Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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Head teacher

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1. Introduction

At West Somerset College, we are committed to providing an environment that nurtures and transforms the lives of children and young people attending West Somerset College and take seriously our responsibilities to safeguard and promote their welfare. In addition, we undertake our responsibilities to work in partnership with agencies as part of the wider, multi-agency, safeguarding system, always acting in the best interest of the child or young person where concerns are identified, in accordance with the West Somerset College Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy and Procedures, statutory guidance and Somerset Safeguarding Partnership policies and procedures.

This Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy applies to all staff, including senior managers and the board of trustees, governors, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students, visitors in our college or anyone working on behalf of this organisation. It also applies wherever staff or volunteers are working with pupils away from the college, for example, at an activity centre or on an educational visit.

*Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility.* Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

Education Providers and volunteers are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour and failure to develop because they have daily contact with children.

Our staff and volunteers will therefore receive appropriate safeguarding training (which is updated regularly), so that they are knowledgeable and aware of their role in the early recognition of the indicators of abuse or neglect and of the appropriate procedures to follow. In addition, all staff members will receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

“*Children are best protected when professionals are clear about what is required of them individually, and how they need to work together.*” (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 updated 2018)

Personal sensitive information is processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and Part 3, the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). Consent to share information will be sought unless we are required to share information where there are child protection concerns (and consent has been withheld) or we are requested to share information with other statutory agencies such as the police or children’s social care in pursuit of their enquiries in order protect and safeguard children and young people.
Definition of safeguarding

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in statutory guidance as: 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; taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively we ensure our approach is child centered, considering always, what is in the best interests of the child or young person.

Most children grow up in loving families and supportive communities and become independent, resilient adults. Wherever possible we want this for all children and young people in Somerset, so that they and their families can support themselves by engaging with and contributing to their local communities. In order to achieve this, children, young people and their families should receive the right intervention as early as possible to tackle problems and prevent issues escalating. All practitioners will adopt an Early Help/Think Family approach meaning they look at the whole family situation and what needs to happen to improve that situation whether that means working with adults, children or the whole family.

Our college’s commitment

To safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people through:

- The provision of a safe environment in which children and young people can learn
- Identifying concerns early and provide appropriate help and support for children and young people and their parents/carers to prevent concerns escalating to a point whereby intervention would be required under the Children Act 1989 and in accordance with the Somerset Effective Support for Children and Families, Thresholds for Assessment and Services guidance.

Glossary

- Reference to “staff” includes both education and care specific staff
- “Staff” or “members of staff” includes all paid staff irrespective of their role in organisation and includes agency staff and volunteers
- SSP is an abbreviation for the Somerset Safeguarding Partnership (SSP) the new name for the Local Safeguarding Board (LSCB)
- Child or Children includes everyone under the age of 18.
- Child Protection refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

Statutory responsibilities

All action taken by West Somerset College will be in accordance with current legislation, namely:

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004; Education Act 2002 and 2011; Education and Inspections Act 2006;
Statutory guidance and Advice namely:

- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)** which sets out the multi-agency working arrangements to safeguarding and promote the welfare of children and young people
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019)** which sets out what schools should do and sets out the legal duties with which school must comply with in order to keep children and young people safe
- **Teacher Standards 2012** which sets out that teachers, including Headteachers, should safeguard children’s well-being and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties
- **Other specific guidance and advice issued by the DfE in relation to the wider safeguarding agency, e.g. behaviour, health and safety, bullying, e-safety and medical needs**

**The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019) requires the college to have a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) who has the status and authority to carry out the duties of the post including committing resources and where appropriate, supporting and directing staff. They provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, take part in strategy discussions, inter-agency meeting (or support other staff to do so) and to contribute to the assessment of children and young people. Mrs Mary Cranna is the Designated Safeguarding Lead at West Somerset College.

**The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)**

Supports the DSL in discharging their responsibilities and whilst they may deputise for the DSL the lead responsibility for child protection remains with the DSL. The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead at West Somerset College is Mr Chris Lund.

Both the DSL and DDSL must complete single agency and multi-agency training to undertake the role which is provided by the Local Authority Education Safeguarding Service and Somerset Safeguarding Partnership. In addition, they will access DSL briefings, attend annual refresher training and remain up to date in relation to early help, safeguarding and child protection.

