Policy/Procedure/ Guideline:	Safeguarding Children and Adults At Risk Policy and Procedures
Senior Manager Responsible:	Assistant Principal for Learner Experience & Support (inc DSL)
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Safeguarding Children and Adults At Risk Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 East Lancashire Learning Group (ELLG) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and is embedded across all aspects of the organisation's activity, including education, training, apprenticeships, work placements, enrichment activities, residential visits and adult learning provision. ELLG adopts a learner-centred approach to safeguarding, placing the wishes, feelings, lived experiences and best interests of learners at the centre of decision making. The College recognises that early identification, professional curiosity, timely intervention and effective partnership working are essential in reducing risk and improving outcomes.

2. Purpose

2.1 This policy promotes a culture of safeguarding through prevention, vigilance, professional curiosity and early intervention. It provides a clear framework for identifying, recording, sharing, assessing and responding to safeguarding concerns in a timely and appropriate manner. The policy sets out clear expectations, responsibilities and standards of conduct for all staff, volunteers, governors, contractors and others working on behalf of East Lancashire Learning Group (ELLG) in relation to safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk. ELLG is committed to promoting good safeguarding practice, robust procedures and a learner-centred approach. This ensures that safeguarding concerns, disclosures and referrals are managed sensitively, professionally and effectively, with the welfare, safety and best interests of the learner at the heart of all decision-making

3. Legislative/Quality Framework

3.1 This policy and procedures have been written and will be implemented in-line with the safeguarding and child protection procedures established by Lancashire Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership. (https://www.lancashiresafeguardingpartnership.org.uk/). It is also written in accordance with legislation established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, the Education Act 2002 and other core legislation and guidance listed in 3.3.

3.2 The protection of adults at risk contributes to the wider safeguarding agenda and this policy operates in conjunction with statutory guidance for reporting concerns. (https://www.lancashiresafeguardingpartnership.org.uk/).

3.3 Additional Legislation and Guidance (please note this list is not exhaustive).

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (2015)
- Information sharing - Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (2024)
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (inc. the 'Prevent Duty' 2023)
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Education inspection framework 2024
- Care and Support Statutory Guidance 2022 (under review)
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Care Act 2014
- ADSS 2005 (Safeguarding Adults National Framework of Standards)
- The Equality Act 2010 (Including the Public Sector Equality Duty)

4. Scope

4.1 This policy applies to all employees, agency staff, governors, volunteers, contractors, placement providers, apprenticeships, subcontractors, consultants, visitors and anyone working on behalf of ELLG.

5. Definitions

5.1 Children

Child(ren) means everyone under the age of 18.

5.2 Adult at Risk

An Adult at Risk is a person aged 18 or over who has needs for care and support and is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect and as a result is unable to protect themselves.

5.3 Safeguarding & Welfare

National statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2026) defines safeguarding and promoting welfare 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.

Therefore, 'safeguarding' includes but is about much more than 'child and vulnerable adult protection'. However, all staff are aware of our responsibility to act in order to **protect** children and vulnerable adults from various potential sources and types of harm:

- Neglect
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Misogyny
- Online Harm
- Harmful Sexual Behaviour
- Child criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Economic Abuse
- Contextual Safeguarding
- Professional Curiosity
- Young Carers
- Bullying, including online bullying and prejudice-based bullying
- Racist, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse
- Gender based violence/violence against women and girls
- Child-on-child abuse, such as sexual violence and harassment

- Radicalisation and/or extremist behaviour
- Child sexual exploitation and trafficking
- Child criminal exploitation, including county lines
- Serious violent crime
- Risks linked to using technology and social media, including online bullying; the risks of being groomed online for exploitation or radicalization; and risks of accessing and generating inappropriate content, for example 'sexting'
- Teenage relationship abuse
- Upskirting
- Substance misuse
- Issues that may be specific to a local area or population, for example gang activity and youth violence
- Domestic abuse
- Female genital mutilation
- Forced marriage
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Poor parenting
- Homelessness
- So-called honour-based violence or faith-based violence
- Other issues not listed here but that pose a risk to children, learners and vulnerable adults

All staff should recognise that children and young people may not feel ready, able or know how to disclose that they are experiencing abuse, neglect, exploitation or harm. They may not recognise that what they are experiencing is harmful or may be reluctant to speak out due to fear, embarrassment, shame, intimidation, previous experiences, cultural factors, disability, communication needs, language barriers, sexual orientation, gender identity or a lack of trust in adults.

Staff should not assume that a learner's silence means there is no concern. Instead, they should remain professionally curious, alert to signs and indicators of abuse, and consult the Safeguarding Team whenever they have concerns about a learner's welfare or safety.

It is essential that staff take time to develop positive, trusting and respectful relationships with learners, creating an environment in which they feel listened to, supported and confident to share concerns or seek help when needed.

5.4 <u>What college staff should look out for - Early help</u>

Any child, young person or adult at risk may benefit from early help and support at any stage of their life. College staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help where a

learner:

- Is disabled or has specific health needs which may increase vulnerability.
- Has special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), whether or not they have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of experiencing, mental health difficulties or emotional wellbeing concerns.
- Is a young carer or has caring responsibilities that may impact their wellbeing, attendance or educational progress.
- Is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social behaviour, criminal activity, gang involvement, organised crime, child criminal exploitation (CCE) or county lines activity.
- Is at risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE), criminal exploitation, modern slavery, trafficking or other forms of exploitation.
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation;
- Is at risk of radicalisation or extremism.
- Is frequently absent from education, demonstrates poor attendance, persistent absence, disengagement from learning, or is missing from home or care.
- Has experienced multiple suspensions, exclusions, alternative provision placements, or is at risk of becoming disengaged from education
- Has a parent or carer in prison, is affected by parental offending, or is impacted by the imprisonment of a close family.
- is living in family circumstances that present challenges or increase vulnerability, including domestic abuse, parental substance misuse, parental mental health difficulties, homelessness, housing instability or financial hardship.
- Is misusing drugs, alcohol or other substances.
- has returned home from care or is care experienced.
- Is at risk of so-called 'honour-based' abuse, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage or abuse linked to cultural or family expectations
- is a privately fostered child.
- has experienced abuse, neglect, trauma, bereavement or adverse childhood experiences.
- May be vulnerable to online harms, including online exploitation, cyberbullying, harmful sexual behaviour, misinformation, disinformation or AI-enabled abuse.
- Is experiencing discrimination, prejudice, harassment or hate-related incident

Staff should recognise that these factors rarely exist in isolation and that vulnerabilities can overlap. Indicators of need may present through changes in behaviour, presentation, attendance, wellbeing, relationships, engagement or academic performance. Staff must remain professionally curious and report concerns promptly to the Safeguarding Team so that appropriate support and early intervention can be considered.

