staff will ensure that they are aware of the circumstances where this would be applicable.
- 4.14 Staff understand that failure to follow any of the procedures set out within this policy may result in disciplinary action being taken by the College.

## **5. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD**

- 5.1 The DSL is a member of the senior leadership team. Our DSL is Julia Withersby, Assistant Principal HR. The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding.
- 5.2 When the DSL is absent, the Deputy DSL, Donna Elston, Head of Student Support will act as cover.
- 5.3 The Governing Body will ensure that an appropriate senior member of staff is appointed to the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be a member of the Senior Leadership team and the role will be explicit within their job description. This person will have the appropriate status and authority within the College to carry out the duties of the post. They will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support 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. He/ she will undertake the following as part of the role:
  1. Provide support, advice and guidance to colleagues
  2. Recognise signs / indicators of abuse and decide when referrals to Children's Social Care / other relevant agencies are appropriate. This should include identification of cases where Early Intervention would be appropriate
  3. Liaise with relevant agencies (where appropriate) to inform the decision on whether to make a referral to Children's Social Care

4. Liaise with Principal (where the role is not carried out by the Principal) to inform him / her of any issues or on-going investigations. Ensure there is always cover for the DSL role by having a named deputy or team of deputies
5. Ensure that the named deputy or deputies are trained to the same level of the DSL and that the role is also explicit within their job description
6. Lead a team of Deputy Safeguarding Leads if the establishment is large enough to require this (including providing effective support and supervision to these colleagues)
7. Attend and effectively contribute to Strategy meetings, Child in Need, Child Protection Conference, Core Groups, MAP meetings and any other meetings or plans requested by other agencies
8. Provide written reports at such meetings using the Local Authority report template
9. Ensure that College is always represented at Child Protection Conferences and ensure that a written report is always submitted and shared with the family prior to conference
10. Keep detailed, accurate and secure written records of referrals and concerns. In the main reports and referrals will be stored securely online but if paper-based they need to be stored in a locked filing cabinet and are not accessible by staff/students
11. Monitor and track the progress of all vulnerable students (including those who are subject to Children's Social Care intervention)
12. Provide the Governing Body with an up-to-date analysis of safeguarding related issues and numbers of vulnerable students to enable them to scrutinise, challenge and support the College as necessary
13. Ensure the College's child protection and safeguarding related policies are up to date and reviewed annually. Work with the Governing Body / Designated Governor regarding this
14. Support the Section 175/157 Audit if requested by the Local Safeguarding Children board. Work with the DDSL, Principal and Designated Governor regarding this
15. Ensure every member of staff has access to and understands the College's child protection and safeguarding related policies (including whistleblowing, etc.)
16. Ensure that parents have access to the Safeguarding/Child Protection policy which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made and the role of the College to avoid possible future conflict
17. Ensure students are aware of the Safeguarding/Child Protection policy
18. Ensure that the most up to date version of the Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy is available to download from the College website and that appropriate safeguarding information is displayed to website visitors
19. Ensure all staff have induction training which covers child protection / safeguarding and are able to recognise and report any concerns immediately when they arise, including the fact that there is also the possibility of child-on-child abuse (previously known as peer on peer abuse)
20. Ensure that all staff have full Level 2 Basic Awareness in Safeguarding training at least once every three years, and ensure that all staff receive safeguarding update training on a minimum of an annual basis. Keep accurate records of staff participation in this
21. Ensure that all staff have completed training in relation to their Prevent Duty
22. Ensure all staff are aware of and adhere to the College's Code of Conduct. Ensure that this Staff Code of Conduct includes references to online conduct and e-safety and is reviewed on an annual basis
23. Attend Level 3 multi-agency Working Together training, and subsequent Refresher training every 2 years

24. Continually update safeguarding knowledge by attending appropriate Level 3 multiagency safeguarding training on a minimum of an annual basis
25. When young people leave the establishment, ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new setting, as per the “Halton Protocol for the Transfer of Child Protection Records between Education Settings”. Ensure that a copy the chronology of the file is retained by College and stored appropriately
26. Ensure that the College has a suitably trained “Key Adult/s” in order to fulfil its obligations under Operation Encompass
27. Ensure that the College’s commitment to Operation Encompass is known throughout the College community via the means of staff training, posters and the College website
28. Ensure safe messages are displayed in reception / visitor areas and that appropriate checks are made on entry to the College.
29. Ensure visitors to the establishment are aware of who the DSL and deputies are and how to share concerns should they arise. All visitors must sign in with reception and then will be issued with a visitors ID badge.
30. Share and disseminate good practice within own College and within the local area.
31. Ensure that filtering and monitoring is a priority in the college via regular meetings with the ICT manager to assess current monitoring status, which is currently being monitored externally by Smoothwall and to address any concerns that staff and students need to be made aware of via team meetings, weekly bulletins, wellbeing newsletters, student ASPIRE sessions and/or 121s.

## **6. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF GOVERNING BODY AND DESIGNATED GOVERNOR**

- 6.1 The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the College’s policies and procedures for child protection meet statutory requirements as is set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024. All governors have a responsibility to ensure that the College’s safeguarding measures meet statutory requirements, and all should know what to do if they have concerns about a child.
- 6.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead should liaise with the Designated Governor for Safeguarding so that the Designated Governor can report to the governing body about safeguarding issues. Reports to the governing body should not be about specific child protection cases, but should review the safeguarding policies and procedures. It is good practice for the Designated Governor and the Designated Safeguarding Lead to present the report together. As per KCSIE 2024, the designated Governor for safeguarding will also actively liaise with the Safeguarding lead in relation to filtering and monitoring to ensure that there is a robust system for keeping students safe online.

## 7. EARLY INTERVENTION

- 7.1 The College recognises that some children need early help and support services and is committed to the early identification of such needs. Providing help early is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later when concerns have escalated.
- 7.2 The recognised method of providing early intervention in Halton is the multi-agency assessment Framework (MAP) process. MAP is a four-step process whereby staff can identify a child's needs early, assess those needs holistically, deliver coordinated services and review progress.

The MAP is designed to be used when:

- A member of staff is worried about how well a child is progressing (e.g. concerns about their health, development, welfare, behaviour, progress in learning or any other aspect of their wellbeing)

- A child or their parent/carer, raises a concern with a member of staff
  - A child's needs are unclear, or broader than the member of staff's service can address
- 7.3 All staff in the College will be alert to the potential need for early help for a student who:
- is disabled and has specific additional needs
  - has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
  - is a young carer
  - is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
  - is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
  - is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
  - is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
  - is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
  - is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
  - has returned home to their family from care
  - is a privately fostered child
  - has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in alternative provision or a pupil.
  - Has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending
- 7.4 In order to best support children and families, the College will participate fully in the Early Intervention/MAP process and will take on the role of Lead Professional where appropriate. To support this, the College will ensure that a member of staff is fully trained to use Eclipse or any other systems used by social care.
- 7.5 The MAP process is entirely voluntary and informed consent of parents or young person, where they are able to provide consent, is mandatory. The College recognises that should a family not provide consent, this may require a review of the Level of Need as refusal to provide consent may increase the risk to the child and subsequent consultation with iCART (Integrated Contact and Referral Team) would be required.
- 7.6 The Early Intervention Locality Teams in Halton develop and maintain strong links to universal services, offer named link workers to key services, offer direct family support and offer support, advice and guidance to professionals. They also offer oversight of MAPs to ensure the level of need is correct. The locality teams are located in Widnes and Runcorn.
- Halton Borough Council newly developed 'Halton Family Hubs' provide support for children and young people from birth until they reach the age of 19 (or up to 25 for young people with special educational needs and disabilities). They will bring council, health and community services together so that families can access the right support at the right time. Family Hub Widnes has recently opened with plans for Family Hub Runcorn to launch in February 2024.
- 7.7 Contact should be made with a worker located within the Early Intervention Locality Team or Children's Social Care iCART team or for advice and support around the MAP process and for help to identify the most appropriate support services for a family's identified needs. If a MAP is already open and risks are increasing or the plan is not progressing, to request a step up to social care college should contact iCART. The contact number is 0151 907 8305.

