



## SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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### VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date revised	Author/reviewer	Section / page no. changed	Summary of change(s)
V1.2	Jul-24	Laura Howe-Haysom	Policy format	New template used including new headings
			Section 6.6	Updated sub-section – reference to DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance (2024)

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			Section 6.8	New sub-section – information provided about the college’s risk assessment process
			Section 8.3	Updated sub-section – more information provided about Early Help

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## 1. Introduction

It is our belief that all children and young adults have an equal right not to be abused, neglected or exploited and the right to be happy, healthy, safe and productive in their contribution to society. As such we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all our students and ensuring that during their time with us they are accessing a safe environment and are protected from all forms of abuse. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility and everyone who comes into contact with children, their families and carers, has a role to play.

Our staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children, to prevent concerns from escalating. In order to fulfil this responsibility, effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

## 2. Purpose and scope

The aim of this policy is to create and embed a culture of safeguarding, where all child protection and safeguarding issues identified are reported and referred professionally and that effective and appropriate action is taken to always ensure the welfare of all children by all staff. Key objectives include:

- Clarifying safeguarding expectations for staff, workers, governors, students and their families;
- Contributing to the establishment of a safe, resilient, and robust safeguarding culture built on shared values - that students are treated with respect and dignity, taught to treat each other and staff with respect, feel safe, have a voice and are listened to;
- Supporting contextual safeguarding practice recognising that our college can be a location where harm can occur;
- Setting expectations for developing knowledge and skills within our college community (staff, students, families) to the signs and indicators of safeguarding issues and how to respond to them;
- Enabling early identification of need for vulnerable students and provision of proportionate interventions to promote their welfare and safety;
- Encouraging partnership working with students and their families, and other agencies in the Local Safeguarding Partnership.

This policy applies to all members of our college community.

## 3. Using this policy

If you are working for or with the college you have a responsibility to raise any concern you may have about a child, young adult or staff member who may be at risk of harm or abuse.

While there are specific legal requirements relating to the welfare and protection of children, we are strongly committed to safeguarding our whole college community –

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children, young people, adult learners and staff against harm, abuse and bullying/harassment. We will therefore actively promote the well-being of all and ensure that this is central to our planning, decision-making and day-to-day practice.

The prime concern at all stages must be the interests and safety of the student. Where there is conflict of interest between the student and an adult, the interest of the student must be paramount.

This policy is one of a range of policies and procedures aim at safeguarding our students and protecting them from the risk of harm and/or abuse.

### 4. Definitions

For the purpose of applying the provisions contained in this policy, the following definitions will apply:

Term / acronym	Definition
Child	In this policy, a 'child' means all children and young people below 19 years of age
Child Protection	Defined in the Children Act 1989 (s.47) as when a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. Under statutory guidance and legislation, action must be taken to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.
Child Safeguarding	Defined as protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
Early Help	Means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years to teenage years. Examples of those who benefit especially from Early Help can be found in 5.3
Abuse	Including neglect, is a form of maltreatment. A person may abuse or neglect a child or young person by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Children may be abused within their family, in an institution or community setting, by those known to them, or more, rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.
Significant harm	Is the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in the family in the best interests of the child. Section 31 of the Children Act 1989 states

	'where the question of whether harm suffered by a child is significant turns on the child's health or development, his health or development shall be compared with that which could reasonably be expected of a similar child.'
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## 5. Duties and Responsibilities

Protecting and safeguarding our students is everyone's responsibility – we all have a part to play in creating a culture that has student welfare and wellbeing at its centre. All staff members, governors, volunteers and external providers must know how to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse, how to respond to young people who disclose abuse and what to do if they are concerned about a young person. Everyone should be aware of their duty to take immediate action if they have any concerns about a young person's welfare.

All staff are required to complete Essential Skills training related to safeguarding – this includes training on Safeguarding, Prevent and reading keep policies and documents such as Keeping Children Safe in Education. Such training must be refreshed annually.

Line managers are responsible for ensuring all staff are made aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to this policy. This includes ensuring their team are up to date with any training and ensuring new colleagues have had had safeguarding induction training with the DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible for promoting and developing good safeguarding practice throughout the college and for ensuring the provision of services designed to promote and safeguard the welfare of children. They will work with the Principal and senior leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that students in need are experiencing or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on our student's attendance, engagement and achievement. They are also responsible for managing early identification of vulnerability of students and their families from staff through cause for concerns or notifications. This will ensure detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals. When required, the DSL will liaise with the case manager and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in relation to child protection cases which concern a staff member (including staff of external organisations who use the premises through lettings

HR is responsible for ensuring appropriate People Policies are in place regarding Safeguarding and that these are followed. This includes ensuring safer recruitment practices are followed and everyone has appropriate training – at induction and regularly thereafter. In addition, along with the DSL, they will make the final decisions regarding suspension of staff in relation to safeguarding, reporting to professional bodies and the Disclosure and Barring Scheme (DBS).

The Principal has ultimate accountability for ensuring the college delivers high quality services that are efficient, effective and safe. This includes overall strategic responsibility

for safeguarding and implementation of this policy. In addition, the Principal will meet regularly with the DSL and report to the Governing Body regarding the effectiveness of safeguarding and implementation of related policies.

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are fully embedded within the College's ethos and reflected in day-to-day practice. They are responsible for ensuring that the Designated Safeguarding Lead is an appropriate member of staff from the College leadership team, that students are taught about safeguarding on the curriculum, that appropriate recruitment checks have been carried out on all staff and workers within the college and ensuring that there are procedures in place to manage safeguarding concerns.

## 6. Safeguarding our college community

### 6.1 Our campus

All staff members have a responsibility to ensure our buildings and grounds are secure and for reporting concerns that may come to light.

