



## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

KEY SAFEGUARDING PERSONNEL			
Role	Name	Tel.	Email
Vice Principal – Students Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Paula Nolan	01942 214797/ 07984072620	<a href="mailto:Paula.Nolan@sjr.ac.uk">Paula.Nolan@sjr.ac.uk</a>
Safeguarding and Welfare Officer Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Amanda Fogarty	01942 214797 07947361003	<a href="mailto:Amanda.Fogarty@sjr.ac.uk">Amanda.Fogarty@sjr.ac.uk</a>
Nominated Safeguarding Governor	Martin Lally	01942 214797	<a href="mailto:Martin.lally@sjr.ac.uk">Martin.lally@sjr.ac.uk</a>
Chair of Governors	John Lumb	01942 214797	<a href="mailto:John.Lumb@sjr.ac.uk">John.Lumb@sjr.ac.uk</a>
Designated Teacher for Looked After Children	Paula Nolan	01942 214797/ 07984072620	<a href="mailto:Paula.Nolan@sjr.ac.uk">Paula.Nolan@sjr.ac.uk</a>
The key safeguarding responsibilities within each of the roles above are set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018.			
Agency Contact Details			
Local Authority Designated Officer	Sue Wharton	01942 828 328	<a href="mailto:lado@wigan.gov.uk">lado@wigan.gov.uk</a>
Children's Social Care referrals	Duty Team	01942 828300	<a href="https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Resident/Health-Social-Care/Children-and-young-people/ProfessionalReferralForm.aspx">https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Resident/Health-Social-Care/Children-and-young-people/ProfessionalReferralForm.aspx</a>
Early Help Hub	Startwell	01942 486262	<a href="mailto:EHH@wigan.gov.uk">EHH@wigan.gov.uk</a>
Wigan Safeguarding Children's Board		01942 486025	<a href="mailto:wscb@wigan.gov.uk">wscb@wigan.gov.uk</a>
Education SPOC – Critical Incidents/ Escalation	Cath Pealing	01942 86146	<a href="mailto:c.pealing@wigan.gov.uk">c.pealing@wigan.gov.uk</a>
CAMHS Contact	Claire Wignall	01942 775400	<a href="mailto:nwbh.wigancamhsschoollink@nhs.net">nwbh.wigancamhsschoollink@nhs.net</a>

**If you believe a child is at immediate risk of significant harm or injury, you must call the Police on 999.**

## **Local Context**

### **Socio Economics**

According to the most recent statistics from the Governments' Public Health Department for socio economic deprivation, Wigan's overall score was 3.1% higher than the national average which was 21.8%. This indicates that St John Rigby College students are more vulnerable to socio economic neglect than other young people on a national scale.

### **Domestic Abuse**

Domestic Abuse is considered a significant issue in Wigan with a spike recorded between 2017 to 2018. The number of domestic abuse related crimes recorded by the Police during this period was 33.1% in comparison to 25.1% for the whole of England and the North West region. This significant increase is also mirrored during this same time period in relation to Violent crime (including sexual violence).

In Wigan between 2019 to 2020 the rate of children (up to 17 years of age) in a home where there was Domestic Abuse occurring within the household was at a rate of 64 per 1,000 and was on a par with the national rate.

### **Mental Health**

Although mental health is a national priority, it is of particular concern in Wigan with there being higher suicide rates than in both the North West Region and nationally. During 2019 to 2020 rates of children in Wigan households where a parent has a severe mental health issue was 143 per 1,000 which is slightly above the national rate.

### **U18s Pregnancy**

Pregnancy rates for under 18s in Wigan are higher than the North West and nationally with 23 per 1000 under 18s becoming pregnant, compared to 21.9 per 1000 and 17.8 per 1000 in the North West region/ England respectively.

### **Demographics**

Wigan is a geographical area made up of a significantly white population with the last data being recorded in 2011 as Wigan being 97.3% white in contrast with the national demographic which is 85.4% of the population. Wigan's demographic given the political climate does make the young people of the area more susceptible to being influenced by extreme right wing views.

According to the Home Office statistics the North West Region 2019 was the second highest in relation to the number of Prevent referrals in relation to Right Wing extremism.

Nationwide in 2020 Just 11% of referrals to the government's controversial Prevent programme were ultimately deemed to be at risk of radicalisation, with the largest number of referrals relating to far-right extremism.

The annual figures emerged as James Brokenshire, the security minister, warned that far-right terror posed "a growing threat", which had been accelerated by the amplification of conspiracy theories online during the pandemic.

Ultimately, 697 were deemed at risk of radicalisation and taken on by the government's Channel programme for specialist support. Of the cases ultimately referred to Channel, 302 (43%) were referred for rightwing radicalisation and 210 (30%) were referred for Islamist radicalisation.

