

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Author: Designated Safeguarding and Welfare Lead

Equality Assessment: DSL Lead

Date: August 2025

Version and Date		Actions/Notes
1	08/2024	Updates from Keeping Children Safe in Educational 2024 (KCSIE) Job titles and roles Removal of Definitions of abuse (referred to Child Protection and Adults at Risk Policy) Updated Terms of Reference for the Safeguarding Strategy Group Addition of Cheshire East's signs of abuse
2.0	09/2025	Updates from latest Government Guidance Job Titles and roles Addition of "What happens when" flow chart

Approved by SMT: September 2025

Approved by Corporation: October 2025

Date of Next Review: August 2026

Related policies or procedures or parent policy if applicable:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Prevent Duty Guidance 2023
- Department of Education's Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges (2023)
- CESCB Procedures Manual
- Child & Adults at Risk Protection Policy and Procedures
- Work Related Learning Policy
- Health and Safety General Statement
- Risk Assessment documentation
- Safer Recruitment & Vetting Policy and Procedures
- PASS Programme Scheme of Work
- Student Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy
- Staff Disciplinary Procedures
- Staff Professional Practice Guidelines
- Student Behaviour Policy and Procedures
- Mental Health Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- AI Policy Social Media Policy

Groups/bodies consulted in the development of the policy: Safeguarding Children in Educational Settings team (SCiES)

To be published on College Website: Yes

To be published on Student Hub: Yes

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Purpose

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners in this college make sure their approach is child centred. This means that we consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

Objectives

No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. Through our day-to-day contact with students and direct work with families, staff take notice of indicators of possible abuse or neglect and consult with Children's Services in Cheshire East (or in neighbouring authorities dependent upon the child's area of residence). We recognise that we form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This responsibility also means that we are aware of the behaviour of staff in the college; we maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'** where safeguarding is concerned. In our college we ensure that:

- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, are treated equally and have equal rights to protection
- All staff act on concerns or disclosures that may suggest a child is at risk of harm
- All staff are professionally curious and feel able to challenge decisions to ensure children receive the right support
- Students and staff involved in Safeguarding issues receive appropriate support
- Staff adhere to the Colleague code of conduct and understand what to do in the event of any allegations against any adult working in the setting
- All staff are aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label; they recognise that, in most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another
- All staff understand that children's poor behaviour may be a sign they are suffering harm or that they have been traumatised by abuse.
- Staff have received advice, support and training in regard to adverse childhood experiences and trauma informed practice
- The provision of a safe and healthy environment for students in which to learn
- Delivering an appropriate safeguarding curriculum through tutorial and learning programmes
- Ensuring Human Resources policies and procedures contain effective safeguarding measures
- Appropriately meeting the needs of vulnerable students (those at risk of not achieving due to negative external factors or non-academic issues such as homelessness, cared for, care leavers).
- Having appropriate measures in place to challenge and minimise the impact of bullying and harassment
- Dealing effectively with concerns relating to the protection of children and adults at risk, including having due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism

- This policy is available on our college website and printed copies of this document are available to parents upon request. We inform parents and carers about this policy when their children join our college and through our college newsletter.

The policy is provided to all staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) at induction, alongside our Staff Code of Conduct. The safeguarding induction will cover online safety which details expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring, the role of the DSL, Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 and Annexe B, Student behaviour policy (including bullying) safeguarding response for those children who go missing from education and staff code of conduct (including whistleblowing and social media).

The Designated Lead is able to support all staff in understanding their responsibilities and implementing it in their practice.

Aims of this document

- To provide staff with the framework to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children and in doing so ensure they meet their statutory responsibilities
- To ensure consistent good practice across the college
- To demonstrate our commitment to protecting children
- To raise the awareness, of all staff, of the need to safeguard all children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse
- To emphasise the need for good communication between all members of staff in matters relating to child protection
- To promote safe practice and encourage challenge for poor and unsafe practice
- To promote effective working relationships with other agencies involved with safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, especially with Children's Social Care and the Police
- To ensure that all members of the college community are aware of our procedures for ensuring staff suitability to work with children
- To ensure that staff understand their responsibility to support children who have suffered abuse in accordance with their agreed plan e.g. extra / targeted help, child in need/ child protection plan.

