

# **POLICY FOR SAFEGUARDING INCLUDING CHILD PROTECTION**



## **Policy Consultation & Review**

This policy is available on our college website and is available on request from the college office. We also inform parents and carers about this policy when their children join our college and through our college newsletter.

We recognise the expertise our staff builds by undertaking safeguarding training and managing safeguarding concerns on a daily basis and we therefore invite staff to contribute to and shape this policy and associated safeguarding arrangements.

The policy is provided to all staff at induction alongside our Staff Code of Conduct. In addition, all staff are provided with Part One of the statutory guidance ['Keeping Children Safe in Education'](#), DfE (September 2016).

This policy will be reviewed in full by the LAB on an annual basis. This policy was last reviewed and agreed by the LAB on 17 November 2017. It is due for review on 17 November 2018.

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## 1. PURPOSE & AIMS

1.1 The purpose of Tech City College's safeguarding policy is to ensure every child who is a registered student at our sixth form is safe and protected from harm. This means we will always work to:

- Protect children and young people at our college from maltreatment;
- Prevent impairment of our children's and young people's health or development;
- Ensure that children and young people at our college grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- Undertake that role so as to enable children and young people at our college to have the best outcomes.

1.2 This policy will give clear direction to staff, volunteers, visitors and parents about expected behaviour and our legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children at college.

1.3 Our college fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children from harm and supporting and promoting the welfare of all children who are registered students at our college. The elements of our policy are prevention, protection and support.

1.4 We recognise that our safeguarding responsibilities are clearly linked to our responsibilities for ensuring that appropriate safeguarding responses are in place for children who are absent from college or who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. The Attendance Officer will regularly liaise with the Principal or Designated Safeguarding Lead to discuss all persistently absent students and those who go missing to identify the risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse or exploitation and to ensure that appropriate safeguarding responses have been put in place to reduce the risk of future harm.

1.5 This policy applies to all students, staff, parents, governors, volunteers and visitors.

## 2. OUR ETHOS

2.1 The child's welfare is of paramount importance. Our college will establish and maintain an ethos where students feel secure, are encouraged to talk, are listened to and are safe. Children at our college will be able to talk freely to any member of staff at our college if they are worried or concerned about something.

2.2 Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. We recognise that staff at our college play a particularly important role as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children to prevent concerns from escalating. **All staff are**

**advised to maintain an attitude of ‘it could happen here’ where safeguarding is concerned.** When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members must always act in the **best interests** of the child.

2.3 All staff and regular visitors will, through training and induction, know how to recognise indicators of concern, how to respond to a disclosure from a child and how to record and report this information. We will not make promises to any child and we will not keep secrets. Every child will know what the adult will have to do with any information they have chosen to disclose.

2.4 Throughout our curriculum we will provide activities and opportunities for children to develop the skills they need to identify risks and stay safe. This will also be extended to include material that will encourage our children to develop essential life skills.

At Tech City, this happens through a) opportunities within whole college personal development and enrichment sessions and b) as an integral planned part of the tutorial. This ensures that every programme of study has a solid foundation which prepares students fully for studying towards success and eventual positive progression.

2.5 At all times we will work in partnership and endeavor to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers and colleagues from other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015, updated 2017) and the Local Safeguarding Children Board

### 3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role	Name	Contact details
<b>Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)</b>	Nasrin Farahani	020303013620 x 2201
<b>Deputy DSL</b>	Kristina Joseph	0203301 3620 x 2214
<b>Principal</b>	Nasrin Farahani	020303013620 x 2201
<b>Named Safeguarding Governor</b>	Mandy Lancy	020 87519888

3.1 It is the responsibility of every member of staff, volunteer and regular visitor to our college to ensure that they carry out the requirements of this policy and, at all times, work in a way that will safeguard and promote the welfare of all of the students at this college. This includes the responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

#### **The LAB (Local Advisory Board, the Governing Body)**

3.2 The LAB of the College is accountable for ensuring the effectiveness of this policy and our compliance with it. Although we have a shared responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of our students and work closely with the Local Safeguarding Children Board, we also have a named governor who champions safeguarding within the college.

3.3 The LAB will ensure that:

- The safeguarding policy is in place and is reviewed annually, is available publicly via our college website and has been written in line with Local Authority guidance and the requirements of the Local Safeguarding Children Board policies and procedures;
- The college contributes to inter-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015 updated 2017);
- A senior member of staff from the college leadership team is designated to take the lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection and that there is a deputy DSL(s) who is appropriately trained to deal with any issues in the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). There will always be cover for this role;
- All staff receive a safeguarding induction and are provided with a copy of this policy and the staff code of conduct;
- All staff undertake appropriate child protection training, that is updated annually, and on-line safeguarding training;
- Procedures are in place for dealing with allegations against members of staff and volunteers in line with statutory guidance;
- Safer recruitment practices are followed in accordance with the requirements of ['Keeping Children Safe in Education'](#) DfE (2016);
- They remedy without delay any weakness in regard to our safeguarding arrangements that are brought to their attention.

3.4 The LAB will receive a regular safeguarding report recording the training that has taken place, the number of staff attending and any outstanding training requirements for the college. At each meeting, it will also record all safeguarding activity that has taken place, for example, meetings attended, reports written, training or induction given. It will not identify individual students.

