

**SAFEGUARDING, CHILD
PROTECTION AND
PREVENT POLICY**

Safeguarding, Child Protection and Prevent Policy

Policy Owner: Board
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 Applicable to students: Yes/No
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SLT		
Unions		
Students		
Employees		
Employers/Stakeholders		

Any Associated Documentation, for Reference:

See paragraph 3.3

ELT SIGN-OFF: Marie Haworth, Vice Principal Quality, Teaching, Learning & Learner Support



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1. Context and Rationale

1.1 Policy Statement

Preston College recognises its statutory and moral duty to promote and secure the physical, mental and emotional welfare of all its learners, including work-based learners, adopting a risk-based approach to safeguarding, which assures the highest possible level of safety for learners and the most positive impact on learning. We recognise that **no single professional can have a full picture** of a young person's needs and circumstances. If children, young people 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. This policy applies to all learners, staff, governors, volunteers, contractors and visitors.

1.2 Privacy Statement

Preston College recognises the importance of proactive information sharing between professionals and local agencies in order to effectively meet learners' needs and identify any need for Early Help. In implementing this policy and associated procedures, and considering the above, the College will ensure that any personal data relating to the application of this policy will be obtained, processed and destroyed in line with the principles outlined in the UK General Data Protection Regulations and supplementary enacting Data Protection legislation. The College is committed to being transparent about how it collects and processes the personal data of its learners, employees, visitors and other stakeholders to meet its data protection obligations. The College will ensure all processing is lawful, fair and transparent and individuals are informed of the legal basis for processing their data. Further information relating to the College's compliance of the UK General Data Protection Regulations can be found in the College's Data Protection Policy.

'The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.' KCSIE (2024)

1.3 Policy Aims

This policy sets out a clear and consistent framework for delivering the College's responsibilities in line with safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance. It will be achieved by:

- Providing a safe, caring and welcoming learning environment where the welfare of our learners is paramount, and in which all learners are respected and valued, and are supported in making excellent progress in their learning, and achieving the best outcomes.
- Safeguard all College learners, including those studying on college grounds, in the workplace (work-based learners and those undertaking work experience) and other external facilities or venues.
- Assuring safe staff recruitment procedures (including volunteers) built around DBS checks, thorough scrutiny of references and ongoing monitoring and review of practice.
- Giving clear directions to staff, volunteers and visitors that safeguarding is **everyone's responsibility** and it is our legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all learners at our college.
- Maintaining and explicitly promoting those procedures, which help to identify suspected cases of all forms of abuse or neglect, report and act upon them, in accordance with the Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool and Lancashire Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP) <https://panlancshirescb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/contents.html>
- Providing appropriate support to learners or staff who have been the victim of abuse, neglect, exploitation or hate crime. This includes demonstrating a zero-tolerance approach to Sexual Violence or Sexual Harassment in any form.
- Contributing to effective partnership working between all those in the wider community involved in providing contextual safeguarding services.

- Working with those partners to provide a co-ordinated offer of Early Help when the additional needs of young people are identified, to ensure, where possible, that they grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- The College embraces its external partnership working and sees this as a vital source of support and guidance, as well as a means to assuring excellence in practice. The external partners that we work most closely with are Children’s Social Care, Adult Social Care, Children and Families Well-being Service, Mental Health Services, Lancashire County Council, Preston City Council and various police departments, including the Prevent team. We also work closely with a number of Third Sector organisations who offer specific support for emerging safeguarding concerns.

1.4 Policy Principles

- To provide for an environment where safeguarding is thoroughly understood, embraced by all members of the College and applied with a high degree of consistency.
- To assure that College resources in safeguarding are focused within a risk management approach which supports those groups identified as being particularly vulnerable.
- To assure compliance with the Equality Act 2010, recognising the potentially relatively high risk of some learners with particular protected characteristics.
- To support the College’s Teaching, Learning and Assessment strategy by promoting positive behavioural attitudes and appropriate British Values, to create an environment in which students feel safe, confident, able to make excellent progress in their learning and therefore become the most employable.
- To fulfil our obligation under the Prevent Duty (updated December 2023) to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.
- The Policy is available on the College’s website, and will be updated and approved by the Corporation Board on an annual basis.

This policy is part of a suite of policies and procedures which have a direct impact on safeguarding and child protection. All of these policies and procedures, along with a range of further resources detailing specific safeguarding issues, are available for staff via the Safeguarding Portal.

1.5 Safeguarding Ethos

Preston College recognises that high self-esteem, confidence, and clear lines of communication with trusted adults helps all young people feel safe, especially those at risk of, or suffering abuse. We will therefore ensure that:

- ALL staff, volunteers and governors contribute to an ethos where young people feel secure and safe
- ALL young people have opportunities to communicate safeguarding concerns, know that they will be listened to, their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon
- ALL young people’s wishes, feelings and views will be taken into account when decisions are being made about how to keep them safe
- ALL staff will contribute to providing a curriculum which will equip young people with the skills they need to stay safe and be able to communicate when they do not feel safe.

1.6 Equality and Diversity

This policy and associated procedure(s) will be implemented in accordance with our policy on equality and diversity, and decisions/actions taken in relation to a potential safeguarding or child protection incident will not be influenced by the background or situation of any persons involved. Each case will be dealt with on its own merits.

2. Definitions

The purpose of this Safeguarding, Child Protection and Prevent policy is to ensure every learner and work-based learner at Preston College is safe and protected from harm. The Department for Education (DfE) 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2024), states safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge;
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online;
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Under the legislation a child is classed as a person under the age of 18 (in this policy they are referred to as young people). The College has also included adults, who might be deemed vulnerable because of their circumstances in the scope of this policy.

Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as **child on child abuse** and can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice based and discriminatory bullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; upskirting; initiating/hazing type violence and rituals; abuse in intimate personal relationships between children; consensual or non-consensual sharing of nudes or semi-nude images or videos, or causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.

For the purposes of this policy, "**sexual violence**" refers to the following offences as defined under the Sexual Offences Act 2003:

- **Rape:** A person (A) commits an offence of rape if they intentionally penetrate the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with their penis, B does not consent to the penetration, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- **Assault by penetration:** A person (A) commits an offence if they intentionally penetrate the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of their body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- **Sexual assault:** A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if they intentionally touch another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- **Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent:** A person (A) commits an offence if they intentionally cause another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.

For the purposes of this policy, "**sexual harassment**" refers to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that occurs online or offline, inside or outside of College. Sexual harassment is likely to violate a learner's dignity, make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, and create a hostile, offensive, or sexualised environment. If left unchallenged, sexual harassment can create an atmosphere that normalises inappropriate behaviour and may lead to sexual violence. **Sexual harassment can include, but is not limited to:**

- Sexual comments, such as sexual stories, lewd comments, sexual remarks about clothes and appearance, and sexualised name-calling.
- Sexual "jokes" and taunting.

- Physical behaviour, such as deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes, and displaying images of a sexual nature.
- Online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. This includes:
 - The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.
 - Sharing unwanted explicit content.
 - Upskirting.
 - Sexualised online bullying.
 - Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including on social media.
 - Sexual exploitation, coercion, and threats.

Hazing is any activity expected of someone joining a group, or participating in a group, that humiliates, degrades or risks emotional and/or physical harm, abuses or endangers them regardless of the person's willingness to participate.