Below is a breakdown of last year's College cohort with this year's intake:

		2020-21						2021-22					
		Y12	Y12 %	Y13	Y13 %	Total	Total %	Y12	Y12 %	Y13	Y13 %	Total	Total %
Gender	Male	376	43.4%	293	42.8%	669	43.1%	328	40.4%	312	42.8%	640	41.5%
	Female	491	56.6%	391	57.2%	882	56.9%	484	59.6%	417	57.2%	901	58.5%
Ethnicity	White British	830	95.7%	653	95.5%	1483	95.6%	745	91.7%	702	96.3%	1447	93.9%
	Other	37	4.3%	31	4.5%	68	4.4%	67	8.3%	27	3.7%	94	6.1%
Religion	Catholic	310	35.8%	203	29.7%	513	33.1%	267	32.9%	267	36.6%	534	34.7%
	Other Religion	537	61.9%	383	56.0%	920	59.3%	538	66.3%	452	62.0%	990	64.2%
	no religion declared	20	2.3%	98	14.3%	118	7.6%	7	0.9%	10	1.4%	17	1.1%

We can see from the table above that there has been nearly a 2% increase in our student intake that do not identify as white and British. It is pleasing to see the College cohort is becoming progressively more diverse.

### Drugs and Gangs

The rise of *County Lines* has also increased concerns of young people being pulled into, and exploited by, drug gangs. County Lines involve city-based drug gangs expanding their drug dealing into smaller towns and rural areas, (such as Wigan) with violence often being involved to protect the routes.

The National Crime Agency estimates that the number of dedicated phone lines dedicated to taking orders from users increased from about 720 to 2,000 between 2017 and 2018. Individuals, often vulnerable people susceptible to exploitation, will then take the drugs from the base to consumers. Two-thirds of police forces link County Lines to child exploitation by gangs.

Given the illicit nature of the operations, total involvement is difficult to capture but the majority of referrals received by the National Crime Agency concern 15 to 17-year-olds, which means the age group of our student population are most at risk of this form of criminal activity.

### Knife Crime

Since 2012, GMP has seen a growing trend in knife possession, usage and 'threat & use'. Knife crime offences have almost doubled between 2015 and 2018. Greater Manchester Police recorded 3,671 offences involving a knife or a sharp weapon in 2019-20, Office for National Statistics data shows: up one per cent from 3,619 offences in 2018-19.

### Cyber Crime

There has been a national increase in cyber crime and the age group of our student cohort is considered to be high risk for the following crimes;

- **Average age of hackers –16**
- **Average age of cyber criminal –17**
- **Strong link to Neuro-diversity 'disabilities' (ASD,Aspergers) -more trusting/vulnerable**

### Online Radicalisation

Previously Google was a search engine that was used to radicalise individuals, but now other search engines are being used such as; Gab, 4Chan, Discord, Telegram.

## Money Mules

Students' bank accounts to transfer money acquired illegally through a courier service, or electronically, on behalf of others. Typically, the young person (mule) is paid for services with a small part of the money transferred.

## Online Safety

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism.
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes'.
- conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying;
- commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>).

## Peer on Peer Abuse

This form of abuse can happen both inside and outside of college and online. It can take place in spaces which are supervised or unsupervised. Within a college context, for example, peer-on-peer abuse might take place in spaces such as toilets, the college grounds, corridors and when young people are walking home.

All staff recognise the indicators and signs of peer on peer abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

Peer on peer abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

1. Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
2. Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
3. Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
4. Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
5. Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
6. Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
7. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi nude images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
8. upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm; and
9. initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

## Conclusion

St John Rigby College sets out through its Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy to address the safeguarding trends outlined in this document through raising awareness with both staff and students. This is done through staff training, the student assemblies, the tutorial and Values for Living programme.

In doing so the College creates a safe place for young people to share any concerns they have and, through working with the appropriate external agencies, College seeks to ensure all our young people are kept safe.

## **Mission Statement**

St John Rigby College is a Catholic College dedicated to the education and development of the whole person and supporting all students to realise their full potential. In becoming an outstanding learning organisation, SJR has a strong sense of purpose and a commitment to shared values within a Christian community. We provide a unique and challenging environment where every individual is valued, talents are recognised and nurtured, achievements are celebrated and dedication is rewarded. To achieve this as a community we will:

- ☐ Welcome all students who are happy to be educated within a Christian environment
- ☐ Value the uniqueness and dignity of each individual
- ☐ Deliver the highest standards of teaching and learning
- ☐ All show a commitment to our work, to the Christian values of the College and to the safety of all in our community
- ☐ Provide equality of opportunity, with mutual respect and positive encouragement
- ☐ Build and further develop local, national and international partnerships

Core values in daily life at St John Rigby College are expressed as:

- ☐ Genuine concern for others
- ☐ Support for and challenge of one another
- ☐ High standards and expectations
- ☐ Consistency and perseverance
- ☐ Recognition of talents, progress and achievements.

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

St John Rigby College recognizes fully the importance of its responsibility to the wellbeing of all children and young people and to the guidance, it provides for its staff. It continues to be our highest priority. We are committed to the contribution we can make and the leadership that we can provide in protecting and safeguarding young people.