5.5 Abuse

Abuse is a form of maltreatment that causes, or has the potential to cause, harm to a child, young person or adult at risk. Harm may result from acts of commission (inflicting harm) or omission (failing to act to prevent harm) and can adversely affect an individual's health, development, wellbeing or safety.

Children, young people and adults at risk may be abused in family, institutional, educational, workplace or community settings by individuals known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can occur in person, online or through a combination of both, and technology may be used to facilitate abuse, exploitation or harm.

Abuse includes physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect, as well as child-on-child abuse, sexual violence, sexual harassment, harmful sexual behaviour, exploitation, domestic abuse, so-called honour-based abuse and online abuse.

ELLG recognises that abuse can occur in any setting. Staff should remain professionally curious, be alert to signs and indicators of harm, and report concerns promptly in accordance with safeguarding procedures. Learners may not always recognise that they are experiencing abuse or feel able to disclose concerns, making early identification and intervention essential.

5.6 Child-on-child Abuse

All staff should recognise that children can abuse other children, both inside and outside of college, including online. Staff should be aware that the absence of reported incidents does not mean that child-on-child abuse is not occurring. Any concerns should be reported promptly to the Safeguarding Team.

Child-on-child abuse will never be dismissed as "banter", "part of growing up", "boys being boys", or harmless behaviour. Such attitudes can create an unsafe environment and contribute to the normalisation of abuse.

Child-on-child abuse may include, but is not limited to:

- Bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
- physical abuse, including behaviour that causes physical harm.
- sexual violence, including rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault
- sexual harassment, including sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment.
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.
- the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images or videos.
- Upskirting
- initiation, hazing or ritualistic behaviour involving harassment, abuse or humiliation
- harmful sexual behaviour

- online abuse, exploitation or image-based abuse

All reports of child-on-child abuse will be taken seriously, recorded appropriately and managed in accordance with safeguarding procedures. The College adopts a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, harassment, sexual violence and harmful sexual behaviour. Staff should remain professionally curious and respond promptly to any signs, indicators or disclosures of child-on-child abuse.

5.7 Sexual violence and sexual harassment

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between children and young people of any age, sex or gender, both online and offline. Such behaviour is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.

All reports of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be taken seriously, responded to promptly and managed in accordance with safeguarding procedures. Victims will be supported, protected and offered appropriate support to minimise the impact on their wellbeing and education.

Staff must not dismiss or minimise sexual violence or sexual harassment as "banter", "part of growing up" or similar behaviour. Any concerns, disclosures or allegations must be reported immediately to the Safeguarding Team .

All learners should be reassured that they will be listened to, taken seriously and supported when reporting concerns. Further guidance can be found in the ELLG Bullying and Harassment Policy.

5.8 Online safety

Online safety is an integral part of safeguarding and forms part of ELLG's whole-college approach to safeguarding and child protection. ELLG recognises that technology can present both opportunities and risks, and that abuse, exploitation and harm can occur online, offline or through a combination of both.

ELLG is committed to safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk from harmful or inappropriate online content, contact, conduct and commercial risks. All staff are responsible for promoting the safe and responsible use of technology and for reporting any online safety concerns in accordance with safeguarding procedures.
Online safety risk can be broadly categorised into four areas:

- **Content** – exposure to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, including pornography, self-harm, suicide, extremism, radicalisation, racism, antisemitism, misogyny, misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories and AI-generated harmful content.
- **Contact** – harmful interactions with others online, including grooming, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, radicalisation, coercion, fraud, peer pressure and adults posing as children or young people.

- **Conduct** – online behaviours that increase the likelihood of, or cause, harm, including cyberbullying, online harassment, harmful sexual behaviour, image-based abuse, the sharing of nude or semi-nude images, and the creation, possession or distribution of inappropriate content.
- **Commerce** – risks associated with online financial activity, including scams, phishing, gambling, financial exploitation and inappropriate advertising.

ELLG recognises the increasing safeguarding risks associated with Artificial Intelligence (AI) and emerging technologies. These include AI-generated sexual imagery, deepfakes, impersonation, online manipulation, exploitation, misinformation and disinformation. Concerns relating to AI-enabled abuse, exploitation or harmful content will be treated as safeguarding concerns and responded to in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

The Chief Information Officer (CIO) supported by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DDSL) will oversee online safety arrangements, including filtering and monitoring systems. ELLG will take all reasonable steps to limit learners' exposure to harmful online content through appropriate filtering and monitoring arrangements that are aligned with the Department for Education's Filtering and Monitoring Standards, Cyber Security Standards and Prevent Duty requirements.

All staff will receive regular safeguarding and online safety training, including training on filtering and monitoring responsibilities, emerging technologies, AI-related risks and current online safeguarding trends. All staff must understand their responsibilities regarding online safety, filtering and monitoring, and report any concerns to the Safeguarding Team without delay.

ELLG will support learners to develop the knowledge, skills and resilience required to stay safe online through tutorials, enrichment activities and the wider curriculum. This will include education relating to healthy relationships, consent, cyberbullying, online exploitation, misinformation, disinformation, digital citizenship, harmful sexual behaviour, online misogyny and the safe and responsible use of artificial intelligence.