Upskirting refers to the act, as identified the Voyeurism Act 2019, of taking a picture or video under another person's clothing, without their knowledge or consent, with the intention of viewing that person's genitals or buttocks, with or without clothing, where the purpose is to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. Upskirting is a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos, colloquially known as "**sexting**" and "**youth produced imagery**", is defined as the sharing between learners of sexually explicit content, including indecent imagery. **Indecent imagery** is defined as an image which meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Nude or semi-nude sexual posing
- A child touching themselves in a sexual way
- Any sexual activity involving a child
- Someone hurting a child sexually
- Sexual activity that involves animals.

Consent is defined as having the freedom and capacity to choose to engage in sexual activity. Consent may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another and can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. A person only consents to a sexual activity if they agree by choice to that activity and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice. Children under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity. The age of consent is 16 in the UK.

3. Law and Guidance

3.1 Statutory Guidance Documents

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to:

- **Education Act 2002:** Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires local education authorities and the governors of Further Education (FE) colleges to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023:** guides education establishments of their role within inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This is **the government's statutory guidance for all organisations and agencies** who work with, or carry out work related to, children in the United Kingdom.
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024:** The Department for Education (DfE) has updated the statutory safeguarding and child protection guidance for schools and colleges in England, Keeping children safe in education. This guidance sets out what schools and colleges in England must do to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people under the age of 18.

- **Guidance for Safer Working Practice 2022:** for adults who work with Children and Young People in Education forms the basis of staff codes of conduct.
- **The Children Act 1989 and 2004:**
- **The Prevent Duty:** The Prevent duty is **the duty in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Section 26)** has placed a further statutory duty on all colleges to “have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This duty has been revised under Section 29 of the CTSA 2015, and came into force on **31 December 2023**.
- **Female Genital Mutilation Act (FGM) 2003** (as inserted by the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a specific legal duty on teachers to report to the police if they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 years.
- **Sexual Offences Act 2003**
- **Equality Act 2010**
- **Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015**
- **Domestic Abuse Act 2021**
- **Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006**
- **DfE Standards for Filtering and Monitoring in Schools and Colleges (Mar 2023)**
- **Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022**

3.2 Relevant Non-statutory Guidance Documents

- DfE (2015) ‘What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused’
- DfE (2024) ‘Information sharing’ – advice for practitioners
- DfE (2017) ‘Child sexual exploitation’ – definition and guidance for practitioners
- DfE (2024) ‘Recruit teachers from overseas
- UKCIS (2024) ‘Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people’

3.3 Other relevant College policies, procedures and key documents

This policy operates in conjunction with the following College policies, procedures and other key documents:

- Administering medicines procedures and guidance
- Admissions policy
- Anti-Bullying & Harassment policy
- Critical Safeguarding Incident procedure
- Data Protection policy
- Death of learner procedure
- External Speakers procedure
- External Support Worker procedure
- Fitness to Practice procedure
- Fitness to Study procedure
- Health & Safety policy
- IT Acceptable Use policy
- Managing Allegations of a safeguarding nature (Staff)
- Mobile device security guide and code of practice
- Prevent Duty risk assessment and action plan
- Quiet Contemplation rooms – acceptable use statement
- Recruitment procedure – Employees and Casual Workers
- Remote and Blended Learning Procedure
- Role description for Link Governor for Safeguarding and Prevent
- SEND policy
- Staff Behaviour Code

- Student Positive Behaviour Framework
- Whistleblowing policy and procedure

All of these policies, procedures and other key documents, along with a range of further resources detailing specific safeguarding issues, are available for staff via the Safeguarding Portal.

4. Roles and Responsibilities for Safeguarding and Prevent

Preston College is committed to providing the relevant personnel with clear and explicit roles and responsibilities to ensure accountability when safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults. The **Board** holds the overall responsibility for ensuring that the College has policies, procedures and structures in place to support and promote the safety and wellbeing of all learners in its care. In practical terms this means:

4.1 All staff (full time, part time, permanent, temporary, paid or unpaid) have a responsibility to:

- Demonstrate an understanding that safeguarding is **everyone's** responsibility, and operate within a 'child centred approach and trauma informed'.
- Behave in accordance with the Staff Behaviour Code.
- Ensure they have completed the appropriate level of Safeguarding and Prevent mandatory training and to update annually or biennially in accordance with the cycle. This includes compliance with the requirement for all staff to read Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024).
- Be aware of the College's procedures that support safeguarding, including all policies, internal reporting procedures, information and training provided.
- Be aware of the role and identity of the DSL and deputy DSLs and seek their advice if required.
- Ensure that they have an active login to My Concern in order to record safeguarding concerns appropriately and in a timely manner
- Respond sensitively and appropriately to any disclosures or allegations of abuse, neglect, sexual violence/harassment, hate crime, exploitation or potential radicalisation, and to inform the Safeguarding team about any concerns as soon as possible, using the College's designated referral systems.
- Inform the Safeguarding team if staff have concerns about other staff, and not to deal with them personally. The reporting system **Confide** has been introduced for this purpose, and all staff have a login.
- Provide effective supervision and take steps to maintain an awareness of how devices are being used by learners, reporting to the DSL if they witness or suspect any unsuitable material has been accessed. The appropriate level of awareness will be provided via the annual safeguarding training.
- Maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality and advise learners that the Safeguarding team must be made aware of any disclosures relating to Safeguarding or Prevent issues and circumstances where confidentiality cannot be kept.
- If called upon, act as an appropriate adult for any young person under the age of 18 who is required to be spoken to by the police at College. This includes supporting the young person to answer any questions and give information, as well as ensuring that the police act properly and fairly.
- Encourage a culture of listening to young people, take them seriously and act on any concerns to ensure that young people are reassured and adequately supported to achieve the best possible outcomes.
- Understand and contribute to the assessment processes for providing Early Help and intervention.
- Be fully aware of the importance of **mental health in relation to safeguarding** and that all staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a young person or vulnerable adult has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

All staff have been made aware that inappropriate behaviour towards learners is unacceptable and that their conduct must be beyond reproach at all times. Appropriate conduct in a variety of situations is outlined in the Staff Behaviour Code which all staff have access to via the Safeguarding Portal and mandatory training site.

4.2 The Board has a duty to:

- Ensure that the College has effective procedures and policies which are consistent with legal guidelines and local needs, and complement the College's responsibility under the Equality Act, and that these policies and procedures support the delivery of a robust whole College approach to safeguarding.
- Ensure that **all** governors receive appropriate Safeguarding and Prevent training upon their induction and that this training is updated regularly in order to equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge
- Ensure that the College has appropriate IT filtering and monitoring systems, in line with the DfE Standards of Filtering and Monitoring in Schools and Colleges, in place to limit learners' exposure to online harms
- Consider the College Safeguarding Policy on an annual basis, and ensure that it is available publicly.
- Ensure that the College's Prevent Strategy complies with the updated Prevent Duty, as set out in the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015.
- Ensure that the College operates 'safer recruitment' practice including DBS checks and the keeping and updating of the Single Central Record.
- Ensure that allegations of abuse against members of staff are managed within the local authority procedures, and supervised by the Designated Officer (LADO).
- Ensure that all staff undergo regular safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring).
- Ensure that their behaviour, that of managers and staff, the curriculum and policies exemplify British values.

The Board has a specific role should a safeguarding allegation be made against the Principal. (Refer to College's Disciplinary Policy).