## 8. PROCEDURES REGARDING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

- 8.1 All members of the College community have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. If any member of the College community has a safeguarding concern regarding a child, they should contact a Safeguarding officer without delay. Staff and governors should not investigate possible abuse or neglect themselves.
- 8.2 Injuries noted should be reported to the Safeguarding Officer immediately and without delay as it is acknowledged that once an injury occurs, the body will start to heal and therefore evidence will start to diminish.
- 8.3 The Safeguarding Officer will consider the information they have received and will determine what action should be taken. He/she will refer to the Halton Levels of Need framework to aid this decision making (see Appendix 2). He/she must record the outcome of this decision-making process.
- 8.4 If the Safeguarding Officer is unsure as to whether the presenting concern reaches the threshold for referral to Children's Social Care, they should contact the Integrated Contact and Referral Team (iCART) for advice (See Appendix 3 for the referral flowchart).
- 8.5 Children's Social Care contact details are as follows:
- iCART, 9am-5pm Mon-Thursday, 9am-4.30pm Friday: 0151 907 8305
  - Out of hours Emergency Duty Team (EDT): 0345 050 0148
- 8.6 If the Safeguarding Officer feels that the concern should be addressed via the Multi Agency Assessment Plan (MAP) or Children in Need processes, then they should contact the child's parent(s) to request consent to proceed. If the parent(s) refuses to give consent, the Safeguarding Officer should consider how to proceed, including if refusal increases the risk of harm to the child.
- 8.7 Where the Safeguarding Officer feels that the information indicates that a child is in need of protection, they should still contact the parent(s) to inform them that they are making a referral to Children's Social Care and to gain consent, unless to do so would place the child at increased risk of harm; for example:
- where sexual abuse involving a family member is suspected or disclosed
  - where fabricated or induced illness is suspected
  - where to do so would impede an existing criminal investigation
- 8.8 The Safeguarding Officer will complete, in detail, the Children's Social Care multi-agency referral online form (available on the Halton Safeguarding Children Board website <https://halton.me/icart-referral/>) He/she will include as much detail as possible relating to the child, immediate and wider family, the allegation of harm, situation, context, environment, risks and protective factors to enable Children's Social Care to react in a timely way. This referral form must be completed within a maximum of 48 hours but sooner when requested.

8.9 If the College does not receive a response of the outcome to the referral from Children's Social Care within one working day, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should contact iCART immediately.

If the referral to iCART results in a Single Assessment and a period of Child in Need or Child Protection, or a multi-agency assessment and plan the College will engage thoroughly with the relevant assessment and resulting plan.

## **9. PROCESS TO FOLLOW IF A CHILD MAKES A DISCLOSURE**

If a child makes a disclosure of abuse to you:

You should:

- Listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset
- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret.
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it.
- Sign and date the write-up and pass it on to the DSL. Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to children's social care and/or the police directly, and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so.
- Report the matter to a Safeguarding Officer.
- If in doubt seek advice from the Safeguarding team.

**You should not:**

- Ask leading questions, put words into the child's mouth or press for details
- Rush the child
- Examine the child
- Investigate
- Promise confidentiality
- Summarise or use your own words to describe events
- Delay sharing the information with a Safeguarding Officer
- Ask the child to remove clothing to see a bruise or injury
- Take a photograph of a bruise or injury and try to specify how the injury is

## **10. CONFIDENTIALITY**

- 10.1 The College recognises that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.
- 10.2 The Principal, Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or Deputy will disclose any information about a child to other members of staff on a need to know basis only. Guidance about sharing information can be found in the 2018 document "Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers 2018"
- 10.3 All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- 10.4 All staff must be aware that they cannot promise confidentiality to a child which might result in the child's safety or wellbeing being compromised.
- 10.5 The College will always share our intention to refer a child to Children's Social Care with their parents/carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation.
- 10.6 The College recognises that children's welfare is our paramount concern and therefore will use the principles set out in section 1 of the Children Act 1989 in order to inform some decisions regarding information sharing
- 10.7 The College pays due regard to the relevant data protection principles which allow us to share personal information, as provided for in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The College is aware of the processing conditions under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR which allow us to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information which is sensitive and personal, and this is treated as "special category personal data". Where we would need to share special category personal data, we are aware that the Data Protection Act 2018 contains "safeguarding of children and individuals at risk" as a processing condition that allows us to share information. This includes allowing the College to share information without consent, if it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that we can gain consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.

## **11. RECORDING, MAINTENANCE & TRANSFER OF RECORDS**

- 11.1 All safeguarding concerns should be recorded on the Cause for Concern Form found online. Staff making records will ensure that they clearly distinguish between fact and opinion and whether the information is 1st or 2nd hand. Records will clearly evidence the voice of the child and will always be written contemporaneously.
- 11.2 Records will be maintained in a confidential section within STAR.
- 11.3 Individual files should be clearly organised in chronological order and all entries should be signed and dated in a legible manner by the person making the entry. This should include their role/designation at the College. There should be a chronology of events kept on file to enable the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy to have an immediate overview of the case.

- 11.4 Such records will be kept in a secure locked filing cabinet or online via a secure safeguarding system.
- 11.5 Files will be archived and securely stored until the child's 25th birthday.
- 11.6 If a child transfers between colleges the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be responsible for transferring the child's Child Protection File to the new College. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will follow the "Halton Protocol for the Transfer of Child Protection Records between Education Settings". The Designated Safeguarding Lead will speak to their counterpart in the College to which the child is transferring in order to ensure that they are aware that the file is to be transferred. Upon confirmation of the child starting on roll the file should be transferred as soon as possible. The file should be signed upon receipt, and delivered by hand wherever possible. A copy of a chronology from the original file will be kept in the College until the child's 25th birthday and will then be securely disposed of.

## **12. ALLEGATIONS MANAGEMENT**

- 12.1 All College staff will be aware of and work within the College's Staff Code of Conduct and other relevant policies and procedures. Guidance for safer working practice will include guidance for staff regarding the College's expectations relating to the use of mobile phones, electronic equipment and social media.
- 12.2 Where allegations against a staff member are made, the Principal should be notified immediately.  
In the event that the Principal is not available, the Deputy Principal must be informed. If the allegation concerns the Principal, the Chair of Governors should be contacted.
- 12.3 Halton Safeguarding Children Board's LADO procedures (available from <http://children.haltonsafeguarding.co.uk/docs/LadoProcedures.pdf>) should be followed in all cases where it is alleged that a member of staff has:
- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
  - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
  - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
- 12.4 Responding to the allegation in a timely and fair manner is essential. The College will consider what immediate actions are required to reduce any risk to children within the College. This may include the staff member being moved to a position in the College where they have no contact with children, or could include that the person is suspended from duty whilst an investigation is undertaken. Suspension will be the last resort and should be seen as a neutral act. Appropriate support will be offered to both the subject of the allegation and complainant.
- 12.5 Contact should be made with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in Halton within 24 hours of receiving the allegation. The duty LADO will request that the College complete a Consultation Form (available from the Halton Safeguarding Children Board

website) in order to provide advice and guidance regarding the matter. The duty LADO will, where appropriate and threshold has been met, arrange for a Strategy Meeting to be undertaken. The contact details for LADO in Halton are 0151 511 7229, email: <mailto:LADO@halton.gov.uk> and/or [safeguarding.adminteam@halton.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding.adminteam@halton.gov.uk)

Please note: Working Together 2020 refers to LADO as the “Designated Officer”, but in line with the North West area, the full title in Halton remains Local Authority Designated Officer.