The aim of this policy is to safeguard and promote the welfare of our young people and we do this by ensuring:

- All our students are safe and protected from harm and/or maltreatment
- A young person's mental and physical health or development is not impaired in any way
- Safeguarding procedures are in place to help students to feel safe and learn to stay safe
- All College staff are aware of the expected behaviours and the legal responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and child protection.
- All agencies are providing appropriate and effective support to children and young people that this is ensured through adoption of the Early Help framework

This will be achieved by:

- Supporting the young person's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
- Providing a high quality, safe and stimulating environment in which young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and are able to enjoy, learn and grow in confidence. To have positive relationships with the staff caring for them and know how to approach staff if they are in difficulties, believing they will be listened to and supported appropriately.
- Raising the awareness of all teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children and young people, of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse and preventing and intervening earlier to address support and social needs of young people through the Early Help framework.
- Providing a systematic means of monitoring young people known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure we, the College, contribute to assessments of need and support packages for those students.
- Emphasising the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.

- Developing a structured procedure within College which will be followed by all members of staff in cases of suspected abuse.
- Developing and promoting effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police, Health and Social Care.
- Ensuring that all staff who have substantial access to young people have been checked as to their suitability, including verification of their identity, qualifications, and a satisfactory DBS check (according to guidance) and a central record is kept for audit.

## Introduction

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by

- The Children Act 1989 (as amended).
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017.
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021.

Other key documents are noted, which have prompted changes to safeguarding requirements over time. This policy references these throughout where relevant:

- GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners 2018.
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges (guidance document) 2018.
- Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018.
- Childcare Act 2006 (as amended in 2018).

## Expectations

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 young people who are suffering harm.

All staff have adopted, in line with Keeping Children Safe In Education guidance, an **"it could happen here"** mentality to ensure that no young person in our care is overlooked.

We recognise that all adults, including temporary staff, volunteers and governors, have a full and active part to play in protecting our students from harm, and that the young person's welfare is our paramount concern.

All staff believe that our education setting should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the young person.

We recognise that a young person who is neglected, abused or witnesses violence may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame themselves, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of worth.

We recognise that the College may provide the only stability in the lives of young people who have been abused or are at risk of harm.

We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a young person in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

We recognise that the Early Help framework provides opportunities to intervene early and prevent safeguarding issues developing, as well as providing a framework for appropriate support to be wrapped around the young person and their family.

## **Safe College, Safe Staff**

Our ICT User Agreements for students, staff and governors and our Educational Visits Policy reflect the consideration the College gives to the protection of our young people, both physically within the education setting environment and, for example, in relation to online safety and when away from the College campus, undertaking off site trips and visits.

## **Lockdown Procedures**

The purpose of this procedure is to provide emergency preparedness and general direction to the College community on how to respond during an incident in which a lockdown might reduce damage, injury or death and during which the site cannot be safely evacuated. It is based on the National Counter Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO) Guidance Note 1/2015 – Developing Dynamic Lockdown Procedures.

Each member of staff will, to the best of their ability, have to manage the situation they find themselves in as best they can but there is no expectation that anyone should act in a manner which is detrimental to their well-being. For further guidance please refer to the College's Lockdown Procedures policy.

## **The College will ensure student and staff safety by;**

1. All members of the governing body understanding and fulfilling their responsibilities, namely to make sure that:
  - There is a Safeguarding, Child Protection policy together with a Staff Code of Conduct policy.
  - The College operates safer recruitment procedures by ensuring that there is at least one person on every recruitment panel that has completed Safer Recruitment training.
  - The education setting has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers. If the concern does not meet the harm threshold then it will be dealt with internally by College using the Staff Code of Conduct. However, if the allegation does meet the harm threshold it will trigger a referral to the DBS if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have, had they not resigned.
  - A senior leader has Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) responsibility.
  - On appointment, the DSL undertakes interagency training and also undertakes DSL "new to role" training and an "update" course every 2 years.
  - All other staff have access to safeguarding training as appropriate.
  - Any weaknesses in Child Protection processes and procedures are remedied immediately.
  - A member of the governing body / trustees, usually the Chair, is nominated to liaise with the LA on safeguarding issues and in the event of an allegation of abuse made against the Principal.
  - Safeguarding and Child Protection policies and procedures are reviewed annually.
  - The Governing body consider how young people may be taught about safeguarding through tutorials, assemblies and curriculum where appropriate.
  - That enhanced DBS checks are in place for the Chair of Governors.
2. The lead DSL is a member of the Senior Leadership team who has; along with the deputy designated safeguarding lead(s), undertaken the relevant training, and, upon appointment will undertake DSL new to role training followed by biannual updates.
3. The DSL involved in recruitment and at least one member of the governing body will also complete safer recruitment training, to be renewed every 2 years.
4. The name of the designated members of staff for Child Protection (DSLs and DDSLs) will be clearly visible in the College, with a statement explaining the College's referral process.
5. All members of staff are trained in, and receive, regular updates in online safety and reporting concerns.



