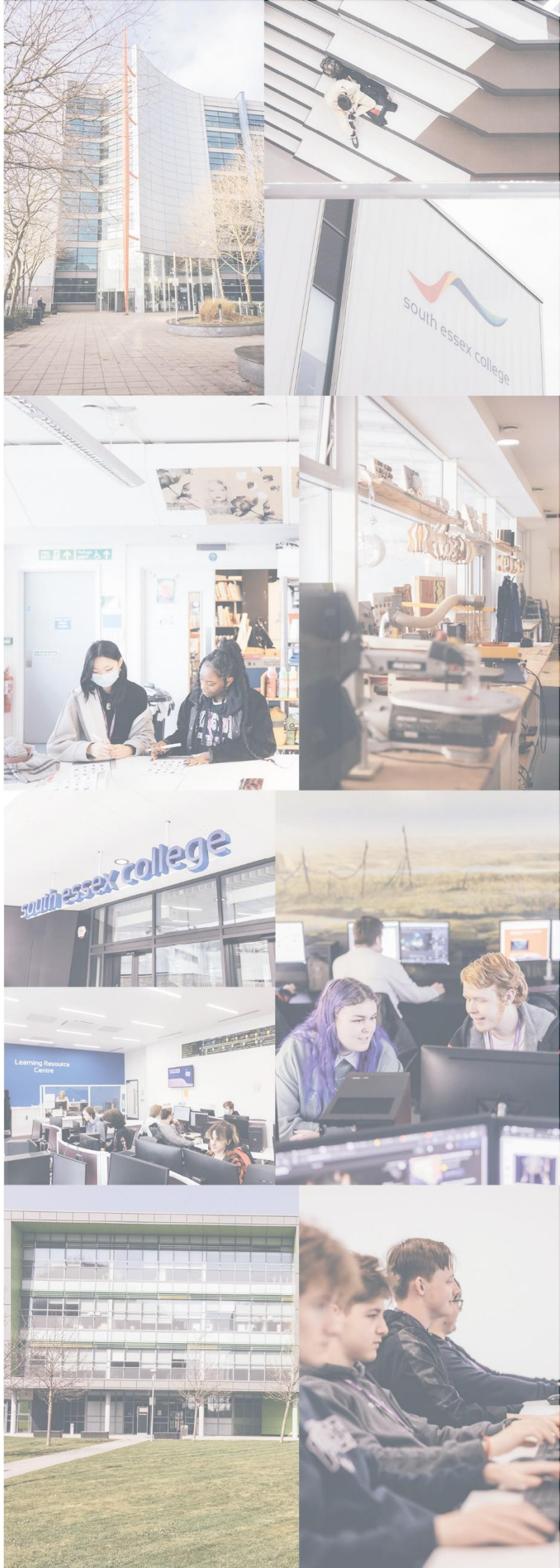




# **SAFEGUARDING POLICY Including Child Protection & Vulnerable Adults 2025-26**



**SIGNIFICANT CHANGES TO POLICY FOLLOWING REVIEW**

HEADING NAME	DETAILS OF SIGNIFICANT CHANGE	CHANGES MADE BY
Throughout Document	Job titles and Team Names updated	DSL (Students)
Throughout Document	Policy Titles updated	DSL (Students)
Named Staff	Job titles and Team Names updated	DSL (Students)
7.3 Early Help	New section to reflect KCSIE and the upcoming changes in the Children's Wellbeing & Schools Bill	DSL (Students)

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## South Essex College Group Safeguarding Named Staff

The contact details below are to support any referrals or advice and guidance that staff may need in relation to any safeguarding concerns. It is recommended that staff contact the Safeguarding Team initially to gain advice or make a referral. If you query is regarding a member of staff please refer straight to the Human Resources.

Safeguarding Team	
Safeguarding Officers & Advisers	Care Experienced Team
<b>Sophy Redding</b> , Safeguarding Officer <b>Julie Josling</b> , Safeguarding Adviser <b>Shelley Barzoukas</b> , Safeguarding Adviser <b>Jason Abbott</b> , Safeguarding Adviser <b>Jade Worsfold</b> , Safeguarding Adviser <b>Michelle Strubel</b> , Safeguarding Adviser	<b>Gina Galloni</b> , Designated Looked After Child Adviser <b>Emma Chapman</b> , Designated Care Experienced Adviser <b>Princess Otigba</b> , Designated Care Experienced Adviser
Safeguarding Team Contact Details	Wellbeing Coaches
<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:Safeguarding@Southessex.ac.uk">Safeguarding@Southessex.ac.uk</a> <b>Tel:</b> 0345 52 12345	<b>Sue Taylor</b> , Wellbeing Coach
Management & Leadership Contacts	
Designated Safeguarding Leads	College Principals & Deputies
<b>Jane Belcher</b> , Interim Director of ALS, Safeguarding & Learner Wellbeing Designated Safeguarding Lead for Students  <b>Sue Walsh</b> Safeguarding & Wellbeing Manager Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for Students	<b>Southend City College</b> <b>Nicki Kelly</b> , College Principal <b>Abigail Tranah</b> , Deputy College Principal  <b>Thurrock College</b> <b>Brad Brooks</b> , College Principal <b>Reilly Allum</b> , Deputy College Principal  <b>Basildon College</b> <b>John Newton</b> , College Principal <b>Steve Ferguson</b> , Deputy College Principal
Human Resources	Strategic Safeguarding Senior Leadership Team
<b>Wayne Donaldson</b> HR Consultant Designated Safeguarding Lead for Staff  <b>Joanne Tierney</b> Human Resources Manager Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for Staff	<b>Adam Fahey</b> Deputy Chief Executive - Curriculum & Quality (Designated Student Safeguarding Lead)  <b>Ansar Mahmood</b> Group Vice CEO – Chief Information Officer (Designated Safeguarding Lead for Staff)

# Safeguarding Policy

## 1.0 Policy Statement

### 1.1 Safeguarding Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to enable all staff employed by the South Essex Colleges Group along with others engaged as agency workers, volunteers or contractors and all students and apprentices to safeguard everyone and to promote the welfare of children and adults who may be at risk.

The College places a high priority on creating a culture in which it is safe to learn and work. Affording protection to our students is also a key priority, as is:

- Welfare of the child and adults at risk is paramount;
- All children and adults at risk, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection;
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child or adult is at risk of harm;
- Having robust recruitment and vetting procedures that deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children and adults at risk from applying for or securing employment, or volunteering opportunities at the college, as outlined in the Safer Recruitment & Managing Allegations Policy;
- Students and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support;
- Affording a student-centred approach and protection to our Students.