Governors have a responsibility to support and oversee the work of the Safeguarding Committee. This is effected by the Quality and Standards Committee and the Board receiving regular Safeguarding updates. The Board also receives an annual safeguarding report.

To support Board oversight, the College also has a Link Governor for Safeguarding and Prevent. The Link Governor is responsible for working with the Strategic Lead for Safeguarding (SLS) and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as a 'critical friend' to ensure that:

- The College has safeguarding policies and procedures, which are consistent with both national and local procedures
- The Board is regularly briefed on safeguarding matters and a safeguarding annual report is provided to the Board
- The DfE Standards for Filtering and Monitoring (March 2023) are met

The Safeguarding and Prevent Link Governor, will be briefed ahead of each Full Board meeting by the LDSL and DSL for a standing item on Safeguarding.

4.3 Principal and Chief Executive responsibilities:

- To ensure that the SLS and DSL are provided with the appropriate support, funding, resources and time to fulfil their responsibilities that all children, young people, and vulnerable adults in the College are suitably safeguarded and prevented from being drawn into terrorism.
- To ensure that appropriate procedures for Safeguarding and Prevent are in place, adhered to and reviewed on a regular basis, and that these procedures take into account local guidance including Lancashire's Continuum of Need, Risk Management and Thresholds guidance.
- To ensure that the College actively engages in inter-agency working with other partners, as appropriate, including police and local authority Prevent Co-ordinators in order to comply with the Duty.
- To ensure the procurement of online filtering and monitoring systems; the documentation and rationale for decisions on what is blocked; reviewing of the effectiveness of the provision and that staff adhere to their responsibilities under the DfE Standards.
- To ensure that all practice and procedures within the College operate with the **best** interests of the young person/vulnerable adult at their heart.
- To ensure all allegations made against staff are thoroughly investigated by suitably trained staff, and reported to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer).
- To make any decisions relating to suspension of staff after taking advice from those involved.
- To be responsible to the Board for any actions taken.
- To make any decision relating to referrals to the police for staff allegations.

4.4 Strategic Lead for Safeguarding (SLS) responsibilities:

The Strategic Lead for Safeguarding with overall responsibilities for Safeguarding and Prevent issues is:

Marie Haworth
Vice Principal: Quality Teaching, Learning & Learner Support
Telephone: 01772 225691
mhaworth@preston.ac.uk

The Strategic Lead for Safeguarding is responsible for the following:

- To lead and chair the Safeguarding Committee, ensuring that there are policies, procedures and systems in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of all young people and vulnerable adults, and to prevent them from being drawn into terrorism.
- To ensure the referral of staff allegations to the LADO.
- To ensure Preston College's procedures stay in line with the DfE and local Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP) guidelines for safeguarding.
- To ensure the updating of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and to monitor the implementation of the policy.
- To ensure all staff receive effective training in Safeguarding and Prevent and are aware of the College Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. This will be delivered as follows:
 - Online Safeguarding must be completed on the first day of employment and will be updated annually thereafter
 - Completion of the appropriate online Home Office Prevent training package, with a biennial update
 - Regular updates are made available through Staff Development activities and briefings
- To report to and advise the Board on safeguarding issues and to ensure termly meetings are held with the Link Governor for Safeguarding and Prevent to advise on safeguarding and filtering and monitoring issues.
- To ensure that parents or carers of young people or vulnerable adults within the College are aware of the College's Safeguarding and Prevent Policy.

- To be responsible for reporting deficiencies in procedure or policy identified by the Lancashire Children’s Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP) or other recognised safeguarding body to the Governing Body at the earliest opportunity.
- To ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) fulfils his/her responsibilities for Safeguarding and Prevent and to ensure that all children, young people, and vulnerable adults in the College are suitably safeguarded.
- To ensure that learners are safe online by ensuring that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place and working effectively, and that staff have an appropriate level of awareness in order to oversee learner usage and report any concerns to the safeguarding team.
- To ensure that an awareness of safeguarding and the importance of British values are embedded in the curriculum for all learners, and demonstrated by all staff.
- To ensure a process is in place whereby all External Speakers/Organisation who wish to hire the premises, are subject to a robust vetting process, in line with the requirements of the Prevent Duty.

4.5 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) responsibilities:

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Single Point of Contact for Prevent and Children Looked After (CLA) is:

Tina Southworth
 Student Services Manager (Designated Safeguarding and Prevent Lead)
 Telephone: 01772 225658 Mobile: 07919 628570
tsouthworth@preston.ac.uk

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for the following:

- To report to the Strategic Lead for Safeguarding, to inform them of high-risk safeguarding issues, especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations, as well as sharing risk assessments for potential learners with a criminal history
- To support the Strategic Lead in the annual review of policies, procedures and systems to promote the welfare of all young people and vulnerable adults, and to ensure that they are available publicly.
- To ensure all staff receive effective training in Safeguarding and Prevent and are aware of the College Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. This will be delivered as follows:
 - Online Safeguarding must be completed on the first day of employment and will be updated annually thereafter
 - Completion of the appropriate online Home Office Prevent training package, with a biennial update
 - Regular updates are made available to staff via Staff Development activities and briefings
- To provide advice and support to staff and volunteers on issues relating to Safeguarding and Prevent, encouraging and promoting a trauma informed culture of listening to young people.
- To consider relevant information, including liaison with other relevant staff members as necessary, to make Safeguarding and Prevent referrals to other agencies, where thresholds have been met.
- To monitor and act on any online filtering and monitoring reports, in particular those which meet safeguarding thresholds and to liaise with the relevant IT staff to make regular checks to the systems
- To work alongside the Director of Human Resources to manage and act on the low level concerns and self-reports recorded on Confide following its implementation in January 2024
- To take overall responsibility as the Designated Teacher for all Children Looked After, facilitating the termly Personal Education Plan (PEP) process, liaising with the Virtual School as appropriate, and ensuring that staff are aware of the safeguarding issues and vulnerabilities associated with CLA.
- To contribute to the assessment processes for providing Early Help and intervention, and to lead on any Prevent referrals to the Channel process.
- To deal with individual safeguarding cases, including contributing to Strategy Discussions, Strategy Meetings, Initial and Review Child Protection Conferences, Core Group Meetings and other Child Protection meetings.

- To attend Child Protection meetings, produce and present reports, liaise with staff, work with parents, work with other agencies and ensure the voice of the young person is evidenced throughout these processes.
- To refer, and contribute to, the Child in Need process for young people who are at Level 3 of the Continuum of Need. This includes attending the appropriate meetings, producing reports and ensuring the voice of the young person is evidenced throughout.
- To keep updated in Safeguarding, Prevent and inter-agency working as required by the Lancashire Children’s Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP) and attend refresher training at least every 2 years.
- To attend appropriate training in order to have an understanding of the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children’s behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcome.
- To liaise with the local authority and work with other agencies, as a point of contact for Preston College, in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) and Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024), and to signpost appropriately where Early Help is required.
- To inform partner organisations, including schools, HEI’s and sub-contractors, of any safeguarding concerns relating to their learners studying at Preston College, via direct contact with the relevant organisation’s Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- To keep secure and accurate records of all Safeguarding and Channel interventions, sharing information on a ‘need to know’ basis only and paying appropriate attention to the requirements of UK GDPR, as well as the need to pass on safeguarding records to other educational establishments.
- To ensure staff in College are aware of, and policies reflect, an understanding of specific issues such as mental health, child on child abuse (including Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment), Hate Crime and safeguarding children with disabilities, special educational needs and young carers.
- To have an understanding of the unique risks associated with online safety and have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep learners safe whilst they are online at college
- To ensure that learners are safe online by ensuring that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place and working effectively, and that staff have an appropriate level of awareness in order to oversee learner usage and report any concerns to the safeguarding team.
- To contribute to the College’s Safeguarding Learners Committee.