**What all staff should know**

At West Somerset College we are required to issue Part One and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019) - in full - to our staff and ensure that they have read and understood its contents. Part one can be accessed here:


**Staff Induction**

As part of the induction process for new employees they will attend an induction briefing or if they commence part way through the year receive a one to one induction meeting with either the DSL or DDSL that signposts staff to relevant safeguarding documentation including: this policy and procedure; guidance for safer working practice; what to do if you’re worried a child may be abused and whistleblowing advice.
Action to be taken if there are concerns in relation to safeguarding practices at West Somerset College

All staff, volunteers and agency staff should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and any potential failures in the safeguarding regime and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team and designated safeguarding leads. Should staff feel unable to raise concerns within the organisation, advice and guidance has been produced to ensure that they are aware of how to raise such concerns externally.

West Somerset College will promote this information: Appendix B: NSPCC Whistleblowing advice the BTCT whistleblowing policy is available via the website:

https://www.the-trust-governor.co.uk/documents/201807231105590.BCT%20Whistleblowing%20Policy%20June%202018%20signed.pdf

Additional information about how to make a referral to children's social care, the LADO (local authority designated officer) or to report concerns to the NSPCC advice line in instances where they have concerns about the organisation’s response to child protection, the conduct of staff or they do not feel that appropriate action has been taken in relation to concerns they have raised is at Appendix C: Concerns Flowchart

Supporting Children
Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

Education providers and staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is based on the principle of providing help for families to stay together where it is safe for the children to do so, and looking at alternatives where it is not, whilst acting in the best interests of the child at all times.

Children who may require early help will be offered early intervention through Early Help support services for families.

A directory of early help services is available from the Early Help Advice Hub on 01823 355803. Somerset Choices (www.somersetchoices.org.uk) and Professional Choices (https://professionalchoices.org.uk) will also help practitioners and families find information and support to prevent escalation of needs and crisis.

Staff will be aware of the early help process, and understand their role in identifying emerging problems, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment of a child’s needs. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. This also includes staff monitoring the situation and feeding back to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or any deputies) any ongoing/escalating concerns so that consideration can be given to a request for involvement to Children’s Services if the child’s situation does not appear to be improving.
Staff and volunteers working within the college will also be alert to the potential need for early help for children also who are more vulnerable. For example:

- Children with a disability and/or specific additional needs
- Children with special educational needs
- Children who are acting as a young carer
- Children who are looked after or previously looked after
- Children who are showing signs of engaging in anti-social or criminal behaviour especially if there is a concern that it is exploitative
- Children missing in education
- Children whose family circumstances present challenges, such as substance abuse, adult mental health or learning disability, domestic violence

College staff members will be aware of the main categories of maltreatment: Physical Abuse, Emotional Abuse, Sexual Abuse and Neglect. They will also be aware of the indicators of maltreatment and specific safeguarding issues so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

**Dealing with a disclosure**
If a child discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff or volunteer should:

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief
- Accept what is being said
- Allow the child to talk freely
- Reassure the child, but not make promises which it might not be possible to keep
- Never promise a child that they will not tell anyone - as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child
- Reassure him or her that what has happened is not his or her fault
- Stress that it was the right thing to tell
- Listen, only asking questions when necessary to clarify
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told
- Make a written record (Report a concern on MyConcern or complete a cause for concern form) records should be factual, using the child’s own words
- Pass the information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately

Dealing with a disclosure from a child, and safeguarding issues can be stressful. The member of staff/volunteer should, therefore, consider seeking support for him/herself and discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

**Record Keeping**
All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be reported on myconcern or recorded in writing e.g. cause for concern form. If in doubt about recording requirements staff should discuss with the designated safeguarding lead. Anyone who does not have access to myconcern will be expected to fill in a cause for concern incident form.
The college uses myconcern for the monitoring of safeguarding and child protection, issues and should regularly review to scrutinise any patterns or drift/outstanding actions. Working alongside the college’s existing safeguarding processes, myconcern will help with the management of child protection, behavioural, bullying issues and much more. The system allows the college to record information in a central repository and have relevant people alerted immediately.