We check the identity of all visitors and volunteers coming into the College. Visitors are expected to be signed in and out through the Reception and to display the appropriate visitor's badge while on college premises.

All individuals on site (students, staff and visitors) must be wearing a lanyard. Any individual who is not identifiable must be challenged for clarification and reassurance.

### 6.2 Our staff

Every member of our college community is responsible for developing a safeguarding culture. All colleagues must do all they can, within the capacity of their role, to:

- Demonstrate an understanding that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility;
- Maintain and demonstrate a mind-set of "it could happen here";
- Ensure that children are protected from harm;
- Ensure that children grow up in circumstances consistent with safe and effective care
- Ensure that children have the best outcomes;
- Report any concerns, even low level ones, in a timely manner;
- Encourage and role model positive and safe behaviour;
- Treat all members of our community with respect.

Training is a key element of developing a culture of safeguarding. The table below outlines the minimum safeguarding training requirements for staff groups within the college:

Staff group	Training requirements
All staff	Are required to complete the Essential Skills Training programme annually which includes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Certificate in Safeguarding;</li><li>• Certificate in Prevent;</li><li>• Reading KCSIE guidance;</li></ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedure;</li> <li>• Reading Prevent Policy and Procedure;</li> <li>• Reading the Staff Code of Conduct.</li> </ul>
Safeguarding Officers	In addition to the above, our Safeguarding Officers will undertake further safeguarding training to Level 3. This training will be refreshed on a two-yearly basis.
Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies	In addition to the Essential Skills Training, the DSL and their deputies will undertake appropriate Designated Safeguarding Lead training and this will be refreshed on a two-yearly basis.
Senior Mental Health Lead	In addition to the Essential Skills Training, the Senior Mental Health Lead will undergo appropriate Senior Mental Health Lead training.
Governors	All our college governors will undertake safeguarding training and this should be refreshed at least annually.
College Leadership Team	Will make themselves aware of and understand their role within the local safeguarding arrangements. This will ensure that those who have responsibility for the management of behaviour, inclusion, Special Educational Needs, attendance, and exclusions will carry out their duties with a safeguarding consideration.
Other training	Appropriate colleagues have received appropriate training in relation to use of reasonable force and positive handling.

You must report any concerns or allegations about a professional's behaviour, but more urgently where they may have:

- 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; or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

If you have a safeguarding concern or an allegation about another member of staff that does not meet the harm threshold, then this should be raised in accordance with our Low Level Concerns Policy and Procedure.

### **6.3 Our Curriculum**

We are dedicated to ensuring that students are taught about safeguarding, including online safety. We recognise that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all students, and a more personalised or contextualised approach for more vulnerable students, victims of abuse and some SEND children might be needed. This is part of a broad and balanced curriculum. This includes:

- Working within guidance in respect to Relationships and sex education (RSHE) and health education;



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- Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education, to explore key areas such as self-esteem, emotional literacy, assertiveness, power, building resilience to radicalisation, e-safety and bullying;
- Appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to ensure that 'over-blocking' does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what students can be taught about online teaching and safeguarding;
- The curriculum will be shaped to respond to safeguarding incident patterns as identified by the DSL and safeguarding team (e.g., respond to an increase in bullying incidents);
- Providing engagement opportunities with parents and carers to consult on key aspects of the curriculum;
- Students can inform the curriculum via discussions with the student union and student focus groups.

### **6.4 Online safety**

Online safety is an integrated and interwoven theme with other safeguarding considerations, including Prevent. It is essential that the DSL takes a lead on ensuring that interventions are effective. This means coordinating support and engaging with other colleagues across the college to ensure a comprehensive whole-College approach.

The DSL will take lead responsibility for ensuring the College's filtering and monitoring systems and processes are appropriate and, in collaboration with the Safeguarding Governor and IT Infrastructure and Technical Manager, ensure they are reviewed and audited in line with statutory guidelines. All staff will receive training on their roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.

We are committed to addressing online safety issues around content, contact, conduct and commerce. This includes:

- Ensuring that online safety is concerned in relevant policies and procedures;
- Online safety is interwoven in safeguarding training for staff and safeguarding on the curriculum for students;
- Acknowledging that child-on-child harm can happen via mobile and smart technology between individuals and groups;
- Provision of remote learning will comply with current government advice;
- Annually reviewing our filtering and monitoring systems, information security and access management alongside the above.

### **6.5 Mental health and wellbeing**

We recognise that we have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our students. Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation, and or may require Early Help support. We commit to undertake the following:

- The training of a Senior Mental Health Lead who can support the development of knowledge and act as an expert to promote the wellbeing and mental health;
- Early identification of vulnerability to mental health problems by reviewing attendance, behaviour, attainment, and safeguarding records at on a termly basis;
- Ensure that students can report and share concerns;

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- Staff will ensure the immediate health and safety of a student who is displaying acute mental health distress. This may require support from emergency services via 999 if the student is at risk of immediate harm;
- DSLs/Deputies will consider whether a case can be managed internally, through Early Help, or should involve other agencies as required;
- Communicate and work with the student and parents/carers to ensure that interventions are in the best interests of the child;
- DSLs will liaise with staff to ensure reasonable adjustments are made and develop ways to support achieving positive educational outcomes. This may include referral to the Fitness to Study Process;
- Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem – DSLs and the Senior Leadership Team should be able to access specialist advice through targeted services or through their locality Primary Mental Health Specialists from Child and Family Consultation Services.

In addition to the above, we will ensure that preventative measures in terms of providing safeguarding on the curriculum will provide opportunities for students to identify when they may need help, and to develop resilience. We will take a 'whole setting' approach to:

- Deliver high quality teaching on mental health and wellbeing on the curriculum;
- Having a culture that promotes mental health and wellbeing;
- Having an environment that promotes mental health and wellbeing;
- Raising awareness of mental health support services available to staff and students;
- Supporting staff wellbeing; and
- Being committed to student and parent/carer participation.