4.6 Safeguarding and Prevent Officers (Deputy DSLs) responsibilities:

The Safeguarding and Prevent Officers will work alongside the DSL and act as a deputy for all the above responsibilities. These are:

Sarah Nixon
Safeguarding and Prevent Officer
Telephone: 01772 225505
Mobile: 07795 527468
sarahnixon@preston.ac.uk

Gemma Moon
Safeguarding and Prevent Officer
Telephone: 01772 225141
Mobile: 07549 035577
gmoon@preston.ac.uk

In the absence of the DSL and Safeguarding and Prevent Officers, other staff have been trained to deputise as appropriate, to ensure a continuity of senior supervision of the safeguarding function. These are currently:

Kathleen Fawcett
Head of Learner Support (SEND)
Telephone: 01772 225328
kfawcett@preston.ac.uk

Debbie Ireland
Head of Curriculum (14 – 19)
Telephone: 01772 225600
direland@preston.ac.uk

Kirsty Braithwaite
Support Lead for Adult, Apps & HE
Telephone: 01772 225915

Kate Morris
Pastoral Manager
Telephone: 01772 225503

kbraithwaite@preston.ac.uk

David Elliott
Recruitment & Progression Manager (14-19)
Telephone: 01772 225774
delliott@preston.ac.uk

kmorris@preston.ac.uk

Daniel Crumblehulme
Employer Engagement Manager
Telephone: 01772 225743
dcrumblehulme@preston.ac.uk

Annette Upton
Learning Support Assistant
Telephone: 01772 225018
aupton@preston.ac.uk

4.7 Director of Human Resources responsibilities:

- To seek advice from Principal and Chief Executive, LADO and DSL when HR procedures may be commenced.
- To ensure investigation and disciplinary record keeping practices remain in line with current legislative requirements (Keeping Children Safe in Education updated September 2024).
- To provide professional advice in the application of best practice.
- To ensure that the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) are informed of any dismissals relating to safeguarding.
- To ensure the single central record is accurate and up to date
- To work alongside the DSL to manage and act on the low level concerns and self-reports recorded on Confide following its implementation in January 2024
- To ensure that the DBS are informed of any employee resignations that have been submitted before the disciplinary process is completed that are relative to safeguarding issues.
- To practice safe staff recruitment in line with the recruitment policy, recruitment procedures and legislative requirements (Keeping Children Safe in Education updated September 2024).
- To provide a framework where authorised persons (or workers providing a service to the College) have been adequately vetted in accordance with legislative requirements.
- To ensure that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistleblowing procedures.

4.8 Employer responsibilities (for work-based learners and those undertaking work experience)

- to be alert to any changes in the learner's behaviour which might give cause for concern
- to alert the Safeguarding team to any concerns, in order for these to be explored and the appropriate support given

4.9 Whistleblowing

The College's [Whistleblowing: Policy and Procedure for Speaking Out](#) is designed for concerns to be raised internally and at a high level and to disclose information which the individual believes shows malpractice or impropriety. The types of disclosures that are eligible for protection under the Whistleblowing: Policy/ Procedure for Speaking Out are known as 'qualifying disclosures'. These could include concerns regarding the danger to the health and safety of any individual.

All College stakeholders can contact the College's designated assessor for whistleblowing at the College who is the Clerk to the Board. The Clerk's contact details are crayner@preston.ac.uk 01772 225046 or 07762 412 987.

4.10 Volunteers and Visitors, including External Speakers

Preston College is committed to keeping learners safe by ensuring that any volunteers, visitors, organisations or individuals who access the College do not pose a risk. We will therefore ensure that:

- All volunteers complete the safeguarding documentation contained within the External Support Workers Procedure, and receive the appropriate clearance through Human Resources/Heads of School or the Safeguarding team.
- All visitors to college sign in and wear identification (badge/sticker/lanyard) to indicate they have done so.
- All staff will challenge visitors to college who are not wearing correct identification.
- All visitors sign out and remove their identification when they leave the premises.
- All visitors are aware of who to speak to if they are worried about a learner during their visit.
- All visitors are accompanied during their visit, unless they have undergone relevant checks and these are accepted and verified by Human Resources, Heads of School or the Safeguarding team
- All visitors will be expected to behave in a way that is compliant with the College's Code of Conduct.
- When visitors are undertaking activities with learners, the content of the activity will be agreed with an appropriate staff member, prior to the visit.
- All External Speakers/Organisations who wish to hire the premises, will be run through a robust vetting process, in line with the requirements of the Prevent Duty.

5. Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass is a police and education early information sharing partnership enabling schools and colleges to offer immediate support for children and young people experiencing domestic abuse and other traumatic experiences. The police with the College's trained point of contact (DSL) share information prior to the start of the next college day after officers have attended a domestic abuse incident, thus enabling appropriate support to be given, dependent upon the needs and wishes of the child or young person.

In May 2024, the Victims and Prisoner's Act received Royal Assent. This places a statutory duty on all police forces in England and Wales to participate in Operation Encompass.

Children and young people experiencing domestic abuse are negatively impacted by this exposure; domestic abuse has been identified as an Adverse Childhood Experience and can lead to emotional, physical and psychological harm. Operation Encompass aims to mitigate this harm by enabling immediate support, making a young person's day better and giving them a better tomorrow.

Operation Encompass provides an advice and helpline service for all staff members from educational settings who may be concerned about children who have experienced domestic abuse. The helpline is available 8AM to 1PM, Monday to Friday on 0204 513 9990 (charged at local rate).]

ALL staff and volunteers at Preston College understand what domestic abuse is and the potential impact upon children and young people and how this might be displayed.

The Safeguarding team will:

- Ensure that the College has suitably trained staff in order to fulfil its obligations under Operation Encompass. The staff who currently monitor the discrete mailbox are Tina Southworth (DSL) and other members of the wider Safeguarding team – Sarah Nixon, Gemma Moon and Kirsty Braithwaite.
- Ensure that the College's commitment to Operation Encompass is known throughout the College community via the means of staff training, learner and parental handbooks and the College's website.

6. The Prevent Duty

Prevent is one of the four elements of CONTEST, the government's counter-terrorism strategy. It aims to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. From 18 September 2015 the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (Section 26) placed a further statutory duty on all colleges to "have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".

At Preston College we are committed to supporting vulnerable learners through our safeguarding policies and procedures and recognise that this will support the College's contribution to the Prevent Duty. We build our learner's resilience to radicalisation by promoting British Values and enabling our learners to challenge extremist views.

The College has engaged positively with appropriate training to ensure that staff have the skills and knowledge to recognise any concerns and to refer them appropriately, as with any other safeguarding concern.

The DSL will regularly update Prevent awareness training to be able to provide advice and support to other staff on how to protect learners against the risk of radicalisation. The DSL will ensure that all staff undertake appropriate Prevent training to ensure they are aware of the risk indicators and their duties regarding preventing radicalisation.

