

# **Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy**

**September 2016**



# Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

Contents	Page
1. Introduction	1
2. Purpose	1
3. Scope	2
4. Legal Framework	3
5. General Principles	3
6. Main Elements	4
7. Roles and Responsibilities	5
8. Allegations against staff	8
9. Supporting staff	8
10. Review	9
11. Access to policy	9
Appendix 1	10

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 South Thames College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and to ensuring that action is taken to support them if they are at risk of significant harm. The College requires all staff, governors, volunteers and those contracted to provide services to share this commitment.
- 1.2 The College requires all staff to demonstrate high standards in their management of risk and in the active protection of children and vulnerable adults from discrimination and avoidable harm. Staff are required to fulfil their our duties for young people under 18 in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016 and our duties towards vulnerable adults in accordance with the National framework of standards for safeguarding adults, ADSS 2005.
- 1.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with;
- Safeguarding Children And Vulnerable Adults: Procedures and Guidelines for Staff
  - The Anti-bullying Policy and Procedures
  - The Health, Wellbeing and Fitness to Study Procedures
  - Mental Health Policy and Procedures
  - Whistle Blowing Policy
  - Disability Disclosure and Confidentiality Procedures
  - Ethical Framework
  - Staff Code of Conduct
  - Prevent Strategy

## 2 Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework that informs procedures relating to the College's legal obligation to safeguard and protect children and vulnerable adults

who are suffering forms of abuse as defined in the Children Act 1989, through the application of principles outlined in the Children Act 2004, Children & Young Person's Act 2008 and Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Groups Act 2006.

- 2.2 This policy provides clear direction to all members of the college community to ensure child protection and vulnerable adult concerns, referrals and monitoring of actions are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that promote the welfare of the learners and support their needs e.g. learners are encouraged to talk and are listened to. The policy also makes commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures.
- 2.3 Accordingly, all staff receive a copy of this policy and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' May 2016 (Appendix 1).
- 2.4 The college recognises that the welfare of the learner is paramount and that all learners regardless of age, disability, gender, ethnic origin, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity have the right to protection from all types of harm or abuse. Working in partnership with children, vulnerable adults, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of individuals.

### **3 Scope**

- 3.1 There are three main elements to the College's Policy:
  - (i) Providing a safe environment for learners through the teaching and pastoral support offered
  - (ii) Supporting learners who make a disclosure of self-harm, harm from others or harm to others.
  - (iii) Ensuring that the College implements effective procedures:
    - for safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children and vulnerable adults
    - for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of self-harm, harm from or to others.
- 3.2 The policy applies to all learners, governors, staff and volunteers working for the College in all locations where education and training is delivered to children and vulnerable adults. It applies also to those situations where learners are in a workplace setting undertaking vocational training or studying for vocational qualifications. The policy also covers collaborative provision and staff employed directly by contractors supplying services on behalf of the College.
- 3.3 A 'child' is defined as a person aged up to 18. 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2016 recognises the additional vulnerabilities of 'looked after children' and care leavers. The Children Act 2004 also covers vulnerable adults with a disability up to the age of 25. A vulnerable adult is defined as "a person aged 18 or over who is, or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him/herself, or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation" (Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006).

## **4 Legal Framework**

- 4.1 South Thames College has a statutory duty to create a safe learning environment for all but specifically in relation to children and vulnerable adults under the Children Acts (1989, 2004); the Education Act 2002, 2011; the Further Education Regulations 2006 and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006). It is the intention of this policy, and supporting procedures, to ensure that appropriate action is taken to discharge these duties. Further reference sources used in producing this policy and supporting procedures include; 'The London Child Protection Procedures' 2016, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (March 2015)