### **6.6 Children Missing or Absent from Education**

All staff should be aware that children being absent from college, particularly unexplainable and/or persistent absences, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect such as sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, so-called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage.

Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future.

Staff should follow procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. These should be reported to the DSL.

We follow the DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance Guidance (2024).

### **6.7 Child-on-child harm**

All staff should recognise that children can harm other children (including online). It is recognised that child-on-child harm can happen inside and outside of college or online. It is important that incidents of abuse and harm are treated under this policy in conjunction

with the Positive Behaviour policy. However, concerns regarding the welfare of a student requires process and records to be kept on the child's safeguarding/child protection file.

At our college:

- We have a 'zero tolerance' approach to abuse. Incidents are taken seriously. These will never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up.' Banter and teasing can and should be acknowledged and recognised as bullying behaviour and may require proportionate intervention;
- We take steps to educate and act and ensure to mitigate the risk of contributing to a culture of unacceptable behaviours or a culture that normalises abuse;
- It is understood that child-on-child harm may reflect equality issues in terms of those who may be targeted are more likely to have protected characteristics.
- Early identification of vulnerability to child-on-child harm is made by reviewing attendance, behaviour, attainment, and safeguarding records on a termly basis.

We have clear systems in place (which are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible) for students to confidently report abuse knowing their concerns addressed.

### **6.8 Our risk management processes**

Risk assessment is an intrinsic part of our safeguarding process. It is used to assess and manage potential risk of abuse or neglect that might harm a person's wellbeing. The risk assessment highlights such things as raising awareness of safeguarding, working in partnership, training for staff, curriculum and welfare, pastoral support, policies and recruitment, speakers and events, safety online and communications. The Risk Assessment and Plan is co-ordinated by the DSL, and developed and reviewed by the Health and Safety Committee.

## **7. Safeguarding Reporting Procedures**

### **7.1 Reporting concerns**

We are dedicated to maintaining and explicitly promoting our safeguarding procedures, which help to identify suspected cases of abuse, reporting and acting upon them. Where you are unsure about what to do, you must speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or their deputy. Any allegation, disclosure or suspicion of harm or abuse will be taken seriously and handled in a sensitive manner. You should never deal with disclosures in isolation.

It is the responsibility of all staff to report and record their concerns. Any member of staff can make a referral if they have concerns that a child may be at risk. The matter must be reported immediately via My Concern or directly to the DSL.

If at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child or vulnerable adult, a referral should be made to Social Care immediately. Anyone can make a referral. If we believe a child is in danger, we will call 999 and ensure the child is safe. If this ever happens, the Designated Safeguarding Lead must be informed at the earliest opportunity.

Students can also raise concerns. This can be done via any staff member, the safeguarding mobile phone (07471823522) or emailing the safeguarding team and they will be treated seriously.

### **7.2 Responding to concerns**

Where any member of staff, student, volunteer or governor has a concern about a child, young person or vulnerable adult, they must report it immediately. There are a number of reasons why someone might need to report a concern such as in response to:

- Something the person has said.
- Signs or suspicions of abuse.
- Allegations made against a member of staff, volunteer, carer or parent.
- Bullying, face to face or online.
- Observation of inappropriate behaviour / views.
- Anything which makes a student / young or vulnerable person uncomfortable.

It is important for staff to note that if an incident has occurred outside of college, it should still be reported.

Key points to remember:

- Report the concern to the DSL as soon as possible and certainly by the end of the day;
- Do not start your own investigation;
- Share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue unnecessarily with colleagues or with friends or family;
- Complete a timely and accurate record of the concern using My Concern;
- Seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

### **7.3 Recording Requirements**

It is essential that you make an accurate record as soon as possible and within 24 hours of the occurrence, of all that has happened, including details of:

- Names of those present during the disclosure / allegation.
- Date and time of the conversation.
- Place where the alleged incident took place.
- Brief description of the concern or allegation.
- Any visible and/or alleged injuries.
- Young person's preferred action.
- Explanations given by the student/adult.
- What action was taken.
- Any actual words or phrases used by the student.
- Next steps and follow up agreed.

Please be aware: these notes may be used in any subsequent court proceedings.

### **7.4 Following report of a concern**

On receiving a concern, the DSL will review the information and may take one, or more, of the following courses of action:

- Initiate an investigation;

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- Make a referral to the relevant external organisation:
  - In cases of suspected abuse and neglect – to the local authority;
  - In cases of radicalisation – to the Channel programme;
  - Where a crime has been committed – to the police.

### **7.5 Reporting to the LADO**

The College will routinely report to the LADO in any case involving concerns of malpractice, abuse or poor professional practice by a:

- Local authority;
- College employee;
- Volunteer;
- Paid or unpaid carer, relative or friend or
- Employee of another organisation providing care or support to the individual.

### **7.6 Concerns about staff or individuals working with students**

We have processes and procedures in place to manage any safeguarding allegation, or concern (no matter how small), about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors).

You must report any concerns or allegations about a professional's behaviour, but more urgently where they may have:

- 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; or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

In the event of a concern against a member of staff, immediate action that must be taken:

- Do not speak to the individual it concerns;
- Allegations or concerns about colleagues, supply staff, volunteers or contractors must be reported directly to the Principal, DSL or Head of HR;
- If the concern relates to Principal it should be reported to the Chair of Governors or Safeguarding Link Governor, who will liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and they will decide on any action required.
- If there is a conflict of interest which inhibits this process of reporting, staff can report directly to the LADO;
- If allegations are regarding a member of supply staff, we will take the lead and progress enquiries with the LADO, whilst working with the employment agency;

If staff have a safeguarding concern or an allegation about another member of staff that does not meet the harm threshold, then this should be shared in accordance with our Low Level Concerns Policy and Procedure.