- The College will ensure the safety of learners by ensuring they cannot access terrorist and extremist material when using the internet and that suitable monitoring and filtering software is in place
- The DSL is aware of when it is appropriate to make a referral to the Channel Panel and how to do so.

The College's procedures for carrying out the Prevent Duty, including how it will engage and implement the Channel programme, are outlined in the Prevent Risk Assessment/Action Plan.

This duty has been revised under Section 29 of the CTSA 2015, and came into force on 31 December 2023. There are no new legal requirements or additional responsibilities contained in this revised document; the changes just provide greater clarity, practical advice and signposting to best practice.

The Channel Panel

The Channel Panel is an early intervention scheme that supports people who are at risk of radicalisation and provides practical support tailored to individual needs. It can help people to make positive choices about their lives by developing the most appropriate support plan for the individual concerned.

The Channel Panel is **chaired by the local authority** and works with multi agency partners to collectively assess the risk to an individual and decide whether an intervention is necessary. If a Channel intervention is required, the Panel works with local partners to develop an appropriate individualised support package.

7. Online safety and personal electronic devices (including Filtering and Monitoring)

Preston College is committed to keeping its learners safe online. A whole college approach to online safety is an interrelated theme within the safeguarding policy and all relevant policies and procedures. As part of a broad and balanced Induction, all learners will be made aware of online risks and taught how to stay safe online. This will cover:

- An introduction to the College's Acceptable Use Policy.
- An introduction to some of the many issues related to online activity and how to avoid risky situations.
- Details of what to do if learners encounter cyber-bullying or any other form of inappropriate activity whilst online.

- Information about the features within the College systems that are there to protect learners i.e. the filtering and monitoring arrangements.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, and extremism.
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
- conduct: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying, and
- commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial

In line with the requirements of the DfE Standards for Filtering and Monitoring (March 2024) the College will ensure that suitable monitoring and filtering systems are in place on all college ICT equipment to prevent learners accessing inappropriate material. Filtering refers to the technology preventing access to harmful or inappropriate content, whilst monitoring refers to the practical steps staff take to ensure harmful or inappropriate access is not made. The College accesses a forensic monitoring system provided by Smoothwall which runs on all college devices, including those that learners use remotely from college. In addition to this we utilise a cyber-security standard Fortigate firewall system. Any inappropriate behaviours or searches flagged up by either of these systems are followed up appropriately.

On an annual basis the DSL reviews the filtering and monitoring procedures to ensure that they effectively prevent access to harmful or inappropriate content, and feeds back to the Safeguarding Governor.

As part of their annual safeguarding training all staff understand the risks of poor filtering and monitoring, and know how to share their concerns

Personal electronic devices

The use of College networks, including through personal electronic devices such as mobile phones and cameras, by staff and learners is closely monitored by the College. Staff will report any concerns about learners' or other staff members' use of personal electronic devices to the Safeguarding team, who will follow the appropriate procedures. In addition we will ensure that:

- For any learners under the age of 18 years, parental consent is obtained to take and use photographs and/or videos of learners, for use in college, to market the College or to share on social media / internet
- staff, visitors, volunteers and learners do not use their own mobile phones or devices to take or record any images of other learners or staff.

8. Contextual Safeguarding and Extra Familial Harm

Safeguarding incidents can occur outside of college and can be associated with outside factors. All staff, particularly the Safeguarding team, will always consider whether children/young people are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Assessment of learners' behaviour will consider whether there are wider environmental factors that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Extra familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation.' The College will provide as much contextual information as possible when making referrals to Children's Social Care or external agencies.

9. Learners with SEND

Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their child protection policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children/young people. Staff will be aware of the following:

- Learners with SEND or disabilities are nearly 4 times more likely to be a victim of abuse
- Certain indicators of abuse, such as behaviour, mood and injury, may relate to the learner's disability without further exploration; however, it should never be assumed that a learner's indicators relate only to their disability
- Learners with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by issues such as peer group isolation and bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers may exist, as well as difficulties in overcoming these barriers

When reporting concerns or making referrals for learners with SEND, the above factors will always be taken into consideration. When managing a safeguarding issue relating to a learner with SEND, the Safeguarding team will liaise with the learner's parents and SEND team where appropriate, to ensure that the learner's needs are met effectively.

10. Managing referrals

All staff members are able to make safeguarding referrals to the Local Authority, but in practice this duty is undertaken by the Safeguarding team. The Safeguarding team will provide staff members with clarity and support where needed to determine whether safeguarding thresholds have been met. When making a referral to Children's Social Care or other external agencies, information will be gathered in line with 'Information Sharing – Guide for Practitioners (DfE 2024) requirements and will only be shared where necessary to do so.

Internal procedures require all safeguarding and welfare concerns to be reported using My Concern, and all staff have been given training opportunities to become familiar with this dynamic reporting platform. Once raised all concerns will be triaged by the Safeguarding team, and any further action required will be taken.

The Safeguarding team will work alongside external agencies, maintaining continuous liaison, including multi-agency liaison where appropriate, in order to ensure the wellbeing of the learners involved. The Safeguarding team will also work closely with the police, as necessary to ensure that the College does not jeopardise any criminal proceedings, and to obtain help and support as necessary. This will include the Prevent team and Counter-Terrorism policing team, where a referral is made under the Prevent Duty.

At all stages of the reporting and referral process, the learner will be informed of the decisions made, actions taken and reasons for doing so. Discussions of concerns with parents will only take place where this would not put the learner or others at potential risk of harm. The College will work closely with all interested parties to ensure that the learner, as well as their family, understands the arrangements in place, such as in-college interventions, is effectively supported, and knows where they can access additional support.

11. Allegations of abuse against staff and low level concerns

The principles for managing allegations of abuse against staff who work with children, young people or vulnerable adults are outlined in *Keeping Children Safe in Education* which is updated on an annual basis. Each educational establishment is required to have its own procedure for dealing with the management of allegations of a safeguarding nature made against staff. The procedure should be consistent with local safeguarding procedures and practice guidance in operation in Lancashire through CSAP (Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership).

The definition of the word “staff”, for this purpose is anyone working in or on behalf of the College in a paid or unpaid capacity. This includes volunteers and contractors.

All allegations against staff will be managed in line with the College’s Managing Allegations of a Safeguarding Nature procedure (updated May 2022), a copy of which is available to all staff. The College will ensure that all allegations against staff, including those who are not employees of the college, are dealt with appropriately and that the College liaises with the relevant parties including the LADO, Children’s Social Care, Adult Social Care, the police and other safeguarding bodies such as Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

When managing allegations against staff, the College will recognise the distinction between allegations that meet the harms threshold and allegations that do not, also known as “low-level concerns”. Allegations that meet the harms threshold include instances where staff have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child.
- Committed or possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.
- Behaved, or may have behaved, in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

If appropriate following the initial assessment, the DSL will need to inform, the LADO so that they can consult with police or Children’s Social Care as appropriate.

The LADO will always be contacted whenever:

A crime has (or may have) been committed:

- The young person or vulnerable adult has suffered or is likely to suffer harm;
- Uncertainty or lack of clarity about whether it is a safeguarding matter remains;
- There are physical marks or injuries;
- Allegations made are sexual in nature;
- The potential safeguarding matter is brought to the organisation’s attention by an ‘outside’ person or agency.