6. All new members of staff will have access to our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy on the Staff Intranet, with the DSL's names clearly displayed, as part of their induction.
7. All other staff, volunteers and governors, have child protection awareness training, updated by the DSL as appropriate, to maintain their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse and contextual safeguarding themes relevant to the College setting.
8. Child protection and safeguarding concerns or allegations against adults (including supply staff), working in the College are referred to LADO for advice and any adult found not suitable to work with children or young people including when a transferable risk is identified will be notified to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for consideration for barring, following resignation, dismissal, or when College ceases to use their service as a result of a substantiated allegation, in the case of a volunteer.
9. All parents/carers are made aware of the staff members responsible for safeguarding in College and how to contact them, as well as a link to the College's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy through the Parents'/Carers' Guide which is accessed via the College's website.
10. The Policy is available publicly either on the College's website or by other means. Parents/ Carers are made aware of this policy and their entitlement to have a copy of it via the website.
11. All visitors complete a sign in / out form, wear a College visitor's lanyard and are provided with safeguarding information including the contact details of safeguarding personnel.
12. Visitors of a professional role are asked to provide evidence of their role and employment details (usually an identity badge) upon arrival at the College.
13. Our procedures will be reviewed and updated regularly.

## **Responsibilities**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead role is to;

1. Help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that students, including young people with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with relevant teachers, support staff and College Senior Leadership Team.
2. Annually highlight to staff and governors any updates on the government guidance on Keeping Children Safe in Education and ask them to complete an online quiz to evidence they have understood the updates.
3. Ensure that staff who work with vulnerable young people are aware of their safeguarding context.
4. Understand the academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for their cohorts of vulnerable young people; support teaching staff to identify the challenges that young people in this group might face and to liaise with College's Learning Support department to ensure that the additional academic support and adjustments are made to best support the young people in their care.
5. Keeping written/electronic records of concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.
6. Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from student's record, until the student's 25th birthday, and are shared if there is a move to another College or educational setting.
7. Ensuring that all records are kept and retained in line with the "Record retention" within the College's GDPR policy.



8. Making sure when a student leaves, the safeguarding file is transferred to the new education setting as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main student file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. Receiving schools' and colleges' files via CPOMS or a hard copy should ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and SENCOs or the named person with oversight for SEN in colleges, are aware as required.
9. Ensuring that they, or the staff member attending case conferences, core groups, early help meetings or other multi-agency planning meetings, contribute to assessments and provide a report which has been shared with the parents/carers.
10. Ensuring that any student currently with a Child Protection plan who is absent from College without explanation for two days is referred to their key worker's Social Care Team.
11. Ensuring that all relevant key staff are Level 3 Safeguarding trained every 2 years.
12. Providing, with the Principal, an annual report for the governing body detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, and by all staff and governors; number and type of incidents/cases, and a number of young people on the child protection register (anonymised)
13. Liaising with other agencies and professionals.

### **Supporting Young People through Early Help Assessments**

The College will consider the need for an Early Help assessment when it is identified that there are low level concerns or emerging needs. It is the responsibility of the College to initiate Early Help to identify what the family's strengths and needs are. This will inform whether the College can support the family or whether a referral to another agency is needed. This process provides a way of recording support and interventions that have been provided by the College to the young person and also supports a referral for additional support that may be needed from more targeted services where a single agency has been unable to meet that need. A team around the child meeting (TAC) can be arranged to ensure that a multi-agency action plan can be developed. It is important that the young person and parents/carers voice is captured as part of this assessment and that they take ownership of the plan. This plan should be regularly reviewed (at least every 6 weeks as a minimum) until outcomes are achieved.

If at any point during the Early Help process, the risk increases and the College becomes concerned that the young person is, or is likely to suffer significant harm, then a referral will be made to children's social care.

### **Multi Agency Working**

**Partnerships have been created which comprise Wigan local authority, a Greater Manchester clinical commissioning group and the chief officer for GM police equally sharing responsibilities for working together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children and young people within the Wigan area. The College, through our Designated Safeguarding Lead and Safeguarding team, will work with its safeguarding partners to ensure we are meeting our statutory safeguarding duty.**

### **Our College will support young people by:**

- Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness through the tutorial programme and curriculum.
- Ensuring a zero tolerance towards peer on peer abuse, bullying, sexual harassment and sexual violence.
- Promoting healthy relationships.
- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the College.
- Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of young people.
- Notifying Social Care as soon as there is a significant concern.
- Providing continuing support to a young person, about whom there have been concerns, who leaves the College, by ensuring that appropriate information is shared with their new educational setting.

## Children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

The College recognises that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- being more prone to peer on peer abuse and peer group isolation than other young people;
- the potential for young people with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, sexual violence and sexual harassment without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

### Information sharing

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential and information is handled in line with the College's Data Protection policy.