Allegations regarding foster carers or anyone in a position of trust working or volunteering with children should be referred to the LADO on the day that the allegation is reported.

The allocated social worker should also be informed on the day. We will not undertake any investigation unless the LADO advises this.

### **8. Useful information**

#### **8.1 Key safeguarding areas**

These topics are themes that can impact on children and families, there are specific areas of safeguarding that we have a statutory responsibility to address:

- Children in the court system;
- Children affected by parental offending/imprisonment;
- Children missing from education – including unexplained or persistent absence;
- Child Exploitation (including both Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation and county lines, modern day slavery and trafficking)
- Cybercrime;
- Domestic Abuse;
- Homelessness;
- So-called Honour based Abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage);
- Online Safety;
- Mental health;
- Child-on-child harm (including bullying, relationship abuse, sexual harassment, sexual violence, upskirting, hazing);
- Preventing Radicalisation (The Prevent Duty);
- Serious Youth Violence;
- Substance Misuse;
- Private Fostering;
- Young Carers.

#### **8.2 Vulnerable students**

The DSL and Deputy DSL will regularly review and monitor those students who have been identified as vulnerable. This can include reviewing attendance data, behaviour data, attainment data and safeguarding records. This is to ensure that:

- Proportionate and early interventions can be taken to promote the safety and welfare of the child and prevent escalation of harm;
- Information about vulnerable students is shared with teachers and the leadership team to promote educational outcomes;
- Students who currently have, or have had, a social worker will have their academic progress and attainment reviewed and additional academic support will be provided to help them reach their full potential
- Reasonable adjustments are made in relation to setting-based interventions – for example responding to behaviour;
- We can support students who may have intersecting protected characteristics. We recognise those with protected characteristics are likely to be more vulnerable to negative experiences of discrimination both explicitly and or systemically;
- We will work in the best interests of the child in compliance with their equality and human rights legal duties.

### **8.3 Early Help**

Any child or young person may benefit from early help but all staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child or young person who:

- Is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs;
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan);
- Has a mental health need;
- Is a young carer;
- 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;
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care;
- Has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation;
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- Has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending;
- 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 alcohol and other drugs themselves;
- Is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage;
- Is a privately fostered child.

(This list is not exhaustive)

Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child or young person's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.

In the first instance, staff who consider that a student may benefit from early help should discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will consider the appropriate action to take in accordance with KCSIE guideline and local safeguarding guidance.

The DSL will liaise with external agencies and professionals in an inter-agency assessment, as appropriate. If early help is appropriate, the matter will be kept under review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care if the student's situation does not appear to be improving.

### **8.4 Multi-agency working**

We are a relevant agency in the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership and will work together with appropriate agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children including identifying and responding to their needs. This is in compliance with statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.

Occasions that warrant a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989:

- If the child is in need under s.17 of the Children Act 1989 (including when a child is a young carer and or subject to a private fostering arrangement).

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- Or if the child needs protection under s.47 of the Children Act 1989 where they are experiencing significant harm, or likely to experience significant harm.

Referrals in these cases should be made by the DSL (or Deputy DSLs) to Children's Social Care in the local authority in which that child resides.

Where the child already has a social worker, the request for service should go immediately to the social worker involved or, in their absence, to their team manager. If the child is a child in care, notification should also be made to the Hope Virtual School.

We will co-operate with any statutory safeguarding assessments conducted by children's social care: this includes ensuring representation at appropriate inter-agency meetings such as integrated support plan meetings initial and review child protection conferences and core group meetings.

Additional multi-agency considerations include:

- Where a student and/or their family is subject to an inter-agency child protection plan or a multiagency risk assessment conference (MARAC) meeting, we will contribute to the preparation, implementation, and review of the plan as appropriate;
- In situations where a child in care may be put on a part time timetable, we will consult with the Hope Virtual School following local procedures;
- If a crime has been suspected or committed that involved the bringing of an offensive weapon on site we will liaise with the Local Authority Violence Reduction Unit (Safer Options) who will consider a proportionate response;
- If there is an immediate risk of harm, the police should be called via 999. For other concerns of criminality, the non-statutory guidance 'When to Call the Police' from the NPCC will be followed. If non-urgent you should report a crime via 101;
- In the rare event that a child death occurs, or a child is seriously harmed, we will notify the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership as soon as is reasonably possible.

### **8.5 Suspensions and permanent exclusions**

When considering suspending or permanently excluding a student where additional vulnerability is identified it is important that the student's welfare is a paramount consideration. The Principal, in collaboration with the DSL, will consider their legal duty of care when sending a student home.

We will exercise our legal duties in relation to our interventions. This includes:

- Whether a statutory assessment should be considered in line with the principles of Children Act 1989;
- That decisions are made in an anti-discriminatory manner in line with the Equality Act 2010 (including having regard to the SEND Code of Practice);
- Taking into consideration the student's rights under the Human Rights Act 1998;
- Interventions will be consistent with statutory guidance.

Actions to take:

- An assessment of need should be undertaken with multi-agency partners with a view to mitigate any identified risk of harm this.



- If the child is subject to a child protection plan or where there is an existing child protection file, we will call a multiagency risk-assessment meeting prior to making the decision to exclude.