## **5 General Principles**

- 5.1 The College has a statutory responsibility under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to:
- Safeguard and promote the welfare of children
  - Work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements are in place to identify, assess and support those who are suffering from harm.
- 5.2 The Statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2015) covers the legislative requirements and expectations on individual services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It also provides the framework of the Local Safeguarding Children Board's to monitor effectiveness of local services including Safeguarding arrangements in Colleges.
- 5.3 The statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2016 is issued under section 175 of the Education Act 2002, the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010 (as amended by SI 2012/2962) and the Education (Non Maintained Special Schools) (England) Regulations 2011. Schools and colleges must have regard to this guidance when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; along with non-statutory guidance 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' (March 2015) and 'Information Sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services' (March 2015).
- 5.4 Safeguarding also covers vulnerability to violent extremism. Since 2011 when the Government published the Prevent Strategy which is part of CONTEST, the United Kingdom's counter terrorism strategy, there has been an awareness of the specific need to safeguard children and young people from extremism and potential radicalisation. Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on colleges to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".
- 5.5 Safeguarding also encompasses issues such as learner health and safety, bullying, arrangements to meet medical need, provision of first aid, college security, access to and use of information technology.
- 5.6 The College's procedures for safeguarding mirror Wandsworth and Merton local Authority Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures and are based upon the London Child Protection Procedures and the Local Authorities Multi Agency Adult Protection Policy, Guidelines and procedures.

## **6 Main Elements**

There are four main elements to the College's Policy:

### **6.1 Prevention**

- Providing an environment in which children and adults feel safe, secure, valued and respected, feel confident and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties
- Creating an ethos where safeguarding is important and understood by everyone in the College
- Training and raising awareness of all staff of the need to safeguard children and vulnerable adults and making it clear it is everyone's responsibility to identify and report possible cases of self-harm, harm to others, or from others
- Ensuring that all adults within the College who have access to children, young people and vulnerable adults have been subject to appropriate checks using safer recruitment practices.

### **6.2 Protection**

- Establishing a systematic means of monitoring children and vulnerable adults, known or thought to be at risk of self-harm, harm to others or from others.
- Establishing structured procedures within the College to be followed by all members of the College community in cases of suspected self-harm, harm to others or from others.
- Developing effective working relationships with all other agencies involved in safeguarding learners
- Accessing the most appropriate support for learners who may have been harmed, or are at risk of self-harm, harm to others or from others.

### **6.3 Safe Recruitment**

- Ensuring that the College practices effective procedures for safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff, governors, contractors and volunteers to work with children and vulnerable adults
- Ensuring recruitment information includes a child protection statement regarding Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks
- Maintaining and reviewing a central record of DBS checks
- Complying with the duty of employers to inform the DBS of any individual (paid employee, volunteer or other) who poses a threat to children or vulnerable adults.

### **6.4 Records and monitoring**

- Ensuring staff are aware of the need to record any concerns held about the learner within the College, the need to keep safeguarding records separate to tutorial records and secure, and when they should be passed on to other agencies.

## **7 Roles and Responsibilities for Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults**

### **7.1 Responsibilities of the Corporation**

The Governing body will:

- Ensure the College's policy for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and associated procedures are in place and implemented to ensure the welfare of the learner cohort
- Receive reports from the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) Designated Lead for Safeguarding, identifying all training undertaken by members of the College, together with the number of learners who have safeguarding plans, or for whom we have safeguarding concerns
- Receive and consult with the Designated Officer from the relevant Local Authority over any allegation made against the Principal or Senior Post Holders and report any actions, as appropriate, to the Chair of Governors. This will not involve undertaking any form of investigation, but will require communication between parties and information to assist enquiries.

### **7.2 Responsibilities of the Principal**

The Principal will:

- Ensure the College's Policy for Safeguarding children, and vulnerable adults and associated procedures are in place and implemented to ensure the welfare of learners
- Delegate operational responsibility and implementation of procedures to the SLT Designated Lead for Safeguarding
- Be responsible for receiving allegations against members of staff and volunteers and passing them on to the Director of Human Resources
- Receive immediate notification of any changes affecting the policy or procedures and ensure the policy is reviewed and amended as appropriate
- If requested by the Designated Officer from the relevant Local Authority, and appropriate, become the point of contact for communication with regard to an individual safeguarding matter concerning an allegation against a member of staff.