### **The Principal**

3.5 At Tech City College the Principal is the strategic lead and is responsible for:

- Identifying a senior member of staff from the leadership team to be the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL);
- Identifying alternate members of staff to act as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in his/her absence to ensure there is always cover for the role;
- Ensuring that the policies and procedures adopted by the college, particularly concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect, are followed by all staff;
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and such concerns are addressed sensitively in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing procedures;
- Liaise with the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff.

### **The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

3.6 The Designated Safeguarding Lead is a senior member of staff, from the leadership team who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection within our college. The DSL will carry out their role in accordance with the responsibilities outlined in Annex B of *'Keeping Children Safe in Education'*. The DSL may designate their deputy to act as required or in absentia.

3.7 The DSL will provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters. Any concern for a child's safety or welfare will be recorded in writing and given to the DSL. (see Appendix 1)

3.8 During term time, the designated safeguarding lead and or a deputy will always be available (during college hours) for staff in the college to discuss any safeguarding concerns. If in *exceptional* circumstances, a DSL is not available on the college site in person, we will ensure that they are available via telephone and any other relevant media.

3.9 The DSL at Tech City College will represent our college at child protection conferences and core group meetings. Through appropriate training, knowledge and experience our DSL will liaise with Children's Services and other agencies where necessary, and make referrals of suspected abuse to Children's Services, take part in strategy discussions and other interagency meetings and contribute to the assessment of children as required.

3.10 The DSL will maintain written records and child protection files ensuring that they are kept confidential and stored securely.

3.11 The DSL is responsible for ensuring that all staff members and volunteers are aware of our policy and the procedure they need to follow. They will ensure that all staff, volunteers and regular visitors have received appropriate child protection information during induction and have been trained within the college to the agreed college's safeguarding procedures.

## **4. TRAINING & INDUCTION**

4.1 When new staff join our college they will be informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place. They will be given a copy of our college's safeguarding

policy along with the staff code of conduct, Part One and Annex A of '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*' and told who our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSLs are. All staff are expected to read these key documents. They will also be provided with the recording concerns form, given information on how to complete it and who to pass it to.

4.2 Every new member of staff or volunteer will receive safeguarding training during their induction period within 4 weeks of joining the college. This programme will include information relating to signs and symptoms of abuse, how to manage a disclosure from a child, how to record concerns and the remit of the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The training will also include information about whistle-blowing in respect of concerns about another adult's behaviour and suitability to work with children. Staff will also receive on-line safety training as this is part of the overarching safeguarding approach of our college.

4.3 In addition to the safeguarding induction, we will ensure that mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in Part one of '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*'. In order to achieve this, we will ensure that:

- all members of staff will undertake appropriate safeguarding training on an annual basis in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Children Board advice and we will evaluate the impact of this training;
- all staff members receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively;
- staff will be informed of any updates during weekly staff briefing sessions that occur on Tuesdays
- staff will be updated on any skills, requisite or statutory obligations on Wednesday staff meetings and training sessions.

4.3A At Tech City College, we are alert to safeguarding issues in the local area and ensure that all staff have training appropriate to these matters as they arise. There are currently no concerns in this locality however if any are raised these are addressed through the Principal via email notification and staff discussion.

4.4 All regular visitors, temporary staff and volunteers to our college will be given a set of our safeguarding procedures; they will be informed of whom our DSL and alternate staff members are and what the recording and reporting system is. (See Appendix 2). A leaflet including information on Prevent, British Values, safeguarding and Child Protection along with H&S information is handed to all visitors.

4.5 The DSL, the deputy designated member(s) of staff and any other senior member of staff who may be in a position of making referrals or attending child protection conferences or core groups will participate in one of the multi-agency training courses available online or face to face through the Local Safeguarding Children's Board at least once every three years. The DSL and Deputy DSL will attend Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

training every two years. In addition to formal training, the DSL will ensure that they update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals, but at least annually, to keep up with any developments relevant to their role. The DSL keeps up to date by accessing online courses and disseminating national and local updates to staff, by attending at DSL cluster meetings, Local Safeguarding Children's Groups etc.]

4.6 Our LAB will also undertake appropriate training to ensure they are able to carry out their duty to safeguard all of the children at our college. Training for Governors to support them in their safeguarding role is available from the LA Governor Services.

4.7 We actively encourage all of our staff to keep up to date with the most recent local and national safeguarding advice and guidance, Annex A of '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*' (2016) provides links to guidance on specific safeguarding issues such as Child Sexual Exploitation and Female Genital Mutilation.

## **5. PROCEDURES FOR MANAGING CONCERNS**

5.1 The College adheres to child protection procedures that have been agreed locally through the Local Children's Safeguarding Board (LSCB). Where we identify children and families in need of support, we will carry out our responsibilities in accordance with local assessment protocols and the LSCB thresholds'.

5.2 Every member of staff including volunteers working with children at our college are advised to maintain an attitude of '*it could happen here*' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child and have a responsibility to take action as outline in this policy.

5.3 All staff are encouraged to report any concerns that they have and not see these as insignificant. On occasions, a referral is justified by a single incident such as an injury or disclosure of abuse. More often however, concerns accumulate over a period of time and are evidenced by building up a picture of harm over time; this is particularly true in cases of emotional abuse and neglect. In these circumstances, it is crucial that staff record and pass on concerns in accordance with this policy to allow the DSL to build up a picture and access support for the child at the earliest opportunity. A reliance on memory without accurate and dated records of concern could lead to a failure to protect.

5.4 It is *not* the responsibility of college staff to investigate welfare concerns or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation. All staff, however, have a duty to recognise concerns and pass the information on in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy.