### **8.6 Actions to take in relation to sexual violence and sexual harassment**

We will take the following actions when responding to incidents of sexual violence and sexual harassment:

- Incidents will be reported immediately to the DSL/ Deputy DSL who will undertake further assessment of what action should be taken proportionate to the factors that have been identified. Following training, The Brook - Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Assessment Tool should be utilised to inform assessment of risk and what actions to subsequently take. This may include seeking specialist advice from Be Safe;
- DSLs/Deputies will take proportionate action and consider whether a case can be managed internally, through Early Help, or should involve other agencies as required;
- When an incident involves an act of sexual violence (rape, assault by penetration, or sexual assault) this must be reported to the police on 101 immediately regardless of the age of criminal responsibility (10 years old). This is on the understanding that the police will take a welfarist approach rather than a criminal justice one. A concurrent referral to social care must also be made for all children directly involved. A strategy can be requested where education can voice explicitly concerns of criminalisation in a multi-agency context;
- When the children involved require a statutory assessment either under s.17 or s. 47 of the Children Act 1989 a referral to social care should be undertaken;
- Where the report includes an online element, we will follow Searching, screening and confiscation at school (2023) and UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people. The key consideration is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child. The highlighted advice provides more details on what to do when viewing an image is unavoidable.
- Risk assessments and or safety plans will be developed for individual children who have been involved in an incident. This should be reviewed at least every three months or every time there is an occurrence of an incident. These should involve the child and parents/carers and address contextual risks.

### **8.7 Raising concerns about the safeguarding practices within the college**

All staff, volunteers, governors and students should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures within the College's safeguarding policies and procedures and know that such concerns will be taken seriously.

The Raising Concerns Policy and Procedure can be followed if there are any concerns about the practices at the college.

### **8.8 Confidentiality and information sharing**

We understand that information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect, and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes.

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the student and staff involved but also to ensure that being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence. You should only discuss concerns with the relevant safeguarding officer, DSL and Principal. That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

There may be times when it is necessary to share information without consent such as:

- To gain consent would place the child at risk;
- By doing so will compromise a criminal investigation;
- It cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; or, if by sharing information it will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner, but it is not possible to gain consent.

Keeping Children Safe in Education states that any member of staff can contact children's social care if they are concerned about a child. This should be then be shared with the DSL and DDSL so that an overview is kept.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a student or parent to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the Principal or DSL.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

## 9. Further information

### 8.1 External information

Relevant legislation and statutory requirements that have been taken into consideration for this policy include:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance (as updated);
- Guidance from the Local Safeguarding Partnership Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023);
- Use of Reasonable Force in Schools (2013) – awaiting update shortly;
- Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention (2019);
- Searching, screening and confiscation: Advice for Schools (2023)
- Working together to Improve School Attendance (2024);
- <https://www.bristolsafeguardingineducation.org/guidance/>;
- <https://bristolsafeguarding.org/policies-and-guidance/>
- <http://sites.southglos.gov.uk/safeguarding/library>.

### **8.2 Internal information**

Local policies and procedures that have been taken into consideration for this policy include:

- Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure;
- Single Central Record Procedure;
- Staff Code of Conduct;
- Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure;
- Positive Behaviour Management Policy;
- Acceptable Use of IT Policies;
- Supporting Children in Care Policy;
- Student Attendance and Punctuality Policy;
- Health and Safety Policy;
- Prevent Policy and Procedure;
- Lockdown Policy and Procedure;
- Anti-Bullying & Harassment Policy;
- Children Missing Education Procedures;
- Safeguarding Risk Assessment and Action Plan;
- Lanyard Policy and Procedure;
- External Visitors policies.

### **10. Policy review**

This policy will be reviewed annually from the date of approval.

The policy may be reviewed at an earlier date if necessary, for example, to update it in line with changes in legislation, organisational development or good practice.

Any individual who has queries regarding the content of this policy, or has difficulty understanding how this policy relates to their role, should contact the Policy Author.

## Appendix 1 - Types of abuse and neglect

Abuse and neglect are defined as the maltreatment of a child or young person whereby someone may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

All staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation, understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the college, inside and outside of home, and online. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

Term	Definition
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.
Neglect	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 because of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.
Emotional abuse	Persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.
Sexual abuse	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

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	activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.
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**Appendix 2 - Multi-Agency Contacts for Safeguarding in Education**

Links and contact details were last checked and updated in August 2024:

<b>If you have concerns about a child/young person in Bristol:</b>			
If a child is at immediate risk call the police	999		
To make an URGENT referral, i.e. a child is likely to suffer or is suffering significant harm, call children's social care	FIRST RESPONSE 0117 9036444		
Out of Hours Referrals	01454 615 165		
To make a NON-URGENT referral, contact FIRST RESPONSE using the online form	FIRST RESPONSE Online form: <a href="https://www.bristol.gov.uk/social-care-health/make-a-referral-to-first-response">https://www.bristol.gov.uk/social-care-health/make-a-referral-to-first-response</a>		
To raise concerns and ask for advice about radicalisation (also contact First Response).	01278 647466 <a href="mailto:PreventSW@avonandsomerset.police.uk">PreventSW@avonandsomerset.police.uk</a>		
To liaise with the specialist Safeguarding Police unit - Lighthouse Safeguarding Unit (Avon and Somerset police)	01278 649228 <a href="mailto:LighthouseBristol@avonandsomerset.police.uk">LighthouseBristol@avonandsomerset.police.uk</a>		
For advice and guidance about whether to make a referral	Families in Focus (Targeted Support)		
	South 0117 9037770	East Central 0117 3576460	North 0117 3521499

<b>If you have concerns about a professional working with a child:</b>	
To raise concerns and ask for guidance in relation to the conduct of someone who works with children	Local Authority Designated Officer - (LADO) 0117 9037795 <a href="#">KBSP LADO notification form</a>

