

POLICY: Learner Safeguarding Policy

1. **Purpose:** Stoke on Trent College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff, Governors, volunteers and Partners working in College to share this commitment.

2. **Scope**

These procedures have been developed to ensure that the Governing Body complies with statutory duties under Section 175 of the Education Act and in response to Government statutory guidance, including Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 and Keeping Children Safe in Education, Statutory Guidance 2016 (KCSiE) about the College’s role in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults attending the College.

For the purpose of these procedures, the term ‘young people’ refers to anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate for children and young people does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection under the Children Act 1989. The Act gives every child the right to protection from all forms of abuse and exploitation and the right to have enquiries made to safeguard their welfare and wellbeing.

A ‘vulnerable adult’ is someone aged 18 years and over who is, or may be, affected by a physical or mental impairment or learning difficulty. In this procedure the terms ‘child’, ‘young person’ or ‘vulnerable adult’ will be used as appropriate.

Definitions for the purpose of this procedure

2.1 **Early Help Assessment (EHA)**

The EHA is a standardised approach to assessing young people’s needs for services. It is targeted at those young people with unmet additional needs and where there are concerns around their wellbeing, including those at risk of achieving poor outcomes. The EHA has been developed nationally for use by practitioners in all agencies to facilitate communication and working together. It is particularly for use where a multi-agency approach is required to help to identify problems before they become serious, through the creation of a team around the child.

2.2 **Safeguarding**

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

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

Child Protection

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

2.3 Definitions of Abuse

Definition of abuse updated in KCSiE, Sept 16, to reflect updated departmental guidance. **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 institution or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (eg via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children’.

All staff should be aware safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), gender based violence/sexual assaults and sexting. Staff should be clear as to the college procedure with regards to peer on peer abuse. All concerns of this nature should be reported to the Safeguarding Team.

The Children’s Act 1989 recognises four categories of abuse – physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect and sexual abuse, including sexual exploitation.

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues – some of which are listed below. Staff should be aware that behaviours linked to the likes of drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put children in danger.

a. Physical Abuse

This is actual or likely physical injury to a child/individual, or failure to prevent physical injury (or suffering) to a child/individual. This may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocation 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.

b. Emotional Abuse

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This is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far 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 the child’s developmental capability, as well as over protection 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 to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploration or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

c. Neglect

This is the persistent failure to meet a child’s/individuals 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 parents or carer, failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter and failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger. It is also failing to ensure adequate supervision and access to appropriate care or treatment. It may also include the neglect of, on lack of response to a child’s basic emotional needs.

d. Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child/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.

Additional forms of Abuse

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Child Sexual Exploitation

Involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive “something” (food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of performing sexual activities and/ or another performing sexual activities on them.

Can occur through use of technology without the child's immediate recognition eg persuasion to post sexual images on the internet/mobile with no immediate payment or gain.

Those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by age, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common

It is unlikely that concerns about possible sexual exploration are as a result of a one off incident.

Peer on Peer Abuse

Staff should recognise that children/young people are capable of abusing their peers. The College will take any concerns of this nature very seriously and concerns should be raised in the same way as any other concerns, directly to the Safeguarding Team. Peer on peer abuse can take the form of bullying (including cyber-bullying) sexting and any other form of sexual or physical abuse. Gender based issues can also occur for example girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence.

Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is an unacceptable form of abuse and violence against girls and women; it is known as female circumcision and is illegal in the UK. FGM is practised in at least 28 African countries as well as countries in Middle East and Asia.

Research in the UK has identified three key communities, Somalis, Kenyans and Nigerians. These groups have both a higher prevalence of FGM and a significant UK Population. The practice tends to occur in areas of high populations of FGM practising communities. Professionals need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffering FGM. The practice is usually carried out on girls between infancy and 15 years. Under the updated Keeping Children Safe in Education, Sept 2016 ‘If a **teacher**, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of Female Genital Mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 the **teacher** must report this to the police’. In college this can be done with the support of the Safeguarding Team.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/31/contents>

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Breast Ironing

In the procedure, hot objects, including stones and hammers, are used to pound and beat girls’ breasts to stop them growing, in the belief it makes them less desirable to men and discourages premarital pregnancy. Breast ironing originated in Cameroon, where it affects as many as one in four girls. It also takes place in Nigeria, Benin and Chad. It is typically carried out by the girl's mother who will say she is trying to protect the girl from sexual harassment and rape, to prevent early pregnancy that would tarnish the family name, or to allow the girl to pursue education rather than be forced into early marriage.