All staff are required to read and comply with the ELLG Online Safety Policy and complete mandatory online safety training appropriate to their role.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

College staff have no investigative role where child and vulnerable adult protection is concerned. This is a matter for police and children's and adult's social care. However, all college staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children and vulnerable adults can learn and all staff, including volunteers, have a responsibility to act to safeguard and promote children and vulnerable adult welfare.

Some people have specific and/or additional safeguarding responsibilities.

6.1 Governors

Governors are responsible for ensuring that ELLG fulfils its statutory safeguarding duties and maintains a whole-college approach to safeguarding. Safeguarding and child protection should underpin all relevant policies, procedures and decision-making, with the best interests, wishes and views of learners central to all actions.

The Governing Body will ensure that:

- safeguarding arrangements comply with current legislation and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.
- an appropriately trained Governor is appointed to provide strategic leadership and oversight of safeguarding
- effective safeguarding, child protection, staff behaviour, whistleblowing and safer recruitment policies are in place and reviewed regularly
- a suitably trained Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSLs are appointed, with appropriate cover arrangements in place at all times
- safeguarding systems, including online safety, filtering and monitoring arrangements, are effective and regularly reviewed
- sufficient resources, training, support and supervision are provided to enable staff to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities
- all staff, governors and volunteers receive safeguarding training appropriate to their role and regular safeguarding updates
- effective safeguarding recording, reporting and monitoring systems are maintained;
- safeguarding remains a standing item for governance scrutiny, and an annual safeguarding report is received from the DSL to monitor compliance, effectiveness and areas for improvement.

Further information relating to governance responsibilities can be found within Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026

6.2 The Principal

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding and child protection arrangements are fully implemented across ELLG and embedded within the organisation's culture, policies and practices.

The Principal should ensure that:

- Safeguarding policies and procedures approved by the Governing Body are implemented effectively and consistently across all areas of the organisation.
- Safeguarding concerns, including allegations, disclosures and referrals relating to abuse, neglect, exploitation or harm, are managed in accordance with statutory guidance and local safeguarding procedures.
- A culture is maintained where learners feel safe, supported and able to report concerns, and where staff feel confident to raise safeguarding concerns or challenge poor or unsafe practice.

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSLs are provided with sufficient authority, time, training, funding, resources and support to carry out their safeguarding responsibilities effectively.
- Safeguarding, child protection, online safety, filtering and monitoring arrangements are effective and subject to regular review.
- All staff, volunteers and relevant stakeholders receive safeguarding training, regular updates and appropriate support in line with their role and responsibilities.
- Effective safeguarding recording, reporting, information-sharing and monitoring arrangements are maintained.
- Sufficient resources are available to support safeguarding, welfare and early intervention activities across the organisation.
- Safeguarding remains a strategic priority and promotes the welfare, safety and best interests of all learners.

  This section should be read in conjunction with the responsibilities outlined within Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

6.3 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) & Deputies

The Assistant Principal for Learner Experience is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for East Lancashire Learning Group (ELLG). Appropriately trained Deputy DSLs are appointed to provide safeguarding support and cover at all times.

The DSL has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, including online safety. Whilst certain activities may be delegated to appropriately trained Deputy DSLs, overall accountability remains with the DSL.

The DSL and Deputy DSLs will:

- act as a source of safeguarding advice, support and expertise for staff.
- manage safeguarding concerns, referrals and liaison with Children's Social Care, Adult Social Care, the Police, Channel and other relevant agencies, as appropriate.
- promote early help, professional curiosity and timely intervention where concerns are identified.
- support staff in recognising, recording, reporting and responding to safeguarding concerns;
- maintain accurate, secure and confidential safeguarding records and ensure appropriate information sharing in accordance with statutory guidance.
- work collaboratively with staff, parents/carers and partner agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of learners.
- take a lead role in promoting positive educational outcomes for learners who are vulnerable, have or have had a social worker, are care experienced, have SEND, are young carers, or may require additional support.
- ensure safeguarding, attendance, wellbeing and educational outcomes are considered holistically when assessing risk and determining support.
- provide advice and support regarding online safety, filtering and monitoring, child-on-child abuse, exploitation, sexual violence and harassment, radicalisation and emerging

safeguarding risks.

- undertake safeguarding and Prevent training appropriate to the role and maintain up-to-date knowledge through regular training and professional development.
- promote a culture in which learners are listened to, taken seriously and supported to share concerns safely.

Further details regarding the responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead can be found within Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

6.4 Individual Staff Responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk and to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment.

All staff will:

- Maintain an appropriate level of safeguarding knowledge and complete all mandatory safeguarding, Prevent, online safety and role-specific training;
- Read and understand Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and any other relevant sections applicable to their role;
- Be familiar with and follow the College's safeguarding, child protection, staff code of conduct, behaviour, online safety and related policies;
- Remain alert to signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation, poor mental health, radicalisation, child-on-child abuse and other safeguarding concerns;
- Adopt a professionally curious approach and identify learners who may benefit from early help or additional support;
- Report safeguarding concerns immediately in accordance with College procedures and support any subsequent safeguarding processes;
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries and act in accordance with the Staff Code of Conduct;
- Understand their responsibilities regarding confidentiality, information sharing and safeguarding record keeping;
- Notify Human Resources of any conviction, caution, charge or investigation that may affect their suitability to work with children, young people or adults at risk.

All staff should be aware of the safeguarding systems that support their role, including:

- The Staff Code of Conduct.
- The Behaviour Policy.
- Procedures for managing learners who are absent from education.
- The identity and role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSLs.
- Local early help and safeguarding referral processes.

- Notify Human Resources of any conviction, caution, charge or investigation that may affect their suitability to work with children, young people or adults at risk.

Staff should be aware that learners may not recognise that they are experiencing abuse, exploitation or neglect, or may not feel able or ready to disclose concerns. Staff should therefore remain professionally curious, build trusted relationships with learners and seek advice from the DSL or Deputy DSL whenever concerns arise.