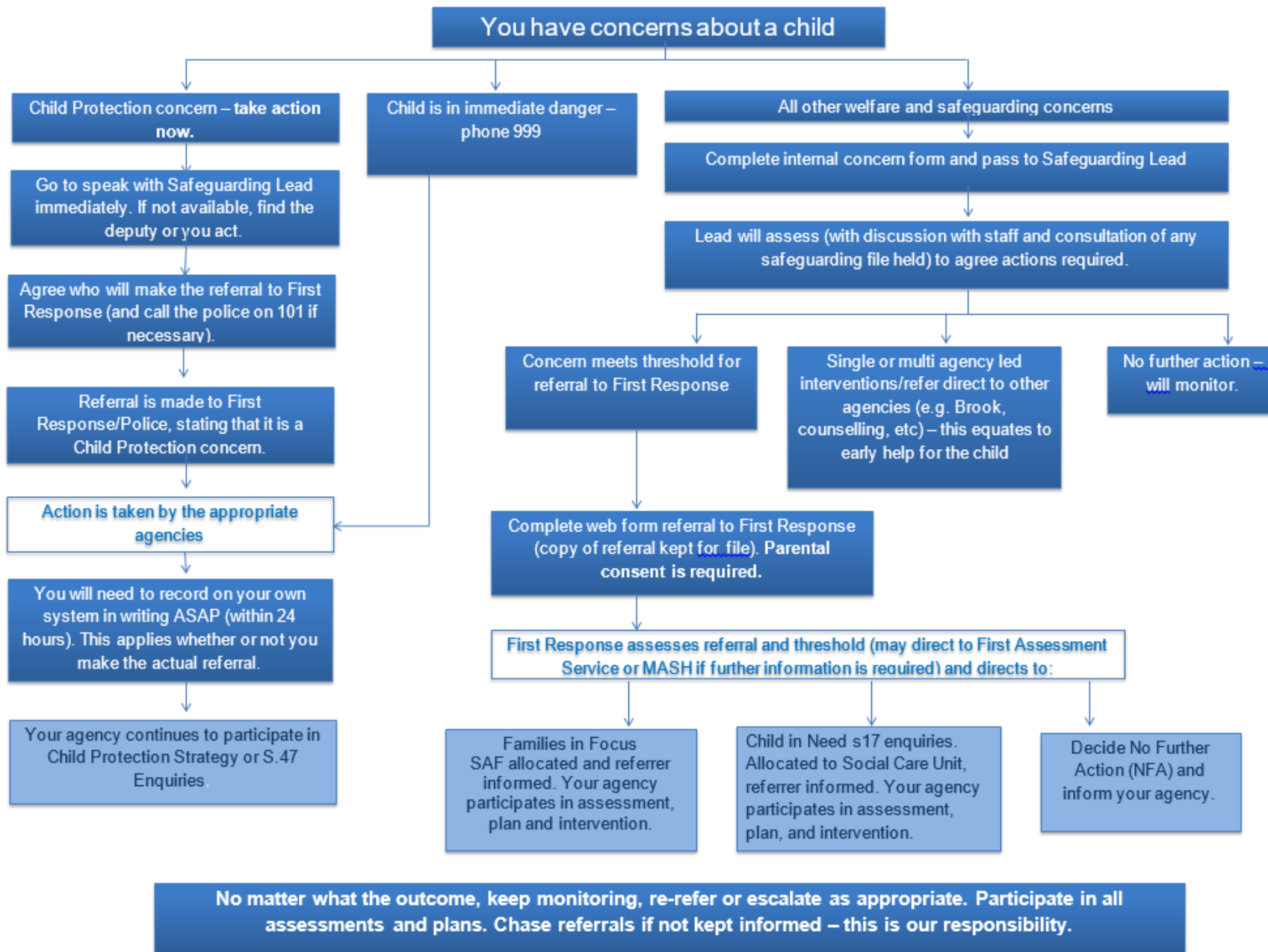
<b>For information, advice and guidance in relation to safeguarding policy and procedures:</b>		
<a href="#">Safeguarding in Education Team</a>	0117 9222710	<a href="mailto:Safeguardingineducationteam@bristol.gov.uk">Safeguardingineducationteam@bristol.gov.uk</a>
South Advisor Helen MacDonald <a href="mailto:Helen.macdonald@bristol.gov.uk">Helen.macdonald@bristol.gov.uk</a> 07788363760	East Central Advisor Jess Curtis <a href="mailto:jessica.curtis@bristol.gov.uk">jessica.curtis@bristol.gov.uk</a> 07788363338	North Advisor Lis Clark <a href="mailto:lis.clark@bristol.gov.uk">lis.clark@bristol.gov.uk</a> 07824503572
<b>Safer Options Team - Education inclusion managers</b>		
South <a href="mailto:Ingrid.Hooper@bristol.gov.uk">Ingrid.Hooper@bristol.gov.uk</a>	East Central <a href="mailto:Calum.Paton@bristol.gov.uk">Calum.Paton@bristol.gov.uk</a>	North <a href="mailto:Ross.Moody@bristol.gov.uk">Ross.Moody@bristol.gov.uk</a>
<b>Child and Adolescent Mental health (CAMHS)</b>		
South 0117 3408121	East Central 0117 3408600	North 0117 3546800
Report a Child Missing from Education / Bristol City Council – Education Welfare	<a href="https://www.bristol.gov.uk/business/schools-learning-and-early-years-for-professionals/attendance-and-inclusion/children-missing-education-cme">https://www.bristol.gov.uk/business/schools-learning-and-early-years-for-professionals/attendance-and-inclusion/children-missing-education-cme</a>	
Children affected by Forced Marriage	020 7008 0151	<a href="mailto:fm@fco.gov.uk">fm@fco.gov.uk</a>
Online Safety Advice	0344 381 4772	<a href="mailto:helpline@saferinternet.org.uk">helpline@saferinternet.org.uk</a>