5.5 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) should be used as a first point of contact for concerns and queries regarding any safeguarding concern in our college. Any member of staff or visitor to the college who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that a child is at risk of harm must report it immediately to



the DSL or, if unavailable, to the Deputy designated person. In the absence of either of the above, the matter should be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff.

5.6 All concerns about a child or young person should be reported without delay and recorded in writing using the agreed template (see Appendix 1).

5.7 Following receipt of any information raising a concern, the DSL will consider what action to take and seek advice from Early Help or Children's Services as required. All information and actions taken, including the reasons for any decisions made, will be fully documented.

5.8 All referrals will be made in line with Local Children's Services procedures as outlined in Appendix 3.

5.9 If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to Children's Services immediately. Anybody can make a referral. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration by raising concerns again with the DSL and/or the Principal. Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point.

5.10 Staff should always follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy in the first instance. However, they may also share information directly with Children's Services, or the police if:

- the situation is an emergency and the designated safeguarding lead, their deputy and the Principal are all unavailable;
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the student's safety.

5.11 Any member of staff who does not feel that concerns about a child have been responded to appropriately and in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy should raise their concerns with the Principal or the Chair of LAB. If any member of staff does not feel the situation has been addressed appropriately at this point, they should contact Children's Services directly with their concerns.

5.12 Staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via **peer on peer abuse**. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), gender based violence/sexual assaults and sexting.

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up". Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse. This could for example include girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation-type violence.

At Tech City College, we believe that all children have a right to attend college and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm by adults in the college and other students.

We recognise that some students will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others and their behaviour will be dealt with under the college's Behaviour Policy.

Occasionally, allegations may be made against students by others in the college, which are of a safeguarding nature. Safeguarding issues raised in this way may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. It is likely that to be considered a safeguarding allegation against a student, some of the following features will be found.

The allegation:

- is made against an older student and refers to their behaviour towards a younger student or a more vulnerable student
- is of a serious nature, possibly including a criminal offence
- raises risk factors for other students in the college
- indicates that other students may have been affected by this student
- indicates that young people outside the college may be affected by this student

At Tech City College, we will support the victims of peer on peer abuse by contacting support agencies and arranging counselling or mentoring support.

### **Sexting**

In cases of 'sexting' we follow guidance given to schools and colleges by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) published in August 2016: 'Sexting in schools and colleges, responding to incidents, and safeguarding young people'.

5.13 We recognise that children with **special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities** can face additional safeguarding challenges and these are discussed in staff training. These additional barriers can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying- without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

5.14 At Tech City College we recognise that our staff are well placed to identify concerns and take action to prevent children from becoming victims of **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** and other forms of so-called '**honour-based**' **violence (HBV)** and provide guidance on these issues through our safeguarding training. If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBV they should inform the DSL who will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multiagency liaison with police and children's social care.

5.15 Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers. Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015)

places a statutory duty upon teachers in England and Wales, to 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 such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. We will provide guidance and support to our teachers on this requirement and further information on when and how to make a report can be found in the following Home Office guidance: '[Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation - procedural information](#)' (October 2015).

5.16 As part of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, colleges have a duty to 'prevent people being drawn into terrorism'. This has become known as the '**Prevent Duty**'.

Where staff are concerned that children and young people are developing extremist views or show signs of becoming radicalised, they should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has received training about the Prevent Duty and tackling extremism and is able to support staff with any concerns they may have.

We use the curriculum to ensure that children and young people understand how people with extreme views share these with others, especially using the internet.

We are committed to ensuring that our students are offered a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Teaching the college's core values alongside the fundamental British Values supports quality teaching and learning, whilst making a positive contribution to the development of a fair, just and civil society.

### **Recognising Extremism**

Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:

- Showing sympathy for extremist causes
- Glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures
- Making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies outside college
- Evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- Advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups
- Out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (but there are also very powerful narratives, programmes and networks that young people can come across online so involvement with particular groups may not be apparent.)
- Secretive behaviour
- Online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles
- Intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality

- Graffiti, art work or writing that displays extremist themes
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- Verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views
- We recognise that safeguarding against radicalisation and extremism is no different to safeguarding against any other vulnerability in today's society. At Tech City College we will ensure that:
  - Through training, staff, volunteers and governors have an understanding of what radicalisation and extremism is, why we need to be vigilant in college and how to respond when concerns arise.
  - There are systems in place for keeping students safe from extremist material when accessing the internet in our college by using effective filtering and usage policies.
  - The DSL has received Prevent training and will act as the point of contact within our college for any concerns relating to radicalisation and extremism.
  - The DSL will make referrals in accordance with Local Channel procedures and will represent our college at Channel meetings as required.
  - Through our curriculum, we will promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students.

5.17 At Tech City College we recognise that **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)** involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups.

Staff should be, and are, made aware, through training, of the key indicators of children being sexually exploited which can include:

- going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late;
- regularly missing college or education or not taking part in education;
- appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- associating with other young people involved in exploitation;
- having older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- suffering from sexually transmitted infections;
- mood swings or changes in emotional wellbeing;
- drug and alcohol misuse;
- displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour.

Staff should also be aware that many children and young people who are victims of sexual exploitation do not recognise themselves as such and should refer any concerns to the DSL.

5.18 A **private fostering arrangement** is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close

relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.

A close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and step-parents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.

Parents and private foster carers both have a legal duty to inform the relevant local authority at least six weeks before the arrangement is due to start; not to do so is a criminal offence.