Staff must never promise confidentiality to a learner. Concerns should only be shared with those who need to know in order to safeguard and support the learner.

Failure to comply with safeguarding responsibilities, College policies or the Staff Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action.

7. Reporting a Concern

Any member of staff who has a concern about the welfare or safety of a child, young person or adult at risk must report it immediately to the Safeguarding Team and, wherever possible, before the end of the working day. Staff must not assume that someone else has taken action and should follow the College's safeguarding reporting procedures.

If a child, young person or adult at risk is at immediate risk of harm or requires urgent medical attention, staff must contact the emergency services by calling 999 and inform the DSL or Deputy DSL as soon as possible.

Where internal safeguarding contacts are unavailable and immediate action is required to safeguard an individual, staff should make a referral directly to the appropriate Children's Social Care, Adult Social Care or Police service and inform the DSL at the earliest opportunity.

All safeguarding concerns, disclosures, allegations and incidents must be recorded accurately, factually and in a timely manner in accordance with College procedures. Records should clearly detail the concern, actions taken, decisions made, the rationale for those decisions and any outcomes.

Staff should remain professionally curious and, where they believe appropriate action has not been taken, must escalate concerns through safeguarding procedures. Early reporting, information sharing and intervention are essential to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of learners

Details of how to do this are included in the accompanying procedures (Appendix

8. Allegations Against a Member of Staff

8.1 Any concern, allegation or complaint that a member of staff, volunteer, contractor, governor or anyone working on behalf of ELLG has behaved in a way that may have harmed a child, committed a criminal offence against a child, behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm, or behaved in a way that would otherwise meet the harm threshold, must be reported immediately to the Director of Human Resources and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Such concerns will be managed in accordance with Part Four of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and local safeguarding procedures (Please refer to the flow chart in Appendix 3).

8.2 Allegations that may meet the harm threshold will be considered in consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), and other relevant agencies where appropriate. Allegations concerning the Principal will be reported directly to the Chair of Governors.

8.3 ELLG promotes a culture of openness, transparency and accountability. All staff are expected to raise concerns about poor, unsafe or inappropriate practice through safeguarding or whistleblowing procedures. Concerns will be taken seriously and managed sensitively, fairly and promptly.

8.4 A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, that an adult working in or on behalf of ELLG may have acted in a manner that is inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct but does not meet the harm threshold. Examples may include over-familiarity with learners, inappropriate professional boundaries, inappropriate communication, or behaviour that causes a sense of concern or unease.

Low-level concerns should be reported to the Director of Human Resources and the DSL (or Deputy DSL). Where the concern relates to the DSL, it should be reported to the Principal. All low-level concerns will be recorded, reviewed and managed appropriately in accordance with KCSIE 2026, employment procedures and data protection legislation.

Records of allegations and low-level concerns will be maintained securely, including details of the concern, actions taken, decisions reached and the rationale for those decisions. Information will be handled confidentially and shared only on a need-to-know basis.

Further guidance regarding allegations against staff and low-level concerns can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, the Staff Code of Conduct and the ELLG Whistleblowing Policy.

9. Recording Action Taken, Feedback and Follow Up:

9.1 All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions and the rationale for those decisions will be recorded accurately, factually and securely by the Safeguarding Team in accordance with statutory guidance, information-sharing requirements and data protection legislation.

9.2 Where appropriate, feedback will be provided to the member of staff raising the concern on a need-to-know basis, whilst maintaining confidentiality and protecting the welfare of those involved:

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Staff should follow up and escalate concerns where:

- They do not feel their concern has been taken seriously.
- They believe appropriate action has not been taken.
- The learner's situation has not improved or appears to be deteriorating.

Staff should remain professionally curious and use the College's escalation procedures where concerns remain. No member of staff should assume that another person has taken action. Timely recording, information sharing, follow-up and escalation are essential to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of learners.

10. Information Sharing

10.1 Effective safeguarding relies upon timely, accurate and appropriate information sharing. ELLG recognises that information sharing is essential for identifying, assessing and responding to concerns relating to abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm, and for promoting the welfare, safety and educational outcomes of learners.

10.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSLs are responsible for overseeing safeguarding information sharing arrangements and ensuring safeguarding records are maintained securely, accurately and in accordance with statutory guidance and data protection legislation.

10.3 The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information where there is a safeguarding concern. Fears about sharing information must not delay action taken to protect a child, young person or adult at risk.

10.4 All safeguarding records will be maintained securely and retained in accordance with the College's records retention schedule and applicable legal requirements.

10.5 Requests for safeguarding information, records or disclosures must be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy DSL or Safeguarding Team for consideration and response.

Staff should be aware that effective information sharing, professional judgement and multi-agency working are critical to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of learners.

11. Children who are absent from Education

11.1 ELLG recognises that children who are absent from education, particularly repeatedly or for prolonged periods, may be at increased risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation, mental ill-health, radicalisation or other safeguarding concerns. Attendance should always be viewed through a safeguarding lens, and early intervention is essential to identify and address any underlying risks.

11.2 All staff must be aware of and follow the College's attendance, absence and children missing education procedures. Any concerns relating to unexplained absence, persistent absence, disengagement from learning, withdrawal from education or a significant change in attendance patterns should be reported promptly to the Safeguarding Team and relevant College services.

11.3 ELLG will work collaboratively with schools, local authorities, safeguarding partners and other relevant agencies to safeguard learners and promote positive attendance, engagement and educational outcomes.

11.4 Where 14 to 16-year-old learners are enrolled at ELLG, the College will notify the learner's school and/or Local Authority where attendance, absence or welfare concerns indicate a potential safeguarding risk, enabling appropriate action to be taken in accordance with local procedures.

Staff should remain professionally curious and recognise that poor attendance or absence may be an indicator of wider vulnerability or harm requiring safeguarding intervention.

12. Work Experience and Work/ Industry Placement

12.1 ELLG recognises that work experience, industry placements, apprenticeships and employer-based learning provide valuable opportunities for learners whilst maintaining a responsibility to safeguard and promote their welfare.

