Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2024-25

Contents

Headmaster/ředitel: Dr Nigel Brown MSc, PGCE, PhD
The English College in Prague - Anglické gymnázium o.p.s.
Phone: +420 283 893 113 | E-mail: office@englishcollege.cz | Sousedíkova 1044/8 190 00 Prague 9 - Vysočany

englishcollege.cz   englishcollege   ecp_prague   TheEnglishCollege

1

1. Policy Introduction and Purpose

At the English College in Prague, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is our highest priority. We commit to a safe, nurturing environment where every child feels valued and protected.

We prioritise anti-discriminatory practices, ensuring equal protection regardless of background. Recognising heightened vulnerability due to factors like discrimination or communication needs, we tailor our safeguarding. Our aim is to foster a community where all children thrive, free from harm.

This policy has been developed in accordance with:
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023**
- Methodological Recommendation on Primary Prevention of Risky Behaviour in Children and Youth (Document MSMT No. 21291/2010-28)
- Methodological guideline of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports on the solution of bullying in schools and school facilities (Document MSMT - 2016)
- Methodological recommendation on the safety of children, pupils and students in schools and school facilities (Document MSMT-2005)

It is based on these laws of the Czech Republic:
- Act No. 359/1999 Coll., On Social and Legal Protection of Children
- Act No. 218/2003 Coll., On Youth Liability for Unlawful Acts and on the Judiciary in Youth Matters and on Amendments to Some Acts
- Act No. 200/1990 Coll., On Offences
- Act No. 140/1967 Coll., Criminal Code
- Act No. 167/1998 Coll., On Addictive Substances

It applies to all members of our community, including staff, governors, volunteers and contractors, and ensures a consistent, child-centred approach to safeguarding. All staff must read and adhere to this policy alongside Part One of KCSIE 2024 and other associated guidance.

In line with safeguarding standards in the Czech Republic and the UK, the English College has a Safety and Crisis Plan. This describes procedures to be followed by all staff, in a range of crisis situations connected to risky behaviour.

Objectives
- To ensure all staff understand their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children
- To outline clear procedures for identifying, reporting and responding to concerns

- To provide a robust framework for creating a safe educational environment that supports pupils' physical, emotional and mental well-being

2. Key Principles

Our safeguarding approach is guided by the following principles:
- **The welfare of the child is paramount**: Every decision and action prioritises the best interests of the child, ensuring they are protected from harm
- **Equality and inclusivity**: All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, race, ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation, have an equal right to safety and protection
- **Empowerment and participation**: We promote an environment where pupils feel heard, valued and empowered to express their concerns without fear
- **Accountability and responsibility**: Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All members of the school community must act promptly on any concerns
- **Collaborative working**: We are committed to working with parents, external agencies and local safeguarding partners to ensure comprehensive protection and support
- **Continuous improvement**: This policy is reviewed annually, incorporating feedback and adapting to changes in legislation, guidance and best practices

2.1 Key Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:
- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework.

Child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and is defined as activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online.

Effective safeguarding means practitioners should understand and be sensitive to factors, including economic and social circumstances and ethnicity, which can impact children and families' lives.

Staff: all those working for or on behalf of the School, full time or part-time, temporary or permanent (including trainee teachers), in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

Child: for the purposes of this policy includes all pupils at the English College in Prague. A child is considered a pupil until they have left the school.

Parent: refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

Volunteers: Individuals who, without pay, provide voluntary services to the School.

Contractors: External professionals or organizations providing contracted services to the School.

Agency Staff: Individuals provided by an external agency to work at the School.

Governors: Members of the School's governing body with strategic oversight and safeguarding responsibilities.

Trainee Teachers: Individuals undertaking teacher training while gaining practical experience at the School.

Visiting Teachers from Partner Schools: Teachers from other institutions collaborating with the School.

OSPOD: (Odbor sociálně-právní ochrany dětí) The Czech Authority for Social and Legal Protection of Children.