Whilst most privately fostered children are appropriately supported and looked after, they are a potentially vulnerable group who should be monitored by the local authority, particularly when the child has come from another country. In some cases, privately fostered children are affected by abuse and neglect, or be involved in trafficking, child sexual exploitation or modern-day slavery.

Colleges have a mandatory duty to report to the local authority where they are aware or suspect that a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement. Although colleges have a duty to inform the local authority, there is no duty for anyone, including the private foster carers or social workers to inform the college. However, it should be clear to the college who has parental responsibility.

College staff should notify the DSL when they become aware of private fostering arrangements. The DSL will speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform the LA. The college itself has a duty to inform the local authority of the private fostering arrangements.

On admission to the college we will take steps to verify the relationship of the adults to the child who is being registered.

**5.19 Children Missing Education** - Knowing where children are during college hours is an extremely important aspect of Safeguarding. Missing college can be an indicator of abuse and neglect and may also raise concerns about child sexual exploitation.

We monitor attendance carefully and address poor or irregular attendance without delay.

In response to the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2016 updated 2017) the college has:

1. Staff who understand what to do when children do not attend regularly
2. Appropriate policies, procedures and responses for students who go missing from education (especially on repeat occasions).
3. Staff who know the signs and triggers for travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.
4. Procedures to inform the local authority when we plan to take students off-roll when they:
  - a. Leave college to be home educated
  - b. Move away from the college's location

- c. Remain medically unfit beyond compulsory school age
- d. Are in custody for four months or more (and will not return to college afterwards); or
- e. Are permanently excluded

We will ensure that students who are expected to attend the college, but fail to take up the place will be referred to the local authority.

When a student leaves the college, we will record the name of the student's new college and their expected start date.

## **6. RECORDS AND INFORMATION SHARING**

6.1 If staff are concerned about the welfare or safety of any child at our college they will record their concern on the agreed reporting form (Appendix 1). They should ensure that the form is signed and dated. Any concerns should be passed to the DSL without delay.

6.2 Any information recorded will be kept in a separate named file, in a secure cabinet and not with the child's academic file. These files will be the responsibility of the DSL. Child protection information will only be shared within college on the basis of 'need to know in the child's best interests' and on the understanding that it remains strictly confidential.

6.3 Child protection information will only be kept in the file and this file will be kept up to date. Records of concern, copies of referrals, invitations to child protection conferences, core groups and reports will be stored here. All our safeguarding files will include; a chronology, contents front cover and will record significant events in the child's life.

6.4 When a child leaves our college, the DSL will make contact with the DSL at the new college and will ensure that the child protection file is forwarded to the receiving college in an appropriately agreed manner. We will retain evidence to demonstrate how the file has been transferred; this may be in the form of a written confirmation of receipt from the receiving college and/or evidence of recorded delivery. Where a parent elects to remove their child from the college roll to home educate, the college will make arrangements to pass any safeguarding concerns to the Home Educators Team within the Local Authority.

## **7. WORKING WITH PARENTS & CARERS**

7.1 Tech City College is committed to working in partnership with parents/carers to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to support them to understand our statutory responsibilities in this area.

7.2 When new students join our college, parents and carers will be informed that we have a safeguarding policy. A copy will be provided to parents on request and is available on the college website. Parents and carers will be informed of our legal duty to assist our colleagues in other agencies with child protection enquiries and what happens should we have cause to make a referral to Children's Services.

7.3 We are committed to working with parents positively, openly and honestly. We ensure that all parents are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. We respect parents' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission or it is necessary to do so in order to safeguard a child from harm.

7.4 We will seek to share with parents any concerns we may have about their child *unless* to do so may place a child at increased risk of harm. A lack of parental engagement or agreement regarding the concerns the college has about a child will not prevent the DSL making a referral to Children's Services in those circumstances where it is appropriate to do so.

7.5 In order to keep children safe and provide appropriate care for them, the college requires parents to provide accurate and up to date information regarding:

- Full names and contact details of all adults with whom the child normally lives;
- Full names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility (if different from above);
- Emergency contact details (if different from above);
- Full details of any other adult authorised by the parent to collect the child from college (if different from the above).

The College will retain this information on the student file. The college will only share information about students with adults who have parental responsibility for a student or where a parent has given permission and the college has been supplied with the adult's full details in writing.

## **8. CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES**

8.1 Children's Services will convene a Child Protection conference once a child protection enquiry under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 has been undertaken and the child is judged to be at continuing risk of significant harm. A review conference will take place once a child has been made the subject of a Child Protection Plan in order to monitor the safety of the child and the required reduction in risk.

8.2 Staff members may be asked to attend a child protection conference or core group meetings on behalf of the college in respect of individual children. Usually the person representing the college at these meetings will be the Principal or DSL. In any event, the person attending will need to have as much relevant up to date information about the child as possible; any member of staff may be required to contribute to this process.

8.3 All reports for child protection conferences will be prepared in advance, using the guidance and template report provided by the Local Children's Services. The information contained in the report will be shared with parents before the conference as appropriate and will include information relating to the child's physical, emotional and intellectual development and the child's presentation

at college. In order to complete such reports, all relevant information will be sought from staff working with the child in college.

8.4 Clearly child protection conferences can be upsetting for parents. We recognise that we are likely to have more contact with parents than other professionals involved. We will work in an open and honest way with any parent whose child has been referred to Children's Services or whose child is subject to a child protection plan. Our responsibility is to promote the protection and welfare of all children and our aim is to achieve this in partnership with our parents.