- 12.6 Where the details of the allegation also suggest that criminal offence may have been committed, the Police will also be contacted.
- 12.7 The Principal should record as much detail as possible about the initial disclosure but should not take statements from children or employees or investigate the matter further until a consultation has taken place with LADO. The Principal will not undertake an investigation prior to consulting with the LADO.
- 12.8 Following consultation with the LADO the College will ensure that the staff member is made aware that an allegation has been made, but will not provide the individual with any further details initially. The member of staff should be advised of the procedures regarding allegations and the College will ensure that the member of staff has access to appropriate support.
- 12.9 Where there is no criminal offence and Police are not leading on an investigation, any investigation undertaken by the College will be timely, thorough, consistent and fair to all parties involved in order to reach the correct conclusion and outcome. The College will endeavour to complete this investigation as quickly as possible.
- 12.10 As a result of an investigation either through the LADO process or via internal disciplinary procedures, if any member of staff is found not suitable to work with children the College will refer the individual to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for consideration for barring. This includes where the member of staff resigns prior to conclusion of the investigation, the member of staff is dismissed, or when the College ceases to use their service as a result of a substantiated allegation. Where appropriate, consideration will also be given to referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency for possible prohibition from teaching.
- 12.11 The College will not use “compromise” or “settlement agreements” if the member of staff is not suitable to continue in their employment with children.
- 12.12 The College recognises that there are occasions when a person who works with children behaves in a way that is concerning and raises questions about their ability to recognise and take steps to safeguard children in their care that wouldn’t meet the threshold of LADO. As an employer the College has a duty to consider whether the issue indicates that they are unsuitable to continue in their role for the immediate future or indefinitely. These are known as issues of suitability and would be dealt with via the College’s disciplinary procedures. Issues of suitability can include:
  - Where an employee is being investigated for an offence against an adult, or
  - Their behaviour in their personal lives brings into question their suitability to work with children.

- 12.13 However, if an adult who works with children has involvement from Children's Social Care in respect of their own child, or a child that they live with or have contact with, it is the responsibility of Children's Social Care to assess the immediate concern and inform the LADO of whether the adult poses a risk to children. Examples of this may include:
- Allegations of assault, physical or emotional, on their own child or on a child they live with or have contact with
  - Domestic abuse
  - Substance misuse
  - Lives with or is in a relationship with a person who is identified as a risk to children
- 12.14 The situation would meet the threshold of LADO should the child in question be made subject to a Child Protection plan. This is because Children's Social Care has determined that the adult presents a risk to the associated child either directly or due to a failure to protect.
- 12.15 Staff in College should ensure that they disclose information about themselves relating to the above to the Principal as soon as possible. The College will create an environment and culture where staff are able to do this.

Low level concerns are monitored throughout the year to track any patterns in behaviour or risks towards students. Meetings take place that involve HR, Designated Safeguarding Lead, deputy safeguarding lead and the Principal.

### 13. WHISTLEBLOWING

- 13.1 The College recognises that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.
- 13.2 All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues. The College's Whistleblowing Policy is there to support and aid them in these circumstances
- 13.3 Whistleblowing regarding the Principal should be made to the Chair of the Governing Body, whose contact details should be readily available to staff

### 14. ESCALATION

- 14.1 If any member of staff is unhappy with the response, they have received in relation to a safeguarding concern they have raised, it is their responsibility to ensure they escalate their concern.

- 14.2 Where professional disagreement occurs and the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or Deputy are unhappy with the actions or decisions of another agency, they will escalate their concern in line with Halton Safeguarding Children Board's formal escalation policy to ensure a timely resolution. The escalation policy can be located here:

<https://hcypsp.haltonsafeguarding.co.uk/procedures-guidance/>

## **15. PROACTIVE SAFEGUARDING**

- 15.1 The College recognises that it plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children by providing them with opportunities to learn, good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive peers and an ethos of protection.
- 15.2 The College recognises that it may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.
- 15.3 The College recognises that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside of College or can occur between children outside the College. All staff, but especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputy should consider the context within which such incidents or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.
- 15.4 The College community will:
- Work to establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to. This ethos will be modelled and replicated by staff and governors
  - Promote a caring, safe and positive environment within the college
  - Ensure that the College site is a safe, secure and welcoming place to learn and grow
  - Encourage self-esteem and self-assertiveness through the curriculum as well as through personal relationships, whilst not condoning aggression or bullying
  - Include regular consultation with children e.g. through safety questionnaires, participation in anti-bullying week, etc
  - Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the College whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty
  - Include safeguarding messages across the curriculum, to ensure that the children are equipped with the skills they need to recognise risky behaviours, stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help. In particular this will include tutorials on staying safe online, anti-bullying, e-safety, issues around consent, sexting, positive mental health, staying safe, positive relationships including sexual health and dealing with safeguarding concerns when on work experience/industrial placement etc
  - Offer a positive college experience
  - Ensure all staff are aware of College guidance for their use of mobile technology and have discussed safeguarding issues around the use of mobile technologies and their associated risks.

## **16. SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE VULNERABLE TO EXTREMISM**

- 16.1 Since 2010, when the Government published the Prevent Strategy, there has been an awareness of the specific need to safeguard children, young people and families from violent extremism. There have been several occasions both locally and nationally in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise vulnerable children and young people to hold extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.
- 16.2 The College values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs / ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Both students and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.
- 16.3 Under duties imposed within the Prevent Duty Guidance 2019 as part of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, The College will ensure that situations are suitably risk assessed, that they will work in partnership with other agencies, that all staff are suitably trained and that IT policies will ensure that children and young people are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in College.
- 16.4 The College's Lead (Single Point for Contact) for Prevent is: Julia Withersby/Donna Elston. The Lead link with other relevant agencies (including the Police) to ensure that vulnerable people are appropriately supported and risk assessed, and that all staff and Governors have received training to ensure they are able to recognise any concerns. The specific Roles and Responsibilities of this Single Point of Contact (SPOC) are defined in Appendix 1.
- 16.5 The current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation. The College is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern.
- 16.6 Definitions of radicalisation and extremism, and indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation are contained in Appendix 1.
- 16.7 The College seeks to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to Far Right/Neo Nazi/White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements.
- 16.8 The Channel and Prevent contacts within Merseyside Constabulary are: Mark Blake  
[Mark.Blake@cheshire.police.uk](mailto:Mark.Blake@cheshire.police.uk)

Alternatively, there are the following national contacts available:

Anti-Terrorist Hotline 0800 789 321

Text Phone Service 0800 032 4539

Website: <https://secure.met.police.uk/athotline/>

## 17. POLICY REVIEW AND PUBLICATION

Written by:	Authorised by:	Date:	Review Date:	Approved by:
Head of Student Services, Kingsway Vocational	Deputy Principal Curriculum	November 2024	November 2025	Board following recommendation of Q&S Committee

### Publication

Audience:	Published:
Staff, Students, Public	Staff and Student Intranets and College website

## APPENDIX 1 - SIGNS AND INDICATORS OF ABUSE IN CHILDREN AND SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

The risk indicators described in this appendix are frequently found in cases of child abuse. Their presence is not proof that abuse has occurred, but:

- Must be regarded as indicators of the possibility of significant harm
- Justifies the need for careful assessment and discussion with Designated Safeguarding Lead
- May require consultation with and/or referral to Children's Services

However, it is important to note that the absence of such indicators does not mean that abuse or neglect has not occurred.

The following non-specific signs may indicate something is wrong:

- Significant change in behaviour / attendance at school
- Extreme anger or sadness
- Aggressive and attention-seeking behaviour
- Suspicious bruises / injuries with unsatisfactory explanations
- Lack of self-esteem
- Self-injury
- Depression
- Age inappropriate sexual behaviour
- Use of slang or new terminology
- Change in attendance patterns
- Obsession with telephones
- Change in political view or ideology that seems out of character

In an abusive situation the child may:

- Appear frightened of the parent/s or other adults or children
- Act in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development (though full account needs to be taken of different patterns of development and different ethnic groups)

The parent or carer may:

- Persistently avoid child health promotion services and treatment of the child's episodic illnesses
- Have unrealistic expectations of the child
- Frequently complain about/to the child and may fail to provide attention or praise (high criticism/low warmth environment)
- Be absent
- Be misusing substances (alcohol or drugs)
- Have mental health issues that compromise parenting ability
- Persistently refuse to allow access on home visits
- Be a victim or a perpetrator of domestic abuse

Staff should be aware of the potential risk to children when individuals, previously known or suspected to have abused children, move into the household. Staff should also be aware of the potential for peer on peer abuse in that abuse can be perpetrated by children or young people in addition to adults.

In relation to any of the signs and indicators described below, staff should ensure that they follow procedures set out in parts 4.0 and 8.0 of the main policy as detailed above.