12.2 Prior to the commencement of any placement, the Work Placement Team will take reasonable steps to assess the suitability of the placement provider and the effectiveness of their safeguarding, health and safety, supervision and risk management arrangements. Appropriate records of these checks will be maintained.

12.3 Placement providers must have suitable arrangements in place to safeguard learners, provide appropriate supervision and report any safeguarding, welfare or health and safety concerns without delay. Any concerns regarding the suitability of a placement provider or supervisor must be reported

immediately in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

12.4 Risk assessments should take account of the learner's age, vulnerability, safeguarding needs, SEND, health requirements and any other factors that may impact upon their safety and wellbeing. Consideration should also be given to contextual safeguarding risks, including travel arrangements, exploitation, online harm, violence, harassment and discrimination.

12.5 ELLG will work collaboratively with employers and placement providers to ensure concerns relating to attendance, wellbeing, behaviour, safeguarding or welfare are identified and responded to promptly. Placement providers are expected to notify the College immediately of any safeguarding concern, allegation, disclosure, significant incident, unexplained absence, repeated absence or disengagement from the placement.

12.6 Children's barred list checks via the DBS might be required on some people who supervise a child under the age of 16 on a work experience placement. East Lancashire Learning Group (ELLG) should consider the specific circumstances of the work experience. Consideration must be given in particular to the nature of the supervision and the frequency of the activity being supervised, to determine what, if any, checks are necessary. These considerations would include whether the person providing the teaching/training/instruction/supervision to the child on work experience will be:

- Unsupervised themselves, and
- Providing the teaching/training/instruction frequently (more than three days in a 30- day period, or overnight).

12.7 If the person working with the child is unsupervised and the same person is in frequent contact with the child, the work is likely to be regulated activity relating to children. If so, East Lancashire Learning Group (ELLG) Work Placement Team will ask the employer providing the work experience to ensure that the person providing the instruction or training is not a barred person. East Lancashire Learning Group (ELLG) is not able to request that an employer obtains an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information for staff supervising children aged 16 to 17 on work experience.

12.8 The requirement for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks will be determined on a case-by-case basis in accordance with current legislation, statutory guidance and the nature of the placement. Consideration will be given to the learner's age, the level of supervision provided and whether the activity constitutes regulated activity.

12.9 Where concerns arise regarding the suitability or safety of a placement, ELLG reserves the right to suspend, amend or terminate the placement in order to safeguard the learner

This section should be read in conjunction with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and the College's Work Placement Policy.

13. Operation Encompass

ELLG is committed to supporting children and young people who may be affected by domestic abuse and other traumatic experiences. Domestic abuse can have a significant impact on a child's emotional wellbeing, behaviour, attendance, engagement and educational outcomes.

Operation Encompass is a national information-sharing partnership between the Police and education settings. It enables the Police to notify a trained Key Adult within the College, prior to the start of the next working day, when a child has been exposed to a domestic abuse incident or other qualifying incident, where appropriate. This information is shared to enable timely, appropriate and proportionate support to be provided to the child.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSLs will act as the College's trained Key Adults and will:

- Receive and act upon Operation Encompass notifications in accordance with national and local guidance.
- Ensure information is shared on a need-to-know basis and handled confidentially.
- Assess and coordinate appropriate safeguarding and wellbeing support for affected learners.
- Ensure staff understand the impact that domestic abuse and trauma can have on children and young people.
- Promote awareness of Operation Encompass through staff training, safeguarding communications and the College website.

Staff should be aware that children affected by domestic abuse may present with changes in behaviour, emotional wellbeing, attendance, engagement or academic performance. Any concerns should be reported promptly to the Safeguarding Team in accordance with College procedures.

Further information about Operation Encompass can be found through the national Operation Encompass programme and associated safeguarding guidance.

14. Critical Incident Procedure

14.1 All staff should be familiar with the College's Critical Incident Procedure to help safeguard themselves and learners. A critical incident is any major event that goes beyond normal day-to-day procedures, such as a serious fire, terror-related threat, or large-scale damage to College buildings or services.

If there is any risk to life, staff must call 999 immediately before following the wider Critical Incident Procedure.

15. Monitoring and Review

15.1 The policy will be reviewed annually by Assistant Principal for Learner Experience & Support & Safeguarding, Prevent & Wellbeing Manager.

16. Management Responsibility

Assistant Principal for Learner Experience has overall management responsibility for this policy. Day to day management responsibility for this policy has been devolved to the Safeguarding, Prevent & Wellbeing Manager.

17. Related Policies/Procedures

- Learner Bullying and Harassment policy (Including sexual harassment, sexual violence and sexually harmful behaviour)
- Acceptable Use of IT Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Critical Incident procedure
- Recruitment and Selection procedure
- DBS and Rehabilitation of Offenders procedures
- Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Personal Care policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Learner Disciplinary Policy
- Whistleblowing procedure
- Social media policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Trips and Visits Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Learner Medication Policy
- Criminal Convictions Policy
- Visitor Policy

18. Dissemination

18.1 East Lancashire Learning Group Staff Hub

18.2 East Lancashire Learning Group, Nelson and Colne College, Lancashire Adult Learning and Accrington and Rossendale College Websites

19. Additional Advice and Support

Below provides links to additional guidance for all staff so that they can develop a wider understanding of safeguarding issues or concerns.

Abuse

Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse has free evidence-based practice resources to help professionals working with children and young people to identify and respond appropriately to concerns of child sexual abuse and abusive behaviours.