## **9. SAFER RECRUITMENT**

9.1 We will ensure that the Principal and at least one member of the LAB have completed appropriate safer recruitment training. At all times the Principal and LAB will ensure that safer recruitment practices are followed in accordance with the requirements of '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*', DfE (2016 updated 2017).

9.2 At Tech City College we will use the recruitment and selection process to deter and reject unsuitable candidates. We require evidence of original academic certificates. We do not accept testimonials and insist on taking up references prior to interview. We will question the contents of application forms if we are unclear about them, we will undertake Disclosure and Barring Service checks and use any other means of ensuring we are recruiting and selecting the most suitable people to work with our children.

9.3 We will maintain a Single Central Register of all safer recruitment checks carried out in line with statutory requirements.

## **10. SAFER WORKING PRACTICE**

10.1 All adults who come into contact with our children have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare. There is a legal duty placed upon us to ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of our children are competent, confident and safe to do so.

10.2 All staff will be provided with a copy of our college's Code of Conduct for Staff at induction. They will be expected to know our college's Code of Conduct and policy for positive handling and carry out their duties in accordance with this advice. There will be occasion when some form of physical contact is inevitable, for example if a child has an accident or is hurt or is in a situation of danger to themselves or others around them. However, at all times the agreed policy for safe restraint must be adhered to.

10.3 If staff, visitors, volunteers or parent helpers are working with children alone they will, wherever possible, be visible to other members of staff and wear a badge or lanyard identifying them. They will be expected to inform another member of staff of their whereabouts in college, who they are with and for how long. Doors, ideally, should have a clear glass panel in them and be left open.



10.4 Guidance about acceptable conduct and safe practice will be given to all staff and volunteers during induction. These are sensible steps that every adult should take in their daily professional conduct with children. This advice can be found in '*Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings*' (October 2015). All staff and volunteers are expected to carry out their work in accordance with this guidance and will be made aware that failure to do so could lead to disciplinary action.

## **11. MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF & VOLUNTEERS**

11.1 Our aim is to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for the children at our college. We do recognise that sometimes the behaviour of adults may lead to an allegation of abuse being made.

11.2 Allegations sometimes arise from a differing understanding of the same event, but when they occur they are distressing and difficult for all concerned. We also recognise that many allegations are genuine and there are some adults who deliberately seek to harm or abuse children.

11.3 We will take all possible steps to safeguard our children and to ensure that the adults in our college are safe to work with children. We will always ensure that the procedures outlined in Part 4 of '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*', DfE (2016) are adhered to and will seek appropriate advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The LADO can be contacted to request a consultation or to make a referral via e-mail or telephone. The LADO contact details are as follows: Tel: 020 7527 8102. Email: [laura.eden@islington.gov.uk](mailto:laura.eden@islington.gov.uk). For all other child protection enquiries contact Islington's Children's Social Care team on 020 7527 7400.

11.4 If an allegation is made or information is received about any adult who works in our college which indicates that they may be unsuitable to work with children, the member of staff receiving the information should inform the Principal immediately. This includes concerns relating to agency and supply staff and volunteers. Should an allegation be made against the Principal, this will be reported to the Chair of LAB. In the event that neither the Principal nor Chair of LAB is not contactable on that day, the information must be passed to and dealt with by either the member of staff acting as Principal or the Vice Chair of LAB.

11.5 The Principal or Chair of LAB will seek advice from the LADO within one working day. No member of staff or the LAB will undertake further investigations before receiving advice from the LADO.

11.6 Any member of staff or volunteer who does not feel confident to raise their concerns with the Principal or Chair of LAB should contact the LADO directly. Further national guidance can be found at: [Advice on whistleblowing](#). The [NSPCC whistleblowing helpline](#) is also available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call:

0800 028 0285 – the helpline is available from 8:00am to 8:00pm, Monday to Friday or via e-mail: help@nspcc.org.uk.

11.7 The College has a legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person. If these circumstances arise in relation to a member of staff at our college, a referral will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual in accordance with advice from the LADO and/or HR.

## 12 RELEVANT POLICIES

12.1 To underpin the values and ethos of our college and our intent to ensure that students at our college are appropriately safeguarded the following policies are also included under our safeguarding umbrella:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Anti-Bullying
- Positive handling and managing behaviour
- Recruitment & Selection
- Whistle-blowing
- Attendance
- On-line Safety
- Health and Safety including site security
- Harassment and discrimination including racial abuse
- Meeting the needs of students with medical conditions
- Intimate Care
- First aid
- Educational visits including overnight stays

## 13. STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

This policy has been devised in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- ['Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children'](#), DfE (2015)
- ['Keeping Children Safe in Education'](#), DfE (September 2016)
- ['What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'](#), DfE (March 2015)
- ['Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners'](#), DfE (March 2015)
- ['The Prevent duty: Departmental advice for colleges and childcare providers'](#), DfE (2015)
- ['Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation - procedural information'](#), Home Office (October 2015)

**Appendix 1: Recording Form for Safeguarding Concerns**

Staff, volunteers and regular visitors are required to complete this form and pass it to Nasrin Farahani, the college DSL if they have a safeguarding concern about a child in our college. (see Appendix 2 for guidance)

Student Name			
Day/Date/Time		DoB	
Member(s) of staff noting concern			

Concern (Please describe as fully as possible)	
Signature:	Date:

Actions Taken			
Date	Person taking action	Action	Signature

Would you like feedback about this concern?  Yes  No Date Given .....

