



**Cheshire College
South & West**

Safeguarding Policy

Key Information	
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ELT Post Responsible for Update and Monitoring	Vice Principal – Innovation, Curriculum and Quality
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1. Aim/Scope

- 1.1 No single professional can have a full picture of a learner's needs and circumstances. Everyone who comes into contact with learners has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.
- 1.2 This policy applies to all staff, whether teaching, administrative, management or support, as well as to volunteers. The word "staff" is used to denote all of these groups.
- 1.3 All staff must follow the guidance outlined in the safeguarding procedures.
- 1.4 The College has a statutory and moral duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of all learners under the age of 18 and adults at risk receiving education and training at the College. This includes protecting them from situations where they are experiencing abuse, neglect or harm or are at risk of experiencing abuse, neglect or harm.
- 1.5 The policy applies to all learners and all staff without exception. The policy is also applied to all visitors including Governors and contractors and any other persons and or organisations who have hired the premises.
- 1.6 This policy should also be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Procedures, Learner Mental Health and Well-being and Fitness to Study policies which all provide supportive mechanisms for success.
- 1.7 This policy will not discriminate either directly or indirectly against any individual on the grounds of gender, race, ethnicity or nationality, sexual orientation, marital status, religion or belief, age, disability, socio-economic status or any other personal characteristic.

2 General Policy Statement

- 2.1 The purpose of the Safeguarding Policy (and subsequent Procedures and Training) is to ensure all staff and stakeholders understand their responsibility and contribution to protecting learners and understanding what to do where there are concerns that a learner is at risk of or is experiencing harm or abuse. The College will create a positive safeguarding culture where staff have an understanding that 'it could happen here'.
- 2.2 The College is committed to:
 - 2.1.1 raising the awareness and identification of children or adults at risk who are at risk of significant harm and providing clear procedures for reporting concerns;
 - 2.1.2 raising the awareness of young people and adults at risk, including the importance of staying safe online;
 - 2.1.3 establishing procedures for reporting and dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff;
 - 2.1.4 the safe recruitment of staff; and
 - 2.1.5 'safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is person-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child or vulnerable adult'.
- 2.3 All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.
- 2.4 The policy ensures all disclosures are referred to the Designated Safeguarding Officers, where they will be acted upon accordingly.
- 2.5 Operational responsibility for the implementation of the policy lies with the Assistant Principal Learner Services and the Designated Safeguarding Lead. This policy will be monitored by Senior Management through the Strategic Safeguarding Steering Group who will review the policy at appropriate intervals and on a regular basis.

- 2.6 The Principal has overall responsibility for Safeguarding.
- 2.7 The College recognises that it has a statutory obligation under the Children Act 1989, the Children Act 2004, section 175 Education Act 2002, section 55 of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009, Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2023 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024, to safeguard and promote the welfare of its individuals. This document offers guidance and outlines procedures that should be followed in all cases of suspected abuse and situations of serious risk. It applies to all individuals under the age of 18 or those over 18 who are considered to be “*adults at risk*”. Adults at risk are people aged over 18 who are affected by mental ill health, are considered vulnerable, have a learning difficulty or disability, or a physical disability or impairment.
- 2.8 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:
- 2.8.1 Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge;
 - 2.8.2 protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online;
 - 2.8.3 preventing the impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development;
 - 2.8.4 ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and
 - 2.8.5 taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. (*Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024*)
- 2.9 In relation to adults at risk the government set out key principles in its guidance document “*No Secrets*” (Department of Health, 2000) which said “*the protection of adults at risk should always receive a high priority and that all agencies should be able to clearly demonstrate they are able to respond to abuse with prompt, timely and appropriate action*”.
- 2.10 The College also recognises its responsibility to safeguard children and adults at risk in the wider community. For instance, if an individual has younger siblings or an adult at risk within their family.
- 2.11 This policy applies to all “*children*” i.e., young persons under the age of 18 years or those over 18 considered to be ‘vulnerable’ due to any learning difficulty, disability or significant mental health needs.
- 2.12 The welfare of the child/learner is, at all times, of paramount importance, irrespective of where any harm takes place.
- 2.13 The policy recognises that any child may benefit from early help, but all staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:
- 2.13.1 is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs;
 - 2.13.2 has special educational needs or Education, Health and Care plan;
 - 2.13.3 has a mental health need;
 - 2.13.4 is a young carer;
 - 2.13.5 is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines;
 - 2.13.6 is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care;
 - 2.13.7 has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision;
 - 2.13.8 is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation;
 - 2.13.9 is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
 - 2.13.10 has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending;
 - 2.13.11 is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse;
 - 2.13.12 is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves;
 - 2.13.13 is at risk of so-called ‘honour’-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage; or
 - 2.13.14 is a privately fostered child.
- 2.14 Throughout the Safeguarding Policy, references are made to ‘children and young people’, this term is used to mean ‘those under the age of 18’. The College recognises that some adults are also vulnerable to abuse, hence