The Corporation recognises it has a statutory and moral duty to ensure that Macclesfield College functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of **ALL** students receiving education and training at the College. The College's Safeguarding Policy is approved by the Corporation. There is a nominated Member of the Corporation who receives additional training in Safeguarding matters and who is a Member of the Safeguarding Strategy Committee.

Scope

This policy applies to all members of the college community (including staff, students, volunteers, supply teachers, parents/carers, visitors, agency staff or anyone working on behalf of Macclesfield College

This policy is consistent with Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership (CESCP) child protection procedures.

Responsibility: The Corporation
Principal
Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)
Safeguarding Strategy Committee

POLICY

Safeguarding at a strategic level is led by the Principal with additional support from 6 Managers responsible for a specific area of safeguarding. The areas are:

- HR policies and practices including staff recruitment - Director of Human Resources and Culture
- Protection of Children and Adults at Risk – Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Tutorial Curriculum – Director of Student Services and Support
- Online Safety – IT Manager
- Health and Safety – Director of Estates
- Educational Visits – Director of Estates
- Work Placement – Director of Employer Enterprise and Commercial Services

The College will achieve the objectives of Safeguarding by ensuring:

HR Policies and Practices

- That robust Human Resources policies are adhered to and monitored through staff induction and appraisals
- The practice of safe recruitment in checking the suitability of all staff, volunteers and service providers to work with all student groups, including identity checks and valid references is adhered to
- All governors, staff, volunteers and service providers have an up-to-date DBS check at the appropriate level compliant with the College's agreed HR policies. This also applies to College nominated governors of the Academy
- All staff are aware of what constitutes inappropriate relationships with students and that it is a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (abuse of position of trust) to enter into a sexual relationship with students under 18, even if that relationship is consensual
- All staff, volunteers and governors have appropriate safeguarding training for their level of responsibility

Tutorial Curriculum

- The Anti-Bullying and Harassment and the student behaviour policies and procedures are adhered to and monitored
- All students will receive tutorial support appropriate to their age, stage and programme and tutorial programmes are designed to support students' learning and development
- The establishment of a learning environment where students feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to whilst they learn and develop
- That Parents/Carers are informed of the College's Safeguarding policy and Child Protection policy and procedures in a timely manner

Child Protection and Adults at Risk

- Separate Child and Adult at Risk Protection Policy and Procedures are adhered to
- All staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and their responsibility for referring any concerns to the DSL / Child Protection Officers
- Students are informed of the support available if they are worried or have concerns

Health and Safety

- Appropriate training and guidance is provided to all staff and students to ensure they understand their responsibilities with regards to evacuation / lockdown
- Appropriate systems of inspection, monitoring and review are maintained
- That staff, students and visitors follow safe working practices at all times
- Health and Safety Inductions for all students are comprehensive and monitored

Work Placement

- That a robust Work Placement policy and procedures are adhered to and monitored
- That staff and students are provided with the appropriate training and students are supervised throughout their placement
- That all college pupils are provided with the appropriate guidance and support whilst on site and that staff are aware of the particular requirements of this cohort
- That all employers are fully briefed on their obligations relating to the College's Safeguarding Policy

E-Safety

- That a robust Online Safety policy and procedures are adhered to and monitored
- Students and staff are educated and supported in staying safe online which is the subject of a specific Online-Safety Policy - *Filtering and Monitoring standards*
- The college will provide a safe environment to learn and work, including when online. A member of the senior leadership team and a governor will have overall strategic responsibility for filtering and monitoring ensuring these standards are met. They will do this by:
 - Procuring filtering and monitoring systems
 - Documenting decisions on what is blocked or allowed and why
 - Reviewing the effectiveness of our provision
 - Overseeing reports

They are also responsible for making sure that all staff:

- Understand their role
- Are appropriately trained
- Follow policies, processes and procedures
- Act on reports and concerns

Senior leaders do work closely with governors or proprietors, the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and IT service providers in all aspects of filtering and monitoring. Day to day management of filtering and monitoring systems requires the specialist knowledge of both safeguarding and IT staff to be effective. The DSL works closely together with IT service providers to meet the needs of our setting