### **7.3 Responsibilities of the Senior Leadership Team Designated Lead Safeguarding Officer**

The SLT Designated Lead Safeguarding Officer is the Vice Principal Curriculum and Learner Services. The Lead Safeguarding Officer will:

- Ensure that the safeguarding policies and procedures are fully implemented across the College and that staff fully understand their responsibilities and duties
- Chair a termly Safeguarding Board to receive and monitor progress made in achieving the College's Safeguarding Actions.
- Convene a termly Chair of Governors Safeguarding meeting to agree priority actions

- Ensure that resources are allocated to enable the Deputy Lead Safeguarding Officer, Centre Lead Safeguarding Officers and others as needed, to attend strategy discussion, interagency meetings and contribute to assessments
- Ensure that members of staff have received training in line with their roles
- Ensure that the College responds appropriately to new legislation including the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015) and has due regard to the need to safeguard young people against potential radicalisation
- Be responsible for receiving allegations against staff, contractors volunteers and passing them on to the Principal and Director of Human Resources
- Ensure that the Director of Human Resources records details of all allegations against staff, contractors and volunteers and consults with the Designated Officer from the relevant Local Authority as appropriate, in order to ensure that allegations are dealt with in an objective and transparent way
- Ensure that the Director of Human Resources carries out any agreed actions with the Designated Officer from the relevant Local Authority and reports on outcomes. This includes any contact and reporting to the Disclosure and Barring Service
- Collate and report on all safeguarding training undertaken by the Safeguarding Officers, and all other staff, together with the number of learners who have safeguarding plans, or for whom we have safeguarding concerns
- Ensure that all College staff, volunteers and contractors are aware of the College's policy for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and referral procedures, and know how to recognise any concerns
- Make known to every member of staff; temporary, contractors, volunteers and every governor the names of the Safeguarding Officers and their roles.
- Represent the College at the Local Safeguarding Children's Board Merton and disseminate to College safeguarding team.

#### **7.4 Responsibilities of the Deputy Lead Safeguarding Officer**

The Deputy Lead Safeguarding Officer will:

- Sample audit safeguarding practices across all campuses including the referral of cases externally and the centralised record of all safeguarding activity to ensure consistent and good practice
- Ensure that detailed and accurate written records are kept, even where that concern does not lead to an external referral
- Ensure that all such records are kept confidentially and securely
- Act as a focal point for staff concerns and liaison with other agencies and professionals
- Lead a team of Centre Lead Safeguarding Officers who act as points of contact for staff on child and vulnerable adult protection issues. Ensure that Safeguarding Officers receive regular appropriate training at a minimum of once every year
- Attend appropriate training as required to keep up to date with local and national issues and in fulfilling the role of Deputy Lead Safeguarding Officer
- Lead on the induction and refresher training for all staff
- Provide guidance to Centre Lead Safeguarding Officers
- Attend the Chair of Governors termly safeguarding meetings and the Safeguarding Board and contribute to the Safeguarding Actions.

- Represent the College at the Local Safeguarding Children's Board Wandsworth and disseminate to the College safeguarding team.

## 7.5 Responsibilities of the Centre Lead Safeguarding Officers

The Centre Lead Safeguarding Officers have a responsibility to:

- Act as a focal point for staff concerns & Safeguarding Referrals
- Oversee the referral of cases of suspected self-harm, harm to others or from others or allegations to the relevant investigating agency
- Monitor safeguarding practices across relevant campus including the referral of cases externally on a weekly basis to ensure consistent and good practice
- Audit Safeguarding referrals and Central Register on a monthly basis to achieve the best outcomes for learners
- Ensure that Safeguarding Officers at each centre receive appropriate training at least once every year.
- Attend appropriate training as required to keep up to date with local and national issues and in fulfilling the role of a Centre Lead Safeguarding Officer.
- Provide supervision sessions at each centre for Safeguarding Officers.
- Attend the Safeguarding Board and contribute to Safeguarding Actions.
- Attend supervision sessions as agreed with Lead or Deputy Lead Safeguarding Officer.