this policy refers to all learners and staff.

3 Definition of an Adult at Risk:

3.1 An adult at risk is a person over 18 years of age who is or may be in need of community services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to care of himself or herself, or unable to protect himself or herself against significant harm or serious exploitation.

3.1.1 An adult at risk is a person who has attained the age of 18, and:

- 3.1.1.1 they are in residential accommodation;
- 3.1.1.2 they are in sheltered housing;
- 3.1.1.3 they receive domiciliary care;
- 3.1.1.4 they receive any form of health care;
- 3.1.1.5 they are detained in lawful custody;
- 3.1.1.6 they are by virtue of an order of a court under supervision by a person exercising functions for the purposes of Part 1 of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 (c.43);
- 3.1.1.7 they receive welfare service of prescribed description;
- 3.1.1.8 they receive any service or participate in any activity provided specifically for persons who fall within sub section (9) of the Health and Social Care Act 2001 (c.15);
- 3.1.1.9 payments are made to them (or to another on their behalf) in pursuance of arrangements under section 57 of the Health and Social Care Act 2001 (c.15); and
- 3.1.1.10 they require assistance in the conduct of their own affairs.

4 The College is Committed to Ensuring that it:

- 4.1 Provides a safe environment for children, young people and adults at risk to learn.
- 4.2 Identifies children, young people and adults at risk who may benefit from early help and ensures the appropriate staff and/or external agencies are involved in an early help assessment.
- 4.3 Identifies children, young people and adults at risk who are suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm, and takes appropriate action to see that such children, young people and adults at risk are kept safe, both at home, in the community and at the College.
- 4.4 Establishes clear procedures for reporting and dealing with allegations of abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- 4.5 Establishes a clear training schedule to ensure all staff and governors and trustees are trained (*annual, online and induction training*) and familiar with the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- 4.6 Provides appropriate support to learners who have been abused. For example, offering them the services of a counsellor/mentor/wellbeing support.
- 4.7 Establish clear procedures for reporting and dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and concerns that do not meet the harm threshold (low level concerns).
- 4.8 Establishes the safe recruitment of staff in compliance with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) regulations, including DBS checks and additional List 99 checks to ensure that staff are not prohibited from teaching as well as obtaining and checking of references and identity checks.
- 4.9 Ensures all staff who work for the College are made aware during induction, of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 and that it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a relationship with a child under the age of 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual. This applies where the child is in full-time education and the person works at the same establishment as the child, even if he/she does not teach the child.
- 4.10 In developing the Safeguarding Policy, the College has consulted with and taken into account, guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE), the NSPCC, CEOP, a number of Safeguarding Children's Partnerships,

Adult Safeguarding Board and Social Services. The policy has been developed in line with the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998.

- 4.1.1 The College will refer concerns that a child, young person or adult at risk is at risk of significant harm to Social Services and/or the Police.