When a child has made a disclosure, the member of staff/volunteer should:

- Record as soon as possible after the conversation. Use myconcern or cause for concern incident form.
- Any hand written notes made immediately after the event, for example a disclosure, can act as evidence of them having been written at the time in any future court case.
- Record the date, time, witness, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child
- Indicate the position of any injuries use a body map.
- Record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions

All records need to be given to the Designated Safeguarding Lead promptly (or any deputies). No copies should be retained by the member of staff or volunteer.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that all safeguarding records are managed in accordance with the Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005. The college follows the guidance on safeguarding/child protection records for educational and early years settings in Somerset.

Records should be factual, accurate, relevant, up to date and auditable. They should support analysing, monitoring, risk assessment and planning for children; enabling appropriate, informed and timely actions to take place.

If a pupil who is/or has been the subject of a child protection plan changes provision, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will inform the social worker responsible for the case and transfer the appropriate records to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the receiving provision as soon as possible, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained, they should be sent separate to the main college file. The receiving school should ensure the DSL and SENCo (or named person with oversight for SEN) are aware as required. The DSL should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of the child leaving.

All files will be individual to the child and not in shared files on families. All college records will have an indicator to inform staff a child protection file does exist for the individual.

All child protection recordings should be scrutinised regularly to ensure the action and outcome has been carried and any drift avoided.
Confidentiality
Safeguarding and protecting children raises issues of confidentiality that must be clearly understood by all staff/volunteers in education.

All staff, both teaching and non-teaching staff, have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly the investigative agencies (Children’s Services: Safeguarding and Specialist Services and the Police). If a child confides in a member of staff/volunteer and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff/volunteer tell the child in a manner appropriate to the child’s age/stage of development that they cannot promise complete confidentiality – instead they must explain that they may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child or other children safe. This may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

Staff/volunteers who receive information about children and their families in the course of their work should share that information only within appropriate professional contexts.

Procedure
When a member of staff is concerned about a child he or she will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL). The member of staff must record information regarding the concerns on the same day via reporting on MyConcern or in person. The recording must be a clear, precise, factual account of the observations. Use a cause for concern form if you do not have access to MyConcern Appendix D.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will decide whether the concerns should be referred to Children’s Services. If it is decided to make a request for involvement to Children’s Services this will be discussed with the parents, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of harm. An Early Help Assessment will be completed in most instances.

While it is the DSL’s role to make request for involvement, any staff member can make a referral to Children’s Services.

If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral should be made to Children’s Services and/or the Police immediately. Where referrals are not made by the DSL, the DSL must be informed as soon as possible.

Particular attention must also be paid to the attendance and development of any child about whom the college has concerns, or who has been identified as being the subject of a child protection plan and a written record will be kept and attendance procedures followed.

A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve and maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significant or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Local authorities, with help of other organisations as appropriate, have a duty to make enquiries under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Such enquiries enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child’s welfare and must be initiated where there are concerns about maltreatment, including all forms of abuse and neglect, female genital mutilation or other so-called honour based violence, and extra-familial threats like radicalisation and sexual exploitation.
Communication with Parents
West Somerset College will ensure the BTCT and West Somerset Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is available publicly either via the provision website or by other means.
Parents should be informed prior to referral, unless it is considered to do so might place the child at increased risk of significant harm by:

- The behavioural response it prompts e.g. a child being subjected to abuse, maltreatment or threats / forced to remain silent if alleged abuser informed;
- Leading to an unreasonable delay;
- Leading to the risk of loss of evidential material.

(The college may also consider not informing parent(s) where it would place a member of staff at risk).

The college will ensure that parents/carers have an understanding of the responsibilities placed on the college and staff for safeguarding children.

Managing Allegations
An allegation is any information which indicates that a member of staff (including volunteers) may have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against/related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way which indicates s/he may pose a risk of harm to children.

This applies to any child the member of staff (including volunteers) has contact within their personal, professional or community life.

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the college setting’s safeguarding arrangements.
If staff members have concerns about another staff member then this should be referred to the Head Teacher or Trust Safeguarding Lead. Where there are concerns about the Head Teacher or Trust Safeguarding Lead, this should be referred to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or Trustee to the board responsible for safeguarding as appropriate.