The DSL takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and online safety, which could include overseeing and acting on:

- Filtering and monitoring reports
- Safeguarding concerns
- Checks to filtering and monitoring systems

The IT service provider has technical responsibility for:

- Maintaining filtering and monitoring systems
- Providing filtering and monitoring reports
- Completing actions following concerns or checks to systems

The IT service provider should work with the senior leadership team and DSL to:

- Procure systems
- Identify risk
- Carry out reviews
- Carry out checks

Apprenticeship

- Apprentices are appropriately trained and risk assessed in the work place
- That all employers are fully briefed on their obligations relating to the College's Safeguarding Policy

Safeguarding Training

In all cases Human Resources will work with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, to ensure that all staff receive the appropriate training in a timely manner and that all training is reviewed annually.

Training for staff will include the following:

- The Principal, DSL, nominated governor and nominated deputies attend the required multi agency Child Protection training and thereafter refresher training at 2 yearly intervals
- All full time and part time staff are provided with basic awareness training for Safeguarding at induction and receive additional training as appropriate (with a maximum of 3 years between sessions)
- Temporary (hourly paid) staff and volunteers are provided with information on the College's arrangements for Safeguarding and their personal responsibilities
- Training on the correct use of technology, how to identify hazards, how to deal with them and the safe working practices for social network sites
- Training on safe recruitment procedures as appropriate
- Training on the Anti-Bullying and Harassment policy and procedures
- Training on the Student Behaviour policy and procedures in conjunction with the Fitness to Study Policy
- Health and Safety inductions for new staff
- Training as appropriate for conducting risk assessments

Training for students will include:

- E-Safety Training
- Tutorials concerning Safeguarding Topics and Fundamental British Values

There is a proactive approach to substance misuse. Issues of drugs and substance misuse are recorded, there are related policies and a curriculum which is robustly delivered throughout the college

Review & Reporting

Strategic issues regarding Child Protection, Anti-Bullying and Harassment and Prevent issues will be discussed by the Safeguarding Strategy Committee termly to determine trends.

Child Protection, Anti-Bullying and Harassment and Prevent operational issues will be reported to the Senior Management Team monthly.

A termly report on how the College is achieving the objectives of the Safeguarding Policy will be presented to the Safeguarding Strategy Committee.

The Corporation will receive an annual report in December with a midyear report in March/April.

This policy and related activity will be subject to an annual review by the Safeguarding Strategy Committee, which will make any appropriate recommendations to the Corporation.

Please see Appendix 1 for the terms of reference for the Safeguarding Strategy Committee.

Record Keeping

Records must be kept of all stages of any allegation, suspicion or incident of child abuse/concern and the subsequent investigation. These will be kept securely within Student Central in relation to external abuser.

There will be further records kept within HR in relation to allegations against staff members. Copies should not be kept by the originating division. Records will be kept for the appropriate length of time in line with GDPR 2018 guidelines.

Anti-Bullying and Harassment records will be held centrally by the Designated Safeguarding Lead until the student leaves College, at which point they will be added to the student file and retained in line with GDPR 2018 guidelines.

Early Help

All staff understand the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership (CESCP) 'Threshold of Need Guidance' and Child Protection procedures; Right Help, Right Time - Delivering effective support for children and families in Cheshire East, Multi Agency Threshold of Need Guide to ensure that the needs of our children are effectively assessed; decisions are based on a child's development needs, parenting capacity and family & environmental factors. We ensure that the most appropriate referrals are made. We actively support multi agency planning for these children and, in doing so, provide information from the child's point of view; bringing their lived experience to life as evidenced by observations or information provided. Staff know how to pass on any concerns no matter how trivial they seem.

Staff members always act in the interests of the child and are aware of their responsibility to act as outlined in this policy. In our college staff are aware that they must be prepared to identify those children who may benefit from early help. The staff are alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- Is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- Has special educational needs (whether they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan or do not)
- Has a mental health need
- Is a young carer
- Is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups and county lines
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from education, care or home
- 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
- Has returned home to their family from care
- Is at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- Is a 'privately fostered child'
- Is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the college day.