5 Designated Responsibilities

5.1 Designated Staff with Responsibility for Child Protection

- 51.1 The Governing Body will appoint a Governor with special responsibility for child protection/adult at risk issues. He/she will undertake appropriate training.
- 51.2 The Assistant Principal Learner Services is a member of the College Senior Leadership Team, with lead responsibility for child protection and adult at risk protection who reports to the Vice Principal and the Principal.
- 51.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead for the College is the Safeguarding, Behaviour and Welfare Manager. This role is a leadership role and reports to the Assistant Principal Learner Services.
- 51.4 Other Staff with named responsibility for safeguarding are identified on posters displayed throughout the College and full lists available from the reception on each campus. All Designated Safeguarding Officers (the Be Safe Team) will be required to update their Safeguarding Children's Partnership training every 2 years.
- 51.5 A Safeguarding Strategic Steering Group will meet termly to discuss safeguarding issues and identify actions required to promote a proactive safeguarding culture.
- 51.6 All staff will undergo safeguarding and child protection training at Induction and all staff receive updates at least annually to ensure they are equipped with the skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. Refresher training will take place annually. Themed training will also be delivered to staff including Harmful Sexual Behaviour Training, Contextual Safeguarding, Online Safety and Safer Recruitment Training for recruiting managers.
- 51.7 The Governing Body and the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) will receive, on an annual basis, a report on safeguarding issues and duties discharged. The designated member of staff with lead responsibility for child protection and adults at risk is responsible for reporting an identified deficiency in procedure or policy to the governing body at the earliest opportunity.

6 Designated Member of Staff with Lead Responsibility

- 6.1 An identified designated Safeguarding Lead has the lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection and has a key duty to take lead responsibility for raising awareness with staff of issues relating to the welfare of children and young people, and the promotion of a safe environment for the children and young people learning within the College.
- 6.2 The designated Safeguarding Lead has received training in child protection and safeguarding adults at risk issues and inter-agency working and will receive refresher training at least every 2 years as well as regularly monitoring developments surrounding safeguarding and child protection.
- 6.3 The designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:
- 6.3.1 overseeing the referral of cases of suspected abuse or allegations to Social Services;
 - 6.3.2 oversight of the procedures to be followed when learners are identified as absent from education;
 - 6.3.3 oversight of the College's procedures to monitor online safety, including the filtering and monitoring systems in place;
 - 6.3.4 act as the key adult for Operation Encompass and receive information from the Police regarding incidents of domestic abuse that have occurred in a learner's home, to enable appropriate support to be put in place for that learner;
 - 6.3.5 identifying deputy designated safeguarding leads and ensure they are appropriately trained;
 - 6.3.6 ensuring during term time the designated safeguarding lead and or a deputy is available in College to discuss safeguarding concerns;
 - 6.3.7 providing advice and support to other staff on issues relating to child protection;

- 6.3.8 maintaining a proper record of any child protection referral, complaint or concern, even where that concern does not lead to a referral (see sections on Confidentiality and Written Records of the Cheshire College South and West Safeguarding Procedures);
- 6.3.9 liaising with the Principal and Governors in relation to ongoing enquiries under *Section 47* of the *Children Act 1989* and police investigation;
- 6.3.10 ensuring that parents of children and young people within the College are aware of the College's Safeguarding Policy;
- 6.3.11 liaising with the local authority and other appropriate agencies;
- 6.3.12 liaising with secondary schools which SEN learners to the College to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for the learners;
- 6.3.13 liaising with employers and training organisations that receive children or young people from the College on long-term placements to ensure that appropriate safeguards are put in place;
- 6.3.14 ensuring that staff receive appropriate training in child protection issues and are aware of the College child protection procedures;
- 6.3.15 ensuring all staff read and understand Part One of the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', DfE (2024); and
- 6.3.16 Reporting into the Safeguarding Strategic Steering Group.