11.1 Low level concerns

Preston College ensures that all staff are aware of how to recognise and report low level concerns around staff behaviour and conduct. The College has introduced a reporting system called Confide to support the reporting of low-level concerns, implemented by the DSL and the Head of Human Resources. All staff will receive a login and appropriate training.

The term ‘low-level’ does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’ – that an adult working in or on behalf of the College may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the Staff Behaviour Code, including conduct outside of work and
- Does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with learners;
- having favourites;
- taking photographs of learners on their mobile phone;

- engaging with a learner on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or,
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

Information recorded in Confide will be triaged to assess what, if any action, is necessary. The triaging will be done by the DSL in support of learners and the Director of Human Resources in relation to staff. Ofsted or auditors may request sight of the Confide system as evidence of compliance around an open and transparent safeguarding culture, but not the detail.

Potential Outcomes for Staff:

- No action is required - where it is clear there is no safeguarding issue
- A professional conversation - where more information is required to establish that there is no LLC or safeguarding issue
- A professional conversation - where staff need reminding of good practice
- A performance improvement plan - for extra guidance and refresher training for minor infringements
- A disciplinary investigation - where there is a concern that professional standards may not have been met

Information held in Confide will not be shared with any external bodies such as LADO or future employers, unless the record has led to action under another procedure which has to be legally declared.

12. Safer recruitment

Preston College is committed to keeping learners safe by ensuring that adults who work or volunteer in College are safe to do so.¹ The College has embedded the principles contained in the current 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022) guidance. The College ensures that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works at the College who is likely to be perceived by vulnerable groups as a safe and trustworthy adult including authorised personnel. Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and, where appropriate, undertaking Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.

An enhanced DBS check with barred list information will be undertaken for all staff members engaged in regulated activity. A person will be considered to be in 'regulated activity' if, as a result of their work, they:

- Are responsible on a daily basis for teaching, training, instructing or the care or supervision of children.
- Regularly work in the College at times when children are on the premises.
- Regularly come into contact with children under 18 years of age. (*Regular is defined as; at least 3 times in a 30 day period.*)
- The appropriate DBS and suitability checks will be carried out for all governors, volunteers, and contractors.

Referral to the DBS

The College will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed a child or poses a risk of harm to a child, or if there is reason to believe that the individual has committed an offence and has been removed from working in regulated activity.

¹ The College's Safer recruitment procedure can be requested from the College

13. Useful External Contacts

LCC Schools Safeguarding Officers	Victoria Wallace and Mechelle Lewis (01772) 531196 school.safeguarding@lancashire.gov.uk
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Tim Booth/Shane Penn/Donna Green (01772) 536694 LADO.admin@lancashire.gov.uk
LCC MASH Education Officers	Martine Blokland (01254) 220914 martine.blokland@lancashire.gov.uk Matt Chipchase (01254) 220989 matt.chipchase@lancashire.gov.uk
MASH – Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub	0300 123 6720 cypreferrals@lancashire.gov.uk
Whistleblowing Helpline	(01772) 532500 whistleblowingcomplaints@lancashire.gov.uk

APPENDIX A Further information – specific safeguarding concerns relevant to colleges

Preston College is committed to keeping our learners safe from specific forms of abuse. We therefore ensure that all staff and volunteers understand that there are specific and emerging ways in which children, young people and vulnerable adults can be abused, such as:

Abuse, Neglect* and Exploitation **

Abuse is defined as 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. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography to those who do not want to receive such content.

Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse.'

Physical abuse is defined as a form of abuse which may involve actions such as hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical abuse can also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. Staff are aware of Female Genital Mutilation, a form of physical abuse.

Emotional abuse is defined as the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. This may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child the opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, 'making fun'

of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children, such as interactions that are beyond their developmental capability, overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. **It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.** It may involve serious bullying, including cyberbullying, causing the child to frequently 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, but it may also occur alone.

Sexual abuse is defined as abuse that involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, and regardless of whether the child is aware of what is happening. This 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. It 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. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it.

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

*Definitions of abuse and neglect come from KCSIE 2024 Paras 24 - 28

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child Sexual Exploitation is defined as a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity, for either of the following reasons:

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants OR
- For the financial advantage, increased status or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator.

The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child Sexual Exploitation doesn't always involve physical contact, it can also occur through the use of technology.

Staff will be aware of the key indicators that a learner is the victim of CSE, including:

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones, etc. without plausible explanation;
- Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks;
- Exclusion or unexplained absences from school, college or work;
- Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late;
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls;
- Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol;
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections;
- Evidence of/suspicions of physical or sexual assault;

- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups;
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers);
- Frequenting areas known for sex work;
- Concerning use of internet or other social media;
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours; and
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

Potential vulnerabilities include:

Although the following vulnerabilities increase the risk of Child Sexual Exploitation, it must be remembered that not all children with these indicators will be exploited. Child Sexual Exploitation can occur without any of these issues.

- Having a prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse;
- Lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic abuse or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality, for example);
- Recent bereavement or loss;
- Social isolation or social difficulties;
- Absence of a safe environment to explore sexuality;
- Economic vulnerability;
- Homelessness or insecure accommodation status;
- Connections with other children and young people who are being sexually exploited;
- Family members or other connections involved in adult sex work;
- Having a physical or learning disability;
- Being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories); and
- Sexual identity.

Where CSE, or the risk of it, is suspected, staff will discuss the case with the Safeguarding team. If after discussion a concern remains, local safeguarding procedures will be triggered.

**Definition of CSE is from Child Sexual Exploitation: Definition and a guide for Practitioners (DfE 2017)

Child Criminal Exploitation (including County Lines)

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) is defined as a form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child/young person into any criminal activity, for the following reasons:

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants
- For the financial advantage or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator
- Through violence or the threat of violence

The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology

Specific forms of CCE can include:

- Being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through County Lines.
- Working in cannabis factories.
- Shoplifting or pickpocketing.

- Committing vehicle crime.
- Committing, or threatening to commit, serious violence to others.

The College recognises that learners involved in CCE are victims themselves, regardless of whether they have committed crimes, and even if the criminal activity appears consensual. The College will also recognise that learners of **any gender** are at risk of CCE.

Some of the following can be indicators that a learner is the victim of CCE, including:

- children/young people who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- children/young people who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- children/young people who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- children/young people who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- children/young people who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- children/young people who regularly miss education or do not take part in education.

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”.’

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked or the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the **National Referral Mechanism** should be considered in addition to normal safeguarding procedures.

As well as the general indicators for CCE, staff will be aware of the specific indicators that a learner may be involved in county lines, including:

- Going missing and subsequently being found in areas away from their home.
- Having been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence, e.g. knife crime.
- Receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, collecting money.
- Being found in accommodation they have no connection.
- Owning a ‘debt bond’ to their exploiters.
- Having their bank account used to facilitate drug dealing.

** Definition of Child Criminal Exploitation comes from KCSIE paras 35 – 40 and Annexe B pages 149-151

‘Sextortion’

‘Sextortion’ is a form of blackmail whereby any individual can be forced into paying money to an offender who is threatening to share nude or semi-nude images of them. Typically perpetrated by organised crime gangs operating outside of the UK, sextortion can target an individual regardless of their age or gender.

All staff will be aware of these potential signs to look out for should this happen to any of our learners. It typically follows the pattern of a normal grooming process but moves very quickly and ends up with the victim being blackmailed. It typically follows the pattern of a normal grooming process but moves very quickly and ends up with the victim being blackmailed.