The Government has issued Information Sharing for Safeguarding Practitioners Guidance that included 7 'Golden Rules' of Information Sharing in safeguarding :

The Government guidance (described by the NSPCC, 2018) is:

1. **Remember that the Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers** to justify information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
2. **Be open and honest with the individual** (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. **Seek advice from other practitioners** if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
4. **Share with informed consent where appropriate** and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is good reason to do so, such as where safety may be at risk.
5. **Consider safety and well-being:** Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. **Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure:** Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
7. **Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it** – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information in order to safeguard young people and cannot assume that someone else will pass on the information.

Sharing of information will be necessary for the purpose for which it's being shared, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.

Key organisations who have a duty under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people are:

- The local authority;
- NHS England;
- Clinical commissioning groups;
- NHS Trusts, NHS Foundation Trusts;
- The local policing body;

- British Transport Police Authority;
- Prisons;
- National Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Companies
- Youth offending teams  
and
- Bodies within the education and /or voluntary sectors, and any individual to the extent that they are providing services in pursuance of section 74 of the Education and Skills Act 2008.

We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a young person to Social Care with their parents/carers unless to do so could put the young person at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation.

### **Supporting Staff**

The College will work with partners in the safeguarding partnership to ensure positive outcomes for young people.

We recognise that staff working in the College who have become involved with a young person who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm, may find the situation stressful and upsetting.

We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSL and to seek further support as appropriate. College also has a Staff Wellbeing group that is considering ways on how to best support staff who are working alongside young people who have complex safeguarding needs.

The DSL has monthly supervision sessions with an external consultant to discuss serious Safeguarding cases as they occur.

### **Allegations Against Staff**

All staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a young person.

All staff should be expected to have awareness and knowledge of the Student Charter, which students sign when they enrol at College. These are all available to staff on the staff intranet.

Guidance about conduct and safe practice, including safe use of mobile phones by staff and volunteers, will be given at induction, alongside information on Safer Working Practices.

We understand that a student may make an allegation against a member of staff.

If such an allegation is made, or information is received which suggests that a person may be unsuitable to work with young people, the member of staff receiving the allegation or aware of the information, will immediately inform the Principal.

The Principal, on all such occasions, will discuss the content of the allegation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Principal, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will consult the LADO, without notifying the Principal first.

The College will follow Wigan's procedures for managing allegations against staff. Under no circumstances will we send a young person home pending such an investigation, unless this advice is given exceptionally, as a result of a consultation with the LADO.

Suspension of the member of staff, excluding the Principal, against whom an allegation has been made, needs careful consideration, and the Principal may seek the advice of the LADO in making this decision.

In the event of an allegation against the Principal, the decision to suspend will be made by the Chair of Governors with advice as outlined above.

We would follow the same procedure as above for managing the suspension of a contractor or for a community user in the event of an allegation arising.

We recognise that young people cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of child protection, which may include the attitudes or actions of colleagues. If it becomes necessary to consult outside the College, they should speak in the first instance, to the LADO following the College's Whistleblowing Policy.

Whistleblowing regarding the Principal should be made to the Chair of the Governing Body whose contact details are readily available to staff. (Please refer to cover sheet of this policy for contact details).

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, then staff can refer to the College's Whistleblowing Policy but if their concerns still persist then other whistleblowing channels are open to them such as:

- General guidance on whistleblowing can be found via: [Advice on Whistleblowing](#).
- The [NSPCC whistleblowing helpline](#) is available as an alternative route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by their school or college. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and/or email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)<sup>12</sup>

### **Physical Intervention and Use of Reasonable Force**

We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, when a young person is endangering him / herself or others.

The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children / young people. "Reasonable" in these circumstances means using no more force than necessary and staff should refer to The Use of Reasonable Force and Restraint Policy.

Such events should be recorded and signed by a witness.

We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a young person may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

We recognise that touch is appropriate in the context of working with children and young people, and all staff have been given 'Safe Practice' guidance to ensure they are clear about their professional boundary.

### **Prevention**

We recognise that the education setting plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to young people by providing them with good lines of communication with trusted adults.

If Early Help is appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate.

Early Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a young person's life. Providing Early Help is more effective in promoting the welfare of young people than reacting later.

Any such cases should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care for assessment for statutory services, if the young person's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

The College will:

- Work to establish and maintain an ethos where young people feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
- Include regular consultation with young people e.g. through student surveys, participation in anti-bullying week, asking young people to report if they have any concerns or worries.
- Ensure that all students know there is a trusted adult in the education setting whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- Include safeguarding across the curriculum, including tutorial, opportunities which equip young people with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help. In particular this will include anti-bullying, e-Safety, Prevent and Mental Health themed days or weeks.
- 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.

### **Mental Health and Wellbeing**

The College actively promotes resilience as part of an integrated, whole College approach to social and emotional wellbeing, which is tailored to the needs of our students. The College's DSL is also the College's Mental Health Lead who works with a range of staff to ensure our students' mental health and wellbeing needs are being met through our Social, Emotional and Mental Health Policy and Support to Study Policy.

### **Hate Crime and Bullying**

Our College policy on Bullying and Harassment and Sexual Violence of Students is set out in a separate document and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. This includes all forms, e.g. Peer on peer abuse, Cyber, racist, homophobic and gender related bullying.