### 1.2 Scope

This policy applies to all Governors, College employees, agency workers and volunteers, contractors, consultants and those working under self-employed arrangements. For the purpose of this policy the term 'Staff' will encompass the above groups.

Staff must acknowledge that:

- Students' welfare is of paramount importance and all students have the right to be protected from abuse;
- Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children and young people of all forms of domestic abuse;
- College staff are particularly important in promoting the welfare of students as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for students and prevent concerns from escalating;
- Staff will receive safeguarding training which is appropriate to their role;
- Students who are being abused will only tell people they trust and with whom they feel safe and that any person confided in needs to be able to respond appropriately to any student who discloses evidence of abuse;



- It is essential that our practice and behaviour puts students' welfare first and cannot be misconstrued in anyway and does not contravene accepted good practice or the College's Staff Code of Professional Conduct.

For the purpose of this policy the term 'student' will encompass any child, young person or adult studying any FE/HE course/programme (full-time, part-time, work-based, apprenticeship or school age/link/infill) at South Essex Colleges Group.

### 1.3 Safeguarding Aims

The Safeguarding aims are:

- To promote the welfare of children and adults at risk;
- To keep students safe from maltreatment, harm or potential harm;
- To develop a good understanding with staff of the importance of safeguarding all children and adults at risk, and their responsibilities for identifying and reporting actual or suspected abuse;
- To ensure all children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe & effective care and preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- To provide early help to students and families as issues or concerns emerge to prevent escalation;
- To ensure safe recruitment and selection procedures are in place when recruiting Staff and engaging others in all forms of work at the College and for dealing with allegations against staff (as outlined in the Safer Recruitment & Managing Allegations Policy);
- To ensure that all students know that the College takes the safeguarding agenda very seriously and will follow the appropriate procedures for identifying and reporting abuse;
- To ensure that parents/carers/guardians are clear about the value the College places on safeguarding.

### 1.4 Relevant Legislation

The College recognises its duties under relevant legislation and guidance as follows:

#### Legislation:

- Children Act 1989
- Education Act 2002
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- The Children's Act 2004
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Prevent Duty 2023
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 1998 and GDPR 2018
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021

#### Guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers 2024
- SET Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures
- Prevent Duty in Further and Higher Education 2023
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years

## 1.5 Related College Policies and Procedures

The Safeguarding Policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Student Anti-Bullying & Harassment Policy
- Student Supporting Positive Behaviours Policy & Procedure
- HE Disciplinary Policy
- Prevent Risk Assessment & Action Plan
- Tutorial & Enrichment Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Freedom of Expression
- Inclusive Risk Assessments or Risk Assessment & Management Plan
- Health & Safety Policy
- Trips & Visits Policy
- Safer Recruitment & Managing Allegations Policy
- SEND Inclusion Statement
- Stop & Search Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- HE Fitness to Study Policy
- HE Fitness to Practice Policy

## 2.0 Safer Recruitment and Selection

Human Resources ensure full compliance with the Department for Education guidance “Keeping Children Safe in Education” incorporating safer recruitment and dealing with allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff. These aims and procedures are outlined in the Safer Recruitment & Managing Allegations Policy.

Staff are required to complete the mandatory online child protection training and are provided with safeguarding training. All new staff are required to attend an induction where they are provided with advice and guidance on safeguarding and how to safeguard themselves. Information is given to staff and they are advised how to find the associated policies and asked to familiarise themselves with these documents and their responsibilities.

## 3.0 Cross-College Responsibilities

### 3.1 Governing Body & Corporation

The Governing Body should ensure they facilitate a whole college approach to safeguarding. This means:

- Ensuring safeguarding, child protection and safeguarding adults at risk are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development;
- Ensuring all systems, processes and policies operate with the best interests of students at their heart;
- Knowledge and oversight of a broad and balanced curriculum including tutorials that teach safeguarding, including online safety, and offers a contextualised approach to all students;
- Ensuring the college is a safe environment for all learners.

The designated member of the Governing Body & Corporation with responsibility for Safeguarding will ensure that the Governing Body are kept informed of safeguarding guidance. This Corporation member will ensure that the College continuously meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. They will not directly be involved in cases or have access to confidential information on students or staff. The Designated Member will work directly with Safeguarding Team and Human Resources to ensure that Safeguarding is high on the College agenda and everyone has an understanding of their responsibilities to safeguard students. There is no requirement for this designated member to receive specialist child protection and inter-agency working training.

### **3.2 Senior Leadership**

As a large multi-campus college group, strategic responsibility for Safeguarding is led by the following members of the Executive Board:

- Director of Additional Learning Support, Safeguarding & Learner Wellbeing (Interim) - Students
- Deputy Chief Executive - Curriculum & Quality – Students
- Group Vice CEO – Chief Information Officer – Staff
- Human Resources Consultant - Staff

#### **3.2.1 Designated Strategic Lead for Students**

The Designated Strategic Lead for Students directs the implementation of the College's strategic direction in relation to student safeguarding to ensure the college undertakes its statutory duties with regard to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. The Strategic Lead for Students will comply with the duties outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education. The Strategic Lead will continually raise awareness of safeguarding across the Governing Body, Senior Leadership Team and Leadership & Management group.

The Strategic Lead will champion the promoting of the educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might have on student's attendance, engagement and achievement at college. The Strategic Lead will also ensure appropriate resourcing, training and support to teaching and support staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help vulnerable students reach their potential.



### **3.2.2 Designated Lead for Staff Safeguarding including Safer Recruitment**

The Human Resources Consultant is the lead signatory for DBS checks and for ensuring that all staff recruited to the College, any agency, self-employed or contractors are fit to practice in this environment. The Human Resources Consultant has responsibility for the Safer Recruitment and Managing Allegations Policy & Procedure. The Human Resources Consultant will be supported by the Human Resources Manager who is the nominated Deputy for Staff safeguarding.

### **3.2.3 Executive Board Training Requirements**

The Executive Board Members are trained to Designated Safeguarding Lead level covering child protection issues, inter-agency working and staff allegations, as required by the Local Safeguarding Partnerships, and will receive refresher training at least every two years.