Potential indicators of sextortion are:

- Learner contacted by an online account they don't know, or possibly a hacked account of someone they do know
- Quickly engaged in sexually explicit communications, may include offender sending indecent images first
- Moved from a chat on social media to a private messaging app with 'end to end encryption'
- Manipulated or pressured into taking nude or semi-nude photos or videos
- Told they have been hacked and offender has access to all their private information
- Blackmailed into sending money or meeting another financial demand

If this scenario occurs staff will reassure the learner that the college can support them and avoid using any victim-blaming language and refer immediately to the Safeguarding team via My Concern.

General

- All staff will be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation, be vigilant and always raise concerns with the safeguarding team. All staff, especially the DSL and deputy DSL(s), will be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with contextual factors outside the College and/or can occur between children and young people outside of these environments; this includes being aware that learners can be at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families (extra-familial harms.)
- All staff will be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and well-being issues, including online abuse, cyberbullying, radicalisation and the sharing of indecent images.
- All staff understand that children who perpetrate abuse or display harmful behaviour should be treated as victims first and foremost and supported in the same way a victim of abuse would be supported. Risk assessments will be undertaken where a child/young person's behaviour poses a risk to others, themselves or the environment.

Domestic Abuse

In line with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, domestic abuse is defined as abusive behaviour of a person towards another person where both are aged 16 or over and are personally connected. Abusive behaviour includes physical or sexual abuse, violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse, psychological or emotional abuse, or another form of abuse.

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

The National Domestic Abuse helpline can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247.

The College recognises the serious, long lasting emotional impact of domestic abuse on children and young people, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse. All staff will be aware of the signs of domestic abuse and follow the appropriate safeguarding procedures where concerns arise.

Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is defined as all procedures involving the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

All staff will be alert to the possibility of a learner being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. If staff are worried about someone who is at risk of FGM or who has been a victim of FGM, they are required to

share this information with Children's Social Care and/or the police. The College's procedures relating to managing cases of FGM and protecting learners will reflect multi-agency working arrangements.

FGM typically takes place between birth and around 15 years old; however, it is believed that the majority of cases happen between the ages of 5 and 8.

Risk factors for FGM include:

- low level of integration into UK society
- mother or a sister who has undergone FGM
- being taken on a long holiday to the country of origin known to adopt FGM
- talk about a 'special' procedure to become a woman

As outlined in Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015), teachers are **legally required** to report to the police any discovery, whether through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence, of FGM on a learner under the age of 18. If you are a teacher and a pupil who is under 18 informs you that they have undergone FGM, you must ring the non-emergency 101 number within 48 hours. You should make a note of your actions and record the police reference number as evidence that you have complied with the duty.

All staff will be aware of the indicators that learners may be at risk of FGM. While some individual indicators they may not indicate risk, the presence of two or more indicators could signal a risk to the learner. It is important to note that the learner may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so staff will be sensitive when broaching the subject.

FGM is included in the definition of so-called **honour-based' abuse (HBA)** which involves crimes that have been committed to defend the honour of the family and/or community. All forms of HBA are forms of abuse and will be treated and escalated as such. Staff will be alert to the signs of HBA, including concerns that a child/young person is at risk of HBA, or has already suffered from HBA, and will consult with the DSL who will activate local safeguarding procedures if concerns arise.

Forced Marriage

Forced marriage is defined as a marriage that is entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties, and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into the marriage. Threats can be physical, emotional, or psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent, e.g. due to some forms of SEND. Forced marriage is a crime in the UK and a form of **HBA**.

In February 2023, the age of consent for marriage in England was raised to 18. The Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022 means that 16 and 17 year olds will no longer be allowed to marry or enter a civil partnership, even if they have parental consent.

It is now an offence, under the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act to cause a child under the age of 18 to enter a marriage in any circumstances, without the need to prove that a form of coercion was used. This includes non-legally binding 'traditional' ceremonies which would still be viewed as marriages by the parties and their families. This should serve as a protective factor in relation to Forced Marriage.

Staff who have any concerns regarding a learner who may have undergone, is currently undergoing, or is at risk of forced marriage will speak to the DSL and local safeguarding procedures will be followed – this could include referral to Children's Social Care, the police or the Forced Marriage Unit.

Children/young people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or gender questioning

A child or young person being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm, however, they can sometimes be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who are.

The recent Cass review identified that caution is necessary for children questioning their gender as there remain many unknowns about the impact of social transition and children may well have wider vulnerabilities, including having complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases additional diagnoses of autism spectrum disorder and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

As such, when supporting a gender questioning child, schools and college should take a cautious approach and consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with the child's parents (other than in the exceptionally rare circumstances where involving parents would constitute a significant risk of harm to the child), including any clinical advice that is available and how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying. Schools and colleges should refer to our Guidance for Schools and Colleges in relation to Gender Questioning Children, when deciding how to proceed.

Risks can be compounded where children lack trusted adults with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and create a culture where they can speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

Hate Crime/Incidents

A hate crime is when someone commits a crime against a person because of their disability, gender identity, race, sexual orientation, religion, or any other perceived difference.

It doesn't always include physical violence. Someone using offensive language towards or harassing a person because of who they are, or who they think they are, is also a crime. The same goes for someone posting abusive or offensive messages about a person online.

A hate incident is any incident which the victim, or anyone else, thinks is based on someone's prejudice towards them because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or because they are transgender.

Preston College operates a robust approach to any hate crime or incident, and will deal with any occurrence as an example of gross misconduct under the Student Positive Behaviour Framework. The College will also report the matter to the police in line with the wishes of the victim. This will include any incidents of gender-based violence.

Resources and information on all of the above are available to staff via our Safeguarding Portal. Updates are included in the mandatory training that all staff are required to complete, and feature in the regular CPD briefings.

Mental Health

All staff at Preston College are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child/young person has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Whilst staff members are not expected or trained to diagnose mental health conditions or issues, they may notice behaviours that may be of concern.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or a deputy. This can be done in person or via My Concern, dependent on the urgency of the situation.

Kirsty Braithwaite is the College's Senior Mental Health Lead, and can be contacted via email kbraithwaite@preston.ac.uk or 01772 225915.

Modern Slavery

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude, and forced or compulsory labour. This can include CCE, CSE, and other forms of exploitation.

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 places a statutory duty on public authorities, including schools and colleges, to notify the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) (section 52 of the Act) on observing signs or receiving intelligence relating to Modern Slavery. The public authority bears this obligation where it has 'reasonable grounds to believe that a person may be the victim of slavery or human trafficking'.

- Staff must be aware of the above and contact the DSL should they suspect or receive information that either parents or their children may be victims of Modern Slavery. The DSL should then contact the NRM.

Child on Child abuse including sexualised abuse

Child on child abuse is **defined as abuse between children/young people under 18 years of age.**

Preston College has a **robust approach to abuse of any kind**, including child on child abuse. We will refer to specific guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education Part five: Child on Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment and Lancashire Procedures. [5.31 Peer Abuse \(proceduresonline.com\)](#)

- All staff will be aware that child on child abuse can occur between learners of any age and gender, both inside and outside of school/college, as well as online.
- All staff will be aware of the indicators of child on child abuse, how to identify it, and how to respond to reports.
- All staff will also recognise that even if no cases have been reported, this is not an indicator that child on child abuse is not occurring.
- All staff will speak to the safeguarding team if they have any concerns about child on child abuse.
- All staff will understand the importance of challenge inappropriate behaviour between learners, and will not tolerate abuse as "banter" or "part of growing up".