**Please pass this form to Nasrin Farahani the Designated Safeguarding Lead when completed**

## **Appendix 2: Safeguarding Induction Sheet for new or supply staff and regular visitors or volunteers.**

We all have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and at our college we take this responsibility seriously.

If you have any concerns about a child or young person in our college, you must share this information immediately with our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Nasrin Farahani, or one of the alternate post holders.

Do not think that your worry is insignificant if it is about hygiene, appearance or behaviour – we would rather you told us as we would rather know about something that appears small than miss a worrying situation.

**If you think the matter is very serious and may be related to child protection, for example, physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect, you must find one of the designated professionals detailed below and provide them with a written record of your concern. A copy of the form to complete is attached to this and others can be obtained from the Designated Safeguarding Lead; Deputy Safeguarding Lead and Student Support Service. Please ensure you complete all sections as described.**

**If you are unable to locate them, ask a member of the college office staff to find them and to ask them to speak with you immediately about a confidential and urgent matter.**

Any allegation concerning a member of staff, a child's foster carer or a volunteer should be reported immediately to the Principal. If an allegation is made about the Principal you should pass this information to the Chair of the LAB. Alternatively, you can contact the Local Authority Designated Officer on 01603 223473. [NSPCC whistleblowing helpline](#) is also available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00am to 8:00pm, Monday to Friday or via e-mail: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).

The people you should talk to in college are:

**Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Nasrin Farahani**

Location of office: Principal Office

Contact Number:020303013620

**Deputy Designated Lead: Kristina Joseph**

Location of office: Student Support Service

Contact Number:02033013620 x2214

**Chair of Governors: Mandy Lancy**

**At Tech City College, we strive to safeguard and promote the welfare of all of our children.**

### **Appendix 3: Types, Signs and Symptoms of Abuse**

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

**Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

**Physical abuse:** a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

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

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

abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

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

## **Indicators of Abuse**

Caution should be used when referring to lists of signs and symptoms of abuse. Although the signs and symptoms listed below may be indicative of abuse there may be alternative explanations. In assessing the circumstances of any child any of these indicators should be viewed within the overall context of the child's individual situation including any disability.

**Please remember if you feel unsure or worried, do something about it. Don't keep it to yourself.**

## **EMOTIONAL ABUSE**

Emotional abuse is difficult to:

- define
- identify/recognise
- prove.

Emotional abuse is chronic and cumulative and has a long-term impact. Indicators may include:

- Physical, mental and emotional development lags
- Sudden speech disorders
- Continual self-depreciation ('I'm stupid, ugly, worthless, etc.')
- Overreaction to mistakes
- Extreme fear of any new situation
- Inappropriate response to pain ('I deserve this')
- Unusual physical behaviour (rocking, hair twisting, self-mutilation) - consider within the context of any form of disability such as autism
- Extremes of passivity or aggression

- Children suffering from emotional abuse may be withdrawn and emotionally flat. One reaction is for the child to seek attention constantly or to be over-familiar. Lack of self-esteem and developmental delay are again likely to be present
- Babies – feeding difficulties, crying, poor sleep patterns, delayed development, irritable, non-cuddly, apathetic, non-demanding
- Toddler/Pre-College – head banging, rocking, bad temper, ‘violent’, clingy. Spectrum from overactive to apathetic, noisy to quiet. Developmental delay – especially language and social skills
- College age – Wetting and soiling, relationship difficulties, poor performance at college, non-attendance, antisocial behaviour. Feels worthless, unloved, inadequate, frightened, isolated, corrupted and terrorised
- Adolescent – depression, self-harm, substance abuse, eating disorder, poor self-esteem, oppositional, aggressive and delinquent behaviour
- Child may be underweight and/or stunted
- Child may fail to achieve milestones, fail to thrive, experience academic failure or under achievement
- Also consider a child's difficulties in expressing their emotions and what they are experiencing and whether this has been impacted on by factors such as age, language barriers or disability

## **NEGLECT**

There are occasions when nearly all parents find it difficult to cope with the many demands of caring for children. But this does not mean that their children are being neglected. Neglect involves ongoing failure to meet a child's needs.

Neglect can often fit into six forms which are:

- Medical – the withholding of medical care including health and dental.
- Emotional – lack of emotional warmth, touch and nurture
- Nutritional – either through lack of access to a proper diet which can affect in their development.
- Educational – failing to ensure regular college attendance that prevents the child reaching their full potential academically
- Physical – failure to meet the child's physical needs
- Lack of supervision and guidance – meaning the child is in dangerous situations without the ability to risk assess the danger.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Horwath, J (2007): Child neglect: identification and assessment: Palgrave Macmillan



### Common Concerns:

With regard to the child, some of the regular concerns are:

- The child's development in all areas including educational attainment
- Cleanliness
- Health
- Children left at home alone and accidents related to this
- Taking on unreasonable care for others
- Young carers

Neglect can often be an indicator of further maltreatment and is often identified as an issue in serious case reviews as being present in the lead up to the death of the child or young person. It is important to recognise that the most frequent issues and concerns regarding the family in relation to neglect relate to parental capability. This can be a consequence of:

- Poor health, including mental health or mental illness
- Disability, including learning difficulties
- Substance misuse and addiction
- Domestic violence

College staff need to consider both acts of *commission* (where a parent / carer deliberately neglects the child) and acts of *omission* (where a parent's failure to act is causing the neglect). This is a key consideration with regard to college attendance where parents are not ensuring their child attend college regularly.