## **3.3 Designated Staff for Students:**

### **3.3.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Students**

The Director of Additional Learning Support, Safeguarding & Learner Wellbeing (Interim) manages operational safeguarding and is the nominated DSL (Students) for the College. They have a key duty to take leadership for raising awareness with staff over issues relating to the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk. The DSL (Students) will receive training in child protection issues, inter-agency working and managing staff allegations as required by Keeping Children Safe in Education and the Local Safeguarding Partnerships, and will receive refresher training at least every two years. They should keep up to date with developments in child protection/safeguarding/adult at risk issues through regular CPD.

The DSL (Students) will comply with the duties outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education including:

1. Overseeing the referrals of cases of suspected abuse or allegations to Local Authority Children's or Adult's Social Care, LSP's or other appropriate agencies and safeguarding risk management;
2. Overseeing the management of cases where students are identified as Care Experienced, Known to Local Authority Children's or Adult's Social Care (Child Protection & Child In Need) or undergoing assessments with external services;
3. Promoting the educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might have on student's attendance, engagement and achievement at college;

4. Ensure the College knows who its cohort of students who have or have had a social worker are, understand their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort;
5. Act as the Prevent Lead for the College including overseeing the management of cases where a radicalisation concern is suspected and referrals into the Channel programme. The DSL (Students) will have attended additional training in relation to radicalisation, extremism, Prevent and the Channel Programme.
6. Provide regular reports to SLT and the College Corporation setting out how the College has discharged its duties.

### **3.3.2 Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Students**

The Safeguarding & Wellbeing Manager is the Deputy DSL (Students). Alongside the day to day management of the Safeguarding Team, they will cover the responsibilities of the Lead DSL (Students) in their absence as well as taking responsibility for certain areas of ensuring all young people and adults at risk enrolled at the College are protected from harm. The Manager will liaise with secondary schools, Local Authority Children's or Adult's Social Care and other agencies which send young people and adults at risk to the College to ensure appropriate arrangements are made for progression. The Manager will receive training in child protection issues, inter-agency working and managing staff allegations as required by Keeping Children Safe in Education and the Local Safeguarding Partnerships, and will receive refresher training at least every two years. They should keep up to date with developments in child protection/safeguarding/adult at risk issues.

### **3.4. All Staff & Volunteer Responsibilities (Good Practice Guidelines & Code of Conduct)**

All staff (including Governors/Agency workers/Volunteers/Self-Employed/Contractors) have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child or adult is at risk of harm. Due to their day to day contact with children, young people and adults, College staff are uniquely placed to observe changes in behaviour and the outward signs of abuse including mental health and wellbeing needs. Students may also turn to a trusted adult in College when they are in distress or at risk. It is vital that College staff are alert to the signs of abuse and understand the procedures for reporting their concerns.

All staff should be aware that children and vulnerable adults may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the Safeguarding Team if they have concerns about a child or a vulnerable adult. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children, young people and vulnerable adults which facilitate communication.

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards students we agree to standards of good practice. Staff should safeguard student's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the education profession as part of their professional duties. Good practice includes:

- Treating all students with respect;
- Setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately;
- Involving a student in relevant decisions that affect them;
- Encouraging positive, respectful and safe behaviour among students;
- Awareness that children can abuse other children (child-on-child abuse) and that this can happen inside and outside of college and online and the indicators that might present in these cases;
- Creating a listening culture and helping to ensure that students know that they can come to them to be listened to whilst never promising you will not tell anyone as this may not be in the best interests of the student;
- Being alert to changes in a student's behaviour and recognising that challenging behaviour or poor mental health and wellbeing may be an indicator of abuse or maltreatment as well as lead to an increased vulnerability and risk of abuse;
- Maintaining records and notes on changes in behaviour or circumstances to support any potential referrals, including registers and following set timetables;
- Know how to manage and maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality by only involving those who need to be involved;
- Reading and understanding Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 1), the College's Safeguarding Policy and related policies on wider safeguarding issues such as bullying, behaviour, professional conduct and data protection;
- Maintaining appropriate standards of conversations and interaction with and between students and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language;
- Being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some students lead to an increased risk of abuse;
- Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping students safe;
- Never to be fearful to share information as this could stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of students;
- Staff promptly reporting to Human Resources the details of any change in their personal circumstances (for example committing of an offence) that may call into question their suitability to work with children, young people and adults at risk;
- Staff promptly reporting to Human Resources, the details of any involvement in an investigation, they or a member of their home/residence have with an external agency, such as police, social services, HMRC or Department of Work and Pensions, or any other legal activity which may pose a risk or impact on their DBS status, and ability to work with children, young people or adults.
- Where a member of staff or volunteer has reason to suspect that a student is at risk of harm they are to follow the procedures as set out in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 of this policy for concerns about a member of staff at the end of this policy.

### **3.4.1 Female Genital Mutilation Mandatory Reporting Duty**

There is a mandatory reporting duty with regards to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) placed on staff in education. Staff must report to the Police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report will face disciplinary sanctions. Reports must be made personally to the Police with support from the Safeguarding Team.

The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases the safeguarding procedure should be followed.

More information on FGM, Forced Marriage and so-called honour-based abuse is outlined in Appendix 8 in the Safeguarding Procedure.

## **4.0 Abuse of Trust**

All staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards students is unacceptable and that their conduct towards students must be beyond reproach.

In addition, all staff should understand that, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the College staff and a student under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that student is over the age of consent.

The College's Staff Code of Professional Conduct sets out our expectations of staff. Appendix 4 outlines the process for any allegations against a member of staff. Further information regarding Abuse of Trust can be found in the Safer Recruitment & Managing Allegations Policy & Procedure.

### **4.1 Concerns about a Colleague**

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a student are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the student is paramount.

All concerns of poor practice or conduct, possible abuse by colleagues towards students or any personal relationship identified must be reported to Human Resources. Complaints about the Principal should be reported to the Chair of Governors.

Staff should be aware that the College has a whistle blowing policy. This can be found on the Nexus Intranet and [College website](#). Whistleblowing normally relates to where there is

potential action towards staff or students which may lead to criminal prosecution. In such situations individuals can make a protected disclosure under this policy.

## **4.2 Allegations against Staff**

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, SET procedures will be followed.

We recognise that some professionals do pose a serious risk to students, make an error in judgement or act inappropriately. We act on every allegation received.