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – DfE advice

Domestic abuse: Various Information/Guidance - Home Office (HO)

Faith based abuse: National Action Plan - DfE advice

Disrespect NoBody campaign - GOV.UK - Home Office website

Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy – Home Office policy paper

Together we can stop child sexual abuse – HM Government campaign

Bullying

Preventing bullying including cyberbullying - DfE advice

Children missing from education, home or care

Children missing education - DfE statutory guidance
Child missing from home or care - DfE statutory guidance

Children and adults missing strategy - Home Office strategy

Children with family members in prison

National Information Centre on Children of Offenders - Barnardo's in partnership with HM Prison and Probation Service

Child Exploitation

Trafficking: safeguarding children - DfE and Home Office guidance

Care of unaccompanied and trafficked children – DfE statutory guidance

Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims – HO statutory guidance

Child exploitation disruption toolkit - HO statutory guidance

County Lines Toolkit For Professionals - The Children's Society in partnership with Victim Support and National Police Chiefs' Council

Multi-agency practice principles for responding to child exploitation and extra-familial harm

Non-statutory guidance for local areas, developed by the Tackling Child Exploitation (TCE) Support Programme, funded by the Department for Education and supported by the Home Office, the Department for Health and Social Care and the Ministry of Justice

Confidentiality

Gillick competency Fraser guidelines - Guidelines to help with balancing children's rights along with safeguarding responsibilities.

Drugs

From harm to hope: A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives- Home Office strategy

Information and advice on drugs - Talk to Frank website

Drug and Alcohol education — teacher guidance & evidence review – PSHE Association

(so called) "Honour Based Abuse" including FGM and forced marriage

Female genital mutilation: information and resources- Home Office guidance
Female genital mutilation: multi agency statutory guidance - DfE, Department for Health, and Home Office

Forced marriage - Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) resources

Forced marriage - Government multi-agency practice guidelines and multi-agency statutory guidance

FGM resource pack – HM Government guidance

Health and Well-being

Rise Above: Free PSHE resources on health, wellbeing and resilience - Public Health England

Supporting pupils at schools with medical conditions - DfE statutory guidance

Mental health and behaviour in schools - DfE advice

Overview - Fabricated or induced illness - NHS advice

Homelessness

Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities – Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities guidance

Information Sharing

Government information sharing advice - Guidance on information sharing for people who provide safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers.

Information Commissioner's Office: Data sharing information hub - Information to help schools and

colleges comply with UK data protection legislation including UK GDPR.

Online safety-advice

Childnet provide guidance for schools on cyberbullying

Educateagainsthate provides practical advice and support on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation

London Grid for Learning provides advice on all aspects of a school or college's online safety arrangements

NSPCC E-safety for schools provides advice, templates, and tools on all aspects of a school or college's online safety arrangements

Safer recruitment consortium "guidance for safe working practice", which may help ensure staff behaviour policies are robust and effective

Searching screening and confiscation is departmental advice for schools on searching children and confiscating items such as mobile phones

South West Grid for Learning provides advice on all aspects of a school or college's online safety arrangements

Use of social media for online radicalisation - A briefing note for schools on how social media is used to encourage travel to Syria and Iraq

Online Safety Audit Tool from UK Council for Internet Safety to help mentors of trainee teachers and newly qualified teachers induct mentees and provide ongoing support, development and monitoring

Online safety guidance if you own or manage an online platform DCMS advice

A business guide for protecting children on your online platform DCMS advice

UK Safer Internet Centre provide tips, advice, guides and other resources to help keep children safe online

Online safety- Remote education, virtual lessons and live streaming

Guidance Get help with remote education resources and support for teachers and school leaders on educating pupils and learners

Departmental guidance on safeguarding and remote education including planning remote education strategies and teaching remotely

London Grid for Learning guidance, including platform specific advice

National cyber security centre guidance on choosing, configuring and deploying video conferencing

UK Safer Internet Centre guidance on safe remote learning

Online Safety- Support for children

Childline for free and confidential advice

UK Safer Internet Centre to report and remove harmful online content

CEOP for advice on making a report about online abuse

Online safety- Parental support

Childnet offers a toolkit to support parents and carers of children of any age to start discussions about their online life, and to find out where to get more help and support

Commonsensemedia provide independent reviews, age ratings, & other information about all types of media for children and their parents

Government advice about protecting children from specific online harms such as child sexual abuse, sexting, and cyberbullying

Internet Matters provide age-specific online safety checklists, guides on how to set parental controls, and practical tips to help children get the most out of their digital world

How Can I Help My Child? Marie Collins Foundation – Sexual Abuse Online

London Grid for Learning provides support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online, including tips to keep primary aged children safe online

Stopitnow resource from The Lucy Faithfull Foundation can be used by parents and carers who are concerned about someone's behaviour, including children who may be displaying concerning sexual behaviour (not just about online)

CEOP Education provides support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online

Parentzone provides help for parents and carers on how to keep their children safe online

Talking to your child about online sexual harassment: A guide for parents – This is the Children's Commissioner's parent guide on talking to your children about online sexual harassment

Private fostering

Private fostering: local authorities - DfE statutory guidance

Radicalisation

Prevent duty guidance- Home Office guidance

Prevent duty: additional advice for schools and childcare providers - DfE advice

Educate Against Hate website - DfE and Home Office advice

Prevent for FE and Training - Education and Training Foundation (ETF)

Extremism and Radicalisation Safeguarding Resources – Resources by London Grid for Learning

Managing risk of radicalisation in your education setting – DfE advice

Serious Violence

Serious violence strategy - Home Office Strategy

Factors linked to serious violence and how these factors can be used to identify individuals for intervention – Home Office

Youth Endowment Fund – Home Office

Gangs and youth violence: for schools and colleges - Home Office advice

Tackling violence against women and girls strategy- Home Office strategy

Violence against women and girls: national statement of expectations for victims - Home Office guidance

Sexual violence and sexual harassment – Specialist organisations

Barnardo's - UK charity caring for and supporting some of the most vulnerable children and young people through their range of services.

Lucy Faithful Foundation - UK-wide child protection charity dedicated to preventing child sexual abuse. They work with families affected by sexual abuse and also run the confidential Stop it Now! Helpline.

Marie Collins Foundation – Charity that, amongst other things, works directly with children, young people, and families to enable their recovery following sexual abuse.

NSPCC - Children's charity specialising in child protection with statutory powers enabling them to take action and safeguard children at risk of abuse.