## 7.6 Responsibilities of the Safeguarding Officers

The Safeguarding Officers have a responsibility to:

- Act as a point of contact for staff on child and vulnerable adult protection issues and provide feedback to staff to ensure learning and improved outcomes for children and vulnerable adults
- Act as a point of contact for children and vulnerable adults studying in the College on issues relating to safeguarding
- Know how to make an appropriate referral
- Provide completed Safeguarding Referral Form to the relevant Centre Lead Safeguarding Officer, or in their absence the Deputy Lead Safeguarding Officer immediately on an initial concern arising.
- Upload all Safeguarding documents, including the Referral Form to the Safeguarding area and complete the Central Register.
- Liaise with Social Services and Children's Services in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures.
- Attend appropriate training at least once every year as required by the role
- Participate in supervision sessions
- Contribute to Safeguarding Actions.

## 7.7 Responsibilities of College Managers

All College Managers have a responsibility to:

- Ensure that staff in their areas are informed of the policy and procedures and that their areas are managed with due regard to the College's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. In the case of Curriculum Managers this includes the delivery of a curriculum and tutorial arrangements that support the personal development, behaviour and welfare of learners.
- The Head of School and Curriculum Managers for Progression Pathway courses have a specific responsibility in relation to vulnerable adults enrolled.

## **7.8 Responsibility of all Staff Members**

All Staff have a responsibility to:

- Be alert to signs of self-harm, harm to others or from others, and report concerns immediately to a Safeguarding Officer using the Safeguarding Referral Form
- Ensure they do not promise confidentiality regarding information which might compromise the individuals safety or well-being or that of another
- Undertake appropriate training in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults as part of staff induction and as mandatory training at least once every two years.
- Read and refer to 'Keeping children safe in education' May 2016 (Appendix 1).
- Read and refer to Safeguarding Briefings published throughout the academic year

## **8. Allegations against staff**

- 8.1 Any suspicion, allegation or actual abuse of a child or vulnerable adult by a College employee, governor, volunteer or contractor must be reported to the Lead Safeguarding Officer or the Deputy Lead Safeguarding Officer who will report the matter in confidence to the Director of Human Resources immediately. If within two hours of the initial concern arising it has not been possible to contact the Director of Human Resources, it must be reported to the Principal or in their absence the Duty Principal. Staff can also report allegations against staff using the College's whistleblowing policy.

## **9. Supporting staff**

- 9.1 The College recognises that any staff member who is supporting a learner who has suffered or is at risk of harm to self, others or from others, may find the situation stressful and/or upsetting.

The College will support staff by providing an opportunity to talk through concerns with the Centre Lead Safeguarding Officer or other lead officers. In addition, staff can seek support from the College's Employee Assistance Programme which is an independent, free, confidential service available 24-hours a day, 7 days a week by telephoning 0800 282 193.

## 10. Review

10.1 The policy will be subject to annual review. The review will be initiated by the Vice Principal Curriculum and Learner Services.

## 11. Access to the policy

The policy will be published on the College Intranet and website.