If there are concerns about a child's welfare that do not meet the thresholds of child abuse the college will consider whether the Early Help approach should be considered. Trained staff are aware that early identification of concerns and the use of Early Help to develop a multi-agency plan for the child can reduce the risk of subsequent abuse.

This support can be provided on a single agency basis or a multi-agency basis. The stepped approach aims to reduce risk and vulnerability and meet needs at the appropriate level of support and/or intervention. Access to effective early intervention and prevention services is essential to achieving this.

Our college is an Operation Encompass setting which means that we are able to give proactive support to those children and their families where domestic abuse is identified

If a member of staff has concerns about a child, they will need to decide what action to take. Where possible, there should be a conversation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead to

agree a course of action, although any staff member can make a referral to Children's Social Care/consult with Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS)/contact the police.

Other options could include referral to specialist services or early help services and should be made in accordance with the referral threshold set by Cheshire East's Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Early Help, Child in Need and Child Protection

In our college we ensure that we follow Cheshire East's Multi-agency Practice Standards Agency roles and responsibilities to ensure that our work, on behalf of our children, is of a consistently good standard. We use these standards to challenge other workers on behalf of children where the standards are not being met. The Principal and the DSL are aware of the Cheshire East Escalation Procedure

Concerns about a Child - Recording and Reporting

Our recording procedures are in line with those outlined in Cheshire East's "Recording and Reporting Guidance" 2024; the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Lead are aware of this document.

Where a member of staff is concerned that a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, they should report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or their Deputy, without delay. A written record should be made of these concerns as soon as possible following the disclosure/concern being raised; this must be on the same working day.

Where staff have conversations with a child who discloses abuse, they follow the basic principles:

- Listen rather than directly question, remain calm
- Never stop a child who is recalling significant events
- Never ask a child if they are being abused
- Make a record of the discussion to include time, place, persons present and what was said (child language – do not substitute words)
- Advise you will have to pass the information on
- Avoid coaching/prompting
- Never take photographs of any injury
- Never undress a child to physically examine them
- Allow time and provide a safe haven / quiet area for future support
- At no time promise confidentiality to a child or adult
- All victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward and that they will be supported and kept safe
- Nor should a victim ever be made to feel they are a problem or ashamed for making a report
- Where abuse has occurred online or outside of the college it will be treated equally seriously.

Staff are aware that they should not question the child; other than to respond with **TED**:

Tell me what you mean by that,
Explain what you mean by that,
Describe that.

Staff will observe and listen, but do not probe/ask any leading questions.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will obtain key information and agree relevant actions after making a timely assessment of the information.

We recognise that parents may hold key information about incidents/allegations therefore, **in the majority of situations; the Designated Safeguarding Lead will speak to the parents and gain their consent** to discussing the situation with others. Staff are aware that there will be very few instances where, to speak to the parents, it could further endanger the child. In those situations, they would still consult/refer, but would have clearly recorded reasons as to why they had not gained parental consent.

The following situations are the instances in which parental consent would not be gained prior to a referral:

- Discussion would impede a police investigation or social work enquiry
- Sexual abuse is suspected
- Organised or multiple abuse is suspected
- Fabrication or induced illness or perplexing presentations is suspected
- Honour Based Abuse e.g. forced marriage, FGM etc. is a possibility/is suspected

Additional consideration re parental consent would be needed in the following circumstances, particularly if there are concerns around parental involvement or influence:

- Extremism or radicalisation is suspected
- County Lines activities are suspected

Staff are also aware that, even in situations where the parent does not give consent, the best interests of the child are paramount and therefore, they would share their concerns. In addition, the referral will not be delayed if it has not been possible to contact the parents/carers.

For non-urgent contact for a referral or request to the front door, the **appropriate portal form** needs to be completed. There is one for children's social care where you feel the child / young person has reached their threshold for support (**upper tier Targeted Help and Statutory / Specialist Help**).

Immediate Safeguarding Concerns

Phone – 0300 123 5012

Option 3 – Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS)

Choose Option 2 – ChECS / Immediate Safeguarding concerns.

Anything you submit to ChECS that is deemed as meeting threshold for social care will be processed within either 2 hours or 24 hours as per statutory guidelines dependant on risk.