Many of the signs of neglect are visible, however college staff may not instinctively know how to recognise signs of neglect or know how to respond effectively when they suspect a student is being neglected. Children spend considerable time in college so staff have opportunities to identify patterns over time and recognise and respond to concerns about their safety and welfare. All concerns should be recorded and reflected upon, not simply placed in a file.

Here are some signs of possible neglect:

#### **Physical signs:**

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Emaciation
- Untreated medical problems
- The child seems underweight and is very small for their age
- The child is poorly clothed, with inadequate protection from the weather
- Neglect can lead to failure to thrive, manifest by a fall away from initial centile lines in weight, height and head circumference. Repeated growth measurements are crucially important

- Signs of malnutrition include wasted muscles and poor condition of skin and hair. It is important not to miss an organic cause of failure to thrive; if this is suspected, further investigations will be required
- Infants and children with neglect often show rapid growth catch-up and improved emotional response in a hospital environment
- Failure to thrive through lack of understanding of dietary needs of a child or inability to provide an appropriate diet; or they may present with obesity through inadequate attention to the child's diet
- Being too hot or too cold – red, swollen and cold hands and feet or they may be dressed in inappropriate clothing
- Consequences arising from situations of danger – accidents, assaults, poisoning
- Unusually severe but preventable physical conditions owing to lack of awareness of preventative health care or failure to treat minor conditions
- Health problems associated with lack of basic facilities such as heating
- Neglect can also include failure to care for the individual needs of the child including any additional support the child may need as a result of any disability

#### **Behavioural signs:**

- No social relationships
- Compulsive scavenging
- Destructive tendencies
- If they are often absent from college for no apparent reason
- If they are regularly left alone, or in charge of younger brothers or sisters
- Lack of stimulation can result in developmental delay, for example, speech delay, and this may be picked up opportunistically or at formal development checks
- Craving attention or ambivalent towards adults, or may be very withdrawn
- Delayed development and failing at college (poor stimulation and opportunity to learn)
- Difficult or challenging behaviour

#### **PHYSICAL ABUSE**

**When dealing with concerns regarding physical abuse, refer any suspected non-accidental injury to Nasrin Farahani, the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay so that they are able to seek appropriate guidance from the police and/or Children's Services in order to safeguard the child.**

Staff must be alert to:

- Unexplained recurrent injuries or burns; improbable excuses or refusal to explain injuries;
  
- Injuries that are not consistent with the story: too many, too severe, wrong place or pattern, child too young for the activity described.

**Physical signs:**

- Bald patches
  
- Bruises, black eyes and broken
  
- Untreated or inadequately treated injuries
  
- Injuries to parts of the body where accidents are unlikely, such as thighs, back, abdomen
  
- Scalds and burns
  
- General appearance and behaviour of the child may include:
  - Concurrent failure to thrive: measure height, weight and, in the younger child, head circumference;
  - Frozen watchfulness: impassive facial appearance of the abused child who carefully tracks the examiner with his eyes.
  
- Bruising:
  - Bruising patterns can suggest gripping (finger marks), slapping or beating with an object.
  
  - Bruising on the cheeks, head or around the ear and black eyes can be the result of non-accidental injury.
  
  - Mongolian blue spots may be mistaken for bruises. Mongolian blue spots are rare in children of white European background, but very common in children of African, Middle Eastern, Mediterranean or Asian background. Mongolian blue spots are can vary in size, but most are a few centimetres across. They can appear anywhere on the body, but are most common at the base of the spine, the buttocks or on the lower back. Occasionally they are present on the back of the shoulder. It is very unusual for a child to have a Mongolian blue spot on the scalp or face. However, because of their colour and location, they can wrongly be confused with bruising. The difference between them is that bruises change colour and shape over a period of days, whereas Mongolian blue spots take many years to fade.
  
- Other injuries:
  - Bite marks may be evident from an impression of teeth
  
  - Small circular burns on the skin suggest cigarette burns
  
  - Scalding inflicted by immersion in hot water often affects buttocks or feet and legs symmetrically
  
  - Red lines occur with ligature injuries

- Retinal haemorrhages can occur with head injury and vigorous shaking of the baby
- Tearing of the frenulum of the upper lip can occur with force-feeding. However, any injury of this type must be assessed in the context of the explanation given, the child's developmental stage, a full examination and other relevant investigations as appropriate.
- Fractured ribs: rib fractures in a young child are suggestive of non-accidental injury
- Other fractures: spiral fractures of the long bones are suggestive of non-accidental injury

**Behavioural signs:**

- Wearing clothes to cover injuries, even in hot weather
- Refusal to undress for gym
- Chronic running away
- Fear of medical help or examination
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Fear of physical contact - shrinking back if touched
- Admitting that they are punished, but the punishment is excessive (such as a child being beaten every night to 'make him study')
- Fear of suspected abuser being contacted
- Injuries that the child cannot explain or explains unconvincingly
- Become sad, withdrawn or depressed
- Having trouble sleeping
- Behaving aggressively or be disruptive
- Showing fear of certain adults
- Having a lack of confidence and low self-esteem
- Using drugs or alcohol
- Repetitive pattern of attendance: recurrent visits, repeated injuries
- Excessive compliance
- Hyper-vigilance

**SEXUAL ABUSE**

Sexual abuse is usually perpetrated by people who are known to and trusted by the child – e.g. relatives, family friends, neighbours, people working with the child in college or through other activities.