7 Designated Staff Members

- 7.1 Other designated members of staff will be appointed to take responsibility for safeguarding issues. These staff include a Safeguarding Team Leader, the Safeguarding and Welfare Officers, the Personal Development Manager, the Learning Support Managers and members of the Be Safe Team.
- 7.2 These designated staff members:
 - 7.2.1 will report to the senior member of staff with lead responsibility;
 - 7.2.2 will know how to make an appropriate referral;
 - 7.2.3 will ensure that all referrals to Social Services / Police will be made verbally and via the appropriate referral form as directed in Keeping Children Safe in Education;
 - 7.2.4 will be available to provide advice and support to other staff on issues relating to child protection;
 - 7.2.5 will have particular responsibility to be available to listen to young people and adults studying at the College;
 - 7.2.6 will deal with individual cases, including attending case conferences and review meetings as appropriate;
 - 7.2.7 will have received training in child protection issues and inter-agency working, as directed in Keeping Children Safe in Education, and will receive refresher training at least every 2 years;
 - 7.2.8 will work with the Personal Development Team to ensure that there is a programme of education which raises awareness with learners on the risks on online, child-on-child abuse, how to protect themselves from harm and who to speak to for help and support; and
 - 7.2.9 will ensure that all referrals, complaints or concerns remain confidential (see sections on *Confidentiality and Written Records of the Cheshire College South and West Safeguarding Procedures*) and that all personal data is handled in accordance with the College's Privacy Policy and data protection legislation.

8 Designated Governor

- 8.1 The designated Governor is responsible for liaising with the Principal, the Assistant Principal Learner Services and the Designated Safeguarding Officer with lead responsibility over matters regarding child and adult at risk protection, including:
 - 8.1.1 ensuring that the College has procedures and policies which are consistent with the Local Authorities (Social Services) procedures;
 - 8.1.2 ensuring that the governing body considers the College policy on safeguarding each year;
 - 8.1.3 ensuring that each year the governing body is informed of how the College and its staff have complied with the policy, including but not limited to a report on the training that staff have undertaken;
 - 8.1.4 ensuring all new and existing governors complete online safeguarding training and ensure annual

- safeguarding refresher information is available to governors; and
- 8.1.5 overseeing the liaison between agencies such as the police, social services in connection with allegations against the Principal. This will not involve undertaking any form of investigation but will ensure good communication between the parties and provide information to assist enquiries. To assist in these duties, the designated governor will receive appropriate training.

9 The Governing Body

- 9.1 The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that:
- 9.1.1 the College has appropriate policies and procedures in place in order for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare. This includes an effective child protection and safeguarding policy and a code of conduct written in accordance with local authority guidance and locally agreed inter-agency procedures. The policy is provided to all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers, and is made available to parents or carers on request;
 - 9.1.2 appropriate safeguarding responses are in place for children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions in order to identify the risk of abuse and neglect and to Prevent the risks of their going missing in the future;
 - 9.1.3 the College operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on staff and volunteers who work with children;
 - 9.1.4 the College has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers that comply with guidance from the local authority and locally agreed inter-agency procedures;
 - 9.1.5 a member of the College's Senior Leadership Team is designated to take overall responsibility for safeguarding and that this person has the necessary training and experience to undertake this role;
 - 9.1.6 staff undertake appropriate safeguarding training;
 - 9.1.7 they remedy, without delay, any deficiencies or weaknesses regarding safeguarding arrangements;
 - 9.1.8 a governor is nominated to be responsible for liaising with the LA and/or partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Principal;
 - 9.1.9 an identified member of staff has responsibility for monitoring the achievement and personal circumstances of learners who are in local authority care;
 - 9.1.10 where services or activities are provided on the College premises by another body, the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding and liaises with the College on these matters where appropriate;
 - 9.1.11 where services or activities are provided by a subcontractor or by another body, the College has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding and liaises with the subcontractor or body on these matters where appropriate;
 - 9.1.12 the College reviews their policies and procedures annually;
 - 9.1.13 all policies and procedures take into account the statutory guidance outlined in "Keeping children safe in education: statutory guidance for schools and Colleges" DfE, September 2024 and "Working together to safeguard children" HM Government, 2023; and
 - 9.1.14 an annual report is produced to ensure that Governors have an overview of safeguarding activities undertaken during the year and approve areas for development.