As well as extreme pain, the practice can cause tissue damage and some medical experts have warned it could contribute towards breast cancer, cysts, abscesses and lead to problems with breastfeeding.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Breast_ironing

Domestic Abuse

The impact on the young person of witnessing, hearing or being subject to domestic abuse which is known to cause emotional distress.

Hidden Harm

The effects on the young person as a result of a parent or carers misuse of substances such as drugs or alcohol.

Self-Harm

The NICE (2004) self-harm definition: ‘the definition of self-harm is intentional self-poisoning or self-injury, irrespective of the apparent purpose of the act. Self-harm includes cutting, poisoning, asphyxiation, burning and other self-inflicted injuries’. Self-harm can also include eating disorders, risk-taking behaviour and drug and alcohol issues. Self-harm is often a coping mechanism, an individual harms their physical self to deal with emotional pain or to break feelings of numbness. Self-harm can become a natural response to the stresses of day-to-day life and can escalate in frequency and severity.

All instances of self-harm should be referred to a Mentor who will liaise with the Safeguarding Team. There are various external agencies who can become involved in order to support a young person.

Teenage Relationship Abuse

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Abuse in young people’s relationships can involve the same forms of controlling and coercive behaviour, physical, emotional, psychological, financial and sexual violence and abuse as seen in adult relationships.

Forced Marriage

A marriage conducted without the valid consent of both parties where duress (emotional pressure in addition to physical abuse) is a factor.

Radicalisation /Extremism(Prevent)

Is the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism. Keeping Children Safe in Education (March 2015) states: ‘The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act, which received Royal Assent on 12 February 2015, places a duty on specified authorities, including local authorities and childcare, education and other children’s services providers, in the exercise of their functions, to have ‘due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism’ (“the Prevent duty”).

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 will also place a duty on local authorities to ensure Channel panels are in place. The panel must include the local authority and chief officer of the local police. Panels assess the extent to which identified individuals are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism, following a referral from the police and where considered appropriate and necessary consent is obtained, arrange for support to be provided to those individuals. The Act will require partners of Channel panels to co-operate with the panel in the carrying out of its functions and with the police in undertaking the initial assessment as to whether a referral is appropriate. Schools and colleges which are required to have regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education are listed in the Act as partners of the panel.

Young people and vulnerable groups are particularly targeted by groups who may promote violent extremist activity.

College staff should be aware of signs of radicalisation and have the confidence to report their concerns to the Safeguarding Team.

The College will also promote the ethos of the ‘**Prevent**’ agenda by encouraging free and open debate but challenging extreme views. It will encourage through its classroom practice, theme weeks and induction activities, a belief in Equality of Opportunity and the celebration of Diversity.

The College will not host or allow its premises to be used by extreme groups and will seek to prevent the distribution of extreme literature.

The college has a legal responsibility to forbid the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the college and must take such steps as are reasonably practicable to secure that where political issues are brought to the attention

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of students they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views. Promotion of any organisations linked to violent extremism is contrary to the values of the college and could constitute misconduct.

The College will provide appropriate support through its own staff or by referral to external agencies, for any student in danger of radicalisation.

3 Requirement

Procedure for College Staff

Keeping Children Safe in Education, Sept 2016 stipulates that ‘schools and colleges and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is described in statutory guidance Working together to Safeguard Children’. Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility and KCSiE states ‘Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone’s** responsibility. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interest** of the child’.

Stoke on Trent College recognises the responsibility placed upon its staff to deal with concerns around wellbeing and actual or suspected child abuse in a positive and effective way. Staff will endeavour to recognise and deal with concerns as quickly as possible and in accordance with the outlined procedures, which are intended to provide guidance and help/protection for young people, parents and staff. These procedures apply to anyone who is enrolled as a student of the College or anyone attending specific activities arranged and managed by the College, including placements, irrespective of location.

Staff will be required to attend mandatory safeguarding training as quickly as possible following their staff induction and refresh every 3 years. In addition to this all staff will be expected to read and digest an Annual Safeguarding Update via an ‘e Bulletin’. They will also be required to adhere to the colleges Staff Safeguarding Code of Conduct and ensure their behaviour with students is appropriate at all times.

Any person who is either employed by the College (voluntarily or paid) or acting in a position of responsibility with children, young people or vulnerable adults, who has concern for the wellbeing of a child, young person or vulnerable adult or knowledge or a suspicion that a child/young person/vulnerable adult is being abused or is at risk of abuse has a duty to refer his/her concern immediately. This guidance is to inform staff what they should do and why if they suspect or have disclosed to them an incident of abuse.

Duty to initially inform

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All staff, acting in a position of responsibility with children, young people or vulnerable adults are required to discuss any concern or suspicion with the College’s Safeguarding Team or Duty Manager and complete an SS01 Form. However, according to Keeping Children Safe in Education, Sept 2016, ‘in exceptional circumstances, such as in an emergency or a genuine concern that appropriate action has not been taken, staff members can speak directly to children’s social care.

Disclosure

When a student discloses abuse to a member of staff their account must be taken seriously and listened to. Staff will proceed in accordance with the procedures set out below which are in accordance with the Stoke on Trent & Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board’s Child Protection Procedures

Confidentiality

The student should be informed that there is a legal duty to inform an authorised agency. Promises of confidentiality should not be given as developments may result in this not being possible.

Staff and external agencies will be informed of relevant information in respect of individual cases regarding safeguarding on a ‘need to know’ basis only.

Duty to refer

In cases requiring the protection of the young person or vulnerable adult the College will conform to the duty to refer the concern to either the appropriate Safeguarding Children or Adult Teams or the Police. The student or parents may wish separately to refer their concern to the police.

4. Concerns

A full record should be made, as soon as possible, of the nature of the concern/disclosure and any other relevant information using Form (SS01). Forms are available on the Staff Safeguarding intranet section. The required information will include:

- Name of the person reporting and the name of the young person
- Details of the young person/vulnerable adult

Name
 Address
 Tel number
 Date of birth
 Programme of study

Record of the concern/disclosure

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The completed form (SS01) should be delivered immediately, by hand, in a sealed envelope to a member of the Safeguarding Team.

Early Help

‘All school and college staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child’s life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. In the first instance staff should discuss early help requirements with the Safeguarding Team’. KCSiE, Sept 2016

5. Concerns or disclosure in relation to Children attending the College Nursery

See separate Nursery Policy and Procedures.

6. Under 16 Learners

In the event that a Pre 16 learner discloses abuse or a college staff member has concern for the Pupils wellbeing or a suspicion that they are being abused, the staff must implement the point 4 of this procedure by completing a safeguarding referral form and contacting a member the designated Senior Lead and Head Teacher.

7. Concerns or disclosures in relation to a Student over 18 years

There is no need to report the concern/disclosure to any outside agency unless there is a risk to others under 18, in which case the procedure for students under 18 should be followed. A student over 18 may wish to involve the police. In this case the College’s role is to support the student through the process and direct the student, if appropriate, to other supporting agencies eg counselling, sexual health clinic etc.

8. Concerns or disclosures in relation to a Student with learning difficulties, and/or physical or mental impairments, aged 18 or over

The College has a duty of care towards students with learning difficulties and or physical or mental impairments. The decision to report abuse should not be made by a single person. If abuse is suspected or reported to a member of staff, he/she should discuss the matter with a member of the Safeguarding Team before contact with external agencies. The course of action will be a matter of professional judgement.

The member of staff to whom the abuse is revealed should explain the above to the student so that the student is aware that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality.

9. Concerns regarding staff members conduct or there is a suspicion or allegations of abuse

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Procedure should be used in cases which it is alleged that a person who work with students or young people in the community has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or relate to a child; or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

Any concerns regarding staff member’s behaviour or if there is a suspicion or allegation of abuse by a member of staff must be reported to the Head of Human Resources or a member of the Safeguarding Team. The Principal will then be made aware of such allegations.

Either party will communicate and report the initial situation for investigation by the Head of HR. In addition a referral will be made in relation to Child Protection (if appropriate) under section 10 below and a separate referral will be made to the Designated Officer at the local authority. The College investigation will be in line with the Stoke on Trent & Staffordshire Safeguarding Board’s Child Protection Procedures and the College’s staff investigation procedures. While an investigation is taking place, a student will be assigned a member of staff, usually a Mentor, to support them. Support for the staff member will be arranged through the College HR department.

If the concern or allegation is against a senior member of the College staff the College Nominated Safeguarding Person will inform the chair of Governors immediately.

Malicious or false allegations will be dealt with through the College Disciplinary procedures.

Whistle blowing procedure

If staff have any concerns about the behaviour of another member of staff then they should follow the whistle blowing procedure. If they have concerns about unsafe practice or potential failures in the college’s safeguarding regime then this procedure should also be followed.

10. Action to be taken when reporting a safeguarding concern

On receipt of a completed Safeguarding Referral Form (SS01) the College’s Safeguarding Team representative will make a decision regarding action to be taken.

Possible actions are identified:

- Child Protection Referral or Police -this should be acted upon as soon as possible
- Completion of EHA
- Referral to Learner Support or single external agency

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- Completion of a Risk Assessment
- Record and monitor incident, disclosure or concern

In making this decision the following factors will be taken into account:

- Nature and severity of concern/disclosure
- Potential risk to the young person (or others)
- Needs of the young person
- Whether a multi-agency approach is required to address concerns highlighted

In making this decision advice may be sought from the Children's Safeguarding Duty Team at the Local Authority.

11. **Child Protection Referral**

When a member of the Safeguarding Team identifies the need to make a referral to Children's Services he/she will:

- Contact the Police / relevant Safeguarding Children Duty Team,
- Complete and return the Children Service referral form

A copy of the Safeguarding Referral form will be held.

12. **EHA**

When a member of the Safeguarding Team identifies the need to complete an EHA they will refer the concern to the relevant qualified EHA College 'Champion'

The following staff member is qualified as Lead Practitioners and EHA Champion therefore able to complete an EHA: -

Lianne Burton – Learner Wellbeing Officer

The EHA will be completed in accordance with Local Authority guidelines.

Where completion of the EHA identifies that either the needs of the individual are already being met or the needs of the individual can be met by a single agency (whether or not the single agency is the College) it is unlikely that an EHA will be required.

Prior to the completion of an EHA contact can be made to the Area Team Manager to:

- Determine whether an EHA is already in place or required for the young person
- To gain advice on if an EHA is required
- Or to gain more advice about the team around the child & family

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An EHA will only be completed with consent from the young person and their parents)

Where consent is not forthcoming from the young person and/or their parents the EHA Champion responsible will discuss the situation with another member of the Safeguarding Team to consider again whether a Child Protection Referral is required.

A copy of the completed EHA will be held by the EHA Champion. A copy will also be sent to the EHA Development and Assessment Officer along with subsequent meeting minutes. While the EHA is live, records will be retained confidentially by the relevant EHA Champion.

13. Risk Assessment

Where appropriate a risk assessment will be carried out by a member of the Safeguarding Team (currently the Learner Wellbeing Officer). This will include documentation of risks and controls in relation to the individual and others. In extenuating circumstances this may result in an individual being refused a place at College or their current place being withdrawn.

14. Log of Concerns/Disclosures

The nominated members of the Safeguarding team will maintain a log of all initial reports of concerns/disclosures; this will be updated to record action taken.

All Safeguarding records will be held in a designated secured area.

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COLLEGE SAFEGUARDING TEAM AND FLOWCHART



Learner Safeguarding Procedure

Pathways for dealing with safeguarding concerns/disclosure

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If a learner has made a disclosure of abuse to a member of staff, the member of staff completes S501 form and contacts the Safeguarding Officers.

Safeguarding Officers

- Lynn Tindale**
ext: 3615 - mobile: 07786 113828
- Dave Hopley**
ext: 3605 - mobile: 07786 113941
- Andrea Dean**
ext: 3632 - mobile: 07786 113993
- Lianne Burton**
ext: 3269 - mobile: 07806 725424
- Claire Oliver**
ext: 3556 - mobile: 07786 113845
- Caroline Proctor**
ext: 3454 - mobile: 07919 299572

Learner Safeguarding Officer meets with staff and learner

Decision made by Learner Safeguarding Officer

Learner Safeguarding Officer makes a referral to relevant agencies

Further action
Consider support:
Counselling, Mentors etc

If a member of staff has a significant concern

Member of staff discusses with relevant colleague

Member of staff discusses with learner

Member of staff still has concerns

No further concerns
Consider support:
Counselling,
Mentors etc

In all circumstances referrer is advised of decision and updated as appropriate

Safeguarding Officers

- Lynn Tindale**
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LS11-020

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There are a number of both statutory and non-statutory documents which this procedure is based upon and which can provide further information and advice:

Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2015

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419595/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children.pdf

Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2016

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/526153/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_guidance_from_5_September_2016.pdf

What to do if you are worried a young person is being abused, 2015

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2>

Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children, 2015

<http://www.saferrecruitmentconsortium.org/GSWP%20Oct%202015.pdf>

Disqualification under Children Act 2006, 2015

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/414345/disqualification-guidance_Feb_15_3_.pdf

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act, 2015

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/6/contents/enacted>

Prevent Duty Guidance, 2015

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

Serious Crime Act, 2015

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/9/contents/enacted>

End of Procedure

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