Characteristics of child sexual abuse:

- It is usually planned and systematic – people do not sexually abuse children by accident, though sexual abuse can be opportunistic;
- Grooming the child – people who abuse children take care to choose a vulnerable child and often spend time making them dependent. This can be done in person or via the internet through chat-rooms and social networking sites;
- Grooming the child's environment – abusers try to ensure that potential adult protectors (parents and other carers especially) are not suspicious of their motives. Again, this can be done in person or via the internet through chat-rooms and social networking sites.

**In young children behavioural changes may include:**

- Regressing to younger behaviour patterns such as thumb sucking or bringing out discarded cuddly toys
- Being overly affectionate - desiring high levels of physical contact and signs of affection such as hugs and kisses
- Lack of trust or fear of someone they know well, such as not wanting to be alone with a babysitter or child minder
- They may start using sexually explicit behaviour or language, particularly if the behaviour or language is not appropriate for their age
- Starting to wet again, day or night/nightmares

**In older children behavioural changes may include:**

- Extreme reactions, such as depression, self-mutilation, suicide attempts, running away, overdoses, anorexia
- Personality changes such as becoming insecure or clinging
- Sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating
- Being isolated or withdrawn
- Inability to concentrate
- Become worried about clothing being removed
- Suddenly drawing sexually explicit pictures
- Trying to be 'ultra-good' or perfect; overreacting to criticism
- Genital discharge or urinary tract infections
- Marked changes in the child's general behaviour. For example, they may become unusually quiet and withdrawn, or unusually aggressive. Or they may start suffering from what may seem to be physical ailments, but which can't be explained medically
- The child may refuse to attend college or start to have difficulty concentrating so that their college work is affected
- They may show unexpected fear or distrust of a particular adult or refuse to continue with their usual social activities

- The child may describe receiving special attention from a particular adult, or refer to a new, "secret" friendship with an adult or young person
- Children who have been sexually abused may demonstrate inappropriate sexualised knowledge and behaviour
- Low self-esteem, depression and self-harm are all associated with sexual abuse

**Physical signs and symptoms for any age child could be:**

- Medical problems such as chronic itching, pain in the genitals, venereal diseases
- Stomach pains or discomfort walking or sitting
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Any features that suggest interference with the genitalia. These may include bruising, swelling, abrasions or tears
- Soreness, itching or unexplained bleeding from penis, vagina or anus
- Sexual abuse may lead to secondary enuresis or faecal soiling and retention
- Symptoms of a sexually transmitted disease such as vaginal discharge or genital warts, or pregnancy in adolescent girls

**CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**

The sexual exploitation of children and young people (CSE) under-18 is defined as that which:

*'involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities.'*

Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example, being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.' (Department for Education, 2012)

Child sexual exploitation is a form of abuse which involves children (male and female, of different ethnic origins and of different ages) receiving something in exchange for sexual activity.

**Who is at risk?**

Child sexual exploitation can happen to any young person from any background. Although the research suggests that the females are more vulnerable to CSE, boys and young men are also victims of this type of abuse.

The characteristics common to all victims of CSE are not those of age, ethnicity or gender, rather their powerlessness and vulnerability. Victims often do not recognise that they are being exploited because they will have been groomed by their abuser(s). As a result, victims do not make informed choices to enter into, or remain involved in, sexually exploitative situations but do so from coercion, enticement, manipulation or fear. Sexual exploitation can happen face to face and it can happen online. It can also occur between young people.

In all its forms, CSE is child abuse and should be treated as a child protection issue.

### **WARNING SIGNS AND VULNERABILITIES CHECKLIST<sup>2</sup>**

The evidence available points to several factors that can increase a child's vulnerability to being sexually exploited. The following are typical **vulnerabilities in children prior to abuse**:

- Living in a chaotic or dysfunctional household (including parental substance use, domestic violence, parental mental health issues, parental criminality)
- History of abuse (including familial child sexual abuse, risk of forced marriage, risk of 'honour'-based violence, physical and emotional abuse and neglect)
- Recent bereavement or loss
- Gang association either through relatives, peers or intimate relationships (in cases of gang-associated CSE only)
- Attending college with young people who are sexually exploited
- Learning disabilities
- Unsure about their sexual orientation or unable to disclose sexual orientation to their families
- Friends with young people who are sexually exploited
- Homeless
- Lacking friends from the same age group
- Living in a gang neighbourhood
- Living in residential care
- Living in hostel, bed and breakfast accommodation or a foyer
- Low self-esteem or self-confidence
- Young carer

The following signs and behaviour are generally seen in children who are **already being sexually exploited**.

- Missing from home or care
- Physical injuries

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<sup>2</sup> The Office of the Children's Commissioner (2012) Interim Report - Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Group and Gangs.

- Drug or alcohol misuse
- Involvement in offending
- Repeat sexually-transmitted infections, pregnancy and terminations
- Absent from college
- Evidence of sexual bullying and/or vulnerability through the internet and/or social networking sites
- Estranged from their family
- Receipt of gifts from unknown sources
- Recruiting others into exploitative situations
- Poor mental health
- Self-harm
- Thoughts of or attempts at suicide

Evidence shows that any child displaying several vulnerabilities from the above lists should be considered to be at high risk of sexual exploitation. If you identify a child who you consider to be suffering from or a high risk of CSE, it is important that the Designated Safeguarding Lead is college is informed so that they can contact Children's Services.