See **Appendix B** for other key terminology relevant to safeguarding.

2.2 Preventative Measures

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with a trained and trusted adult will help to protect our pupils against potential abuse. We therefore:

A. Maintain an ethos, based on an extensive pastoral system, in which young people feel secure and know that their concerns will be taken seriously;
B. Ensure pupils know that there are adults in school who can be approached if they are worried or are in any kind of difficulty;
C. Include within the Personal, Social and Moral Education(PSME) and Preventative Programme, sessions that will help our pupils to gain an awareness of the issues involved not only to promote their own safety, but also to help them develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to the care of children.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and all members of the school community have a role to play in ensuring the safety and well-being of children. The following outlines key roles and responsibilities within the school:

3.1 Designated Staff

All schools must nominate a senior member of staff to coordinate child protection arrangements and this person is named in this policy guidance. The school ensures that the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy will be either on site at all times that the school is functioning, or directly contactable.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):
David Brookes   david.brookes@englishcollege.cz

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs):
Irena Smetánková   irena.smetankova@englishcollege.cz
Tony Emmerson   tony.emmerson@englishcollege.cz

Safeguarding Governor:
Katie Schoulz   katie.schoulz@englishcollege.cz

3.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is **David Brookes**, a member of the Senior Leadership Team, who has overall responsibility for child protection and safeguarding across the school. The DSL's responsibilities include:

- Acting as the first point of contact for safeguarding concerns and providing advice, guidance and support to staff.
- Responsibility for IT and cyber-safety.
- Ensuring the proper implementation of safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Managing referrals, maintaining detailed, accurate and secure records of safeguarding concerns and referrals.
- Responsibility for the Single Central Record (SCR).
- Liaising with local and international safeguarding authorities, including child protection agencies, to manage cases and ensure prompt action.
- Responsibility for attendance, under Working Together to Improve School Attendance (WTISA) guidelines.
- Ensuring that the DSL receives regular training to keep up to date with current guidance.
- Delivering regular safeguarding training to staff and ensuring their compliance with statutory requirements, such as Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024.
- Leading the Safeguarding Committee and providing an annual safeguarding report to the Governing Body.
- Ensuring that safeguarding files for pupils transferring schools are securely passed to the receiving institution.

3.2 Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs)

The Deputy DSLs are **Tony Emmerson** and **Irena Smetánková**, who support the DSL in all safeguarding matters and act in their absence. Their responsibilities include:

- Assisting in managing safeguarding cases and referrals
- Providing safeguarding advice and support to staff as needed
- Attending safeguarding meetings and case conferences as representatives of the school
- Ensuring continuity in safeguarding practices during the DSL's absence

3.3 The Governing Body

The Governing Body has ultimate responsibility for safeguarding and ensuring the school's compliance with statutory obligations. This includes:

- Ensuring there is a Designated Safeguarding Governor.
- Reviewing and approving the safeguarding policy annually.
- Ensuring the school has an appropriately trained DSL and DDSLs, with the status and authority to carry out the duties of the post.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of safeguarding policies and procedures through regular updates and reports from the DSL.
- Ensuring that safer recruitment practices are implemented, including robust background checks for all staff and volunteers.
- Attend annual safeguarding training and updates.
- That the school is compliant with the Equality Act.
- That the school is compliant with all requirements for Data Protection.
- That all safeguarding files and contact numbers are stored in line with latest guidance.
- That the school provides a safe online environment.
- That, if any of the school buildings are used outside of term time, that those using the buildings are aware of this safeguarding policy, and that they have undertaken all the necessary training.