<b>Produced by:</b>	<b>Bev Giarraputo Vice Principal Curriculum and Learner Services</b>
<b>Date Reviewed:</b>	<b>August 2015</b>
<b>Approved by:</b>	<b>SLT</b>
<b>Date Approved:</b>	<b>September 2016</b>
<b>Review by:</b>	<b>August 2017</b>

## Appendix 1 - Keeping Children Safe in Education (May 2016) Part one: Safeguarding information for all staff

### Part one: Safeguarding information for all staff

#### What school and college staff should know and do

##### A child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding

1. Schools and colleges and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is described in statutory guidance Working together to safeguard children.
2. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child.
3. No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, **everyone** who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.
4. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as: protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
5. Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

##### The role of school and college staff

6. School and college staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, and prevent concerns from escalating.
7. **All** school and college staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
8. Each school and college should have a designated safeguarding lead who will provide support to staff members to carry out their safeguarding duties and who will liaise closely with other services such as children's social care.
9. **All** school and college staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help.<sup>3</sup> Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage

---

<sup>3</sup> Detailed information on early help can be found in Chapter 1 of Working together to safeguard children

years. In the first instance staff should discuss early help requirements with the designated safeguarding lead. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment.

10. **Any staff member** who has a concern about a child's welfare should follow the referral processes set out in paragraphs 21-27. Staff may be required to support social workers and other agencies following any referral.

11. The Teachers' Standards 2012 state that teachers, including headteachers, should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.<sup>4</sup>

### **What school and college staff need to know**

12. **All** staff members should be aware of systems within their school or college which support safeguarding and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. This should include:

- the child protection policy;
- the staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct); and
- the role of the designated safeguarding lead.

Copies of policies and a copy of Part one of this document (Keeping children safe in education) should be provided to staff at induction.

13. **All** staff members should receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated. In addition all staff members should receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

14. **All** staff should be aware of the early help process, and understand their role in it. This includes identifying emerging problems, liaising with the designated safeguarding lead, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment and, in some cases, acting as the lead professional in undertaking an early help assessment.

15. **All** staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989<sup>5</sup> that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> The Teachers' Standards apply to: trainees working towards QTS; all teachers completing their statutory induction period (newly qualified teachers [NQTs]); and teachers in maintained schools, including maintained special schools, who are subject to the Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012.

<sup>5</sup> Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need in their area for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Local authorities undertake assessments of the needs of individual children to determine which services to provide and what action to take. This can include:

16. **All** staff should know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused or neglected. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality whilst at the same time liaising with relevant professionals such as the designated safeguarding lead and children's social care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about an allegation- as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

### **What school and college staff should look out for**

17. **All** school and college staff members should be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection. Types of abuse and neglect, and examples of safeguarding issues are described in paragraphs 35-44 of this guidance.

18. Departmental advice: What to do if you are worried a child is being abused- Advice for practitioners provides more information on understanding and identifying abuse and neglect. Examples of potential signs of abuse and neglect are highlighted throughout the advice and will be particularly helpful for school and college staff. The NSPCC website also provides useful additional information on types of abuse and what to look out for.

19. Staff members working with children 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 **best** interests of the child.

20. Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect. If staff members are unsure they should always speak to the designated safeguarding lead.

### **What school and college staff should do if they have concerns about a child**

21. If staff members have any **concerns** about a child (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger - see paragraph 28) they will need to decide what action to take. Where possible, there should be a conversation with the designated safeguarding lead to agree a course of action, although any staff member can make a referral to children's social care. Other options could include referral to specialist services or early help services and should be made in accordance with the referral threshold set by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

22. If anyone other than the designated safeguarding lead makes the referral they should inform the designated safeguarding lead, as soon as possible. The local authority should make a decision within one working day of a referral being made about what

---

Section 17- A child in need is defined under section 17(10) of the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health or development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled.

Section 47- If the local authority have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm they have a duty to make enquires under section 47 to enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare. This duty also applies if a child is subject to an emergency protection order (under section 44 of the Children Act 1989) or in police protective custody under section 46 of the Children Act 1989.

Ⓔ Detailed information on statutory assessments can be found in Chapter 1 of Working together to safeguard children

course of action they are taking and should let the referrer know the outcome. Staff should follow up on a referral should that information not be forthcoming. The online tool [Reporting child abuse to your local council](#) directs you to your local children's social care contact number.