The person to whom an allegation is first reported should take the matter seriously and keep an open mind. S/he should not investigate or ask leading questions if seeking clarification; it is important not to make assumptions. Confidentiality should not be promised and the person should be advised that the concern will be shared on a ‘need to know’ basis only.

Actions to be taken include making an immediate written record of the allegation using the informant’s words – including time, date and place where the alleged incident took place, brief details of what happened, what was said and who was present. This record should be signed, dated and immediately passed on to the Head Teacher or Trust Safeguarding Lead.

The recipient of an allegation must not unilaterally determine its validity, and failure to report it in accordance with procedures is a potential disciplinary matter.

The allegation will be discussed with Trust HR Manager and CEO and a decision will be collectively made whether this is a child protection concern and whether it is necessary to refer the concern to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):

- If the allegation meets any of the three criteria set out at the start of this section, contact should always be made with the Local Authority Designated Officer without delay.
• If it is decided that the allegation meets the threshold for safeguarding, this will take place in accordance Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership Inter-agency Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Procedures.
• If it is decided that the allegation does not meet the threshold for safeguarding, it will be handed back to the employer for consideration via the college’s internal procedures.

The Headteacher/Trust Safeguarding Lead should, as soon as possible, following briefing from the Local Authority Designated Officer, inform the subject of the allegation.

For further information, see: SSCP’s Allegations Management or contact Somerset Direct for a referral to the LADO Somerset Direct 0300 123 2224.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer/through the whistleblowing procedure or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them:

NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for those who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285, line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and Email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

Safer Working Practice
To reduce the risk of allegations, all staff should be aware of safer working practice and should be familiar with the guidance contained in the trust code of conduct and Safer Recruitment Document Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings (May 2019).

The document seeks to ensure that the responsibilities of college leaders towards children and staff are discharged by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe, unprofessional and unwise behaviour. This includes guidelines for staff on positive behaviour management in line with the ban on corporal punishment (School Standards and Framework Act 1998).

Site Safety
The college will make reasonable effort to provide a secure, healthy, hazard-free environment for everyone at and visiting our provision. Consequently, all staff will:

• Maintain suitable/reasonable physical boundaries and barriers such as fencing, gates and locks on doors;
• Provide post 16 students access to the site without compromising security for pre 16 students; All staff, post 16 students and visitors wear lanyards for security reasons;
• Directly supervise children at all times, ensuring they remain on the premises and are never permitted to enter hazardous or insecure sections areas;
• Take all reasonable steps to monitor contractors, visitors and volunteers using the premises during time, requiring them to report to the provision office, take and read our Information and Guidance for Contractors and Visitors leaflet sign in to confirm that they have received, read and understood this leaflet, and wear a visitor’s badge/sticker;
• Alert contractors, visitors and volunteers to our college’s Safeguarding expectations and protocols, advising them of the name of the DSL and Deputy DSLs.
• Update the single central record of staff/volunteers /casual/governance that are in regulated activity with children.

Our college believes good safe security allows both staff and pupils to feel safe and confident in their surroundings, and offers reassurance to parents and carers. We note that clearly defined risk
management of the site allows staff to manage the school site by limiting trespass and by channelling visitors to the site through appropriate entrances.

**Abuse and neglect (definitions)**

All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

Abuse is the maltreatment of a child or young person; they may be abused or neglected through harm being inflicted or by parents or carers failing to prevent harm. Children and young people may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or by being targeted by others via the internet for example. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. The following are the statutory definitions of abuse and neglect as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) however, the ultimate responsibility to assess and determine the type category of abuse is that of the Police and Children's Social Care – our responsibility is to understand what each category of abuse is and how this can impact on the welfare and development of our children and where we have concerns that a child or young person may be at risk of abuse and neglect (one or more categories can apply) to take appropriate action as early as possible

- **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. Statutory guidance Safeguarding Children in whom Illness is Fabricated or Induced (2008) sets out a national framework within which agencies and professionals at local level – individually and jointly – draw up and agree upon their own more detailed ways of working together where illness may be being fabricated or induced in a child by a carer who has parenting responsibilities for them.