Allegations against staff should be reported directly to Human Resources. Allegations about the Principal should be reported to the Chair of Governors.

Please see Appendix 2 of this Policy for further details on dealing with an allegation against staff. More information is provided in the Safer Recruitment & Managing Allegations Policy & Procedure.

## **5.0 Safeguarding Concerns shared by Institutions/Agencies/Employers**

Where the College shares a safeguarding concern regarding an individual, whether this be a student, staff member or volunteer, with another institution or agency, partnership working will be key to referrals and information sharing.

Where there is a requirement to protect the immediate safety of a child/children or vulnerable person based on the information available at the time, it is recognised that the member of staff or volunteer affected will not be advised of such referral until such time as it is safe to do so. Staff are to follow the Safeguarding Flowchart in Appendix 1.

An agreed Lead Professional will be appointed who will be responsible for managing the referrals (e.g. to Local Authority Children's or Adult's Social Care, LADO) and keeping all parties up to date with the progress of the case. Further guidance is available in the Safeguarding Procedure in Appendix 4 of the full procedures.

## **6.0 Preventing Radicalisation & Extremism**

The College recognises its important role in preventing people being drawn into terrorism, which includes not just violent extremism but also non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists exploit.

The College is committed to developing an awareness and understanding of Prevent across our college community. An annual risk assessment will be completed alongside the counter-terrorism local profile to inform the education, training and procedures of the college. A robust procedure for cases of extremism is detailed in Appendix 11 of the

Safeguarding Procedures. Relevant college policies, such as Freedom of Expression, will further underpin the commitment to protecting every member of the college community from being drawn into terrorism and reducing permissive environments.

## 7.0 Students who may be particularly vulnerable

Some students may be at an increased risk of abuse. It is important to understand that this increase in risk is due more to societal attitudes and assumptions, and safeguarding procedures that fail to acknowledge people's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual person's personality, impairment or circumstances. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and a reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

To ensure that all of our students receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to students who are:

- Care Experienced
- Have a social worker or previously known to Local Authority Children's or Adult's Social Care
- Disabled or have special educational needs
- Living in a domestic abuse situation
- Affected by parental substance misuse, domestic abuse or parental mental health needs
- Separated Migrant Children
- Living away from home
- Vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- Living in temporary accommodation
- Live transient lifestyles
- Living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- Not having support networks
- Personal substance misuse issues
- Physical ill-health
- Mental Health and wellbeing
- Financial circumstances
- Vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion or sexuality
- Involved directly or indirectly in sexual exploitation
- Do not have English as a first language
- At risk of female genital mutilation (FGM)
- At risk of forced marriage
- At risk of being drawn into extremism
- Offending history
- Gender questioning young people
- LGBT+

The list provides examples of additionally vulnerable groups and is not exhaustive. Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information and resources in community languages and accessible formats for students with communication needs. The use of local early help offers will further enhance the support to vulnerable groups.



## **7.1 Students who are Care Experienced or Known to Local Authority Children's or Adult's Social Care**

The College will provide a range of support to young people who are:

- Care Experienced (Looked After Children or Care Leavers);
- Students who need a Social Worker (Child in Need, Child Protection Plans);
- Accessing or referred to Early Help & external services.

The College will:

- Allocate a designated member of the Safeguarding Team to support transition, education, progression and professionals meetings;
- Liaise with the Local Authority to obtain and share information so that decisions can routinely be made in the best interests of the student's safety, welfare and educational outcomes;
- Promote the educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might have on student's attendance, engagement and achievement at college;
- Ensure staff knows who its cohort of students who have or have had a social worker are, understand their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort.

## **7.2 Mental Health Support**

The College recognises that it has an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of students. Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a student has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Any staff member who has concerns about a student's mental health should follow the safeguarding procedure in Appendix 1. Appendix 12 in the Safeguarding Procedure provides information on how to respond to a Mental Health Crisis.

## **7.3 Early Help**

Not all incidents or referrals will be a safeguarding or child protection concern but may need an immediate intervention by a member of the Safeguarding Team. Staff will follow the referral process into the Safeguarding Team. The Safeguarding Team will work with all parties to ensure that referrals are made to suitable agencies and parents/carers are made aware of the steps being taken (where appropriate). This may be referred to as Early Help or Tier 2 Support.

Not all referrals to Social Care will meet their threshold for support. In these cases the Safeguarding Team will work with students and their parents/carers to access support via the Early Offer of Help (EOH) available within each Local Authority. The EOH will enable appropriate and targeted support to be put in place for students and their families, as well as providing a comprehensive action plan and monitoring process.

## **8.0 Students Living in College Approved Accommodation**

The College will offer students aged 18+ years the opportunity to apply to live in Halls of Residence (University Square managed/operated by the University of Essex) or properties managed by an approved letting agency. All students will be provided with contact details for college services/teams and external agencies as part of their induction including International Students.

Students living in Halls of Residence will have access to the University Square Security Team who are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for any pastoral or wellbeing needs. The University Square Security Team will maintain regular contact with the Safeguarding Team and Higher Education Support Team regarding any concerns or referrals. Any incidents will be reported to Safeguarding Team for welfare check to be conducted.

Students living in properties managed by an approved letting agency will be supported by the Higher Education Support Team who will refer to the Safeguarding Team with any concerns for welfare checks to be conducted.

## **9.0 Support during Unexpected College Closures**

Some students might need additional support during unexpected college closures (i.e. adverse weather, pandemic, enforced closures), restrictions eases and transition to college.

Additional support with mental health and wellbeing will be made available to all students. Designated support teams will be given more time to support staff and students with new safeguarding and welfare concerns as students return.

All staff should be particularly vigilant to new and additional safeguarding concerns. It is important they act immediately on any safeguarding concern by reporting these to the Safeguarding Team.

In the result of any local or national lockdowns that occur, the College will implement the procedures and services outlined in Appendix 15 of the Safeguarding Procedure. In the event of a closure this Appendix will be published separately and displayed on the College website.

## 10.0 Pre-16 Students

The College provides a part-time programme for 14-16 year olds of compulsory school age. Extra safeguards are arranged to ensure that these younger students are safeguarded during their studies. The College recognises the vulnerability of its youngest students and therefore implements additional measures to review and monitor their safety including:

- Ensuring that students aged 14-16 years old are not educated in the same room, at the same time, as a learner aged 19 or over, without a teacher present in the room;
- Easy identification for staff by different lanyards or a pin badge;
- Students to remain on site for all breaks;
- Designated staff who will monitor attendance, progression and welfare.