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Reporting online abuse and grooming	<a href="https://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/">https://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/</a>
FGM advice / NSPCC FGM Helpline	0800 028 3550   <a href="mailto:fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk">fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk</a>
Domestic Abuse support (Bristol)	Directorate of local and national services <a href="https://www.bristol.gov.uk/crime-emergencies/abuse-violence">https://www.bristol.gov.uk/crime-emergencies/abuse-violence</a>
Whistleblowing professional policy	NSPCC Whistleblowing hotline 0800 028 0285 <a href="mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk">help@nspcc.org.uk</a>
Child sexual exploitation & child criminal exploitation	Operation Topaz (Avon and Somerset Police) <a href="https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/forms/vul">https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/forms/vul</a>
Young Carers – advice and support	Carers Support Centre 0117 958 9980 <a href="https://www.carerssupportcentre.org.uk/">https://www.carerssupportcentre.org.uk/</a>
Advice around harmful sexualised behaviour	<a href="https://www.awp.nhs.uk/camhs/camhs-services/HSB-services/be-safe">https://www.awp.nhs.uk/camhs/camhs-services/HSB-services/be-safe</a>

<b>Other Local Authorities Contacts</b>	
South Gloucestershire – Access and Reponses Team	01454 866000 <a href="mailto:accessandresponse@southglos.gov.uk">accessandresponse@southglos.gov.uk</a> <a href="#">Access and Response Teams (ART)</a>
North Somerset – Single Point of Access	01275 888 808 <a href="https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/children-young-people-families">https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/children-young-people-families</a>
Bath and North East Somerset (BANES) – Children’s Social Work Services	01225 396312 or 01225 396313 <a href="mailto:ChildCare_Duty@bathnes.gov.uk">ChildCare_Duty@bathnes.gov.uk</a> <a href="https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/report-concern-about-child">https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/report-concern-about-child</a>

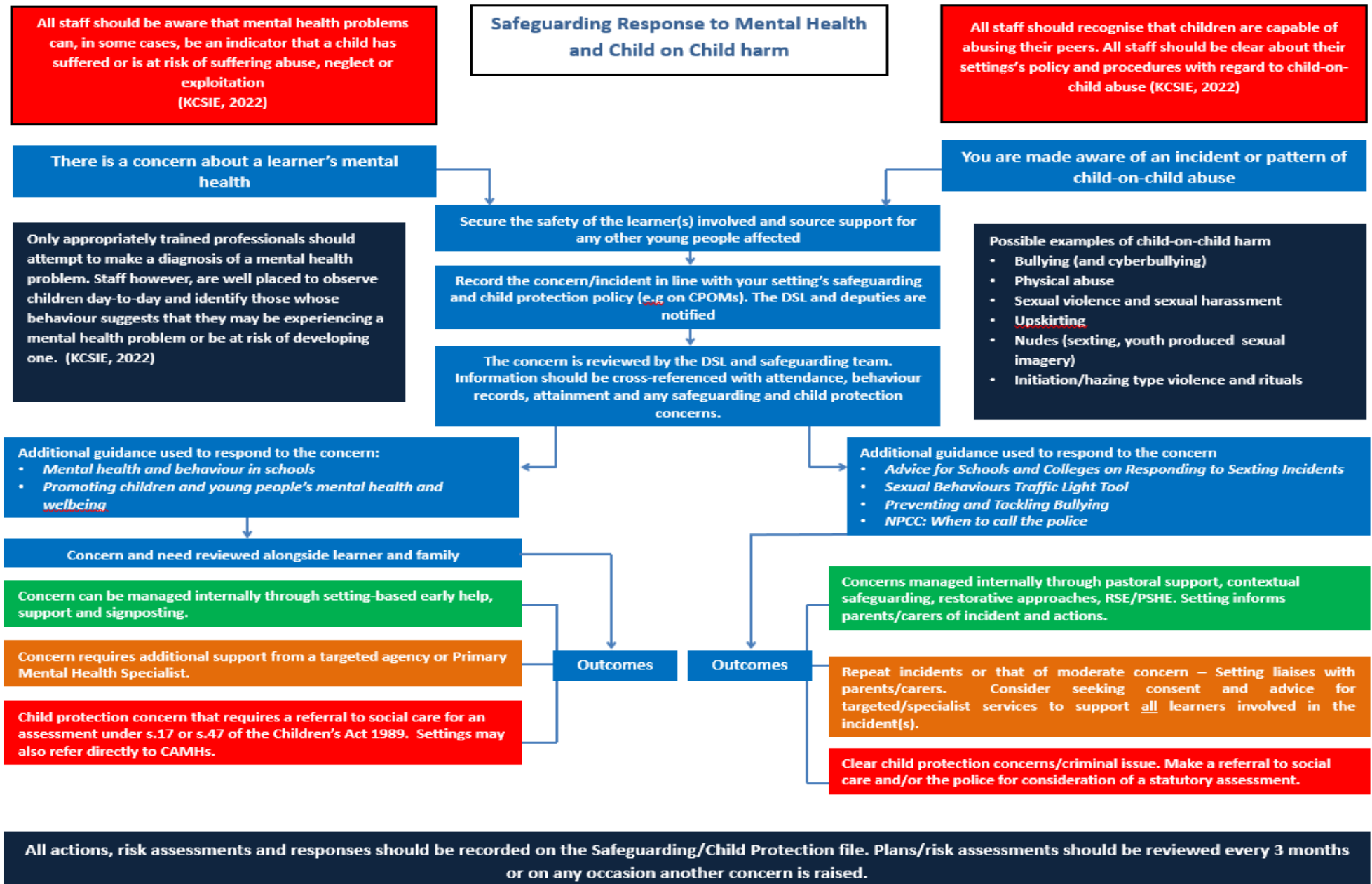
**Appendix 3i – Reporting Concerns Flow Chart – Bristol**





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### Appendix 3ii - Process flow chart responding to child-on-child incidents and Mental Health



#### **Appendix 4 - Specific actions to take on topical safeguarding issues**

In recognition that the threshold of child protection is 'likely to suffer' significant harm we may need to make a referral to children's social care. Where possible, this will involve notifying the parent/carer if it does not place the student at further risk of harm

It is also important to recognise the importance of liaising with other education settings who may have siblings attending. It is likely that they may hold additional information which will support early identification of harm and in turn develop our assessment of need.