- **Neglect:** 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: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

- **Emotional abuse:** 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 unlved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child’s developmental capability as well as
overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

- **Sexual abuse**: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not sole perpetrated by adult males. Woman can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

**Safeguarding in specific circumstances:**
In addition to the above there are other areas of safeguarding that West Somerset College to have due regard to. **Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019)** highlights specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues which staff who work with children and young people should read the following is a synopsis of the areas addressed but are not a fully replica of the guidance which can be accessed here:


**Children and the court system** may be required to give evidence in the criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are a range of guides to support child witnesses. In the civil courts children and young people may be involved in child arrangement hearing and the Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangement information tool detaining the dispute resolution service.

**Children Missing Education (CME):** All staff should be alert to children going missing as this can be a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding risks, including abuse and neglect, sexual abuse or exploitation (Child Sexual Exploitation and Criminal), travel to conflict zones, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to protect and safeguard a child or young person. More information can be accessed on our website here:

Children with family members in prison are more likely to have poor outcomes, including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. More information to support schools and colleges can be found on the Nicco website: https://www.nicco.org.uk/

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is child sexual abuse, whereby an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under 18 to engage in 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. More information can be accessed on our website here: https://west-somerset-college.secure-primarysite.net/child-sexual-exploitation/

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) is a geographically widespread form of harm that is often referred to as county lines, which involves drug networks or gangs that groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money. A key indicator is that victims are often missing from home, care or education and trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health: Good mental health and resilience are fundamental to our physical health, our relationships, and our education and to achieving our potential. DfE advice for schools in relation to mental health and behaviour in schools (2018) which can be accessed here. This is non-statutory advice which clarifies the responsibility of the school, outlines what they can do and how to support a child or young person whose behaviour - whether it is disruptive, withdrawn, anxious, depressed or otherwise - may be related to an unmet mental health need. Whist it considers the school environment it is also relevant for work within our residential provision. More information can be accessed on our website here: https://west-somerset-college.secure-primarysite.net/mental-health/

Domestic abuse, Domestic violence, Gender-based violence and violence against women and girls (VAWG), teenage relationship abuse: is defined as 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 irrespective of gender or sexuality. Exposure to domestic abuse or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on the development of children and young people. Further advice and guidance accessed via the NSPCC, Refuge and Safelives spotlight on young people and domestic abuse. Further resources relating to violence against women and girls (VAWG) can be accessed here.

Homelessness or the being at risk of being made homeless is a significant risk for children or young people. The DSL should refer to the local housing authority at the earliest opportunity. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils to provide meaningful help, including an assessment of need and circumstances. The DfE and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and local government have published joint statutory guidance on the provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year old’s who may be homeless or require accommodation A series of fact sheets can be access here.

Online Safety: Annex C of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019) addresses the use of technology which can be a significant component of many safeguarding issues including CSE, CCE, radicalisation, sexual predation etc., whereby technology provides the platform that
facilitates harm. Schools and colleges must adopt a range of effective safeguarding approaches that both safeguards and empowers children and young people to access support and remain safe online by reducing the risk of harm through the use of filters, monitoring and appropriate use policies for those accessing our IT system, whilst at the same time providing a safe environment in which children and young people can learn to keep themselves safe online. More information can be accessed on our website here: [https://west-somerset-college.secure-primarysite.net/esafety/](https://west-somerset-college.secure-primarysite.net/esafety/)

**Peer on Peer abuse**: children and young people can abuse their peers which can take many forms, including but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying); sexual violence or harassment; physical abuse including hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiating/hazing type violence or rituals.

**Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges**: can occur between two children of any age and sex and occur through a group of children or young people sexually assaulting or harassing an individual or group of children. It can also involve **Upskirting**, which 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. This is now a criminal offence. BTCT Peer on Peer Abuse Policy is available here [Bridgwater and Taunton College Trust - BTCT Policies](https://west-somerset-college.secure-primarysite.net/esafety/). Further guidance is available here.