Staff designated to 14-16 cohorts will be supported by the Safeguarding Team as required and will be appropriately trained to fulfil their duties.

## 11.0 Child-on-Child and Peer-on-Peer Abuse including Sexual Harassment & Violence

The College recognises that sexual violence and sexual harassment can happen anywhere and are committed to responding to all reports and concerns including those that take place outside of college and/or online. Sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable and will not be tolerated. Addressing inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears innocuous) can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

The College is committed to supporting all our students and will use the policies and procedures developed in the college to manage all cases of sexual violence and sexual harassment. The College's relevant Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Policies & Procedures will support appropriate sanctions. In addition to managing Child-On-Child and Peer-on-Peer abuse, the College will actively monitor and respond to any instances of cyberbullying, exposure to harmful online content, or attempts at exploitation through digital platforms. Guidance on these issues will be available through the VLE and safeguarding communications

Appendix 5 in the Safeguarding procedure explains the procedures for dealing with cases of Child-On-Child and Peer-on-Peer abuse and the support to victims, perpetrators and all students. The College has a robust Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedure which will be applied in most cases of non-sexual peer on peer abuse with outcomes based on the College's relevant Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Policies & Procedures.

## **12.0 Applicant Screening and Support To Continue Studies**

The College recognises that some students may not be able to participate fully and satisfactorily in relation to their academic studies and student life generally. This may be as a result of a new or recurring disability, illness, mental health condition or personal circumstances.

The Safeguarding Team will work alongside the student, parents/carers and other professionals to assess risk, required levels of support and required reasonable adjustments as part of the Admission Process.

Support to Continue Studies meetings will be held for any student who is enrolled on a programme of study who has had a change of circumstances that impact on their engagement in academic studies. The meetings are outlined in the Supporting Positive Behaviours Policy (FE) and Fitness to Study Policy (HE).

## **13.0 Support for those involved in a child protection/safeguarding issue**

Abuse is devastating for the person and can also result in stress and anxiety for staff who become involved.

We will support students, their families and staff by:

- Taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously
- Nominating a link person who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact
- Where a member of staff is subject to an allegation made by a student, separate link staff from Human Resources will be nominated to avoid any conflict of interest
- Responding sympathetically to any request from students or staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety
- Maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- Storing records securely
- Offering details of helplines, counselling or other avenues of external support
- Following the procedures laid down in our whistleblowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures
- Cooperating fully with relevant statutory agencies

## **14.0 Complaints Procedure**

Our Compliments & Complaints Policy & Procedure will be followed where a student or parent/carer/NOK raise a concern about poor practice towards a student that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection or adult safeguarding action. Complaints against staff are managed by Human Resources.

Complaints from staff are dealt with under the College's Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure and Whistleblowing Policy.

## **15.0 Local Authority Networks**

The College will work within the Local Authority Networks to ensure that all students are protected from harm.

The College will adhere to the Southend, Essex & Thurrock (SET) Safeguarding Procedures so that referrals are timely and appropriate. The SET Procedures set out what should happen in any local area when a child or young person is believed to be in need of support.

The College will produce a Safeguarding Audit (as outlined in the Children's Act 2004) and complete data returns to the Local Authority as requested on their performance against statutory guidance. The DSL (Students) will be responsible for providing these reports and presenting to the Local Safeguarding Partnerships as requested.

## **16.0 Sub-Contractors**

The College will ensure that Sub-Contractors have an up to date Safeguarding Policy and named manager responsible for safeguarding across their organisation. All Sub-Contractors will be required to submit evidence of their policies and procedures to the Vice Group CEO – Innovation and Employer Engagement during annual audits and quality checks.

The Vice Group CEO will ensure that audits encompass safeguarding and safer recruitment checks across all partnerships. Any concerns or inadequate practices will be highlighted to the DSL (Students) and DSL (Staff).

## **17.0 Extended College and off-site arrangements**

Where extended College activities are provided by and managed by the College, our own Safeguarding Policy and Procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

## **18.0 Training**

The staff identified in section 3.0 as being the leads responsible for Safeguarding across the College will receive Designated Safeguarding Leads and Inter-Agency Safeguarding Training every two years and will source appropriate CPD to ensure they keep abreast of issues related to safeguarding children and adults at risk.

All staff will be required to complete the online Child Protection and Safeguarding training module when they join the College. Staff will not be able to complete their 3 month probation without a successful pass on the training module.

Face to face Safeguarding training will be delivered to all staff as part of their Induction. Annual safeguarding CPD will take place through Department meetings and cross college events.

The Safeguarding Team will work with Staff Development to develop a range of CPD resources for all staff on Safeguarding topics.

## **19.0 Publicity**

The College Prospectuses, website and internal intranet site will contain a Safeguarding/Child Protection statement and outline of services available to students.

College induction (staff and student) will include an introduction to the Safeguarding Policy and related issues such as conduct, bullying & harassment and services available.

The DSL (Students) and the Safeguarding & Wellbeing Manager are responsible for ensuring that there is cross-college knowledge of safeguarding. Human Resources will work collaboratively with DSL (Students) to ensure the Staff Guide to Safeguarding will be updated annually and made available electronically as well as hard copies in team rooms.