#### **Child Exploitation – Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

We will ensure that early help intervention is provided as soon as a concern of exploitation is identified. Discussion and advice will be sought from targeted services to consider what support may be available. The student and their families will be part of any planning and interventions.

If the student is at risk of CSE or there is intelligence which indicates that the student or peer group are at risk of CSE, we will share information with Operation Topaz. This information will support proactive activity to disrupt criminal activity in relation to sexual exploitation.

If the student is at risk of CCE information should be shared with Bristol's Violence Reduction Unit - Safer Options. The Safer Options Education Inclusion Managers can advise and provide support to manage risk. Targeted support maybe available to disrupt students from getting involved with criminality.

Avon and Somerset Police share 'Missing persons' notifications (which a student is reported missing from home or care) with education settings with a view to support them to take proactive action and reasonable adjustments in relation to behaviour management and achieving positive educational outcomes. These should be stored securely on the students Safeguarding/Child Protection file.

#### **Domestic Abuse**

Operation Encompass is a national operation where local police forces notify when the police are called to an incident to domestic abuse. Avon and Somerset have their own version of this and will notify education settings whenever they have responded to a domestic abuse incident. This will enable us to take proactive action and reasonable adjustments in relation to behaviour management and achieving positive educational outcomes.

Under the current information sharing protocol, we are not permitted to share this information without seeking consent from Avon and Somerset police in case this may put a victim and students at further risk of harm. The only exception to this when information is shared with new education setting (part of statutory duties in relation to transfer of the Safeguarding/Child Protection file, Keeping Children Safe in Education). Additional instructions around this are sent out with every single notification. In line with guidance, education settings:

- Must have signed up to a Police Safeguarding Notification Briefing to receive these.
- Should have at least two members of trained staff able to receive and act upon these notifications.

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- Should promote an open culture of safeguarding to enable students and families to disclose and feel safe to talk about their experiences and what support may be required.

### **Female Genital Mutilation**

This is a legal duty for all professionals undertaking teaching work to report known cases of FGM to the police via 101. This is when they:

- Are informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or
- Observe physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out.

These cases must be referred to the DSL who will support them to carry out their duty. It is also advised any referrals made to the police under the mandatory reporting duty is followed up with children's social care so an assessment of need and support is concurrently considered.

### **Travel:**

National guidance has highlighted going on holiday to a risk affected country is cause for concern, local guidance has been developed to prevent discriminatory action against families from risk affected communities.

### **In these events:**

- Families are encouraged to notify us when they are looking to travel during term time;
- This will prompt a conversation with the DSL to discuss and explain what FGM is in that; it is significantly harmful and illegal to practice this;
- We will complete an FGM Referral Risk assessment with the family to identify any support that the family may require in relation to FGM;
- Proportionate action is taken. Referrals to social care should NOT be automatically made – however should be made if there are high risk concerns identified from the FGM Referral Risk Assessment;
- These assessments should be saved onto the students Safeguarding/Child Protection file to avoid duplication with new incidents of travel.

### **Online Safety**

For concerns around individual cases where a child has been harmed through online mediums, advice and guidance can be made through the Professional Online Safeguarding Helpline, T: 0344 381 4772, E: [helpline@saferrinternet.org.uk](mailto:helpline@saferrinternet.org.uk)

Where there have been established cases of online abuse or grooming, the setting should alert - Child Exploitation and Online Protection command (CEOPS).

### **Serious Youth Violence**

This should be read in conjunction with the above section around Child Criminal Exploitation. There has been local guidance issued on the issue of 'Offensive Weapons in Education Settings'. It is important to note that should a weapon be used or there is threat of use, the police should be called immediately. In addition:

- The same day a weapon is found Safer Options should be called for a multi- disciplinary assessment of risk.

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- Whilst it is acknowledged that the decision to exclude remains with the Principal it is recommended that consultation with the Safer Options Education Inclusion Manager is made so as not to further put the child at further risk of harm if they are excluded.
- Alternatives to exclusions should be considered first in recognition that by doing so a student it may be at further risk of harm out in the community.
- Police will be notified through the multi-agency discussion held at the 'Out of Court Disposals Panel' to prevent students unnecessarily getting a criminal record.

### **Preventing Radicalisation - The Prevent duty**

All settings are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism" This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

The Prevent duty is part of our wider safeguarding obligations. The DSL and other senior leaders will familiarise themselves with the revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales, especially paragraphs 57-76, which are specifically concerned with schools. The guidance is set out in terms of four general themes:

- Risk assessment;
- Working in partnership;
- Staff training; and
- IT policies.

### **Private Fostering**

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child:

- Under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled)
- By someone other than a parent or close relative (\*Close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half- siblings and step-parents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.)
- With the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.

Cases of private fostering arrangements must be reported to children's social care to ensure that needs are adequately made. Statutory guidance states that this should be done at least six weeks before the arrangement is due to start or as soon as you are made aware of the arrangements. Not to do so is a criminal offence.

Further support and reasonable adjustments will be made to promote achievement of positive educational outcomes.

### **Young Carers**

A young carer is a person under 18 who regularly provides emotional and/or practical support and assistance for a family member who is disabled, physically or mentally unwell or who misuses substances. We will signpost students who are young carers to appropriate support.

The Carers Support Centre can undertake an assessment of need and provide bespoke support.