A consultation will take place with Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS) and/or the police immediately. Where a child lives in a different authority the Designated Safeguarding Lead follows the procedures for that authority.

Where possible we ensure that contacts with outside agencies are through the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their Deputy; however, staff are aware that anyone can make this contact. Where a member of staff makes contact, they ensure that they make the Designated Safeguarding Lead aware as soon as possible.

Safeguarding records are held electronically and as hard copies.

Safeguarding and Child Protection records are stored securely and are separate from the main pupil file. Authorisation to access these records is controlled by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, information should be kept confidential.

The college ensures that safeguarding information, including Child Protection information, is stored and handled in line with the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

Where children leave the college, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should ensure their safeguarding file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. This allows the new school or college to have support in place for when the child arrives.

We also ensure that key workers or social workers are notified where a child leaves the college (as appropriate).

Safer Working Practices

Use of Mobile Phones, Cameras and Internet

The College and staff take safeguarding seriously and understand this policy is over- arching. We refer staff to the 'Staff use of mobile phones policy / guidance,' 'Social Media Policy', 'Code of Conduct' and 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with Children and Young People in Education Settings May 2022'.

Electronic devices should be password protected so that content cannot be accessed by unauthorised users.

Cameras, Photography and Images

Macclesfield College will obtain parents' and carers' *written consent* for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications).

Online Safety

On college equipment we ensure that appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place.

We refer you to our 'Online Safety Policy' which incorporates and considers the 4Cs as detailed in KCSIE 2024 to ensure an effective online policy.

Allegations Against Staff

Support and advice are sought from Children's Services or the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO), and our Director of Human Resources and Culture whenever necessary.

At Macclesfield College we recognise the possibility that adults working in the college; including directly employed staff, volunteers, governors and supply teachers, may harm children; that they may have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Any concerns of this nature, about the conduct of other adults, should be taken to the Principal without delay or, where that is a concern about the Principal, to the Chair of Governors and the LADO.

Staff are aware that this must be done on the same working day.

The college will not internally investigate until instructed by the LADO.

We make all staff aware of their duty to raise concerns.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them. They have been made aware of those other channels of support

As part of our whole college approach to safeguarding we promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about adults working in or on behalf of the college (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately. This includes allegations which do not meet the harms threshold, also known as low level concerns.

Low-level concerns

We understand that the term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the college may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and
- Does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- Being over friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to college policy

- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, or
- Humiliating pupils.

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

Low-level concerns will be reported in the same way as a concern in relation to concerns and allegations that meet the harms test i.e. to the DSL/ Director of Human Resources or, chair of governors if the concern is about the principal.

Records of low-level concerns will be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified and responded to.

Where a pattern of behaviour is identified, the Principal will decide on a course of action. This might be internal disciplinary procedures, or referral to the LADO if the harm threshold is met.

The Principal will consider if there are any wider cultural issues in college that enabled the behaviour to occur and if appropriate policies could be revised or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of recurrence.

Safer Recruitment

The college pays full regard to DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2024 and with reference to the 'Position of Trust' offence (Sexual Offences Act 2003). We ensure that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works in the college who is likely to be perceived by the children as a safe and trustworthy adult.

We do this by:

- Operating safer recruitment practices, following the guidance in Section 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024
- Ensuring that staff and volunteers adhere to a published code of conduct and other professional standards at all times. Staff are aware of social media/on-line conduct policies
- Ensuring that all staff and other adults on site are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationship with pupils and parents, following our code of conduct, staff handbook
- Requiring all staff to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings that may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment at the setting). Disqualification under the Child Care Act 2006 (amended following the 2018 Regulations)
- Maintaining an accurate, complete, up to date Single Central Record

Cared for children (Looked after children) and previously cared for children

In Macclesfield College we ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep Cared for Children safe as we are aware that children often become cared for as a result of abuse and/or neglect. We have identified a designated teacher for our Cared for Children; this person works closely with the Virtual School.

Children with Special Needs and Disabilities

We ensure that staff are aware that children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online

and offline. We ensure that staff have knowledge and understanding of the additional barriers which can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in children with special needs/disabilities. These barriers can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- These children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children
- Children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by things like bullying - without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers
- Cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in college or the consequences of doing so.