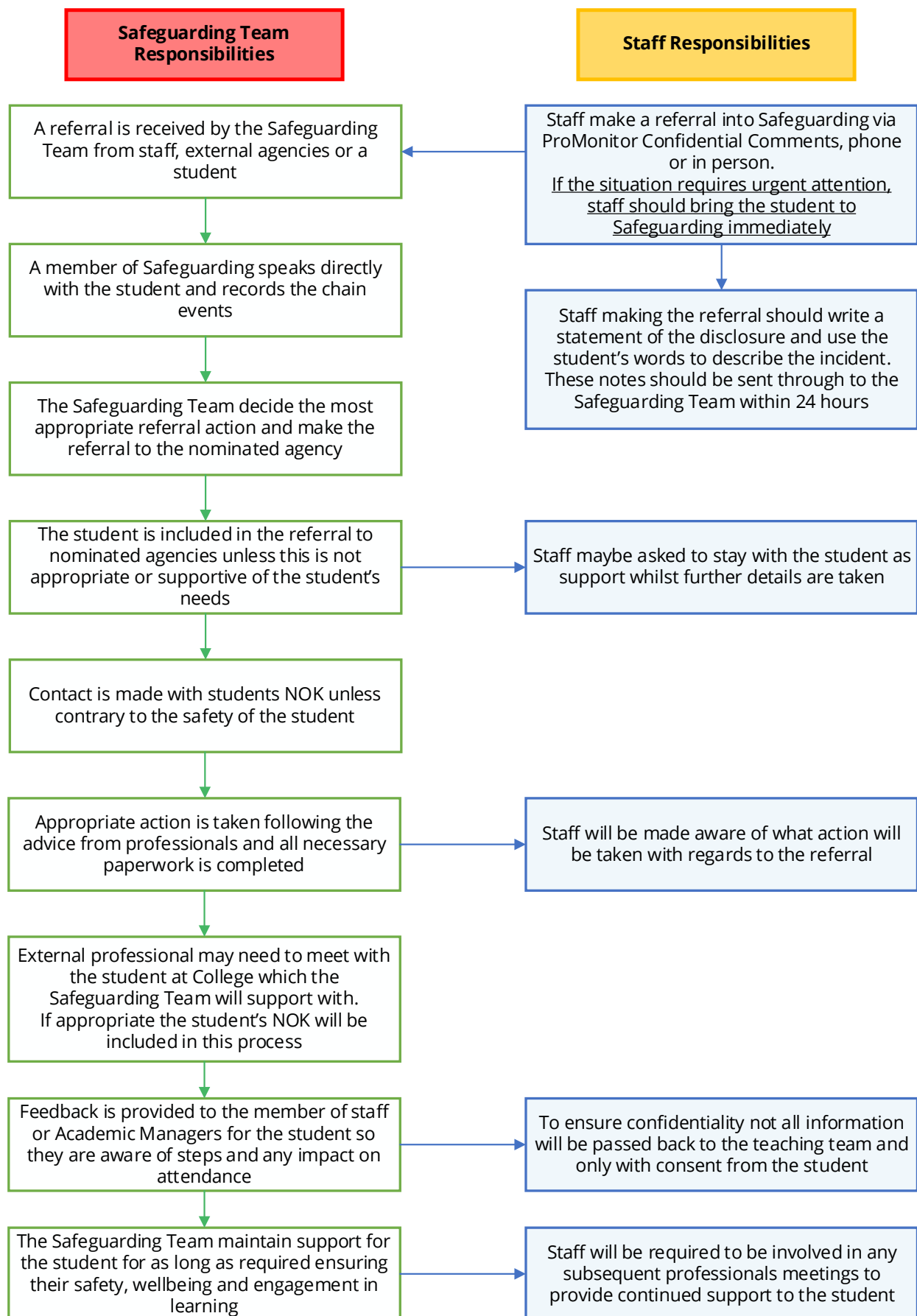
## **20.0 Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it is fit for purpose and meets the statutory requirements. It is the responsibility of the individuals appointed to the roles below at the College to review the Policy and to ensure it is compliant with relevant legislation, regulations, best practice and communicated to staff and ensure compliance.

- Director Additional Learning Support, Safeguarding & Learner Wellbeing – DSL (Students)
  - Lead Executive Board Member for Safeguarding (Students) for the College
  - Designated Safeguarding Lead for Students Operations
- Human Resources Management Team
  - College Lead Counter-signatory for Disclosure and Barring Service, Designated Safeguarding Lead for Staff



## Appendix 1: Child Protection & Vulnerable Adults Flowchart



## Child Protection & Vulnerable Adults Guidelines

### Staff Responsibilities

- Acknowledge your duty of care to ensuring the wellbeing & safety of staff and students.
- Understand and adhere to the Safeguarding Policy.
- Complete the online Child Protection training and update this every two years.
- Know the correct procedure for reporting child protection and vulnerable adult (CP/VA) concerns.
- Do not ignore something which troubles you; discuss the matter with a member of the Safeguarding Team for advice on how to proceed.
- Do not attempt to investigate a potential CP/VA yourself, pass this on to a member of the Safeguarding Team, they are trained for these situations.
- If a student discloses a potential CP/VA to you stay calm, explain to the student that you are required to pass this on to a member of the Safeguarding Team and never promise confidentiality.

### Professional Boundaries

As a College member of staff it is your responsibility to protect yourself from potential allegations of abuse:

- Build positive nurturing relationships with students that maintain high standards and provide clear boundaries of professional conduct and behaviour.
- Never give students your personal phone numbers, email addresses and address information.
- Do not engage with students through social networking sites unless they are college approved pages.

### Disclosures: Hints and Tips

As a tutor you will establish a good relationship with your students and will get to know them very well. If you are concerned about a student, talk to them.

- Go to a meeting room so you can have a 'confidential' discussion
- Do not promise to keep things secret, be clear that you may share what is discussed
- Be open and honest about why you want to talk to them
- Describe the behaviour you have witnessed, give clear examples and use evidence
- Explain you are there to help and support them
- Ask them if they wish to share anything with you
- Do not pry, challenge or react negatively if they tell you they do not wish to tell you
- Do not lead students to make statements or used closed questions.
- Let them know the support available at the college and how they access it through the Safeguarding Team
- If necessary, support them in accessing the service by accompanying them to initial meeting

- Monitor the student's behaviour, progress and attendance
- Share your concerns with the Safeguarding Team and let them know what action you have taken