## RECOGNISING PHYSICAL ABUSE

Children will have accidental injuries. All injuries noted by staff should be responded to, regardless of whether the member of staff suspects it is an accidental injury. The following are often regarded as indicators of concern:

- An explanation which is inconsistent with an injury
- Several different explanations provided for an injury
- Unexplained delay in seeking treatment
- The parents/carers are uninterested or undisturbed by an accident or injury
- Parents are absent without good reason when their child is presented for treatment
- Repeated presentation of minor injuries (which may represent a "cry for help" and if ignored could lead to a more serious injury)
- Family use of different doctors, urgent treatment centres (e.g. Walk-in centres) and A&E departments
- Reluctance to give information or mention previous injuries
- Absence from school (which may be used to hide injury from professionals)
- Depression and anxiety
- Aggression and violence
- Difficulties with relationships and socialising
- Trying to hide injuries (e.g. under clothing) – reluctance to get changed for PE
- Becoming distant or withdrawn
- Going missing from home
- Not wanting to go home from school

Injuries to children should always be addressed immediately in order to prevent evidence from disappearing. This is particularly pertinent in the case of visible slap/scratch marks.

Injuries caused by Physical Abuse

Bruising

- On the cheeks, ears, palms, arms and feet
- On the back, buttocks, tummy, hips and backs of legs
- Any bruising to a non-mobile child
- Multiple bruising in clusters, usually on the upper arms or outer thighs
- Bruises which look like they have been caused by fingers, a hand or an object (the outline of an object used e.g. belt marks, hand prints or a hair brush)
- Two simultaneous bruised eyes, without bruising to the forehead, (rarely accidental, though a single bruised eye can be accidental or abusive)
- Repeated or multiple bruising on the head or on sites unlikely to be injured accidentally
- Variation in colour possibly indicating injuries caused at different times

#### Burns and Scalds

- Burns on the backs of hands, feet, legs, genitals or buttocks
- Burns which have a clear shape, e.g. a cigarette burns or lineal burns
- Scalds that have a line indicating immersion or poured liquid (a child getting into hot water on his/her own accord will struggle to get out and cause splash marks)

#### Bite Marks

Bite marks can leave clear impressions of the teeth. Human bite marks are oval or crescent shaped. Those over 3 cm in diameter are more likely to have been caused by an adult or older child.

#### Fractures

Fractures may cause pain, swelling and discolouration over a bone or joint. Non-mobile children rarely sustain fractures. There are grounds for concern if:

- The history provided is vague, non-existent or inconsistent with the fracture type
- There are associated old fractures
- Medical attention is sought after a period of delay when the fracture has caused symptoms such as swelling, pain or loss of movement
- There is an unexplained fracture in the first year of life

### RECOGNISING EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise, as the signs are usually behavioural rather than physical. The manifestations of emotional abuse might also indicate the presence of other kinds of abuse. The indicators of emotional abuse are often also associated with other forms of abuse.

The following may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Developmental delay – physical, emotional and mental
- Abnormal attachment between a child and parent/carer e.g. anxious, indiscriminate or non-attachment
- Aggressive / violent behaviour
- Scapegoated within the family
- Problems with relationships and socialising
- Rebellious behaviour
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence – can manifest as eating disorders or self-harming behaviours
- Withdrawn or seen as a “loner” – difficulty relating to others (self-isolating behaviour or negative impulsive behaviour)

### RECOGNISING NEGLECT

Evidence of neglect is built up over a period of time and can cover different aspects of parenting. Indicators include:

- Failure by parents or carers to meet the basic essential needs e.g. adequate food, clothes, warmth, hygiene and medical care
- Poor supervision of child
- Poor hygiene (e.g. dirty or smelly)
- Unwashed / inadequate clothing
- Untreated health problems or frequent missed medical / dental appointments
- Frequent, untreated bouts of head lice
- A child seen to be listless, apathetic and unresponsive with no apparent medical cause
- Failure of child to grow within normal expected pattern, with accompanying weight loss
- Child thrives away from home environment
- Child frequently absent from school / poor punctuality Child left with adults who are intoxicated or violent Child abandoned or left alone for excessive periods
- Poor school attendance / punctuality
- Withdrawn / isolated
- Problems with relationships and socialising

Within Halton the Graded Care Profile is used as a recognised tool for the assessment of neglect. Further information regarding this can be found on the Halton Safeguarding Children Board website.

#### RECOGNISING SIGNS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

Boys and girls of all ages may be sexually abused and are frequently scared to say anything due to guilt and/or fear. This is particularly difficult for a child to talk about and full account should be taken of the cultural sensitivities of any individual child/family. Recognition can be difficult, unless the child discloses and is believed. There may be no physical signs and indications are likely to be emotional/behavioural.

Indicators associated with this form of abuse are:

- Inappropriate sexualised conduct
- Sexually explicit behaviour, play or conversation, inappropriate to the child's age
- Continual and inappropriate or excessive masturbation
- Self-harm (including eating disorder), self-mutilation and suicide attempts
- Risk taking behaviour (during adolescence)
- Promiscuous behaviour
- Aggressive behaviour
- Withdrawn or isolated
- Unexplained gifts, toys or favours
- An anxious unwillingness to remove clothes e.g. for sports events (but this may be related to cultural norms or physical difficulties)
- Pain or itching of genital area
- Blood on underclothes
- Bed wetting or soiling
- Sleep problems
- Pregnancy in a younger girl where the identity of the father is not disclosed
- Physical symptoms such as injuries to the genital or anal area, bruising to buttocks, abdomen and thighs, sexually transmitted infections, presence of semen on vagina, anus, external genitalia or clothing

The Brook Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool is available for professionals who work with children to help identify, assess and respond appropriately to sexual behaviours  
<http://www.brook.org.uk/ourwork/category/sexual-behaviours-traffic-light-tool>.

## RECOGNISING CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

The following list of indicators is not exhaustive or definitive, but it does highlight common signs which can assist professionals in identifying children or young people who may be victims of sexual exploitation. Signs include:

- underage sexual activity
- inappropriate sexual or sexualised behaviour
- sexually risky behaviour, 'swapping' sex
- repeat sexually transmitted infections in girls, repeat pregnancy, abortions, miscarriage receiving unexplained gifts, or gifts from unknown sources
- having multiple mobile phones and worrying about losing contact via mobile
- having unaffordable new things (clothes, mobile) or expensive habits (alcohol, drugs)
- changes in the way they dress
- going to hotels or other unusual locations to meet friends
- seen at known places of concern
- obsession with mobile phones and fear if the phone is taken
- moving around the country, appearing in new towns or cities, not knowing where they are
- getting in/out of different cars driven by unknown adults
- unknown adults collecting the children from school
- having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- involved in abusive relationships, intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations
- hanging out with groups of older people, or anti-social groups, or with other vulnerable peers
- associating with other young people involved in sexual exploitation
- recruiting other young people to exploitative situations
- truancy, exclusion, disengagement with school, opting out of education altogether
- repeat absences/truancy from school (e.g. same time of day, same day each week, etc.)
- unexplained changes in behaviour or personality (chaotic, aggressive, sexual)
- mood swings, volatile behaviour, emotional distress
- self-harming, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, overdosing, eating disorders
- drug or alcohol misuse
- frequent missing from home episodes
- getting involved in crime, police involvement, police records
- involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership
- injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault

## RECOGNISING CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of "County Lines" criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from one area to another, typically from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) should be considered. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years:

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

The following list of indicators is not exhaustive or definite but it does highlight common signs which can assist professionals in identifying children or young people who may be victims of sexual exploitation. Signs include:

- Persistently going missing from school or home and/or being found out-of-area
- Unexplained acquisition of money, clothes or mobile phones
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls
- Relationships with controlling/older individuals or groups
- Leaving home/care without explanation
- Suspicion of physical assault/unexplained injuries
- Parental concerns
- Carrying weapons
- Significant decline in school results/performance
- Gang association or isolation from peers or social networks

## RECOGNISING SEXTING/YOUTH-PRODUCED SEXUAL IMAGERY

Whilst professionals refer to the issue as “sexting” there is no clear definition of “sexting”. Many professionals consider sexting to be “sending or posting sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs, via mobiles or over the Internet” yet when young people are asked “What does sexting mean to you?” they are more likely to interpret sexting as “writing and sharing explicit messages with people they know”. Similarly, many parents think of sexting as flirty or sexual text messages rather than images. “Youth produced sexual imagery” best describes the practice because:

- “Youth-produced” includes young people sharing images that they, or another young person, have created of themselves
- “Sexual” is clearer than “indecent”. A judgement of whether something is ‘decent’ is both a value judgement and dependent on context
- “Imagery” covers both still photos and moving videos

Creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of under-18s is illegal and therefore causes the greatest complexity for schools and other agencies when responding. It also presents a range of risks which need careful management.