Child on child abuse can be manifested in many different ways, including:

- Bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying.
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers.
- Physical abuse – this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse.
- Sexual violence – this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence.
- Sexual harassment, including online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.
- Upskirting
- The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.
- Initiation and hazing-type violence and rituals, which can include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group, and may also include an online element.

All staff will be clear as to the College's policy and procedures regarding child on child abuse and the role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a young person may be at risk.

All staff will be made aware of the heightened vulnerability of learners with SEND, who evidence suggests are more likely to be abused than their peers. Staff will not assume that possible indicators of abuse relate to the learner's SEND and will always explore indicators further.

All staff will be made aware of the heightened vulnerability of LGBTQ+ learners, who evidence suggests are also more likely to be targeted by their peers. In some cases, learners who are perceived to be LGBTQ+, regardless of whether they are LGBTQ+, can be just as vulnerable to abuse as LGBTQ+ learners. The College's response to sexual violence and sexual harassment between learners of the same sex will be equally as robust as it is for incidents between young people of the opposite sex.

Learners will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled. This includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. Learners will also be reassured that they will be taken seriously, be supported, and kept safe.

The College's procedures for managing allegations of child on child abuse are as follows. Staff will follow these procedures and will consider:

- the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed
- the nature of the alleged incident
- the ages of the young people involved
- any power imbalance between the young people
- is the incident a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse
- are there ongoing risks to the victim, other young people, school or College staff
- contextual safeguarding issues.

Following a report of sexual violence, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) will make an immediate risk and needs assessment, considering:

- the victim
- the alleged perpetrator
- all other learners (and if appropriate adult learners and staff).
- Risk assessments will be recorded and kept under review as a minimum termly.

Sharing nude and semi-nude images

Formerly known as sexting, the sharing of nude and semi-nude images is defined as the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams online by young people under the age of 18. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums (UKCIS 2024). It includes nude or nearly nude images and/or sexual acts. It is also referred to as 'youth produced sexual imagery'. It is also worth noting that an image of a young person can be digitally manipulated by the use of artificial intelligence (AI) to generate a new nude or semi-nude image.

The College will ensure that staff are aware to treat the sharing of indecent images as a safeguarding concern.

Staff will be aware that creating, possessing, and distributing indecent imagery of children is a criminal offence, regardless of whether the imagery is created, possessed, and distributed by the individual depicted; however, the College will ensure that learners are not unnecessarily criminalised.

Where a member of staff becomes aware of an incidence of sexting that involves indecent images of a learner, they will refer this to the DSL as soon as possible. Where a learner confides in a staff member about the circulation of indecent imagery, depicting them or someone else, the staff member will:

- Refrain from viewing, copy, printing, sharing, storing or saving the imagery.
- Tell the DSL immediately if they accidentally view an indecent image and seek support.
- Explain to the learner that the incident will need to be reported.

- Respond positively to the learner without blaming or shaming anyone involved, and reassuring them that they can receive support from the DSL.
- Report the incident to the DSL.

The DSL will attempt to understand what the image contains **without viewing it** and the context surrounding its creation and distribution – they will categorise the incident into one of two categories:

- **Aggravated:** incidents which involve additional or abusive elements beyond the creation and distribution of nudes or semi-nudes, including where there is an adult involved, where there is an intent to harm the learner, or where the images are used recklessly.
- **Experimental:** incidents involving the creation and distribution of nudes or semi-nudes with no adult involvement or apparent intent to cause harm or reckless misuse.

Where it is necessary to view the imagery, eg if this is the only way to make a decision about whether to inform other agencies, the DSL should:

- never copy, print, share, store or save them; this is illegal.
- discuss the decision with the SLS or member of ELT
- make sure viewing is undertaken by the DSL (or equivalent) or another member of the safeguarding team with delegated authority from the SLS or member of ELT
- make sure viewing takes place with another member of staff present in the room, ideally the SLS or member of ELT and on the premises of the education setting. This staff member does not need to view the imagery.
- make sure wherever possible that they are viewed by a staff member of the same sex as the child or young person in the images
- record how and why the decision was made to view the imagery in the safeguarding or child protection records, including who was present, why the nudes or semi-nudes were viewed and any subsequent actions.
- if any devices need to be taken and passed onto the police, the device(s) should be confiscated and the police should be called.

The above summarised points are explained in further detail with important supporting guidance in the **UKCIS guidance – Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings (updated 2024)**

Extremism, Radicalisation and Terrorism

The threat from **Extremism** has been steadily growing for many years. In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks in Israel in Oct 2023 highlighted the need for a new definition of Extremism as follows:

Extremism is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance that aims to:

1. negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or
2. undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or
3. intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results in (1) or (2).

It is the first in a series of new measures to counter extremism and religious hatred and promote social cohesion and democratic resilience.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

Terrorism refers to an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person or people, serious damage to property, or seriously interferes with or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat of these actions must be designed to influence the government or intimidate the public, and be made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

Protecting learners from the risk of radicalisation is part of the College's wider safeguarding duties. The College will actively assess the risk of learners being radicalised and drawn into extremism and/or terrorism.

Staff will be alert to changes in learners' behaviour which could indicate that they may need help or protection. Staff will use their professional judgement to identify learners who may be at risk of radicalisation and act appropriately, which may include contacting the DSL or making a Prevent referral. The College will work with local safeguarding arrangements as appropriate. The school will work with local safeguarding arrangements as appropriate to ensure awareness of local & national incidents that may heighten the activity of extreme groups or cause increased curiosity of children.

The DSL will undertake Prevent awareness training to be able to provide advice and support to other staff on how to protect learners against the risk of radicalisation and ensure that all staff and governors have received appropriate and up-to date training. The College will support the safeguarding of young people online by ensuring they cannot access terrorist and extremist material when using the internet and that suitable filtering and monitoring software and supervision is in place.

The Safeguarding team understand when it is appropriate to make a referral to the Channel Panel and are aware of how to do so - 'Notice. Check. Share.'

Serious Violence and Serious Violence Duty

Through training, all staff will be made aware of the indicators which may signal a young person is at risk from, or is involved with, serious violent crime. These indicators include, but are not limited to:

- Increased absence from college.
- A change in friendships.
- Relationships with older individuals or groups.
- A significant decline in academic performance.
- Signs of self-harm.
- A significant change in wellbeing.
- Signs of assault.
- Unexplained injuries.
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions.

Staff will be made aware of some of the most significant risk factors that could increase a learner's vulnerability to becoming involved in serious violence. These risk factors include, but are not limited to:

- Being male.
- Having been frequently absent from college.
- Having been permanently excluded from college.
- Having experienced child maltreatment or trauma.
- Having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

Staff members who suspect a learner may be vulnerable to, or involved in, serious violent crime will immediately report their concerns to the Safeguarding team.

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 introduced a new duty on a range of specified authorities, such as the police, local government, youth offending teams, health and probation services, to work collaboratively, share data and information, and put in place plans to prevent and reduce serious violence within their local communities. Educational authorities and prisons/youth custody authorities will be under a separate duty to co-operate with core duty holders when asked, and there will be a requirement for the partnership to consult with all such institutions in their area. The College's responsibilities under the Duty will be met through existing multi-agency collaboration.