All staff are aware that young people with SEND and / or differences / perceived differences are more susceptible to being bullied / victims of child abuse.

We keep a record of known bullying incidents via CPOMS.

### **Serious Crime**

All staff are trained annually in relation to indicators, which may signal that young people are at risk from, or are involved with serious crime. These may include increased absence from College, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in well-being, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs. If staff do have concerns then they know to follow College's safeguarding procedures.

### **Preventing Radicalisation**

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of College's wider safeguarding duties. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. As with managing other safeguarding risks, education settings should be alert to changes in a young person's behaviour that could indicate that they are in need of protection. Staff should use their professional judgement in identifying young people who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include making a referral to the Channel programme.

Our College safeguarding policy will therefore be written to comply with the College's duty under Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 in accordance with the Department of Education specific guidance for schools.

The College will ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead and other key staff are trained in spotting the possible signs of exploitation outlined in Appendix one and two (this is not an exhaustive or definitive list).

### **Upskirting**

“Upskirting” typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.

Although this harassment is known as “upskirting”, people of any gender can be victims. Photographs can be taken under any item of clothing including shorts and trousers.

College will educate and inform staff and students that such acts are illegal and will not be tolerated.

### **Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment including Peer on Peer Abuse**

The College recognises that allegations of sexual violence and sexual harassment are likely to be complex and require difficult professional decisions to be made.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two young people of any sex. They can also occur through a group of young people sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single young person or group of young people.

The departmental advice, when referring to sexual violence refers to sexual offences as described under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. This includes: rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault.

Sexual harassment is ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline. It is likely to violate a child’s dignity, and/or makes them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or creates a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

College is committed to creating an environment in which sexual violence, sexual harassment and peer on peer abuse are not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not perceived as an inevitable part of growing up.

College will not tolerate or dismiss sexual violence or sexual harassment as banter, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” and will challenge such behaviour through the College’s Student Charter and College’s Support and Disciplinary procedures.

Decisions will be made on a case by case basis with the Designated Safeguarding Lead taking a leading role, supported by other agencies such as Children’s Social Care and the Police as required .

### **Honour Based Violence (includes Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)**

Abuse committed in the context of preserving “honour” often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action College should take.

The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 was amended by the Serious Crime Act 2015 where the law was extended to:

- A non-UK national who is ‘habitually resident’ in the UK and commits such an offence abroad can now face a maximum penalty of 14 years imprisonment. It is also an offence to assist a non-UK resident to carry out FGM overseas on a girl who is habitually, rather than permanently, resident in the UK. This follows a number of cases where victims were unable to get justice as FGM was committed by those not permanently residing in the UK.
- Create a new offence of failing to protect a girl from the risk of FGM. Anyone convicted can face imprisonment for up to seven years and / or unlimited fine.
- Provide anonymity for the victims of FGM. Anyone identifying a victim can be subject to an unlimited fine.

The College recognises and adheres to its mandatory duty to report any suspected or known cases of FGM about a female under 18 years old to the police.

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead will maintain up to date knowledge of the Greater Manchester Safeguarding Partnership Protocol in relation to Female Genital Mutilation.

Forcing someone to marry against their will is a criminal offence. It also applies to UK nationals overseas who are at risk of becoming the victim of a forced marriage. Forced marriage can involve physical, psychological, emotional, financial and sexual abuse including being held unlawfully captive, assaulted and raped.

If College had concerns around a young person being a victim of this they would liaise with the Police and other external agencies to safeguard that young person.

### **Young People Missing from Education**

All staff should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a young person going missing in future. College puts in place appropriate safeguarding responses to young people who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

- Where reasonably possible, the College will hold two emergency contact numbers for each student. This goes beyond the legal minimum age of 17 and is good practice to give College additional options to make contact with a responsible adult when a young person is missing from education. This is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.
- Further information on College duties regarding children missing from education, including information Colleges must provide to the local authority when removing a young person from the College roll at standard and non-standard transition points can be found in the department's statutory guidance: [Children Missing Education](#).
- Further information for colleges providing education for a child of compulsory school age can be found in: [Full-time-Enrolment of 14 to 16 year olds in Further Education and Sixth Form Colleges](#).

### **Young People with Family Members in Prison**

Approximately 200,000 children have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. [NICCO](#) provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

### **Young Carers**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has responsibility for tracking and monitoring this vulnerable cohort of students and will report on them termly in relation to their academic progress, wellbeing and destinations. They will also attend or ensure there is College representation at appropriate external meetings as required.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Our child protection policy and procedures will be monitored and updated by:

- Governing Body visits to the College
- Student surveys and questionnaires
- Scrutiny of exclusion and attendance data
- Logs of peer on peer abuse, bullying / racist behaviour/ sexual violence and sexual harassment incidents



- Review of parental concerns
- Review of the use of intervention strategies, support and disciplinary procedures, support to study strategies and physical spaces such as the nurture room.
- SEMH Policy