## THE LAW

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

It is an offence to possess, distribute, show and make indecent images of children.

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 (England and Wales) defines a child, for the purposes of indecent images, as anyone under the age of 18.

The types of incidents which this covers are:

- A person under the age of 18 creates and shares sexual imagery of themselves with a peer under the age of 18
- A person under the age of 18 shares sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18 with a peer under the age of 18 or an adult
- A person under the age of 18 is in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18

This does not cover:

- The sharing of sexual imagery of people under 18 by adults as this constitutes child sexual abuse and schools should always inform the police
- Young people under the age of 18 sharing adult pornography or exchanging sexual texts which don't contain imagery

This does mean that young people are breaking the law by sharing such images, however whilst young people creating and sharing sexual imagery can be very risky, it is often the result of young people's natural curiosity about sex and their exploration of relationships. Often, young people need education, support or safeguarding, not criminalisation.

Whilst it is recognised that the production of such imagery is likely to take place outside of school, issues often manifest in school. As a result, it is expected that:

- All members of staff should be able to recognise and refer any disclosures of incidents of this nature
- All incidents of youth produced sexual imagery should be dealt with as safeguarding concerns and school safeguarding procedures should be followed
- Adults should not view youth produced sexual imagery unless there is good and clear reason to do so

If staff have any concerns re: sexting or any disclosures are made, they should always follow the school's safeguarding procedures and refer to the DSL/Deputy. They should never view, print, copy or share any images themselves; this is illegal.

The decision to view imagery should be based on the professional judgement of the DSL and should always comply with the child protection policy and procedures of the school or college. Imagery should never be viewed if the act of viewing will cause significant distress or harm to the pupil. If a decision is made to view imagery the DSL would need to be satisfied that viewing:

- is the only way to make a decision about whether to involve other agencies (i.e. it is not possible to establish the facts from the young people involved)
- is necessary to report the image to a website, app or suitable reporting agency to have it taken down, or to support the young person or parent in making a report
- is unavoidable because a pupil has presented an image directly to a staff member or the imagery has been found on a school device or network
- If it is necessary to view the imagery then the DSL should: Never copy, print or share the imagery; this is illegal
- Discuss the decision with the Head teacher
- Ensure viewing is undertaken by the DSL or another member of the safeguarding team with delegated authority from the Head teacher

- Ensure viewing takes place with another member of staff present in the room, ideally the Head teacher or a member of the senior leadership team. This staff member does not need to view the images
- Wherever possible ensure viewing takes place on school or college premises, ideally in the Head teacher or a member of the senior leadership team's office
- Ensure wherever possible that images are viewed by a staff member of the same sex as the young person in the imagery
- Record the viewing of the imagery in the school's safeguarding records including who was present, why the image was viewed and any subsequent actions. Ensure this is signed and dated and meets the wider standards set out by Ofsted for recording safeguarding incidents

## RECOGNISING Child on Child ABUSE

Young people can abuse other young people. Child on Child abuse is behaviour by an individual or group, intending to physically, sexually or emotionally hurt others. All staff should be aware of safeguarding issues including:

- Bullying (physical, name-calling, homophobic, etc including cyber-bullying)
- Gender-based violence
- Sexually harmful behaviour and sexting

This abuse can be motivated by perceived differences e.g. on grounds of race, religion, gender, culture, sexual identity, disability, special educational needs or other differences and can result in significant, long-lasting and traumatic isolation, intimidation or violence to the victim.

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up".

We also recognise the gendered nature of Child and Child abuse (i.e. that it is more likely that females will be victims and males the perpetrators). However, all Child on Child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Most cases of young people hurting other young people will be dealt with under the College's Student Disciplinary Policy, but this Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- Could put students at the College at risk
- Is violent
- Involves students being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, up-skirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including sexting)

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is the first priority of any education setting but emotional bullying can often be more damaging than physical. An assessment of an incident between peers should be completed and should consider the following:

- Chronological and developmental ages of everyone involved
- Difference in their power or authority in relation to age, race, gender, physical, emotional or intellectual vulnerability
- All alleged physical and verbal aspects of the behaviour and incident
- Whether the behaviour involved inappropriate sexual knowledge or motivation
- What was the degree of physical aggression, intimidation, threatening behaviour or bribery?

## RECOGNISING SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT BETWEEN CHILDREN

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBTQ children are at greater risk.

The College considers that it is important all staff are aware of the difference between sexual violence and sexual harassment in order to help identify and report any concerns.

What is sexual violence?

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 offences relating to sexual violence are described below:

- Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- Assault by Penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- Sexual Assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

What is consent?

Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment is “unwanted conduct of a sexual nature” that can occur online and offline. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child’s dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

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

It may include:

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

#### RECOGNISING HARMFUL PRACTICES (FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION, FORCED MARRIAGE AND HONOUR BASED ABUSE)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

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.

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the practice is illegal under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. It is essential that staff are aware of FGM practices and the need to look for signs, symptoms and other indicators of FGM. FGM involves procedures that intentionally alter/injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. FGM is internationally recognised as a violation of human rights of girls and women. There are 4 types of procedure:

- Type 1, Clitoridectomy - partial/total removal of clitoris
- Type 2, Excision - partial/total removal of clitoris and labia minora
- Type 3, Infibulation - entrance to vagina is narrowed by repositioning the inner/outer labia
- Type 4, all other procedures that may include: pricking, piercing, incising, cauterising and scraping the genital area.

It is carried out because there is a belief that:

- FGM brings status/respect to the girl – social acceptance for marriage
- It preserves a girl’s virginity
- Part of being a woman / rite of passage
- Upholds family honour
- Cleanses and purifies the girl
- Gives a sense of belonging to the community
- Fulfils a religious requirement/perpetuates a custom or tradition

- Helps girls be clean/hygienic
- Is cosmetically desirable
- It is mistakenly believed to make child-birth easier

Indicators that may point to FGM happening:

- Child talking about getting ready for a special ceremony
- Family taking a long trip abroad
- Child's family being from one of the "at risk" communities for FGM (Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Egypt, Nigeria, Eritrea as well as non-African communities including Yemeni, Afghani, Kurdistan, Indonesian and Pakistani)
- Knowledge that the child's sibling has undergone FGM
- Child talks about going abroad to be "cut" or to prepare for marriage

Signs that may indicate a child has undergone FGM:

- Prolonged absence from school and other activities
- Behaviour change on return from a holiday abroad, such as being withdrawn and appearing subdued
- Bladder or menstrual problems
- Finding it difficult to stand, sit or walk. Looking uncomfortable when undertaking these activities
- Complaining about pain between the legs
- Mentioning something somebody did to them that they are not allowed to talk about
- Secretive behaviour, including isolating themselves from the group
- Reluctance to take part in physical activity
- Repeated urinal tract infections
- Disclosure

#### Mandatory Reporting of FGM

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

If there are suspicions regarding FGM, it is essential that schools take action without delay. If there are concerns that a child is at risk of, or is a victim of, FGM contact the NSPCC FGM helpline anonymously 24/7 on 0800 028 3550 or [fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk)

#### Forced Marriage (FM)

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

Forced Marriage is an entirely separate issue from arranged marriage. It is a human rights abuse and falls within the Crown Prosecution Service definition of domestic violence. Young men and women can be at risk in affected ethnic groups. Whistleblowing may come from younger siblings.

Other indicators may be detected by changes in adolescent behaviours. Further to this the legal age now for marriage is 18.