We aim to build the necessary skills in staff so that they can safeguard and respond to the specific needs of this group of children.

The use of 'Reasonable Force'

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in schools and colleges to use reasonable force to safeguard children. 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. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'.

We have a key emphasis on de-escalation and only use physical touch to prevent a child or others being harmed. If we do this, we ensure that it is for the shortest time necessary.

Where it has been necessary to use physical intervention, we ensure the following:

- The child's wellbeing after the event is monitored and supported
- Parents are fully briefed
- The incident is fully recorded including antecedents, de-escalation attempted, and holds used.
- An individual plan is agreed and recorded so that it is clear what will happen should a similar situation arise in the future
- Any incident involving the restraint of a child is always reported to an identified senior member of staff

At Macclesfield College staff have received training in de-escalation.

Private Fostering

Private Fostering is a type of 'Kinship Care'. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 provides further examples of this type of care and information and guidance around supporting children living in these arrangements. To support kinship carers, the role of virtual heads will be extended to supporting every child in the care of friends or family.

We recognise that our college has a mandatory duty to report to the local authority when we become aware of, or suspect that, a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement. To aid our awareness we ensure that we establish parental responsibility for every child; we take steps to verify the relationship of the adults to the child when we register them.

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, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.

A close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and stepparents (by marriage or where a legal order has been made, such as a Child Arrangement Order); it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.

Parents and private foster carers both have a legal duty to inform the relevant local authority at least six weeks before the arrangement is due to start; not to do so is a criminal offence. Whilst most privately fostered children are appropriately supported and looked after, we recognise that they are a potentially vulnerable group who should be monitored by the local authority, particularly when the child has come from another country. In some cases, privately fostered children are affected by abuse and neglect, or are involved in trafficking, child sexual exploitation or modern-day slavery.

Where a member of staff becomes aware of private fostering arrangements, they are aware that they need to notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will then speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform Cheshire East. The college would also inform Cheshire East of the private fostering arrangements.

Children who need a Social Worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse and/or neglect and/or exploitation and/or complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead will be aware of the fact a child has a social worker and will use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes.

Where children need a social worker, this should inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).

Children Requiring Mental Health Support

We recognise that colleges have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their learners.

Staff are aware of how experiences of children can affect emotional wellbeing, mental health and college attendance. We acknowledge that 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. In our college we have a senior mental health lead and mental health first aiders who can be a point of contact and support within college. They can seek additional advice and support from the Local Authority Well-being for Education Lead and the Mental Health Support Team

We ensure we have specific training and clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.

Educational Outcomes

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead ensures that staff know the children who have experienced or are experiencing welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues so that, as relevant, we know who these children are, understand their academic progress and attainment; this means that we are able to make necessary adjustments to help these children to achieve. In this way we maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort. This includes children with a social worker and those previously known to social care; we ensure that teachers are made aware of those children in this category.

Specific Safeguarding Issues

All staff have an awareness of safeguarding issues. They are aware that these safeguarding issues may not directly involve the child in our college but could be happening to their siblings or parents this includes the importance of understanding intra-familial harms and support for siblings where there is intrafamilial harm. They are also aware that some issues could be happening in the lives of staff members.

As a college that promotes a strong culture of safeguarding and being alert to the signs and indicators of abuse and harm in children, staff would be aware of the following issues identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 (Part One and Annexe B) and would know how to identify and respond to them:

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional
- Neglect
- Child abduction and community safety incidents
- Children and the Court System
- Children with family members in prison / custody
- Cyber crime
- Homelessness
- Drug/substance/alcohol misuse (both pupil and parent)
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- County lines
- Serious violence

- Extremism and Radicalisation, including Prevent and Channel
- Children missing from education
- Domestic abuse
- Child-on-child relationship abuse/Teenage Relationship Abuse
- Child-on-child abuse
- Nudes and Semi Nudes
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges
- Problematic and Harmful Sexual Behaviour
- Sexual health needs
- Obesity/malnutrition
- Online grooming
- Inappropriate behaviour of staff towards children
- Bullying, including homophobic, racist, gender and disability. Breaches of the Equality Act 2010
- Mental health issues including self-harm
- Honour based abuse including - Female Genital Mutilation, Breast Ironing, Forced Marriage
- Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children
- Child Trafficking
- Modern Slavery and National Referral Mechanism

Staff are aware that behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, domestic abuse, deliberately missing education and sharing nudes or semi-nudes put children in danger.

Staff at Macclesfield College take the safeguarding of each child very seriously. This means that, should they have any concerns of a safeguarding nature about a child or adult, they are expected to report, record and take the necessary steps to ensure that the child is safe and protected. This is never an easy action, nor one taken lightly. They are aware that it can lead to challenge from parents/carers, but at all times staff have the child at the heart of all their decisions and act in their best interests.

Further information on our safeguarding and related policy documents and procedures is available on request from the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

APPENDIX 1 - SAFEGUARDING STRATEGY COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. To review termly and assess the effectiveness and appropriateness of:
 - Any activity related to the Safeguarding Policy
 - Training undertaken by staff, volunteers and governors in relation to Safeguarding
 - The content of the Safeguarding Policy
 - The Safeguarding Action Plan
 - The Prevent risk assessment and action plan
2. To agree the annual and midyear report on the above with recommendations for developments. The report to be received and the recommendations considered by the Safeguarding Strategy Committee and forwarded to Macclesfield College Corporation.

Proposed Membership

Governor with responsibility for Safeguarding
Deputy Principal (Chair)
Director of Student Services and Inclusion
Designated Safeguarding and Welfare Lead
Centre Principals
Specialist Provision Lead
Director of Human Resources and Culture
Director of Estates and Capital Projects
Head of IT, MIS and Exams
Maxim Representative
Welfare Team Representative

APPENDIX 2 - SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE

(Please refer to Child Protection policy for definitions)

Physical Abuse

- Bruises, black eyes and broken bones.
- Unexplained or untreated injuries.
- Injuries to unusual body parts e.g. thighs, back, abdomen.
- Bruising that resembles hand/finger marks.
- Burns/scalds.
- Human bites/cigarette burns.
- Injuries that the child cannot explain or explains unconvincingly.
- Injuries in babies and non-mobile children

Neglect

- Excessive hunger
- Inadequate or insufficient clothing
- Poor personal or dental hygiene
- Untreated medical issues
- Changes in weight or being excessively under or overweight
- Low self-esteem, attachment issues, depression or self-harm
- Poor relationships with peers
- Self-soothing behaviours that may not be age-appropriate (e.g. rocking, hair-twisting, thumb-sucking)
- Changes to school performance or attendance

Symptoms of abuse

Sexual Abuse

- Bruising, particularly to the thighs, buttocks and upper arms and marks on the neck
- Bleeding, pain or itching in the genital area
- Difficulty in walking or sitting
- Sudden change in behaviour or school performance
- Displays of affection that are sexual or not age-appropriate
- Use of sexually explicit language that is not age-appropriate
- Alluding to having a secret that cannot be revealed
- Bedwetting or incontinence
- Reluctance to undress around others (e.g. for PE lessons)
- Infections, unexplained genital discharge, or sexually transmitted diseases
- Unexplained gifts or money
- Self-harming
- Poor concentration, withdrawal, sleep disturbance
- Reluctance to be alone with a particular person

Emotional Abuse

- Concerning interactions between parents or carers and the child (e.g. overly critical or lack of affection)
- Lack of self-confidence or self-esteem
- Sudden speech disorders
- Self-harm or eating disorders
- Lack of empathy shown to others (including cruelty to animals)
- Drug, alcohol or other substance misuse
- Change of appetite, weight loss/gain
- Signs of distress: tearfulness, anger

Behaviours

- | | |
|---|--|
| • Marked change in general behaviour | Lack of self-confidence or self-esteem |
| • Extremely passive/aggressive | Self-harm or eating disorders |
| • Sleeping difficulties | Eating disorder |
| • Lethargy/tiredness | Fear of certain adults |
| • Poor social relationships | Attendance difficulties |
| • Disclosure | Self-harm |
| • Withdrawn/withdrawn from family and friends | |



Flowchart of procedures for responding to a safeguarding concern