3.4 All Staff and Volunteers

Every staff member and volunteer has a duty to:

- Recognise the signs of abuse, neglect and safeguarding concerns (as outlined in **Appendix B**), and report them promptly to the DSL or DDSLs
- Read and comply with **KCSIE 2024**, Part One, Teaching Standards & Professional Conduct (Staff Handbook), School Code and this safeguarding policy
- Attend regular safeguarding training and updates
- Foster a safe environment where children feel secure and confident to share concerns
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries and uphold the school's code of conduct

3.5 The Headmaster

The Headmaster under Czech law is responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of this policy across the school. This includes:

- Allocating sufficient resources and time for safeguarding matters
- Supporting the DSL and DDSLs in their roles

- Promoting a culture of vigilance and transparency in safeguarding practices

3.6 The Safeguarding Committee

Chaired by the DSL, the Safeguarding Committee meets termly to review safeguarding matters and ensure the continuous improvement of safeguarding practices. Members include:

- David Brookes (DSL)
- Tony Emmerson (DDSL)
- Irena Smetánková (DDSL)
- Katie Schoultz - Safeguarding Governor
- Anna Štrosová - HR Manager
- Markéta Mašovská - School Office Manager
- Dr Nigel Brown - Headmaster

3.7 Students

Students are encouraged to play an active role in their safety by:
- Reporting any concerns to a trusted adult
- Participating in the school's safeguarding education and awareness programmes
- Respecting and supporting their peers to help create a safe environment

4. Safeguarding Procedures

To ensure the safety and well-being of all pupils, the English College in Prague has established clear and effective safeguarding procedures. These are underpinned by a child-centred approach and comply with statutory guidance, including **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024**.

Key points for staff to remember for taking action are:

1. In an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, for example, call the Police on 158;

2. Do not start your own investigation;

3. Share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family;

4. Report your concern on MyConcern and contact a DSL/DDSLs as soon as possible.

4.1 Reporting a Concern

Staff, pupils and volunteers must report any safeguarding concerns promptly using the **MyConcern** system. This ensures that all concerns are recorded securely and actioned appropriately. For guidance on receiving a disclosure from a pupil see **Appendix A.**

Steps for Reporting via MyConcern:

- **Log in**: Staff members use their unique credentials to access MyConcern
- **Report a Concern**: Select the "Report a Concern" option on the homepage and complete the on-screen form with relevant details, including:
  - Date and time of the concern
  - Description of the incident or disclosure
  - Any actions already taken
- **Submit**: Once submitted, the system automatically notifies the DSL and DDSLs. For urgent concerns, staff must also contact the DSL directly to ensure immediate action is taken
- **Follow-up**: Staff can update concerns through the "My Concerns" section, ensuring ongoing communication with safeguarding leads

If MyConcern is inaccessible, concerns must be reported directly to the DSL or DDSLs verbally and followed up in writing as soon as possible.

4.2 Managing Concerns

Once a concern is reported:

- The DSL or DDSL assesses the risk and determines the appropriate course of action, which may include:
  - Internal support measures for the pupil
  - Referrals to external agencies, including social services or law enforcement, in line with local safeguarding thresholds
- All actions and communications are logged in MyConcern to ensure transparency and accountability

4.3 Dealing with Disclosures

If a child makes a disclosure (as outlined in **Appendix A**):

- Listen calmly and reassure the child that they have done the right thing by speaking up
- Do not promise confidentiality; explain that the information will need to be shared with appropriate staff to ensure their safety

- Record the disclosure as soon as possible using MyConcern, avoiding judgmental or leading language

4.4 External Referrals and Multi-Agency Working

The school is committed to working collaboratively with local safeguarding partners and external agencies. Referrals to social services (OSPOD) or other relevant bodies (e.g. PPP, Police) are made promptly by the DSL, ensuring pupils receive timely and appropriate support.

4.5 Monitoring and Review

Safeguarding concerns and actions are reviewed regularly by the DSL and the Safeguarding Committee to ensure effective case management and continuous improvement.

4.6.1 Low Level Concerns and Neutral Notifications

Low Level Concerns: These are concerns, however minor, that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, but which do not meet the threshold for serious harm or abuse. Examples include being overly friendly, having favorites, or using inappropriate language. Such concerns should be reported to the DSL.