23. See page 10 for a flow chart setting out the process for staff when they have concerns about a child.

24. If after a referral the child's situation does not appear to be improving the designated safeguarding lead (or the person that made the referral) should press for re-consideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.

25. If early help is appropriate the designated safeguarding lead should support the staff member in liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate.

26. If early help and or other support is appropriate the case should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care if the child's situation doesn't appear to be improving.

27. If a **teacher**<sup>7</sup>, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of Female Genital Mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 the **teacher** must report this to the police. See Annex A for further details.

### **What school and college staff should do if a child is in danger or at risk of harm**

28. **If, a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.** Anyone can make a referral. Where referrals are not made by the designated safeguarding lead the designated safeguarding lead should be informed, as soon as possible, that a referral has been made. [Reporting child abuse to your local council](#) directs you to your local children' social care contact number.

### **Record keeping**

29. All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing. If in doubt about recording requirements staff should discuss with the designated safeguarding lead.

### **Why is all of this important?**

30. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. Research and Serious Case Reviews have repeatedly

---

<sup>7</sup> Section 5B(11) of the FGM Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) provides the definition for the term 'teacher': "teacher" means – (a) in relation to England, a person within section 141A(1) of the Education Act 2002 (persons employed or engaged to carry out teaching work at schools and other institutions in England).

shown the dangers of failing to take effective action. Poor practice includes: failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect, poor record keeping, failing to listen to the views of the child, failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve, sharing information too slowly and a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.<sup>8</sup>

### **What school and college staff should do if they have concerns about another staff member**

31. If staff members have concerns about another staff member then this should be referred to the headteacher or principal. Where there are concerns about the headteacher or principal this should be referred to the chair of governors, chair of the management committee or proprietor of an independent school as appropriate. In the event of allegations of abuse being made against the headteacher, where the headteacher is also the sole proprietor of an independent school, allegations should be reported directly to the designated officer(s) at the local authority. Staff may consider discussing any concerns with the school's designated safeguarding lead and make any referral via them. Full details can be found in Part four of this guidance.

### **What school or college staff should do if they have concerns about safeguarding practices within the school or college**

32. All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school or college's safeguarding regime and that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

33. Appropriate whistleblowing procedures, which are suitably reflected in staff training and staff behaviour policies, should be in place for such concerns to be raised with the school or college's senior leadership team.