Rape Crisis - National charity and the umbrella body for their network of independent member Rape Crisis Centres.

UK Safer Internet Centre - Provides advice and support to children, young people, parents, carers and schools about staying safe online.

Harmful sexual behaviour

Rape Crisis (England & Wales) or The Survivors Trust for information, advice, and details of local specialist sexual violence organisations.

NICE guidance contains information on, amongst other things: developing interventions; working with families and carers; and multi-agency working.

HSB toolkit The Lucy Faithfull Foundation - designed for parents, carers, family members and professionals, to help everyone play their part in keeping children safe. It has links to useful information, resources, and support as well as practical tips to prevent harmful sexual behaviour and provide safe environments for families.

The Lucy Faithfull Foundation also run shorespace.org.uk which provides a safe and anonymous place for young people to get help and support to prevent harmful sexual behaviours.

NSPCC Learning: Protecting children from harmful sexual behaviour and NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework- free and independent advice about HSB.

Contextual Safeguarding Network - Beyond Referrals (Schools) – Provides a school self-assessment toolkit and guidance for addressing HSB in schools.

Preventing harmful sexual behaviour in children - Stop It Now provides a guide for parents, carers and professionals to help everyone do their part in keeping children safe, they also run a free confidential helpline.

Support for Victims

Anti-Bullying Alliance - Detailed information for anyone being bullied, along with advice for parents and schools. Signposts to various helplines and websites for further support.

Rape Crisis - Provide and signpost to a range of services to support people who have experienced rape, child abuse or any kind of sexual violence.

The Survivors Trust- UK-wide national umbrella agency with resources and support dedicated to survivors of rape, sexual violence and child sex abuse.

Victim Support - Supporting children and young people who have been affected by crime. Also provides support to parents and professionals who work with children and young people – regardless of whether a crime has been reported or how long ago it was.

Childline provides free and confidential advice for children and young people.

Toolkits

NSPCC - Online Self-assessment tool to ensure organisations are doing everything they can to safeguard children.

NSPCC - Resources which help adults respond to children disclosing abuse.

NSPCC also provides free and independent advice about HSB: NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework

Safeguarding Unit, Farrer and Co. and Carlene Firmin, MBE, University of Bedfordshire - Peer- on-Peer Abuse toolkit provides practical guidance for schools on how to prevent, identify early and respond appropriately to peer-on-peer abuse.

Contextual Safeguarding Network - Self-assessment toolkit for schools to assess their own response to HSB and levers for addressing HSB in schools

Childnet - STAR SEND Toolkit equips, enables and empowers educators with the knowledge to support young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

Childnet - Just a joke? provides lesson plans, activities, a quiz and teaching guide designed to explore problematic online sexual behaviour with 9-12 year olds.

Childnet - Step Up, Speak Up a practical campaign toolkit that addresses the issue of online sexual harassment amongst young people aged 13-17 years old.

NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework An evidence-informed framework for children and young people displaying HSB.

Farrer & Co: Addressing child on chold abuse: a resource for schools and colleges - This resource provides practical guidance for schools and colleges on how to prevent, identify early and respond appropriately to child-on-child abuse.

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes

London Grid for Learning-collection of advice - Various information and resources dealing with the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.

UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people - Advice for schools and colleges on responding to incidents of non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.