**This policy should be read alongside the following policies relevant to the safety and welfare of our students:**

#### **Related Policies and Procedures**

- Bullying and Harassment and Sexual Violence of Students Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Allegations Against Staff
- Code of Conduct for College Staff
- Data Protection Policy
- Disclosure and Confidentiality Procedures
- e-Safety Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Physical Restraint and the Use of Reasonable Force and Stop and Search Policy
- Prevent Duty Risk Assessment
- Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy
- Procedures for dealing with Allegations Against Staff
- Social Networking Policy for Staff
- Staff Information and Communications User Agreement
- Staff Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health Policy (SEMH)
- Student Attendance Management Strategy
- Student Charter
- Student Exclusion Policy
- Student IT User Agreement
- Support to Study Policy
- Transgender Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

## Glossary

**A Child** A person who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

**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 who know 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.

### **Bullying & Cyberbullying**

Behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation

**Child Protection** activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

**Child Sexual Exploitation** is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

**Children with Special Educational Needs and/or disabilities** a child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

**Disability** a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

**Contextual Safeguarding** is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse.

**Criminal Exploitation** involves young people under the age of 18 in exploitative situations, relationships or contexts, where they may be manipulated or coerced into committing crime on behalf of an individual or gang in return for gifts, these may include: friendship or peer acceptance, but also cigarettes, drugs, alcohol or even food and accommodation.

**Domestic Abuse** is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

**Early Help** is intervening early and as soon as possible to tackle problems emerging for children, young people and families with a population most at risk of developing problems. Effective intervention may occur at any point in a child or young person's life.

**Emotional Abuse** -The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child 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.

**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** is a procedure where the female genitals are deliberately cut, injured or changed, but where there's no medical reason for this to be done.

**Gangs & Youth Violence** -Defining a gang is difficult. They tend to fall into three categories; peer groups, street gangs and organised crime groups. It can be common for groups of children and young people to gather together in public places to socialise, and although some peer group gatherings can lead to increased antisocial behaviour and low level youth offending, these activities should not be confused with the serious violence of a Street Gang.

A Street Gang can be described as a relatively durable, predominantly street-based group of children who see themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group for whom crime and violence is integral to the group's identity.

An organised criminal group is a group of individuals normally led by adults for whom involvement in crime is for personal gain (financial or otherwise).

**Hate** Hostility or prejudice based on one of the following things:

- disability
- race
- religion
- transgender identity
- sexual orientation.

Honour-based violence is a violent crime or incident which may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family or community.

**Neglect** is 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:

- 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.

**Peer on Peer Abuse** occurs when a young person is exploited, bullied and / or harmed by their peers who are the same or similar age; everyone directly involved in peer on peer abuse is under the age of 18.

**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.

**Private Fostering** is arrangement 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, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. (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.)

## **Radicalisation & Extremism**

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

Extremism is 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.

**Safeguarding** and promoting the welfare of young people;

- protecting young people from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of young people's health or development;
- ensuring that young people grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all young people to have the best outcomes.

**Sexting** is when someone shares sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others, or sends sexually explicit messages.

They can be sent using mobiles, tablets, smartphones, and laptops - any device that allows you to share media and messages.

**Sexual Abuse** involves forcing or enticing a young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.

They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children

**Teen Relationship Abuse** consists of the same patterns of coercive and controlling behaviour as domestic abuse. These patterns might include some or all of the following: sexual abuse, physical abuse, financial abuse, emotional abuse and psychological abuse.

**Trafficking** people is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control of another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or removal of organs.

## **Appendix I: Recognising signs of child abuse**

### **Signs of Abuse in Children:**

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

- Significant change in behaviour
- Extreme anger or sadness
- Aggressive and attention-seeking behaviour
- Suspicious bruises with unsatisfactory explanations
- Lack of self-esteem
- Self-injury
- Depression
- Age inappropriate sexual behaviour
- Child Sexual Exploitation.

### **Risk Indicators**

The factors described in this section 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, (or in the absence of all those individuals, an experienced colleague)
- May require consultation with and / or referral to Children's Services

The absence of such indicators does not mean that abuse or neglect has not occurred.

In an abusive relationship the child may:

- Appear frightened of the parent/s
- 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 or misusing substances
- Persistently refuse to allow access on home visits
- Be involved in 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.

### **Recognising Physical Abuse**

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 and A&E departments
- Reluctance to give information or mention previous injuries

## **Bruising**

Young people can have accidental bruising, but the following must be considered as non-accidental unless there is evidence or an adequate explanation provided:

- Any bruising to a pre-crawling or pre-walking baby
- Bruising in or around the mouth, particularly in small babies which may indicate force feeding
- 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
- The outline of an object used e.g. belt marks, hand prints or a hair brush
- Bruising or tears around, or behind, the earlobe/s indicating injury by pulling or twisting
- Bruising around the face
- Grasp marks on small children
- Bruising on the arms, buttocks and thighs may be an indicator of sexual abuse

## **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.

A medical opinion should be sought where there is any doubt over the origin of the bite.