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

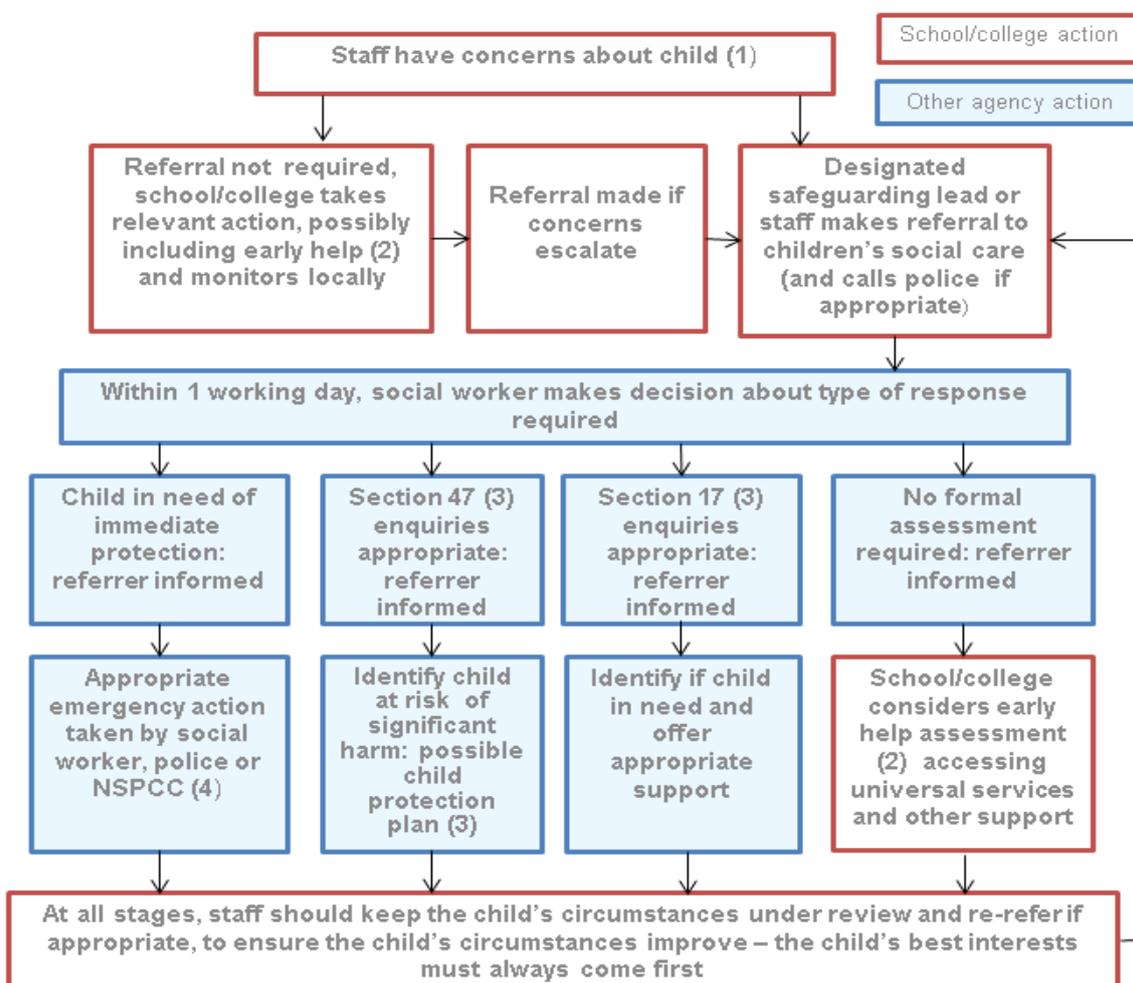
- General guidance can be found at- Advice on whistleblowing
- The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and Email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).<sup>9</sup>

---

8 New learning from serious case reviews: a two year report for 2009-2011 (**We will update with new evidence if it is available before September**)

9 Alternatively, staff can write to: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), Weston House, 42 Curtain, Road, London EC2A 3NH.

## Actions where there are concerns about a child



1. In cases which also involve an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part four of this guidance.
2. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help, an early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Chapter one of Working together to safeguard children provides detailed guidance on the early help process.
3. Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. This can include s17 assessments of children in need and s47 assessments of children at risk of significant harm. Full details are in Chapter one of Working together to safeguard children.
4. This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

## Types of abuse and neglect

35. **All school and 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.**

36. **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 another child or children.

37. **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.

38. **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.

39. **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.

40. **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.

## Specific safeguarding issues

41. **All** staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues- some of which are listed below. Staff should be aware that behaviours linked to the likes of drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put children in danger.

42. **All** staff should be aware 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. Staff should be clear as to the school or college's policy and procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse.

43. Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues. For example information for schools and colleges can be found on the TES, MindEd and the NSPCC websites. School and college staff can access government guidance as required on the issues listed below via GOV.UK and other government websites:

- bullying including cyberbullying
- children missing education – and Annex A
- child missing from home or care
- child sexual exploitation (CSE) – and Annex A
- domestic violence
- drugs
- fabricated or induced illness
- faith abuse
- female genital mutilation (FGM) – and Annex A
- forced marriage- and Annex A
- gangs and youth violence
- gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- hate
- mental health
- missing children and adults strategy
- private fostering

- preventing radicalisation – and Annex A
- relationship abuse
- sexting
- trafficking

44. Annex A contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues. School leaders and those staff that work directly with children should read the annex.