**If a student discloses some information that you are very concerned about seek help**

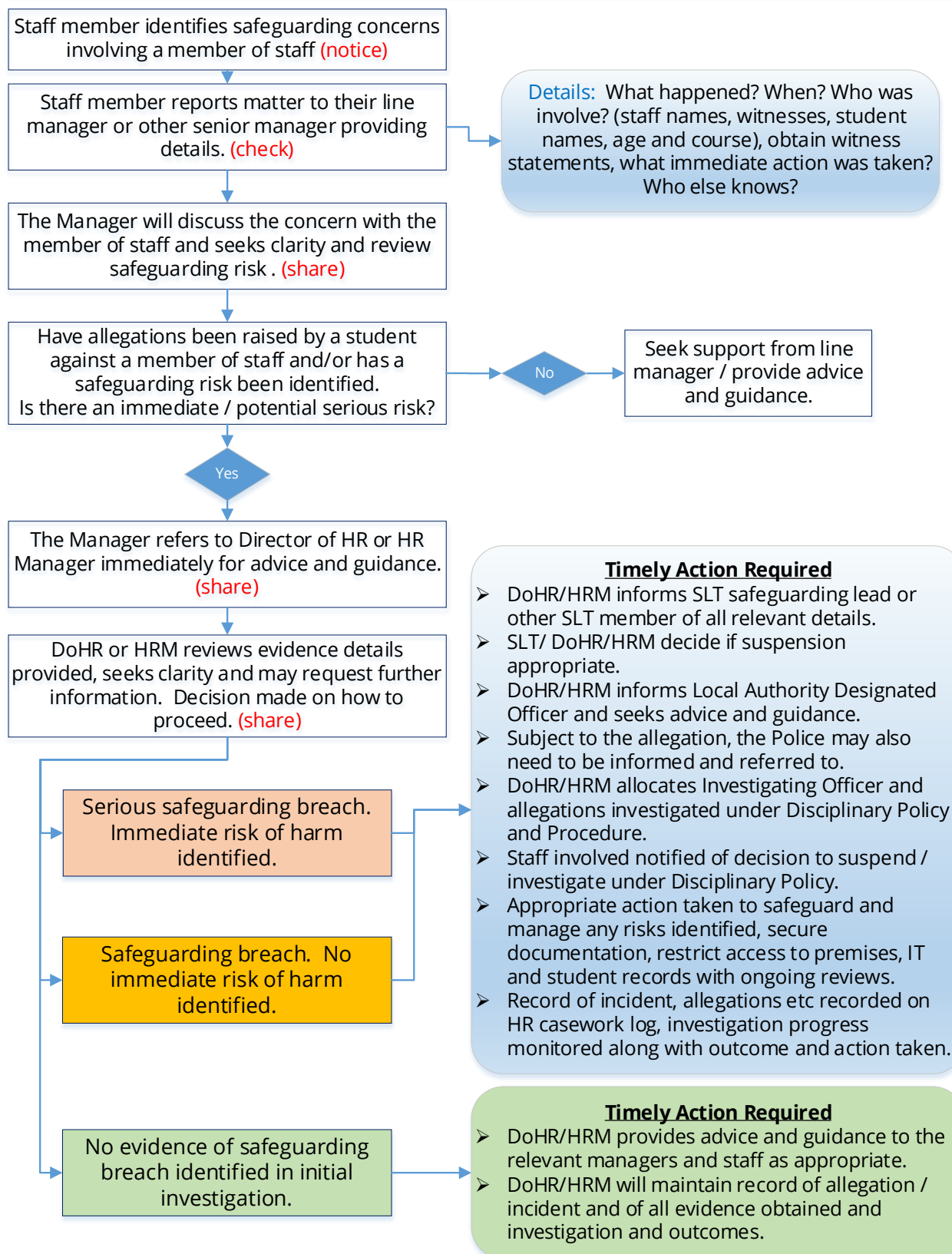
- React positively that they have chosen to disclose, don't get angry or be shocked at what they tell you
- Tell them they have done the right thing in telling you
- Explain that you will need to pass the information on to someone who will be able to support them further
- Make notes where possible of what they say, use their words
- Do not let them leave the meeting room and ask another member of staff to sit with them if necessary
- Contact a member of the Safeguarding Team immediately

**After a Disclosure**

- Speak with your Line Manager to let them know what has happened and do talk about how it made you feel
- Keep confidentiality and do not speak about the incident unless absolutely necessary and do this only to key staff such as Safeguarding or your Line Manager

## Appendix 2: Allegations against a Member of Staff Flowchart

Staff are required to follow '**notice, check and share**' procedure in relation to any safeguarding allegation involving a member of staff. The following flowchart show this process:



## Important Notes

- Human Resources are available to discuss any potential staff allegations you may have. If in any doubt, refer to HR for advice and guidance.
- Human Resources safeguard all staff at the College and are the direct link for any staff safeguarding concerns.
- Once a staff allegation is made to Human Resources, the next appropriate action is based on the allegation and whether there is an immediate risk of harm constituting a safeguarding risk.
- Staff will be required to provide a statement detailing their concerns in a written statement to be handed over to Human Resources. The statement needs to detail
  - Detailed summary of the incident / allegations
  - Campus
  - Names of all involved (staff and students) and Department
  - Students: student number, date of birth, age, home address and course of study and campus.
  - Any immediate action you have taken
  - If student or staff required first aid, a copy of the reporting form.
  - Any other relevant information that would help the line manager and HR in reviewing the circumstances and enable them to robustly manage any safeguarding risk.
- Other evidence may be obtained such as CCTV, videos, phone records, social media evidence as may be appropriate.
- If the statement details an imminent safeguarding risk, the member of staff will meet with the Human Resources team immediately to discuss the allegation.
- If a Safeguarding risk is present, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is informed of the incident and information, including statements, shared. The LADO will then instruct and formalise further proceedings via Human Resources.
- If a Safeguarding risk is present, the Director of HR or HR Manager will inform the SLT member safeguarding lead or other SLT member immediately and review evidence available to discuss and agree way forward including deciding on whether suspension of staff appropriate. DoHR / HRM will then take appropriate action and maintain communication with all relevant members of Management on discreet basis as to process and action taken along with outcome.
- If the allegation is deemed not to constitute a Safeguarding referral, advice is given to the Head of Department by Human Resources to support the member of staff and the student with an appropriate outcome (as detailed in the above flow chart).
- Robust evidence of allegations / incidents raised or identified will be maintained and records shared with relevant external agencies and documentation and information will be managed in line with General Data Protection Act legislation.
- Where safeguarding allegations against staff are proven, or where an individual resigns and leaves during an investigation and the College is not afforded the opportunity to

investigate fully and reach a conclusion, the Director of Human Resources will report the matter to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (part of the Disclosure and Barring Services) and provide relevant information. It will be the ISA's responsibility to review the information provided and make a decision as to whether an individual's DBS status is affected and whether they are considered suitable to work with children, young or vulnerable people.