## **Burns and Scalds**

It can be difficult to distinguish between accidental and non-accidental burns and scalds, and will always require experienced medical opinion. Any burn with a clear outline may be suspicious e.g.:

- Circular burns from cigarettes (but may be friction burns if along the bony protuberance of the spine)
- Linear burns from hot metal rods or electrical fire elements
- Burns of uniform depth over a large area
- Scalds that have a line indicating immersion or poured liquid (a child getting into hot water is his/her own accord will struggle to get out and cause splash marks)
- Old scars indicating previous burns/scalds which did not have appropriate treatment or adequate explanation

## **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

## **Scars**

A large number of scars or scars of different sizes or ages, or on different parts of the body, may suggest abuse.

## **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
- Abnormal attachment between a child and parent/carer e.g. anxious, indiscriminate or not attachment
- Indiscriminate attachment or failure to attach

- Aggressive behaviour towards others
- Scapegoated within the family
- Frozen watchfulness, particularly in pre-school children
- Low self esteem and lack of confidence
- Withdrawn or seen as a “loner” – difficulty relating to others

## **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.

### **Some 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
- Involvement in prostitution or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners
- An anxious unwillingness to remove clothes e.g. for sports events (but this may be related to cultural norms or physical difficulties)

### **Some physical indicators associated with this form of abuse are:**

- Pain or itching of genital area
- Blood on underclothes
- 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 disease, presence of semen on vagina, anus, external genitalia or clothing

## **Sexual Abuse by Young People**

The boundary between what is abusive and what is part of normal childhood or youthful experimentation can be blurred. The determination of whether behaviour is developmental, inappropriate or abusive will hinge around the related concepts of true consent, power imbalance and exploitation. This may include young people who exhibit a range of sexually problematic behaviour such as indecent exposure, obscene telephone calls, fetishism, bestiality and sexual abuse against adults, peers or children.

Developmental Sexual Activity encompasses those actions that are to be expected from children and young people as they move from infancy through to an adult understanding of their physical, emotional and behavioural relationships with each other. Such sexual activity is essentially information gathering and experience testing. It is characterised by mutuality and of the seeking of consent.

Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour can be inappropriate socially, inappropriate to development, or both. In considering whether behaviour fits into this category, it is important to consider what negative effects it has on any of the parties involved and what concerns it raises about a child or young person. It should be recognised that some actions may be motivated by information seeking, but still cause significant upset, confusion, worry, physical damage, etc. It may also be that the behaviour is “acting out” which may derive from other sexual situations to which the child or young person has been exposed.

If an act appears to have been inappropriate, there may still be a need for some form of behaviour management or intervention. For some children, educative inputs may be enough to address the behaviour.



Abusive sexual activity included any behaviour involving coercion, threats, aggression together with secrecy, or where one participant relies on an unequal power base.

### **Assessment**

In order to more fully determine the nature of the incident the following factors should be given consideration. The presence of exploitation in terms of:

- Equality – consider differentials of physical, cognitive and emotional development, power and control and authority, passive and assertive tendencies
- Consent – agreement including all the following:
  - Understanding that is proposed based on age, maturity, development level, functioning and experience
  - Knowledge of society's standards for what is being proposed
  - Awareness of potential consequences and alternatives
  - Assumption that agreements or disagreements will be respected equally
  - Voluntary decision
  - Mental competence
- Coercion – the young perpetrator who abuses may use techniques like bribing, manipulation and emotional threats of secondary gains and losses that is loss of love, friendship, etc. Some may use physical force, brutality or the threat of these regardless of victim resistance.

In evaluating sexual behaviour of children and young people, the above information should be used only as a guide.

### **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
- A young person is seen to be listless, apathetic and irresponsible with no apparent medical cause
- Failure of young person to grow within normal expected pattern, with accompanying weight loss
- A young person thrives away from home environment
- Frequently absent from school
- Living with adults who are intoxicated or violent
- Being abandoned or left alone for excessive periods

### **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
- 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
- having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- contact with known perpetrators

- 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
- 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
- getting involved in crime
- police involvement, police records
- involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership
- injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault.

## Appendix II

### Forced Marriage (FM)

This 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. Whistle-blowing may come from younger siblings. Other indicators may be detected by changes in adolescent behaviours. Never attempt to intervene directly as a school or through a third party.

### Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

It is essential that staff are aware of FGM practices and the need to look for signs, symptoms and other indicators of FGM.

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.

### Why is it carried out?

Belief that:

- FGM brings status/respect to the girl – social acceptance for marriage
- 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/tradition
- Helps girls be clean / hygienic
- Is cosmetically desirable
- Mistakenly believed to make childbirth easier

### Circumstances and occurrences 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 Leon, Egypt, Nigeria, Eritrea as well as non-African communities including Yemeni, Afghani, Kurdistan, Indonesia and Pakistan)
- 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 sit still and looking uncomfortable
- 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 infection
- Disclosure

### The 'One Chance' rule

As with Forced Marriage there is the 'One Chance' rule. It is essential that the College takes action without delay.