Neutral Notifications: These are used to record events or situations that could be misconstrued, or where there is concern about an adult's behavior, even if no clear boundary has been broken. This system protects both pupils and staff by creating a record for potential future reference. Staff are encouraged to self-report situations that may appear compromising or where they feel their behavior fell below professional standards. These should be made by email to the DSL.

Rationale: Both Low Level Concerns and Neutral Notifications are crucial for maintaining a safe environment. They enable the school to identify potential patterns of behavior, address concerns proactively, and protect staff from false allegations, even when the immediate concern does not meet the threshold for significant harm.

4.6.2 Recording Low Level Concerns

Any staff member who has a 'low level concern' about a colleague, must report this to the appropriate DSL and record it in writing via the Staff Safeguarding section of MyConcern. The record will include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and the action taken. The identity of the individual sharing their concerns will also be recorded. However, if the individual wishes to

remain anonymous, that will be respected as far as reasonably possible. Records will be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic, or inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

4.7 Allegations Against Members of Staff & other Adults (e.g. Parents, Visitors, Governors)

a. Allegations made about another member of staff or other adults (e.g. parents, visitors or governors) should be raised directly with the Headmaster immediately or in his absence the Designated Safeguarding Lead
b. In the specific case of a suspicion being raised against any of the Designated Safeguarding Leads, this should be shared with the Headmaster (Nigel Brown) immediately or in his absence the Chair of Governors (Denis Keefe);
c. In the specific case of a suspicion being raised against the Headmaster, this should be shared with the Chair of the Board of Governors (Denis Keefe) immediately. The nature of such issues is highly individualised and thus each case will be acted on depending on what needs to be done.

    The Chair of the Board of Governors will keep a careful confidential record of all aspects of the disclosure.

The procedure to be followed is outlined in the **Staff Disciplinary** section of the Staff Handbook

Teachers and other members of staff must protect themselves and staff should bear in mind that even innocent actions or comments can sometimes be misconstrued.

Occasionally false allegations of abuse are made. Staff should be guided by the advice in the Staff Handbook, under 'Teaching Standards & Professional Conduct' to reduce the risk of false allegations and situations which may give rise to misinterpretation.

4.8 Confidentiality

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.

● Personal information about a child or young person will be disclosed to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.
● All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or well-being or that of another.
- We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to social services with their parents/carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation.
- In some cases we may contact social services in Prague, the Police, or our child protection consultant in the UK and carry out a No-Names consultation.

5. Safe Recruitment and Staff Conduct

The English College in Prague is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children through robust recruitment practices and maintaining high standards of professional conduct for all staff and volunteers.

5.1 Safe Recruitment

The school ensures that all recruitment processes comply with **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024** and safer recruitment best practices.

Key Steps:

- **Job Advertisements:** All job postings include a statement on the school's commitment to safeguarding
- **Pre-employment Checks:**
    - Identity verification
    - International Child Protection Certificates (if the person is British or has ever worked in the UK) and a Czech criminal record check (on employment, if they have not already living in the Czech Republic).
    - Additional overseas criminal record checks for candidates who have lived or worked abroad
    - Verification of professional qualifications and right-to-work documentation
    - Online check for shortlisted candidates (social media)
- **Safer Recruitment Training:** selection interview panels will include:
    - at least one member who has completed certified safer recruitment training. In order for Heads of Faculty and Heads of Department to take part in interviews, they need to have completed the TES Develop Safer Recruitment training course.
    - a minimum of 2 members of staff, and as diverse as circumstances allow

- questions relating to safeguarding whether or not the post involves significant contact with children.
- **References:** At least two professional references are obtained and verified for all shortlisted candidates

The **Single Central Record (SCR)** is maintained and regularly audited to ensure compliance with all safer recruitment requirements. This includes:

- Legal name
- Current Address (including in UK if different)
- Role
- Record original copies of relevant qualifications have been seen by HR
- Verification of personal details/identity (name, D.o.B) (including seeing original birth certificate)
- Record of criminal record checks gathered at employment
- Updated criminal record checks on a rolling three year basis for all staff, governors, volunteers and contractors.
- Application form
- Medical
- References
- Record of online search