**Preventing extremism**: Children and young people can be vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation and forms part of schools and colleges safeguarding responsibilities, as set out in the Prevent Duty. Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values and radicalisation refers to the process by which a person come to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups. Further information can be accessed by clicking on the links below:

[Extremism](https://west-somerset-college.secure-primarysite.net/esafety/)  [Radicalisation](https://west-somerset-college.secure-primarysite.net/esafety/)  [Prevent](https://west-somerset-college.secure-primarysite.net/esafety/)

More information can be accessed on our website here: [https://west-somerset-college.secure-primarysite.net/prevent/](https://west-somerset-college.secure-primarysite.net/prevent/)

**Private Fostering**: is when a child under the age of 16 (under 18 if disabled) is cared for by someone who is not their parent or a ‘close relative’. This is a private arrangement made between a parent and carer, for 28 days or more. Close relatives are defined as step-parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles or aunts (whether of full blood, half blood or marriage/affinity). A private foster carer may be a friend of the family, the parent of a friend of the child, or someone previously unknown to the child’s family who is willing to privately foster a child. West Somerset College has a responsibility to refer to Children’s Social Care of any private fostering arrangement we become aware of, in order for Children’s Social Care to undertake an assessment to ensure the needs and welfare of the child or young person is being met and that adults caring for them have access to advice and support.
Special Education Needs and disabilities: There’s a concern sometimes that, for children with SEN and disabilities, that their SEN or disability needs are seen first, and the potential for abuse second. If children are behaving in particular ways or they’re looking distressed or their behaviour or demeanour is different from in the past, our staff should think about that being a sign of the potential for abuse, and not simply see it as part of their disability or their special educational needs.

Looked after children: The staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child’s looked after legal status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child. The designated teacher for looked after children and the DSL have details of the child’s social worker and the name and contact details of the local authority’s virtual head for children in care. More information can be accessed on our website here:


So-called ‘honour-based’ violence (including Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage Breast Ironing) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family or community. All forms of honour based violence (HBV) is abuse, regardless of the motivation and should be handled and escalated as such. There are specific mandatory reporting duties for teachers to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Additional guidance and publications:

- FGM: Mandatory reporting procedural information can be accessed here
- FGM Fact sheet can be access here
- Forced Marriages: Multi-agency guidelines(2014) pages 35 and 26 pertain to schools can be accessed here along with statutory guidance (2014) which can be access here

The Governing Body (including Trusts or Directors)

West Somerset governing body will ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation. They will also have regard to this guidance to ensure that the policies, procedures and training in the provision are effective and comply with the law at all times.

The responsibilities placed on governing bodies and proprietors include:

- Contributing to ensure the provision is carrying out inter-agency working, which includes providing a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified.
- Ensuring that an effective safeguarding and child protection policy is in place, together with a staff behaviour code of conduct policy and behaviour policy.
- Ensuring staff are provided with Part One and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2019)—and are aware of specific safeguarding issues.
- Ensuring that staff induction is in place with regards to child protection and safeguarding.
- Appointing an appropriate senior member of staff to act as the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
• Ensuring that all of the Designated Safeguarding Leads (including deputies) undergo formal child protection training every two years (in line with SSP guidance) and receive regular (annual) safeguarding refreshers (for example via e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments).

• Prioritising the welfare of children and young people and creating a culture where staff and volunteers are confident to challenge senior leaders over any safeguarding concerns.

• Ensuring that children are taught about safeguarding in an age appropriate way.

• Ensuring appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place to safeguard children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material.

• Having a senior board level lead to take leadership responsibility for the organisation’s safeguarding arrangements.

• Ensure scrutiny and effectiveness of the single central record and child protection recording is undertaken.

• Ensure safeguarding is regularly discussed and outcomes recorded at Governor meetings.

• Ensure the requirements of The Governor’s Safeguarding Audit Section 175 are met and actions when needed completed in a timely way.

Allegations of abuse made against teachers, other staff, Volunteers and Agency Staff: People in a Position of Trust

Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2018) states that organisations should have in place clear policies in line with those from the Somerset Safeguarding Partnership to manage allegations against people who work with children and young people. Such policies should make a clear distinction between an allegation, a concern about the quality of care or practice or a complaint.

In addition, Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019) Part Four, sets how allegations may indicate that a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in regular or close contact with children in their present position, or in any capacity in a school or college under the age of 18 years. Part 4 of the Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019) which can be accessed here.