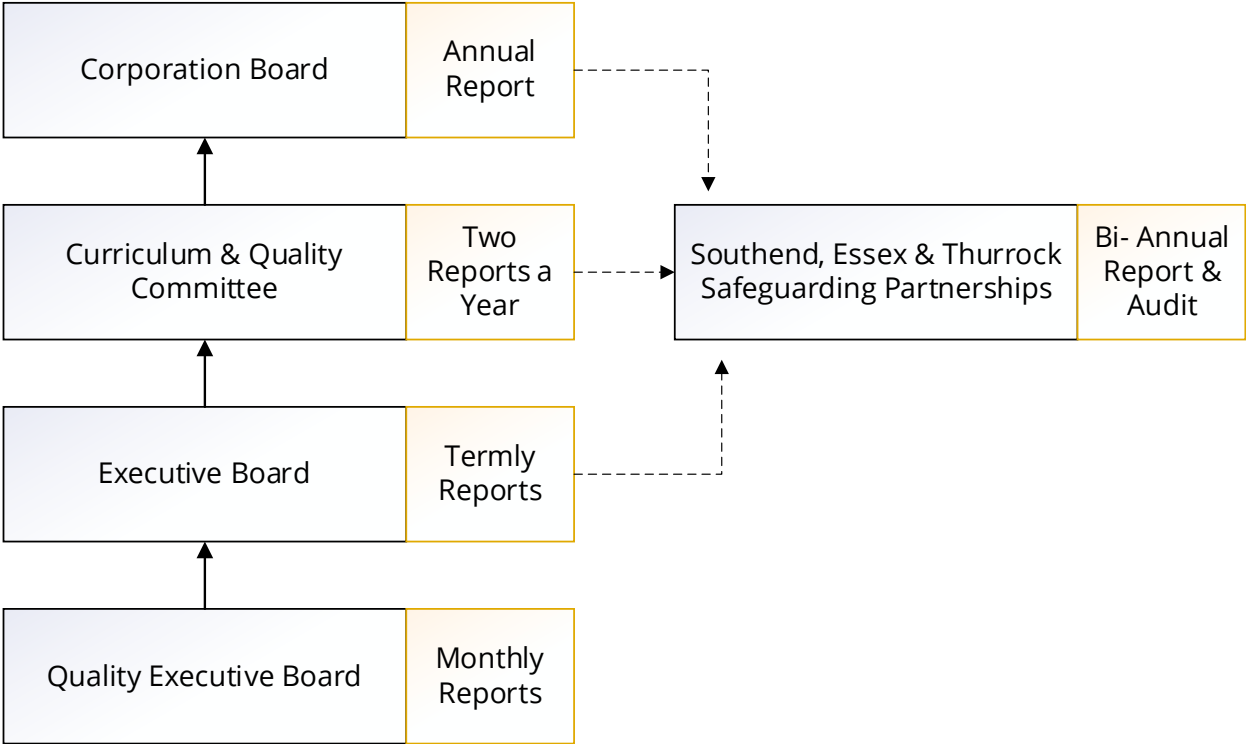
- The Safeguarding Team may be called to support the student after the referral has been made. This is to ensure the student is supported and has a point of contact within the College for any concerns, queries or further information that they may wish to disclose. It is not the Safeguarding Team's responsibility to investigate the allegation but to be the agency of referral should any further safeguarding concerns arise during/ after the initial disclosure.



## Appendix 3: Safeguarding Reporting Structure

### Safeguarding Reporting Structure

The following groups will be provided with reports from the Wellbeing & Safeguarding Team which outline current performance, data trends, challenges, quality checks and Policy updates.



## Equality Impact Assessment

The aim of an equality impact assessment (EIA) is to consider the equality implications of any new or amended policy, procedure, practice, project, function on different groups of staff, students and visitors to the college. This EIA tool provides a simple framework that helps evaluate whether the change may inadvertently disadvantage protected characteristics and identify ways to proactively advance and promote equality.

You will need to consider each of the equations and provide information as to consideration and any changes made in relation to Equality, diversity and inclusion.

Date EIA completed.	July 2025
Name of person responsible for completing the EIA	Jane Belcher
Role of person responsible for completing the EIA	Director of ALS, Safeguarding & Learner Wellbeing & DSL (Students)
Who is affected by the policy / decision / change	All staff and students
What's the reason for the new policy / change in policy, practice, process etc.	Updates are in line with legislation and statutory guidance on safeguarding

You will need to consider whether it's possible that the proposed new policy / change in policy / procedure/practice etc could discriminate or unfairly discriminate or disadvantage people. You should consider:

Who gets to participate	Who does not, or who now does not due to the changes proposed / made.
Who is at an advantage	Who is at a disadvantage, and again has this changed?
Who will benefit	Who will not benefit (or who did and now doesn't due to the changes proposed in policy
Who can access the policy	Who cannot, or now cannot.

Protected Characteristic	What degree of impact does the change have (score 1-5 with 1 the lowest and 5 the highest)	What is a potential positive, neutral or negative impact? Include what you have considered. Are there any barriers?	What action will be taken to address any negative impact or remove any potential barriers identified? Note if we are not able to resolve anything identified.	Date by when and whom will this action be taken.
Age	1	None identified		
Disability	1	Some potential barriers to accessing/reading and understanding documentation	Appropriate action will be taken to ensure any person who discloses a health concern and/or disability are provided with adjustments to enable them to understand and be aware of processes	As and when required
Gender (Sex)	1	None identified		
Gender Reassignment	1	None identified		
Marriage or Civil Partnership	1	None identified		
Pregnancy / Maternity	1	None identified		
Race	1	None identified		
Religion or Religious Belief	1	None identified		
Sexual Orientation	1	None identified		
Any other element that needs to be considered.	1	Persons where English is not a first language	Appropriate action will be taken to ensure any person who discloses English as a second language are provided with adjustments to enable them to understand and be aware of processes	As and when required

**Note:**

1. The terms stated under protected characteristics are the terminology used in the Equality Act 2010.
2. As part of the policy approval process Executive Board will consider the EIA assessment and any potential barriers which we may not be able to overcome and whether the action proposed will mitigate sufficiently within legislation or whether we decide to not implement the new policy if the risk are significant. If the policy is approved the EIA is also approved



<b>Senior Leadership Responsibility</b>	Director of ALS, Safeguarding & Learner Wellbeing
<b>Policy Author</b>	DSL (Students)
<b>Roles Responsible for Reviewing</b>	Director of ALS, Safeguarding & Learner Wellbeing
<b>Issue date of current version</b>	September 2025 (Version 11)
<b>Full Corporation Board Approval</b>	September 2025
<b>Date to be reviewed</b>	July 2026
<b>Type of Policy</b>	Public