5.2 Induction and Training

All new staff receive safeguarding training as part of their induction, which includes:

- Reading and understanding this policy, the [Teaching Standards & Professional Conduct](#) (Staff Handbook), School Code and [KCSIE](#) **Part One**
- Read and comply with **KCSIE 2024**, Part One, and this safeguarding policy
- Awareness of safeguarding procedures and their roles in reporting concerns
- Training to recognise early signs of extremist behaviour and know how to escalate concerns

Annual safeguarding training is also provided to all staff, volunteers and governors. Regular updates are also included within standard staff training throughout the year.

5.3 Staff Conduct

All staff must adhere to the **Teaching Standards & Professional Conduct**, which outlines expected behaviour, including:

- Maintaining professional boundaries in relationships with pupils
- Avoiding any actions or communication that could be misinterpreted
- Following guidelines for appropriate physical contact, digital communication and one-to-one interactions

Staff must immediately report any concerns about their own conduct or that of a colleague to the Headmaster (or DSL in their absence). In the specific case of the

6. Child Protection

Child protection is a core component of safeguarding and focuses on identifying and responding to children at risk of harm.

6.1 Recognising Abuse and Neglect

All staff must remain vigilant to the signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation. This includes physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, as well as specific safeguarding concerns such as:

- **Child-on-child abuse**, including bullying and harassment
- **Online safety risks**, including grooming and cyberbullying
- **Radicalisation and extremism**

Staff are encouraged to adopt a **"it could happen here"** mindset when identifying potential safeguarding concerns.

6.2 Reporting Concerns

Any concerns about a child's safety or well-being must be reported immediately using the **MyConcern** system or directly to the DSL/DDSL if urgent. The DSL/DDSL will assess and take appropriate action, including external referrals if necessary.

6.3 Dealing with Disclosures

When a child discloses abuse or harm:

- Listen without interrupting or leading the conversation
- Reassure the child and explain the need to share their disclosure with safeguarding leads
- Record the disclosure accurately and submit it through **MyConcern**

6.4 Prevent Duty

The school fulfils its duty under the **Prevent Strategy**, identifying and addressing risks of radicalisation. Staff receive training on employment and regular updates

to recognise early signs of extremist behaviour and know how to escalate concerns.

6.5 Supporting Children

The school provides tailored support for pupils who are victims of abuse or at risk of harm, including access to counselling services (currently external) and liaison with external agencies. Staff are trained to consider the pupil's voice and prioritise their well-being in all safeguarding actions.

6.6 Multi-Agency Working

The school collaborates with local safeguarding partners, social services, and law enforcement to ensure coordinated support for children in need.

7. Online Safety

The English College in Prague recognises the importance of safeguarding children in the digital world. Online safety is integral to our safeguarding policy and procedures, protecting pupils from risks such as cyberbullying, online grooming, exploitation, and exposure to harmful content.

7.1 Education and Awareness

- **Pupils:** Online safety is embedded in the curriculum, promoting responsible use of technology and critical awareness of risks. Topics include privacy settings, digital footprints, and recognising inappropriate online behaviour
- **Staff:** All staff receive training on online safety, including recognising signs of online abuse and supporting pupils in navigating digital risks
- **Parents:** Resources and workshops are provided to help parents understand and mitigate online risks at home

7.2 Technology and Filtering Systems

- The school implements robust filtering and monitoring systems to prevent access to harmful content
- Regular audits ensure that systems are updated and compliant with the latest guidance, including **KCSIE 2024** and relevant local legislation

7.3 Reporting Online Concerns

All concerns about online safety, including cyberbullying and inappropriate use of technology, must be reported via **MyConcern** or directly to the DSL. These concerns are managed in line with the safeguarding procedures

8. Safer Working Practices

All staff are expected to follow safer working practices to ensure professional boundaries are maintained and to protect both pupils and staff from potential allegations or harm.

8.1 Professional Conduct

- Staff must maintain a professional relationship with pupils at all times, avoiding any behaviour that could be misinterpreted or deemed inappropriate
- Communication with pupils must remain professional, including through email, messaging apps, or social media. Personal contact details should never be shared

8.2 Physical Contact and One-to-One Situations

- Any physical contact with pupils must be appropriate and limited to what is necessary for their care or instruction (e.g., first aid or sports coaching).
- One-to-one interactions should take place in visible and appropriate settings, such as rooms with windows or doors left open

  The **Neutral Notifications** system should where relevant be used to self report.

8.3 Off-Site Activities

- Staff must ensure all safeguarding measures are in place during off-site activities, including trips and excursions. Risk assessments must include safeguarding considerations
- The same standards of professional conduct apply off-site as within the school

8.4 Whistleblowing

- Staff have a duty to report any concerns about unsafe practices, whether observed in others or inadvertently practised themselves
- These concerns can be raised confidentially with the DSL or the Headmaster

9. Monitoring and Review

Safeguarding at the English College in Prague is an ongoing commitment, requiring regular monitoring and evaluation to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with statutory requirements.

9.1 Monitoring Safeguarding Practices

- The DSL, with support from the Safeguarding Committee, oversees the implementation and effectiveness of safeguarding procedures
- **MyConcern** data is reviewed regularly to identify trends, areas of concern and training needs

9.2 Annual Policy Review

- This policy is reviewed annually, or more frequently if legislative or procedural changes occur
- The review is conducted by the DSL, in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Body
- Feedback from staff, pupils and parents is incorporated into the review process

9.3 External Audits and Inspections

- The school welcomes regular inspections from **BSO-accredited inspection agencies**, **COBIS**, and other relevant bodies to ensure safeguarding compliance and identify areas for improvement

10. Links to Other Policies

The safeguarding policy operates in conjunction with other key policies and documents that together ensure a comprehensive approach to the safety and welfare of students at the English College in Prague. These include:

- [School Code](): Incorporates guidelines on anti-bullying, behavior, and conduct expectations for students, staff, and the wider school community. Provides guidance on the provision of first aid and the management of medical emergencies
- [Act on the Protection of Whistleblowers](): Provides procedures for raising concerns about unsafe practices or misconduct by staff, volunteers, or contractors.
- [Health & Safety Policy](): Details the measures taken to maintain a safe physical environment for students and staff.

- **Learning Support Policy**: Complements the safeguarding policy by outlining procedures for identifying and supporting students with special educational needs or learning difficulties, who may be more vulnerable.
- **Privacy Directive**: Outlines how sensitive information, including safeguarding records, is handled in compliance with relevant legislation.
- **School safety and crisis plan**: Covers the responsible use of technology by students and staff and outlines measures to protect against online risks.
- **Headmaster's Directive on School Trips and Events**: Details safeguarding requirements for off-site activities, including risk assessments and supervision.

The School Code and policies are accessible on the school website, or linked in the Staff Handbook and are reviewed regularly to ensure they remain aligned with the school's safeguarding framework and statutory requirements.

Appendix A: Guidance for Receiving a Disclosure from a Pupil

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. If a pupil talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or well-being, the staff member will need to let the pupil know that they cannot promise confidentiality and may need to pass the information on – staff are not allowed to keep secrets. The point at which they tell the pupil this is a matter for professional judgement.

During a conversation with a pupil during a disclosure you must:

A. Allow them to speak freely;
B. Remain calm and collected – the pupil may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting their listener;
C. Give reassuring nods or words of comfort – 'I'm so sorry this has happened', 'I want to help', 'This isn't your fault', 'You are doing the right thing in talking to me';
D. Not be afraid of silences – staff must remember how hard this must be for the pupil;
E. Under no circumstances ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the pupil's mother think about all this;
F. Tell the pupil that in order to help them, the member of staff must pass the information on;
G. Not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused;
H. Avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as 'I do wish you had told me about this when it started' or 'I can't believe what I'm hearing' may be interpreted by the child to mean that they have done something wrong;
I. Tell the pupil what will happen next. The pupil may agree to go to see the designated senior person. Otherwise it is the duty of the member of staff to inform the DSL of what has been discussed. If the pupil does agree to go and see the designated person, the staff member should inform the DSL that the child will be coming to see them at some point;
J. Report to the DSL, via My Concern, even if the child has promised to do it by themselves;
K. Write up the conversation as soon as possible on My Concern
L. Seek support if you feel distressed.

Appendix B: Recognising Abuse

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, for example by leaving a small child home alone, or leaving knives or matches within reach of an unattended toddler. The impairment of physical health may also be regarded as a form of abuse.

Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

There are four categories of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse 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.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development for mental health. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only for meeting the needs of another person. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. 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 overprotection and limitation of exploration and
learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. Some level of

emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Neglect

Neglect Is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological

needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect May occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing or shelter, including exclusion from home or abandonment; failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; failure to ensure adequate supervision, including the use of inadequate care-takers; or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual

activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

A child who is being abused or neglected may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries;
- show signs of pain or discomfort;
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather;
- be concerned about changing for PE or swimming;
- look unkempt and uncared for;
- have consistently poor hygiene;
- have ill fitting/dirty clothes;
- change their eating habits;

- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships;
- appear fearful;
- be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety;
- self-harm;
- frequently miss school or arrive late;
- show signs of not wanting to go home;
- display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn;
- challenge authority;
- become disinterested in their school work;
- be constantly tired or preoccupied;
- be wary of physical contact;
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol;
- display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age;
- make strong efforts to avoid specific family members or friends, without an obvious reason;
- a sudden lack of concentration;
- tired and hungry;
- talk about being left home alone, with inappropriate carers or with strangers;
- regularly missing from school or education;
- reluctant to go home after school;
- poor school attendance and punctuality, or who are consistently late being picked up;
- drink alcohol regularly from an early age;
- are concerned for younger siblings without explaining why;
- talk about running away;
- shy away from being touched or flinch at sudden movements.

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the Designated Safeguarding Lead to decide how to proceed.

Mental health

All staff should also be aware 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.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing mental health problems or be at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern,
immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity.

Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator.

The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online.

Child on Child abuse

Incidents of child on child abuse should always be taken seriously, reported and followed up. Downplaying certain behaviours is not acceptable, for example dismissing sexual harassment as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', 'part of growing

up' or 'boys being boys' can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, and an unsafe environment for children. In worst-case scenarios this can lead to a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

Children Missing in Education (CME)

Children with unexplainable and or/persistent absences from education for prolonged periods an/or repeated occasions refers to 'any child of compulsory school age who is not registered at any formally approved education activity e.g. school, alternative provision, elective home education, and has been out of education provision for at least 4 weeks'.

CME also includes those children who are missing (family whereabouts unknown), and are
usually children who are registered on a school roll/alternative provision. This might be a child
who is not at their last known address and either
• has not taken up an allocated school place as expected, or
• has 10 or more days of continuous absence from the college without explanation, or left the college suddenly and the destination is unknown
For this reason it is vital that prolonged absences are referred to the DSL who will consider a
referral

Children staying with host families

ECP may arrange for pupils to stay with a host family during a foreign exchange trip or sports tour.

It is not possible for schools to obtain criminal record information from the DBS about adults abroad. Where pupils stay with families abroad, we will agree with partner schools a shared understanding of the arrangements in place. Staff will use their professional judgement to satisfy themselves that the arrangements are appropriate to safeguard the pupils, which will include ensuring pupils understand who to contact should an emergency occur, or a situation arise which makes them feel uncomfortable. We will also make parents aware of these arrangements.

The college follows the guidance in **Annex E** of **KCSIE 2024** to ensure that hosting arrangements are as safe as possible.

Radicalisation and preventing extremism

The Prevent Duty is the duty in the counter-terrorism strategy (CONTEST) to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. It places a duty on schools to have due regard to the need to prevent pupils from being drawn into terrorism.

The UK's Counter-Terrorism Strategy is split into four areas:

- **Prevent**: to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.
- **Pursue**: to stop terrorist attacks and prosecute wherever possible.
- **Protect**: to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack.
- **Prepare**: to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack when it cannot be stopped.

Specific signs to look for

- A conviction that their religion, culture or beliefs are under threat and treated unjustly;
- A tendency to look for conspiracy theories, and a distrust of mainstream media;
- A sense of debt or guilt;
- Blaming parents for family problems;
- Feeling let down, and perhaps 'religious seeking';
- Peer pressure, low self-esteem, and/or the need for identity and belonging;
- Physical change / growth spurt (being bigger than peers);
- Being secretive about who they have been talking to online and what sites they visit;
- Switching screens when you come near the phone, tablet or computer;
- Possessing items – electronic devices or phones – you have not given them; and
- Becoming emotionally volatile.

In addition staff should be alert to **general signs of abuse in** section '2.2 Recognising abuse and neglect'.

Safeguarding students with Special Educational Needs

We recognise that children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges and this policy reflects the fact that additional barriers, including mental health, peer group isolation and bullying can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. This can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- Children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by issues such as bullying (particularly cyberbullying) sometimes without showing any obvious signs; and
There are sometimes communication barriers due to physical or social issues, which means that students do not or are not able to make a disclosure.

To ensure that we effectively safeguard our students with special educational needs, the DSL liaises regularly with the Head of Learning Support. This includes a regular meeting where students are discussed and joint strategies put in place. Communication to relevant parties involved in that child's care is regular and appropriate.

When applying disciplinary measures such as restraint or isolation in response to incidents involving children with SEN and disabilities, it is important to consider the risks carefully, given the additional vulnerability of the group. To safeguard a pupil others, it may be necessary to use restraint and yet restraint is likely to impact on the well-being of the child. Consequently it is important to plan positive and proactive behaviour support, which will reduce the occurrence of risky behaviour and the need to use restraint.

Additional categories of abuse

The following are additional categories of abuse that should be considered:

- **Vulnerability of LGBTQIA+:** Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual + children may be at increased risk of abuse due to their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- **Child abduction and community safety incidents:** This includes incidents where a child is taken away without lawful authority or reasonable excuse.
- **Children and the court system:** Children may be at risk of abuse within the court system, particularly if they are involved in care proceedings.
- **Children with family members in prison:** Children with family members in prison may be at increased risk of abuse due to the stigma and isolation they may experience.
- **Domestic abuse and violence, and teenage relationship abuse:** Children who are exposed to domestic abuse and violence, or who are in abusive teenage relationships, may be at increased risk of abuse.
- **Homelessness:** Children who are homeless may be at increased risk of abuse due to their vulnerability.
- **Honour-based Abuse (HBA) including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Forced Marriage:** HBA is a form of abuse that is perpetrated in the name of honour. It can include FGM and forced marriage.
- **Modern Slavery:** Modern slavery is a form of abuse that involves the exploitation of people for profit.
- **Radicalisation and preventing extremism:** Children who are radicalised or who are at risk of extremism may be at increased risk of abuse.
- **Self-harm:** Self-harm is a sign that a child is in distress and may be at risk of abuse.
- **Serious bullying:** Serious bullying can have a devastating impact on children and can lead to abuse.
- **Serious violence:** Children who are exposed to serious violence may be at increased risk of abuse.

- **Sexting (Youth Produced Sexual Imagery [YPSI]):** Sexting is the sharing of sexual images or videos. It can be a form of abuse if it is non-consensual or if it involves the exploitation of a child.