An allegation may relate to a person who works with children who has:

• behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child

• possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or

• behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm.

Phone Somerset Direct on 0300 123 2224 for a referral.

What staff should do if they have concerns about another staff member

If any member of staff, volunteer or agency staff have concerns relating to an individual’s conduct or behaviour, whether they be a colleague, member of the management or senior leadership team, they should refer their concerns to: Sally Power - Trust Safeguarding lead (sapower@educ.somerset.gov.uk) or Gregg Mockeridge- Headteacher. Where concerns or allegations relate to the Headteacher, these should be referred to Peter Elliott- CEO.
Staff Code of Conduct; In addition to the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, We have a BTCT Staff Code of Conduct that outlines an acceptable level of staff behaviour. During their induction training, new staff will be given and have read:

- BTCT Staff Code of Conduct (inc. use of social media, and the Position of Trust Offence)
- West Somerset College Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) (Part One and Annex A)
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Procedures for children missing education.

Appendix A

Employees

Safeguarding Induction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Member:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name and Role:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date of Commencement:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inductor:</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Name and Role</td>
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<td>Date of Induction:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Signed by Inductee:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Signed by Inductor:</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Agenda:

Welcome to our College

Outline of the safeguarding induction meeting

- Statutory documents to be read and acknowledged
- What is Safeguarding (Child Protection)
- What safeguarding means for children or young people at our College
- Voice and influence
- Action to be taken if you have a concern

All members of staff and volunteers need to read and complete a declaration to acknowledge the following key safeguarding documents: West Somerset College Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy (including any appendix templates):

- What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused Advice for practitioners
- BTCT Staff Code of Conduct
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019 Part One & Annex A
- The Prevent Duty June 2015
- BTCT Whistleblowing Policy
- WSC positive behaviour policy Behaviour Policy
- WSC Children Missing In Education Policy
- BTCT Peer To Peer Abuse Policy September 2019

What is Safeguarding (Child Protection)

Safeguarding is an overarching term used to ensure that the welfare of children and young people is paramount, and they are protected from abuse and neglect. We all have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This means protecting children and young people from abuse and neglect; preventing impairment of health or development; ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best life chances.

Every member of staff, irrespective of their role in the organisation, has a responsibility to keep children or young people safe and to take appropriate action whenever they hear, observe or are told information that could impact on their welfare and safety.

Child protection is the statutory threshold for intervention in family life whereby a child or young person is suffering or at risk of significant harm. As a college we have a number of statutory responsibilities that must be fulfilled which are set out in legislation and statutory guidance.

You have been issued with Part 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019) and you will have been asked to read the document ahead of today’s induction. Have you had an opportunity to do so? Do you have any questions?
What Safeguarding means for children or young people at our West Somerset College

We expect our staff to exercise high standards of behaviour and provide high quality professional support to our children. It is therefore important that we all understand that the nature of our work and the responsibilities related to it, which places us in unique position of trust. During the course of your induction you will have the opportunity to access a range of training that will provide you with the knowledge and skills you need to do your job. In addition, you will be required to read a number of different policies and procedures that will provide you with contextual information and guidance.

All staff, irrespective of their role in the organisation, have a responsibly to ensure that illegal, unsafe, unprofessional or irresponsible behaviour exhibited by staff is challenged and reported. It is always difficult to raise concerns about a colleagues' behaviour, but you must discuss any concerns with the designated or deputy safeguarding lead.

If you do not feel you can raise concerns within the organisation then you can access the NSPCC Whistleblowing helpline on 0800 028 0285 between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. or email help@nspcc.org.uk

Voice and influence

When working with children and young people communication is crucial, especially in relation to safeguarding. Communication is a two-way process and doesn’t just relate to a child’s ability to communicate via speech therefore, we need to approach communication in its broadest terms, considering body language, gestures, behaviour and presentation. We must also support our children to make positive choices.

Action to be taken if you have a concern about the welfare of a pupil or the conduction/actions of a member of staff or visitor to our college.

You should discuss your concerns, observations or any information that may impact on the welfare of a child with a designated or deputy safeguarding lead. The flowchart overleaf has been developed to offer you guidance on what you should do. It is not intended to cover all eventualities, but it aims to provide a framework for action.