The pressure put on people to marry against their will can be physical (including threats, actual physical violence and sexual violence) or emotional and psychological, for example, when someone is made to feel like they're bringing shame on their family. Financial abuse (taking the person's wages or not giving them any money) can also be a factor.

Often those about to be forced into marriage can't talk about what's happening to them because of the emotional pressure they are under from family. If there are suspicions regarding Forced Marriage following talking to the child, it is essential that school takes action without delay. (In cases of forced marriage, involving the family and the community may increase the risk of significant harm to the child or young person. The family may deny that the child or young person is being forced to marry and they may expedite any travel arrangements and bring forward the marriage.) If there are concerns that a child is at risk of FM school should contact the Forced Marriage Unit helpline for advice on 0207 008 0151.

#### Honour Based Abuse (HBA)

Honour based abuse is a violent crime or incident which may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family or community. The terms "honour crime" or "honour-based abuse" or "izzat" embrace a variety of crimes of violence (mainly but not exclusively against women), including assault, imprisonment and murder where the person is being punished by their family or their community. They are being punished for actually, or allegedly, undermining what the family or community believes to be the correct code of behaviour.

It is often linked to family members or acquaintances who mistakenly believe someone has brought shame to their family or community by doing something that is not in keeping with the traditional beliefs of their culture. For example, honour based violence might be committed against people who:

- become involved with a boyfriend or girlfriend from a different culture or religion
- want to get out of an arranged marriage
- want to get out of a forced marriage
- wear clothes or take part in activities that might not be considered traditional within a particular culture

In disobeying this correct code of behaviour, the person shows that they have not been properly controlled to conform by their family and this is to the "shame" or "dishonour" of the family. It can be distinguished from other forms of abuse, as it is often committed with some degree of approval and/or collusion from family and/ community members. Victims will have multiple perpetrators not only in the UK; HBA can be a trigger for a Forced Marriage.

#### INDICATORS OF FM OR HBA

- Absence and persistent absence
- Request for extended leave of absence and failure to return from visits to country of origin
- Fear about forthcoming school holidays
- Surveillance by siblings or cousins at school
- Decline in behaviour, engagement, performance or punctuality
- Poor exam results
- Being withdrawn from school by those with parental responsibility
- Not allowed to attend extra-curricular activities

- Sudden announcement of engagement to a stranger
- Prevented from going on to further / higher education Accompanied to doctors or clinics by family members Self-harm / attempted suicide / depression / isolation
- Running away from home
- Eating disorders
- Substance misuse
- Siblings forced to marry / early marriage of siblings
- Self-harm or suicide of siblings
- Death of a parent
- Family disputes

If there are suspicions regarding Forced Marriage or Honour Based Violence following talking to the child, it is essential that the College takes action without delay. In cases of Forced Marriage and Honour Based Abuse, involving the family and the community may increase the risk of significant harm to the child or young person. If there are concerns that a child is at risk of FM school should contact the Forced Marriage Unit helpline for advice on 0207 008 0151 or in either case, contact 999 if the situation is deemed to be an emergency.

#### HOMELESSNESS

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The DSL [and deputy/deputies] will be aware of contact details and referral routes into the local housing authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity (where appropriate and in accordance with local procedures).

Where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, the DSL will also make a referral to children's social care.

#### DOMESTIC ABUSE

Domestic abuse, or domestic violence, is defined across Government as any incident of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of their gender or sexuality.

The safety of victims and children in addition to the defendant's accountability are important to the CPS when prosecuting cases of domestic abuse. As such the CPS applies its guidelines on domestic abuse to all cases of current or former partner or family abuse irrespective of the age of the defendant or the victim.

- Delayed or inappropriate emotional development.
- Loss of self-confidence or self-esteem.
- Social withdrawal or a loss of interest or enthusiasm.
- Depression.
- Avoidance of certain situations, such as refusing to go to school or ride the bus.
- Desperately seeks affection.

#### ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACES)

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are traumatic events occurring before age 18. ACEs include all types of abuse and neglect as well as parental mental illness, substance use, divorce, incarceration, and domestic violence. These can have a harmful impact on the lives of children and make them more vulnerable to other forms of abuse.

- Delayed or inappropriate emotional development.

- Loss of self-confidence or self-esteem.
- Social withdrawal or a loss of interest or enthusiasm.
- Depression.
- Avoidance of certain situations, such as refusing to go to school or ride the bus.
- Desperately seeks affection.

## PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES

We recognise that pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group, including:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- Pupils being more prone to peer group isolation than other pupils
- The potential for pupils with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

We offer extra pastoral support for pupils with SEN and disabilities. This includes:

- Specialist support teams with learning difficulties and disability experience
- Excellent transition information from local special schools
- Link members from our Foundation Team to local special schools and Alternative Provision Schools
- Special personalised interviews to ensure the whole learner is taken into account
- Worried About a Mate? Mental Health charter to support learners from different groups including Autism
- On-going CPD for staff to support all vulnerable groups including SEN learners.

Children or young people who harm others may have additional or complex needs e.g.:

- Significant disruption in their own lives
- Exposure to domestic abuse or witnessing or suffering abuse
- Educational under-achievement
- Involved in crime

It is important to develop appropriate strategies in order to prevent the issue of Child-on-Child abuse rather than manage the issues in a reactive way. Even with the most stringent of policies and support mechanisms, peer abuse can and may still occur. In order to try to prevent the College will:

- Have an ethos where students and staff treat each other with respect and understand how their actions affect others
- Ensure that the school environment is one that allows students to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them
- Use a strong and positive PSHCE curriculum to tackle issues such as prejudiced behaviour, and gives an open forum for young people to talk
- Openly discuss any issues that could motivate bullying with staff and students
- Address issues early between pupils which might later provoke conflict
- Develop strategies to help to prevent bullying
- Involve students and parents to ensure they know what to do to prevent and report concerns

- Create an inclusive, safe environment where pupils can openly discuss issues without fear
- Invest in skills to help staff understand the needs of SEND, disabled and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender pupils through staff training and CPD to ensure that staff do not dismiss issues
- Work with the wider community and agencies to tackle issues that occur outside the setting

For further information, staff should refer to College's Anti Bullying Policy.

## MOBILE PHONES AND CAMERAS

Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use but will limit such use to non- contact time when pupils are not present. Staff members' personal phones will remain in their bags or cupboards during contact time with pupils.

Staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras.

We will follow the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018 when taking and storing photos and recordings for use in the school.

## CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families and outside of their home. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships. Contextual Safeguarding expands the objectives of child protection systems in recognition that young people are vulnerable to abuse in a range of social contexts.

More information about Contextual Safeguarding can be found here:

<https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/>

## CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION (CME)

Children Missing Education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life. Effective information sharing between parents, schools and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education. Colleges have a safeguarding duty in respect of their pupils, and as part of this should investigate any unexplained absences. Academies and independent schools have a similar safeguarding duty for their pupils. When a child is deemed to be missing from education, Schools must make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the local authority, before deleting the pupil's name from the register. Once these enquiries have been undertaken, the local protocol for Children Missing Education must be followed.

## RECOGNISING VULNERABILITIES TO EXTREMISM AND RADICALISATION

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.

Extremism is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy as:

“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. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas”

Extremism is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service as:

“The demonstration of unacceptable behaviour by using any means or medium to express views which:

- Encourage, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs;
- Seek to provoke others to terrorist acts;
- Encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts; or
- Foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK

There is no such thing as a “typical extremist”; those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences, and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity.

Students may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal and environmental factors - it is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities. It is vital that College staff are able to recognise those vulnerabilities.

Indicators of vulnerability include:

- Identity Crisis – the student / pupil is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society;
- Personal Crisis – the student / pupil may be experiencing family tensions; a sense of isolation; and low self-esteem; they may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging;
- Personal Circumstances – migration; local community tensions; and events affecting the student / pupil’s country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy;
- Unmet Aspirations – the student/pupil may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life;
- Experiences of Criminality – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement / reintegration;
- Special Educational Needs – students/pupils may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others.

This list however is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing the above are at risk of radicalisation for the purposes of violent extremism. More critical risk factors could include:

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters;
- Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element;
- Possessing or accessing violent extremist literature;
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage;
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues;

- Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations; and
- Significant changes to appearance and / or behaviour;
- Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and / or personal crisis.

If there are suspicions regarding radicalisation or extremism, it is essential that Colleges take action without delay. If there are concerns that a child is at risk of radicalisation, or is voicing concerning opinions or attitudes, staff should contact the College lead (SPOC) for Prevent without delay. The College lead will then risk assess the information and make contact with and take advice from the appropriate agencies.

#### PREVENTING VIOLENT EXTREMISM - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COLLEGE'S SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT (SPOC)

- Ensuring that staff are aware of the role of the SPOC in relation to protecting pupils from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism;
- Maintaining and applying a good understanding of the relevant guidance in relation to preventing pupils from becoming involved in terrorism, and protecting them from radicalisation by those who support terrorism or forms of extremism which lead to terrorism;
- Raising awareness about the role and responsibilities of the College in relation to protecting pupils from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism;
- Monitoring the effect in practice of the school's RE curriculum and assembly policy to ensure that they are used to promote community cohesion and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs;
- Raising awareness within the school about the safeguarding processes relating to protecting pupils from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism;
- Acting as the first point of contact within the school for case discussions relating to pupils who may be at risk of radicalisation or involved in terrorism;
- Collating relevant information in relation to referrals of vulnerable pupils into the Prevent / Channel\* process;
- Attending Channel\* meetings as necessary and carrying out any actions as agreed;
- Reporting progress on actions to the Channel\* Co-ordinator; and
- Sharing any relevant additional information in a timely manner.

\*Channel is a multi-agency approach to provide support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorist related activity. It is led by the Cheshire Police Counter-Terrorism Unit, and it aims to:

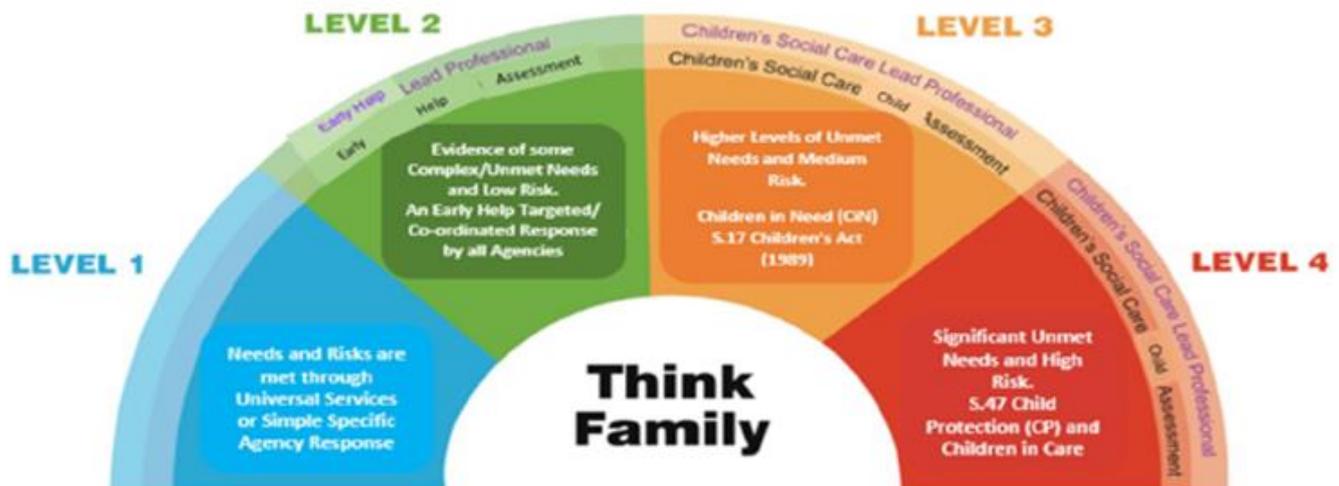
- Establish an effective multi-agency referral and intervention process to identify vulnerable individuals;
- Safeguard individuals who might be vulnerable to being radicalised, so that they are not at risk of being drawn into terrorist-related activity; and
- Provide early intervention to protect and divert people away from the risks they face and reduce vulnerability.

## Halton Levels of Need Framework

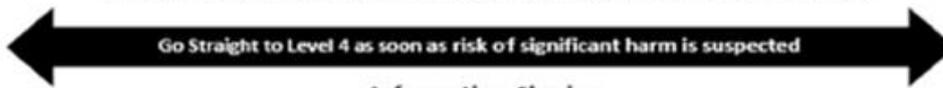
The Halton Levels of Need framework aims to support agencies to meet the needs of children, young people and their families to ensure the best possible outcomes. It aims to assist practitioners and managers in assessing and identifying a child's level of additional need and how best to respond in order to meet those needs as early as possible to prevent needs escalating further.

## APPENDIX 3

# Halton Continuum of Need



If in doubt consult with agency safeguarding leads, or iCART on 0151 907 8305

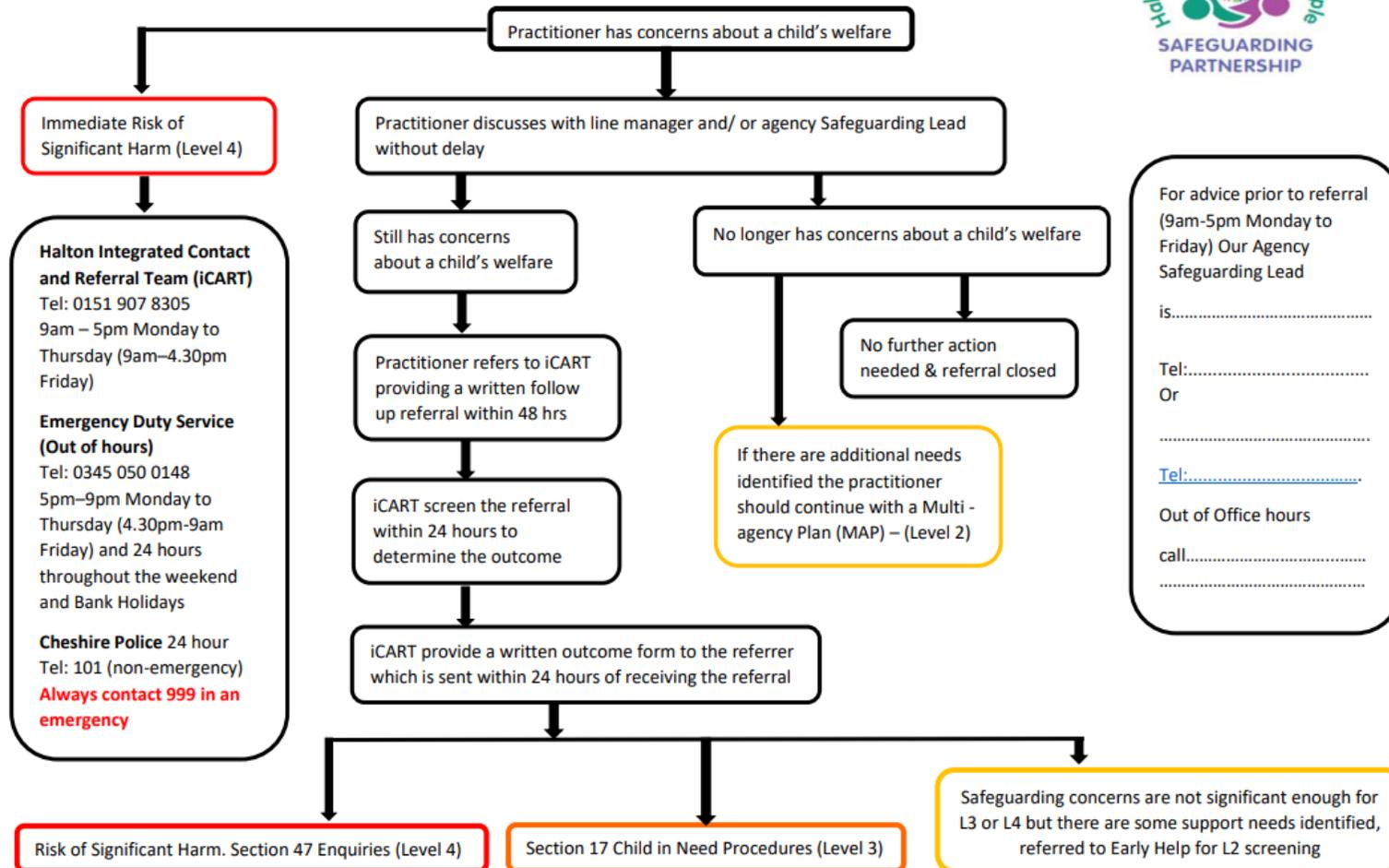


Information Sharing



<https://hcypsp.haltonsafeguarding.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Levels-Of-Need-Framework.pdf>

## What to do if you have a concern about a child's welfare



## **Annex**

### **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

November 2022

#### **Response to COVID-19 ??????**

There have been significant changes within educational settings within the UK in response to the outbreak of COVID-19 which has impacted upon the Safeguarding and Well Being of students.

The current position is that, following the Government announcement, all college sites are open and risk of transmission is low. However, if the situation was to change we will implement the systems and protocols listed below.

The pressures on children, young people and their families post COVID remain significant. There will be heightened awareness of family pressures for a variety of reasons including, financial hardship, health or anxiety. These areas should be considered in terms of setting any work for students to undertake at home (including recognising the impact of online learning and ability to access online resources). Staff may be aware of the mental health of both students and their parents or carers and should refer to safeguarding about any emerging concerns.

We have undertaken a scoping exercise to identify the most vulnerable students and individual arrangements have been made with either students, parents/carers and/or social care who have an attached social worker and those with an EHCP. We continue working in partnership with the local authority to contribute to the wider picture, which involves daily updates to Milorad Vasic, Director for People, Halton Borough Council.

For students subject to a Child Protection Plan and Child in Need Plan, and who have an allocated social worker: contact will be made by the safeguarding as agreed with the family and social worker. Where families have requested this to be specific times per week, this has been discussed and agreed with the allocated social worker.

For students who are Looked after Children and recent Care Leavers: contact will be made by the health and wellbeing team who will make contact as often as agreed with the student, carer and social worker.

For students with an EHCP: Support Workers and Learning Support Advisors will maintain regular contact as agreed with student and parents / carers. Support can be delivered through individual arrangements based on curriculum activity.

For students on the edge of social care involvement or pending allocation of a social worker or identified as high risk: contact will be made by the health and wellbeing team once per week for a welfare check.

NB Contact will be made remotely through email/Microsoft Teams/telephone calls/social media or other appropriate methods.

Reporting arrangements:

The college arrangements continue in line with our Safeguarding Policy. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is:

Thalia Bell – [thalia.bell@riversidecollege.ac.uk](mailto:thalia.bell@riversidecollege.ac.uk)

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is:

Donna Elston – [donna.elston@riversidecollege.ac.uk](mailto:donna.elston@riversidecollege.ac.uk)

The Safeguarding Officers are:

Anna Hopwood – [anna.hopwood@riversidecollege.ac.uk](mailto:anna.hopwood@riversidecollege.ac.uk)

Mandy Davies – [mandy/davies@riversidecollege.ac.uk](mailto:mandy/davies@riversidecollege.ac.uk)

Amy Clarke – [amy.clarke@riversidecollege.ac.uk](mailto:amy.clarke@riversidecollege.ac.uk)

Helen Maddison – [helen.maddison@riversidecollege.ac.uk](mailto:helen.maddison@riversidecollege.ac.uk)

Jayne Barker – [Jayne.barker@riversidecollege.ac.uk](mailto:Jayne.barker@riversidecollege.ac.uk)

Rachel Bailey – [Rachel.bailey@riversidecollege.ac.uk](mailto:Rachel.bailey@riversidecollege.ac.uk)

Katie Peacock – [katie.peacock@riversidecollege.ac.uk](mailto:katie.peacock@riversidecollege.ac.uk)

We will be operating during normal business hours, 9am – 4pm (Mon – Friday)

We have confirmed the arrangements to contact the LADO at the local authority remain unchanged. For more information on this please contact [HRUnit@riversidecollege.ac.uk](mailto:HRUnit@riversidecollege.ac.uk)

Staff will continue to follow the safeguarding procedures and advise the safeguarding leads immediately about concerns they have about any child, whether in college or not. COVID-19 means a need for increased vigilance due to the pressures on services, families and young people, rather than a reduction in our standards.

If you have access to STAR, please continue to log confidential comments as you normally would. If you do not have access to STAR to log confidential comments please email concerns to [safeguarding@riversidecollege.ac.uk](mailto:safeguarding@riversidecollege.ac.uk) where a member of the safeguarding team will respond to the concern and log on ProMonitor. This email address is monitored by all safeguarding staff.

Normal safeguarding procedures apply for referrals to children's services. This contact will go through a member of the safeguarding team (listed above) who will follow appropriate measures in seeking the appropriate and necessary support.

Should a child or young person be at risk of significant harm and local agencies are not able to respond, the college will immediately follow the safeguarding children partnership escalation procedure.

Allegations or concerns about staff

With such different arrangements in place, young people could be at greater risk of online abuse. We remind all staff to maintain the view that 'it could happen here' and to immediately report any concern, no matter how small, to the safeguarding team.

Any agency staff or volunteers working with students during college closure will complete an induction to ensure they are aware of the risks and know how to take action if they are concerned.

#### New staff or volunteers

All new starters must have an online induction. They must read the college Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, the Positive Behaviour Policy, the Whistleblowing Policy and the staff Code of Conduct. The DSL or deputy will ensure new recruits know who to contact if worried about a child or young person and ensure the new starters are familiar with the child protection procedure.

All new starters or volunteers need to confirm that they have read Part I and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education

#### Child on Child abuse

We recognise the potential for abuse to go on between young people, especially in the context of a college closure or partial closure. Our staff will remain vigilant to the signs of Child on Child abuse, including those between young people who are not currently attending our provision. Extra care should be taken where groups have mixed age, developmental stages, are attending other education establishments as an interim measure and similar. When making contact with these families our staff may ask about relationships between learners.

#### Risk online

Young people will be using the internet more during this period. The College may also use online approaches to deliver training or support. Staff will be aware of the signs and signals of cyberbullying and other risks online and apply the same child-centered safeguarding practices as when students are learning at the College. The College continues to ensure appropriate filters and monitors are in place. The College has taken on board the guidance from the UK Safer Internet Centre on safe remote learning and guidance for safer working practice from the Safer Recruitment Consortium.

It is extremely important that professional boundaries do not slip during this exceptional period and protocols for online working have been issued. Staff need to refer to current college policies in relation to this (see below)

<http://documents.riverside.ac.uk/ICT%20Acceptable%20Use%20Policy.pdf>

<http://documents.riverside.ac.uk/E%20Communications%20and%20Social%20Media%20Policy.pdf>

Students accessing remote learning will receive guidance on keeping safe online and know how to raise concerns with the college, Childline, the UK Safer Internet Centre and CEOP. This guidance is available on our College website.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/internet-connected-devices/>

## Mental Health

Restrictions to movement and contact with other people means pupils are more likely to be at risk of mental health problems. Individual academies should make pupils and their families aware of where further support can be found. The Department for Education have produced guidance to support parents:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

The following organisations can also provide support:

[www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com) – Free online emotional wellbeing and counselling with self-help articles

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/helping-someone-else/>

## Parents and Carers

Parents and carers will receive information about keeping students safe online with peers, the College, other education offers they may access and the wider internet community. We have set out the College's approach, including the sites students will be asked to access and set out who from the college (if anyone) their student is going to be interacting with online. Parents have been offered the following links via our College website:

- o Internet matters - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- o Net-aware - for support for parents and careers from the NSPCC
- o Parent info - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- o Thinkuknow - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
- o UK Safer Internet Centre - advice for parents and carers

Free additional support for staff in responding to online safety issues can be accessed from the Professionals Online Safety Helpline at the UK Safer Internet Centre.