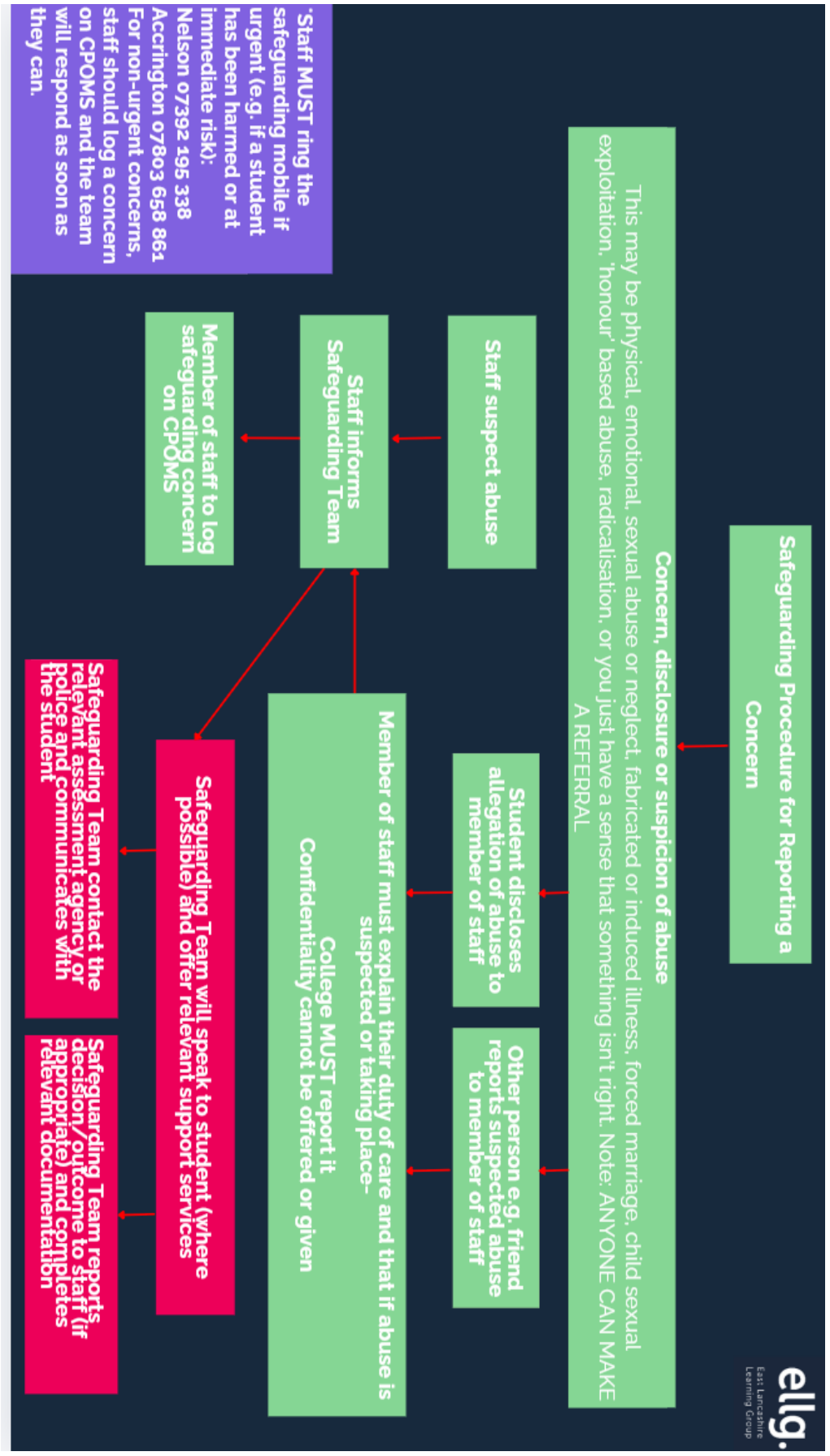
Support for parents/carers

National Crime Agency's CEOP Education Programme – Provides information for parents and carers to help protect their child from online child sexual abuse, including #AskThe Awkward - help to talk with your children about online relationships – Guidance on how to talk to their children about online relationships

20. Appendices

Appendix 1: Procedures for staff who are reporting a safeguarding concern.
Appendix 2: Procedures for Safeguarding Team who are reporting a concern to the Local Authority.
Appendix 3: Procedure for managing allegations against staff.

Appendix 1


Safeguarding Procedure for Reporting a Concern
Concern, disclosure or suspicion of abuse
This may be physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect, fabricated or induced illness, forced marriage, child sexual exploitation, 'honour' based abuse, radicalisation, or you just have a sense that something isn't right. Note: ANYONE CAN MAKE A REFERRAL
Student discloses allegation of abuse to member of staff
Other person e.g. friend reports suspected abuse to member of staff
Member of staff must explain their duty of care and that if abuse is suspected or taking place- College MUST report it Confidentiality cannot be offered or given
Staff suspect abuse
Staff informs Safeguarding Team
Member of staff to log safeguarding concern on CPOMS
Safeguarding Team will speak to student (where possible) and offer relevant support services
Safeguarding Team contact the relevant assessment agency or Police and communicates with the student
Safeguarding Team reports decision/outcome to staff (if appropriate) and completes relevant documentation
'Staff MUST ring the safeguarding mobile if urgent (e.g. if a student has been harmed or at immediate risk): Nelson 07392 195 338 Accrington 07803 658 861 For non-urgent concerns, staff should log a concern on CPOMS and the team will respond as soon as they can.
ellg.
East Lancashire Learning Group

Appendix 2: Procedure for Referral by Safeguarding and Welfare Team to the Local Authority

Safeguarding and Welfare Team considers:

- Current concern/incident/events and any relevant historical information
- Possible explanations an any contemporaneous events
- The need to seek further, external information/advice
- Actions/options (including with parents as relevant
- Recording

↓ ↓ ↓

Need for Early Help/ Support Identified

- Discuss with SWT/ Pastoral team
- Discuss with parents
- Agree ongoing monitoring/in college support
- Obtain consent
- Follow locally agreed protocols including Continuum of Need and Thresholds and Early Helps guidance
- Possible Channel
- Referral
- Record
- SWT monitors and reviews. May consider need for Child in Need/Section 17 referral

Child Protection/ Section 47 Referral to Children's Social Care

- Where it is clear that a child protection referral is necessary then the matter should be reported to Children's Social Care without delay **0300 123 6720**
- Out of hours referral should be made to the duty team **0300 123 6722**; and/or
- Notify police if a crime has been committed;
- Inform parents (as and when appropriate and inline with any advice from CSC/ Police)
- SWT records responses (within 24 hrs)/seeks one where none is received/escalates where unhappy with response

Vulnerable Adult Concern/Adult

- Once it's been established that a vulnerable adult is at risk, the matter should be referred to Adult Social Care Services **0300 123 6721**
- Notify police if the adult is in immediate danger of is a crime has been committed
- If there is uncertainty as to whether abuse has occurred advice can also be sought from **0300 123 6721**
- SWT records, responses from ASC/ seeks one where none is received/ escalates where unhappy

Appendix 3: Procedure for Managing Allegations Against Staff

It is alleged that:

A member of staff or volunteer in college has:

a. behaved in a way that has harmed a child/vulnerable, or may have harmed a child/vulnerable adult;
b. possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child/vulnerable adult; or
c. behaved towards a child, children or vulnerable adults in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults
d. behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

CONFIDENTIALITY REMINDER

Report to Assistant Principal/HR Manager who acts as Case Manager (or Chair of Governors if Allegation is against the Principal)

a. Case Manager begins timeline/record and ensures any immediate risk managed
b. Without speaking to anyone else at this stage or investigating the matter, Case Manager contacts the local authority Designated Officer (LADO) to establish whether LADO notification and/or children's social care/or adult's social care/police referral is required **(LADO: Tim Booth, tim.booth@lancashire.gov.uk, 01772 536694)**. Case Manager gathers any additional information as advised by LADO

CONFIDENTIALITY REMINDER

The Management of Allegations Against Staff

Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part four) defines an allegation as follows:

NFA/College Action

- Update and proceed with any in-college action
- Ensure appropriate support for all
- Case Manager records, including formal outcome on HR file
- Consider any learning and share with HR, staff and parents as appropriate

Or

- Case Manager completes LADO notification and ensures any onward consultation/ referral(s) to children's/adult's social care and Police
- Discuss with HR

Back to college for internal action

Strategy Meeting

Police Enquiries

Section 47 (Child only)

Malicious

False

Unsubstantiate

Substantiate

Once external enquiries and processes have run their course in-college action completed, including DBS referral in-line with KCSIE where appropriate.