What is important is that you take action and raise your concerns, the designated or deputy safeguarding lead may hold other relevant information, but your information may be new and important - the final part of the information jigsaw.
The NSPCC whistleblowing Advice Line offers free advice and support to professionals with concerns about how child protection issues are being handled in their own or another organisation.

What is whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is when someone raises a concern about a dangerous or illegal activity or any wrongdoing within their organisation.

Raising a concern is known as “blowing the whistle” and is a vital process for identifying risk to children, young people and vulnerable adults. In recent years there have been several high profile cases of institutional abuse which have come to light as a result of whistleblowing.

Sharing information or talking through a concern can be the first step to helping an organisation identify problems, improve practice and safeguard the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

**Contact the Whistleblowing Advice Line**

Call **0800 028 0285**

Email **help@nspcc.org.uk**

The government website: [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) also has valuable information for whistleblowers in relation to their rights, support and who to tell, this can be accessed [here](http://www.gov.uk)
Action to be taken where there are concerns about the welfare of a child or young person or the conduct/actions of Staff or Visitors

General Information and Advice

Always act in the best interests of the child or young person: the welfare of the child is paramount **Children Act 1989**

Always maintain an attitude of ‘it could happen here’: Learning lessons from Serious Case Reviews e.g. Daniel Pelka and Nigel Leat

Be alert to the signs of abuse and neglect supporting documents include:


What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused (DfE March 2015) Advice for Practitioners: Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)

These can be accessed on any of our schools website and the safeguarding notice board in the staff room

If, a child or young person is in immediate danger or is at risk of significant harm

Anyone can make a referral to Children’s Social Care and/or the Police (but the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) which the child attends in our Trust should be informed if a referral has been made). **Somerset Direct Contact details: 0300 123 2224** : Emergency Duty Team (EDT) outside office hours, weekends or bank holidays **telephone number 0300 123 2327** or contact the **Police on 999**

If you have a concern relating to dangerous or illegal activity or any wrongdoing within the organisation and you do not feel you can raise a concern directly you can contact the **NSPCC Whistleblowing helpline 0800 028 0285** – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday or Email: **help@nspcc.org.uk**.

**Child Welfare**

Discuss your concerns with the Designated or Deputy Safeguarding Lead (DSL/DDSL) at West Somerset College - You must act to safeguard

DSL: Mary Cranna
Phone number: 01643 706061
Email address: **MCranna@educ.somerset.gov.uk**

DDSL: Chris Lund
Phone number: 01643 706061
Email address: **clund@educ.somerset.gov.uk**

**Immediate Concerns and/or immediate action is required**

Safeguarding/Child Protection Concerns

The DSL will consider what information is already known consider indicators of risk and following multi-agency guidelines take appropriate action

Concerns relating to the conduct or actions of a staff member: Report to Trust Safeguarding Lead (TSL - S Power) or Head teacher: Gregg Mockeridge, they will liaise with the CEO & HR. If concerns relate to Headteacher or TSL, the CEO must be notified. All allegations will be investigated following statutory guidance and Somerset Safeguarding Partnership procedures by the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO – Anthony Goble)
## Appendix D

### Cause for Concern Reporting Form

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<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Child Name:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Tutor Group:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date of report:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Name of reporting person:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Any witnesses?</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**To Details of concern/event:**

**Signed:**

**Date:**

---

**Advice for recording a concern** - when recording an incident include the date, time and place as well as the names of any potential witnesses to the event or disclosure. Keep observations factual. If recording conversations try to use exact words and not to rephrase. Avoid leading questions. Use the outlines provided to show injury sites. Size estimates can also be included.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Referred DSL on:</th>
<th>DSL on duty:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advice sought:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(when, from whom and what was advice given)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Concern/referral discussed with parent/carer?</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(If not, state reasons why – if yes, note discussion with parent)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Referral made:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(If not, state reasons why – if yes, record to whom and any action agreed)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EHA required?</strong></td>
<td>Yes / No?</td>
<td>By whom:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Feedback to referring member of staff:</strong></td>
<td>Yes / No?</td>
<td>By whom:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Response to / action taken with pupil:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(what was done and by whom?)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other action taken:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Signed:                     Date: