



ESPA College

Child Protection and

Safeguarding Policy

Version 1

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1. Statement of intent

ESPA College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the physical, mental and emotional welfare of every learner. We implement a whole college approach to managing safeguarding concerns, ensuring that the wellbeing of young people is at the forefront of all action taken.

This policy sets out a clear and consistent framework for delivering this promise, in line with safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance. It will be achieved by:

- Ensuring that members of the Trustees, the Principal /Vice Principal and staff understand their responsibilities under safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance, are alert to the signs of child abuse, and know to refer concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Teaching learners/young people how to keep safe and recognise behaviour that is unacceptable.
- Identifying and making provision for any learner/young person that has been subject to, or is at risk of, abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- Creating a culture of safer recruitment by adopting procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might pose a risk to learners/young people.
- Ensuring that the Principal/Vice Principal and any new staff and volunteers are only appointed when all the appropriate checks have been satisfactorily completed.

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2. Acronyms

This policy contains a number of acronyms used in the specialist Education sector. These acronyms are listed below alongside their descriptions.

Acronyms	Long Form	Description
CCE	Child criminal exploitation	A form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, for the financial advantage or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence.
MDT	Multi Disciplinary Team	
CSCS	Children's social care services	The branch of the local authority that deals with children's social care.
CSE	Child sexual exploitation	A form of sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants.
DBS	Disclosure and barring service	The service that performs the statutory check of criminal records for anyone working or volunteering in a school or College.
DfE	Department for Education	The national government body with responsibility for children's services, policy and education, including early years, schools, higher and further education policy, apprenticeships and wider skills in England.
DSL	Designated safeguarding lead	A member of the senior leadership team who has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection throughout the College.
EHCP	Education, health and care plan	A funded intervention plan which coordinates the educational, health and care needs for learners who have significant needs that impact on their learning and access to education.
ESFA	Education and Skills Funding Agency	An agency sponsored by the Department for Education with accountability for funding education and skills training for children, young people and adults.
FGM	Female genital mutilation	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.
UK GDPR	UK General Data Protection Regulation	Legislative provision designed to strengthen the safety and security of all data held within an organisation and ensure that procedures relating to personal data are fair and consistent.
HBA	'Honour-based' abuse	So-called 'honour-based' abuse involves crimes that have been committed to defend the honour of the family and/or community.
KCSIE	Keeping children safe in education	Statutory guidance setting out schools and Colleges' duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
LA	Local authority	A local government agency responsible for the provision of a range of services in a specified local area, including education.
LAC	Looked-after children	Children who have been placed in local authority care or where children's services have looked after children for more than a period of 24 hours.
LADOs	LA designated officers	
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer plus	Term relating to a community of people, protected by the Equality Act 2010, who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, or other protected sexual or gender identities.
NPCC	National Police Chiefs' Council	
PLAC	Previously looked-after children	Children who were previously in local authority care or were looked after by children's services for more than a period of 24 hours. PLAC are also known as care leavers.
PSHE	Personal, social and health education	A non-statutory subject in which learners learn about themselves, other people, rights, responsibilities and relationships.
RSHE	Relationships, sex and health education	A compulsory subject from Year 7 for all pupils. Includes the teaching of sexual health, reproduction and sexuality, as well as promoting positive relationships.
SCR	Single central record	A statutory secure record of recruitment and identity checks for all permanent and temporary staff, proprietors, contractors, external coaches instructors, and volunteers.

SEND	Special Educational Needs & Disabilities	
SENCO	Special educational needs coordinator	A statutory role within all Colleges maintaining oversight and coordinating the implementation of the College's special educational needs policy and provision..
SLT	Senior leadership team	Staff members who have been delegated leadership responsibilities in a College.

3. Definitions

The terms “**children**” and “**child**” refer to anyone under the age of 18.

For the purposes of this policy, “**safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children**” is defined as:

- Protecting learners and young people from maltreatment.
- Preventing the impairment of learners/young people’s mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring that learners/young people grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all learners/young people to have the best outcomes.

For the purposes of this policy, “**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.

For the purposes of this policy “**sexual violence**”, and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice. 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.
- **“upskirting”** refers to the act, as identified in the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, of taking a picture or video under another person’s clothing, without their knowledge or consent.
- **“consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos”**, colloquially known as **“sexting”**, is defined as the sharing between learners/young people of sexually explicit content, including indecent imagery.
- **“abuse”** is defined as a form of maltreatment of a learner/young person which involves inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing the ill treatment of others – this can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on learners/young people of all forms of domestic abuse. Learners/young people may be abused in a family, institutional or community setting by those known to them or by others, e.g. via the internet.
- **“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 learner/young person. Physical abuse can also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a learner/young person.
- **“emotional abuse”** is defined as the persistent emotional maltreatment of a learner/young person such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the learner/young person’s emotional development. This may involve conveying to a learner/young person that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the learner/young person the opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, dismissing what they say or how they communicate.
- For the purposes of this policy, **“sexual abuse”** is defined as abuse that involves forcing or enticing a learner/young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, and regardless of whether the learner/young person is aware of what is happening.
- **“neglect”** is defined as the persistent failure to meet a learner/young person’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of a learner/young person’s health or development.

1. Legal framework

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

Legislation

- Children Act 1989
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by the Serious Crime Act 2015)
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Apprenticeships, Children and Learning Act 2009
- Equality Act 2010
- Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022

Statutory guidance

- DfE (2015) 'The Prevent duty'
- DfE (2018) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- DfE (2018) 'Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006'
- DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education 2024'
- HM Government (2020) 'Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation'
- HM Government (2021) 'Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism'

2. Roles and responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to:

- Consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the learner/young person.
- Provide a safe environment in which learners/young people can learn.
- Be prepared to identify learners/young people who may benefit from early help.
- Be aware of the College's systems which support safeguarding, including any policies, procedures, information and training provided upon induction.
- Be aware of the role and identity of the DSLs and On-Call teams.
- Undertake safeguarding training, including online safety training (which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations and responsibilities relating to filtering and monitoring).
- Be aware of the local early help process and understand their role in it.
- Be aware of, and understand, the process for making referrals to CSC (Children's Social Care), as well as making statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989 and their role in these assessments.
- Inform the police immediately, if at any point there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a learner.
- Support social workers and other partners in making decisions about individual learners in collaboration with the Safeguarding Team.
- Be aware of and understand the safeguarding procedures to follow in the event that a learner confides they are being abused, exploited or neglected.

- Be aware that a learner may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and/or may not recognise their experiences as harmful.
- Maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality when dealing with individual cases.
- Reassure victims that they are being taken seriously, that they will be supported, and that they will be kept safe.
- Always speak to a DSL if they are unsure about how to handle safeguarding matters.
- Be aware of behaviours that could potentially be a sign that a learner/young person may be at risk of harm.
- Report any cases to the police where it appears that an act of FGM has been carried out.

The Governors/Trustees have a duty to:

- Take strategic leadership responsibility for the College's safeguarding arrangements.
- Ensure that the College complies with its duties under the above child protection and safeguarding legislation.
- Guarantee that the policies, procedures and training opportunities in the College are effective and comply with the law at all times.
- Ensure that staff working directly with learners/young people read and are informed of (at least) Part one of KCSIE 2024.
- Ensure that staff who do not work directly with learners/young people read Part one of KCSIE.
- Ensure that mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities in regard to safeguarding learners/young people.
- Ensure a senior board level someone takes leadership responsibility for safeguarding arrangements.
- Facilitate an organisational College approach to safeguarding; this includes ensuring that safeguarding and learner/young person protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development.
- Ensure systems are in place, learners/young people to confidently report abuse, knowing that their concerns will be treated seriously and they can safely express their views and give feedback. Systems should be well-promoted, easily understood, and easily accessible.
- Ensure that staff have due regard to relevant data protection principles that allow them to share and withhold personal information.
- Guarantee that there are effective and appropriate policies and procedures in place.
- Make sure that young people are taught about safeguarding, including protection against dangers online (including when they are online at home), through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Ensure that staff are appropriately trained to support learners/young people to be themselves at College, e.g. if they are LGBTQ+.
- Ensure ESPA College has clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems in learners/young people, including clear routes to escalate concerns and clear referral and accountability systems.
- Ensure that all governors receive appropriate safeguarding and learner protection training and that this training is updated regularly.
- Certify that there are procedures in place to handle allegations against staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors.

- Confirm that there are procedures in place to make a referral to the DBS and the Teaching Regulation Agency, if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns.
- Guarantee that there are procedures in place to handle learner's/young people's allegations against other learners.
- Ensure that appropriate disciplinary procedures are in place, as well as policies pertaining to the behaviour of learners and staff.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, including those in relation to learner-on-learner abuse.
- Guarantee that there are systems in place for learners/young people to express their views and give feedback.
- Support mechanisms to assist staff in understanding and discharging their roles and responsibilities.
- Put in place appropriate safeguarding responses for learners who become absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods, to help identify any risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation, and prevent the risk of their disappearance in future.
- Ensure that all members of the governing board have been subject to an enhanced DBS check.
- Create a culture where staff are confident to challenge senior leaders over any safeguarding concerns.

The Principal/Vice Principal has a duty to:

- Ensure that the policies and procedures adopted by the governing board, particularly concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect, are followed by staff.
- Provide staff with the appropriate policies and information upon induction.
- Maintain relevant and current policies, procedures and protocols in relation to all aspects of safeguarding.

This includes:

- Ensuring that the College knows which learners have or had a social worker.
- Understanding the academic progress and attainment of these learners/young people.
- Maintaining a culture of high aspirations for these young people.
- Supporting tutors to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help these young people reach their potential.
- Helping to promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues these learners/young people are experiencing with tutors and the MDT.

The DSLs have a duty to:

- Take lead responsibility for safeguarding and learners' protection, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place.
- Provide advice and support to other staff on learners' welfare, safeguarding and learner/young people's protection matters.

- Where appropriate take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and/or support other staff to do so.
- Be part of the out of hours on-call DSL Team.
- Refer cases:
 - To Safeguarding where abuse and neglect are suspected, and support staff who make referrals.
 - To the Channel programme where radicalisation concerns arise, and support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme.
 - To the DBS where a person is dismissed or has left due to harm, or risk of harm to a learner/young person.
 - To the police where a crime may have been committed, in line with the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) guidance.
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff.
- Act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners.
- Liaise with the other DSLs to ensure effective safeguarding outcomes.
- Liaise with the case manager and the LA designated officers (LADOs) for learner protection concerns in cases concerning staff.
- Liaise with staff on matters of safety, safeguarding and welfare, including online and digital safety.
- Liaise with staff when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies so that young people's needs are considered holistically.
- Promote supportive engagement with parents in relation to safeguarding.
- Work with the College Coordinators, AUMs and relevant Residential Managers and AUMs, taking responsibility for promoting outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and learner protection issues that the young people in need are experiencing. Identifying the impact that these issues might be having on their attendance, engagement and achievement.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands ESPA's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy - this will be discussed during the staff induction process.
- Work with the Trustees to ensure ESPA's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is reviewed annually, and the procedures are updated and reviewed regularly.
- Ensure the College Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is available publicly, on the website.
- Link with local safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure that staff are aware of the relevant training opportunities available and the latest local policies on safeguarding.
- All relevant staff undergo child safeguarding training that is refreshed every 3 years.
- Encourage a culture of listening to young people and taking account of their wishes and feelings.
- Support and advise staff to help them feel confident re: safeguarding and child protection matters.
- Understand the importance of partnerships and information sharing, including within College, with other Colleges, and with the safeguarding partners, other organisations and practitioners.
- Understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR.
- Keep detailed, accurate, secure records of concerns and referrals, safeguarding data, and understand the purpose of this record-keeping.
- Analyse safeguarding data, looking for identifiable trends to inform best practice and training needs.

3. Multi-agency working

ESPA College contributes to multi-agency working as part of its statutory duty. The College is aware of and will follow the local safeguarding arrangements.

We work with CSCS, Channel the police, health services and other services to protect the welfare of young people.

Information sharing

We recognise the importance of proactive information sharing between professionals and local agencies in order to effectively meet young people's needs and identify any need for early help.

Considering the above, staff will be aware that whilst the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 place a duty on colleges to process personal information fairly and lawfully, they also allow for information to be stored and shared for safeguarding purposes. Data protection regulations do not act as a barrier to sharing information when failure to do so would result in the learner/young person being placed at risk of harm.

Staff members will ensure that fear of sharing information does not stand in the way of their responsibility to promote the welfare and safety of learners/young people. If staff members are in doubt about sharing information, they can speak to a DSL.

4. Early help

Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a young person's life. Any young person may benefit from early help, but in particular, staff will be alert to the potential need for early help for learners who:

- Have SEND, regardless of whether they have a statutory EHC plan.
- Have mental health needs.
- Are young carers.
- Show signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines.
- Are frequently missing or going missing from care or from home.
- Are at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, or sexual or criminal exploitation.
- Are at risk of being radicalised or exploited.
- Have family members in prison, or are affected by parental offending.
- Are in a family circumstance presenting challenges for them, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health problems, or domestic abuse.
- Misuse drugs or alcohol.
- Have returned home to their family from care.
- Are at risk of Honour Based Abuse, such as FGM or forced marriage.
- Are persistently absent from education.
- Show early signs of abuse and/or neglect in other ways.

Managers and DSLs will take the lead where early help is appropriate. This includes liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. The local early help process will be followed as required.

Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment. In some cases acting as the lead practitioner.

5. Abuse and neglect

All staff will be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect and understand that young people/learners can be at risk of harm inside and outside of College, inside and outside of the home, and online. All staff will be aware that abuse, neglect and other safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be given a specific label, and multiple issues often overlap one another. Therefore, staff will be vigilant and always raise concerns with a DSL. All staff will be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the College/residential setting and can occur between young people outside of these environments. This includes being aware that young people can be at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside of their families. All staff will be aware of the appropriate action to take following a learner being identified as a potential risk of abuse and will speak to a DSL if they are unsure.

All staff will be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues, including online abuse, cyberbullying, and the sharing of indecent images.

6. Child-on-child abuse

For the purposes of this policy, “**child-on-child abuse**” is defined as abuse between children.

ESPA has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, including child-on-child abuse, as confirmed in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy’s statement of intent.

All staff will be aware that child-on-child abuse can occur between young people of any age and gender, both inside and outside of College/home 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 a DSL if they have any concerns about child-on-child abuse.

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 – sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’.
- 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.
- The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.
- Upskirting.
- 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 ESPA policy and procedures regarding child-on-child abuse and the role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

Learners/young people 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/young people will also be reassured that they will be taken seriously, be supported, and kept safe.

7. Online safety and personal electronic devices

We will adhere to the Safe IT Use Policy at all times.

As part of a broad and balanced curriculum, all young people will be made aware of online risks and taught how to stay safe online.

Through training, all staff members will be made aware of:

- Attitudes and behaviours which may indicate students are at risk of potential harm online.
- The procedure to follow when they have a concern regarding a young person's online activity.

KCSIE 23 will ensure that appropriate monitoring and filtering systems are in place on College devices and networks to prevent young people accessing inappropriate material. The College will, however, ensure that the use of filtering and monitoring systems does not cause “over blocking”, which may lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what learners/young people can be taught online. We will also ensure that it meets the filtering and monitoring standards published by the DfE and work towards gaining Cyber Essentials Certification.

Staff will be aware of the filtering and monitoring systems in place and will know how to escalate concerns where they are identified.

Communicating with parents

As part of the usual communication with parents, including regular Parent Forums, ESPA will reinforce the importance of young people being safe online and inform parents around current online safety concerns in our Parent's Forum.

Personal electronic devices

The use of ESPA electronic devices, including mobile phones and cameras, by staff and learners/young people is closely monitored by ESPA in accordance with the Safe IT Use and Use of Social Media Policy.

Photographs and videos young people will be carefully planned before any activity with particular regard to consent and adhering to Data Protection. Designated staff will oversee the planning of any events where photographs and videos will be taken.

Where photographs and videos will involve young people who are LAC, adopted learners, or learners for whom there are security concerns, the DSLs will liaise with the learner/young person's social workers, carers or adoptive parents to assess the needs and risks associated with the learners/young people.

Staff will report any concerns about learners'/young peoples' or other staff members' use of personal electronic devices to a manager or DSL, following the appropriate procedures.

8. Consensual and non-consensual sharing of indecent images and videos

ESPA will ensure that staff are aware to treat the consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as "sexting" or youth-produced sexual images) is a safeguarding concern.

Staff will understand the difference between sexual behaviour that is considered normal and expected for the age of the young person, and sexual behaviour that is inappropriate and harmful. Staff will understand how to deal with instances of sharing nudes and semi-nudes in the College community, including understanding motivations, assessing risks posed to learners/young people depicted in the images, and how and when to report instances of this behaviour.

Staff will be aware that anyone creating, possessing, and distributing indecent imagery of learners is a criminal offence, regardless of whether the imagery is created, possessed, and distributed by the individual depicted.

Where a member of staff becomes aware of an incidence of sharing nudes and/or semi-nudes, they will refer this to a manager or DSL as soon as possible.

Where appropriate, young people/learners will be informed about sexual related activity and the law as part of the wider curriculum.

9. Context of safeguarding incidents

Safeguarding incidents can occur outside of the home/College and can be associated with outside factors. All staff, particularly the DSLs, will always consider the context of safeguarding incidents. Assessment of a young person's behaviour will consider whether there are wider environmental factors that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. The College will provide as much contextual information as possible when making referrals to CSCS.

LAC and PLAC (Looked after Children and Previously Looked after Children)

Children can often become looked after because of abuse and/or neglect. Because of this, they can be at potentially greater risk in relation to safeguarding. PLAC, also known as care leavers, can also remain vulnerable after leaving care.

We will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep LAC and PLAC safe. This includes ensuring that the appropriate staff have the information needed such as:

- Looked after legal status, i.e. whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents, or on an interim full care order.
- Contact arrangements with parents or those with parental responsibility.
- Care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority of looking after the learner.

LGBTQ+ young people

The fact that a young person may be LGBTQ+ is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, staff will be aware that LGBTQ+ young people can be targeted by other individuals.

Staff will also be aware that the risk to these learners/young people can be compounded when they do not have a trusted adult with whom they can speak openly. Staff will endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced by these young people and provide a safe space for them to speak out and share any concerns they have.

Young people requiring mental health support

All staff will be made aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a learner/young person has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect or exploitation.

10. Subcontracted & alternative provision

The College will remain responsible for a young person's welfare during their time at an alternative provider such as a local GFE College. When placing a young person with an alternative provider, the College will seek confirmation that the provider has conducted all relevant safeguarding checks on staff.

11. Work experience

When a learner is sent on work experience the College will ensure that the provider has appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place.

12. Concerns about learners

If a member of staff has any concerns about a young person's welfare, or a young person has reported a safeguarding concern in relation to themselves or a peer, they will act immediately by speaking to a manager or DSL.

Staff will be aware that young people may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experience as harmful. Staff will be aware that this must not prevent them from having professional curiosity and speaking to someone if they have concerns about the learner.

All staff members are aware of the procedure for reporting concerns and understand their responsibilities in relation to confidentiality and information sharing.

The LA will usually make a decision regarding what action is required within one working day of the referral being made and will notify the referrer. Staff are required to monitor a referral if they do not receive information from the LA regarding what action is necessary for the young person. If the situation does not improve after a referral, we will ask for reconsideration to ensure that their concerns have been addressed and that the situation improves for the young person.

If a young person is in immediate danger, a referral will be made to CSCS and/or the police immediately. If a young person has committed a crime, such as sexual violence, the police will be notified without delay.

Where there are safeguarding concerns, ESPA will ensure that the young person's wishes are taken into account, and that there are systems available for learners to provide feedback and express their views. When responding to safeguarding concerns, staff members will act calmly and supportively, ensuring that the young person feels like they are being listened to and believed.

13. Managing referrals

The reporting and referral process outlined in the Reporting Safeguarding Concerns Flowchart will be followed accordingly. (Appendix A).

All staff members, in particular the DSLs, will be aware of the LA's arrangements in place for managing referrals. The DSLs and managers will provide staff members with clarity and support where needed. When making a referral to CSCS or other external agencies, information will be shared in line with confidentiality requirements and will only be shared where necessary to do so.

Managers and DSLs will work alongside external agencies, maintaining continuous liaison, including multi-agency links where appropriate, in order to ensure the wellbeing of the learners/young people involved. The team will work closely with the police (where appropriate) to ensure ESPA does not jeopardise any criminal proceedings, and to obtain help and support as necessary.

Where a young person involved has been harmed or is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, the referrer will be notified of the action that will be taken within one working day of a referral being made. Where this information is not forthcoming, the referrer will contact the assigned social worker for more information.

ESPA will not wait for the start or outcome of an investigation before protecting those involved: this applies to criminal investigations as well as those made by CSCS. Where CSCS decide that a statutory investigation is not appropriate, ESPA will consider referring the incident again if it is believed that the young person involved is at risk of harm. Where CSCS decide that a statutory investigation is not appropriate ESPA agrees with this decision, we will consider the use of other support mechanisms, such as early help and pastoral support.

At all stages of the reporting and referral process, the young person involved (where appropriate), 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 young person or others at potential risk of harm.

14. Concerns about College safeguarding practices

Any concerns regarding the safeguarding practices can be raised with the Senior Leadership Team, and the necessary whistleblowing procedures will be followed, as outlined in the Whistleblowing Policy. If a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with the SLT, they should contact the Trustees or access other whistleblowing channels such as the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline (0800 028 0285).

15. Communication and confidentiality

All child protection and safeguarding concerns will be treated in the strictest of confidence.

Concerns will only be reported to those necessary for their progression or escalation and reports will only be shared amongst staff members and with external agencies on a need-to-know basis. During the disclosure of a concern by a young person, staff members will not promise the young person confidentiality and will ensure that they are aware of what information will be shared, with whom and why.

Where it is in the public interest, and protects young people from harm, information can be lawfully shared without the victim's consent, e.g. if doing so would assist the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime. Before doing so, managers and DSLs will weigh the victim's wishes against their duty to prevent harm to the victim and others. Where a referral is made against the victim's wishes, it is done so carefully with the reasons for the referral explained to the victim and specialist support offered.

Depending on the nature of a concern, the team will discuss the concern with the parents or carers of the young person involved. Discussions with parents will not take place where they could potentially put a young person at risk of harm. Discussion with the victim's parents will relate to the arrangements being put in place to safeguard the victim, with the aim of understanding their wishes in terms of support arrangements and the progression of the report. Discussion with any alleged perpetrator's parents will have regard to the arrangements that will impact their child, with the reasons behind decisions behind decisions being explained and the available support discussed. External agencies will be invited to these discussions where necessary.

Where a young person is leaving the service, managers and DSLs will consider whether it is appropriate to share any information with the young person's new provider, that will allow the new provider to support the learner/young person and arrange appropriate support for their arrival.

16. Safer recruitment

ESPA's full policy and procedures for safer recruitment are outlined in our Recruitment & DBS Policy & Safeguarding Policies.

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 the care or supervision of learners.
- Regularly work in the College/residential at times when learners are on the premises.
- Regularly come into contact with young people under 18 years of age.

The appropriate DBS and suitability checks will be carried out for all Trustees and volunteers.

In line with KCSIE 24, we may undertake preliminary online checks as part of our recruitment processes.

Referral to the DBS

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed a young person or posed a risk of harm to a young person, or if there is a reason to believe the member of staff has committed an offence and has been removed from working in regulated activity.

17. Single central record (SCR)

ESPA keep an SCR which records all staff.

This includes:

- An identity check
- A barred list check
- An enhanced DBS check
- A prohibition from teaching check
- A check of professional qualifications where required
- A check to determine the individual's right to work in the UK
- Additional checks for those who have lived or worked outside of the UK
- Whether the employee's position involves relevant activity, i.e., regularly caring for, training, supervising or being solely in charge of persons aged under 18

For agency and third-party supply staff, we will also record whether confirmation from the agency supplying the member of staff has been received which indicates that all necessary checks have been conducted, and the date that confirmation was received. If any checks have been conducted for volunteers, this will also be recorded.

Written confirmation that supply agencies have completed all relevant checks will also be included.

ESPA is free to record any other information it deems relevant.

The details of an individual will be removed from the SCR once they no longer work with us.

18. Training

Staff members will undergo safeguarding/child protection training at induction, which will be updated on a yearly basis and/or whenever there is a change in legislation.

Induction will cover:

- Appropriate child protection and safeguarding training, including online safety training – which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.
- Information about the role and identity of the DSLs.
- Prevent Duty.

All staff members will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates as required.

Staff will receive opportunities to contribute towards and inform the safeguarding arrangements in ESPA.

The Principal and Vice Principal will undergo L3 child protection and safeguarding training, and update this training every two years. The DSLs will also obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses, ensuring they keep up-to-date with any developments relevant to their role. This will include training to understand:

- How LAs conduct child protection case conferences and child protection review conferences, to enable the DSL to attend and contribute to these effectively when required.
- The importance of providing information and support to CSCS.
- How to be alert to the specific needs of children in need, learners/young people with SEND and/or relevant health conditions, and young carers.
- The importance of internal and external information sharing.
- The Prevent duty.
- The risk associated with online safety, including the additional risks faced online by pupils with SEND.

19. Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed at least annually by the DSL team. This policy will be updated as needed to ensure it is up-to-date with safeguarding issues as they emerge and evolve, including any lessons learnt.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff. All members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in this policy as part of their induction programme. The next scheduled review date for this policy is September 2026.

20. Specific safeguarding issues

This section sets out details about specific safeguarding issues that learners may experience and outlines specific actions that would be taken in relation to individual issues.

The issues covered are:

Domestic abuse

For the purposes of this policy, and 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.

ESPA recognises the impact of domestic abuse on young people, as victims in their own right, or if they see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse

Young people absent from education

A learner who is absent from College can be a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. Staff will monitor young people via attendance reviews, if they are absent from the College, particularly on repeat occasions and/or prolonged periods, reporting them to DSL following normal safeguarding procedures. The College will inform the LA of any learner who fails to attend regularly or has been absent without the College's permission or explanation for a continuous period of 10 College days or more.

The College will follow the DfE's guidance on improving attendance where there is a need to work with children's services due to College absence indicating safeguarding concerns.

Child abduction and community safety incidents

For the purposes of this policy, "**child abduction**" is defined as the unauthorised removal or retention of a child from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents and other relatives, other people known to the victim, and strangers.

Learners will be provided with practical advice and lessons to ensure they can keep themselves safe outdoors.

Child criminal exploitation (CCE)

For the purposes of this policy, "**child criminal exploitation**" 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 into taking part in criminal activity, for any of the following reasons:

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants.
- Through violence or the threat of violence.

Forms of CCE can include:

- Being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines.
- Shoplifting.
- Committing vehicle crime and
- Committing, or threatening to commit, serious violence to others.

We recognise that learners involved in CCE are victims themselves, regardless of whether they have committed crimes, and even if the criminal activity appears consensual.

All staff will be aware of the indicators that a young person is the victim of CCE, including:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions.
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation.

- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing.
- Misusing drugs or alcohol.
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late.
- Regularly becoming absent from College or education or not taking part.

County Lines

For the purposes of this policy, “**County Lines**” refers to gangs and organised criminal networks exploiting young people to move, store or sell drugs and money into one or more areas, locally and/or across the UK.

As well as 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.
- Receiving requests for drugs via a phone line.
- Handing over and collecting money for drugs.
- Being found in accommodation they have no connection with.
- Owing a ‘debt bond’ to their exploiters.
- Having their bank account used to facilitate drug dealing.

Staff will be made aware of learners with missing episodes who may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs . Staff members who suspect a learner may be vulnerable to, or involved in, County Lines activity will immediately report all concerns to a DSL or manager.

Cyber-crime

For the purposes of this policy, “**cyber-crime**” is defined as criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet.

Crimes can include:

- Unauthorised access to computers, known as ‘hacking’.
- Making, supplying or obtaining malicious software, or ‘malware’, e.g. viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and remote access trojans.

All staff will be aware of the signs of cyber-crime and follow the appropriate safeguarding procedures where concerns arise. This may include the DSL referring learners to the National Crime Agency’s Cyber Choices programme.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

For the purposes of this policy, “**child sexual exploitation**” is defined as a form of sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity for any of the following reasons:

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants.

- For the financial advantage, increased status or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator.
- Through violence or the threat of violence.

ESPA recognises that CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the learner's immediate knowledge, e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. We will recognise that CSE can affect any learner who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities, even if the activity appears consensual; this includes learners aged 16 and above who can legally consent to sexual activity.

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

- Appearing with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions.
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation.
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing.
- Misusing drugs or alcohol.
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late.
- Regularly becoming absent or not taking part.
- Having older partners.
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections.
- Displaying sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development.

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

Modern slavery

For the purposes of this policy, “**modern slavery**” encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude, and forced or compulsory labour. This can include CCE, CSE, and other forms of exploitation.

All staff will be aware of and alert to the signs that a learner may be the victim of modern slavery.

FGM

For the purposes of this policy, “**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 someone 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 CSCS and/or the police.

Indicators that a learner may be at heightened risk of undergoing FGM include:

- The learner coming from a community known to adopt FGM.
- Any girl with a mother or sister who has been subjected to FGM.
- Any girl withdrawn from PSHE sessions/discussions.

Virginity testing and hymenoplasty

Under the Health and Care Act 2022, it is illegal to carry out, offer or aid and abet virginity testing or hymenoplasty in any part of the UK. It is also illegal for UK nationals and residents to do these things outside the UK.

Virginity testing and hymenoplasty are forms of violence against women and girls and are part of the cycle of HBA and can be precursors to child or forced marriage and other forms of family and/or community coercive behaviours, including physical and emotional control. Victims are pressurised into undergoing these procedures, often by family members or their intended husband's family to fulfil the requirement that any woman remains 'pure' before marriage.

Forced marriage

Forced marriage is a crime. It is a form of abuse directed towards a child or vulnerable adult, including adults who are forced into marriage against their free will.

Forced marriage is a marriage where one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage but are coerced into it. Force can be physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. Forced marriage can be committed if a person lacks capacity, whether or not coercion plays a part.

All staff will be alert to the indicators that a young person is at risk of, or has undergone, forced marriage, including, but not limited to, the learner:

- Being absent from College – particularly where this is persistent.
- Requesting for extended leave of absence and failure to return from visits to country of origin.
- Being fearful about forthcoming College holidays.
- Demonstrating a decline in behaviour, engagement, performance or punctuality.
- Being withdrawn from College by parents.
- Suddenly announcing that they are engaged to a stranger, e.g. to friends or on social media.
- Having a family history of forced marriage, e.g. their older siblings have been forced to marry.

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 a manager or DSL and local safeguarding procedures will be followed.

Radicalisation

For the purposes of this policy, “**radicalisation**” refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups

For the purposes of this policy, “**extremism**” refers to the vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

For the purposes of this policy, **“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.

Protecting young people from the risk of radicalisation is part of ESPA’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 learner’s behaviour which could indicate that they may need help or protection.

Staff will use their professional judgement to identify learners who may be susceptible to extremist ideologies and radicalisation and act appropriately, which may include contacting a manager or DSL or making a Prevent referral. The College will work with local safeguarding arrangements as appropriate.

All staff working with young people under 18 will undertake Prevent awareness training alongside regular refresher training to be able to provide advice and support on how to protect learners against the risk of radicalisation.

The Prevent Duty

Under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, all Colleges are subject to a duty to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”, known as **“the Prevent Duty”**. The Prevent Duty will form part of the College’s wider safeguarding obligations. 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 Duty Policy.

Mental health

All staff will be made aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a learner has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Staff who have a mental health concern about a learner that is also a safeguarding concern will act in line with this policy and speak to a DSL.

The College will access a range of advice to help them identify learners in need of additional mental health support, including working with external agencies.

Serious violence

Staff will be made aware of the indicators which may signal a learner 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.
- 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.

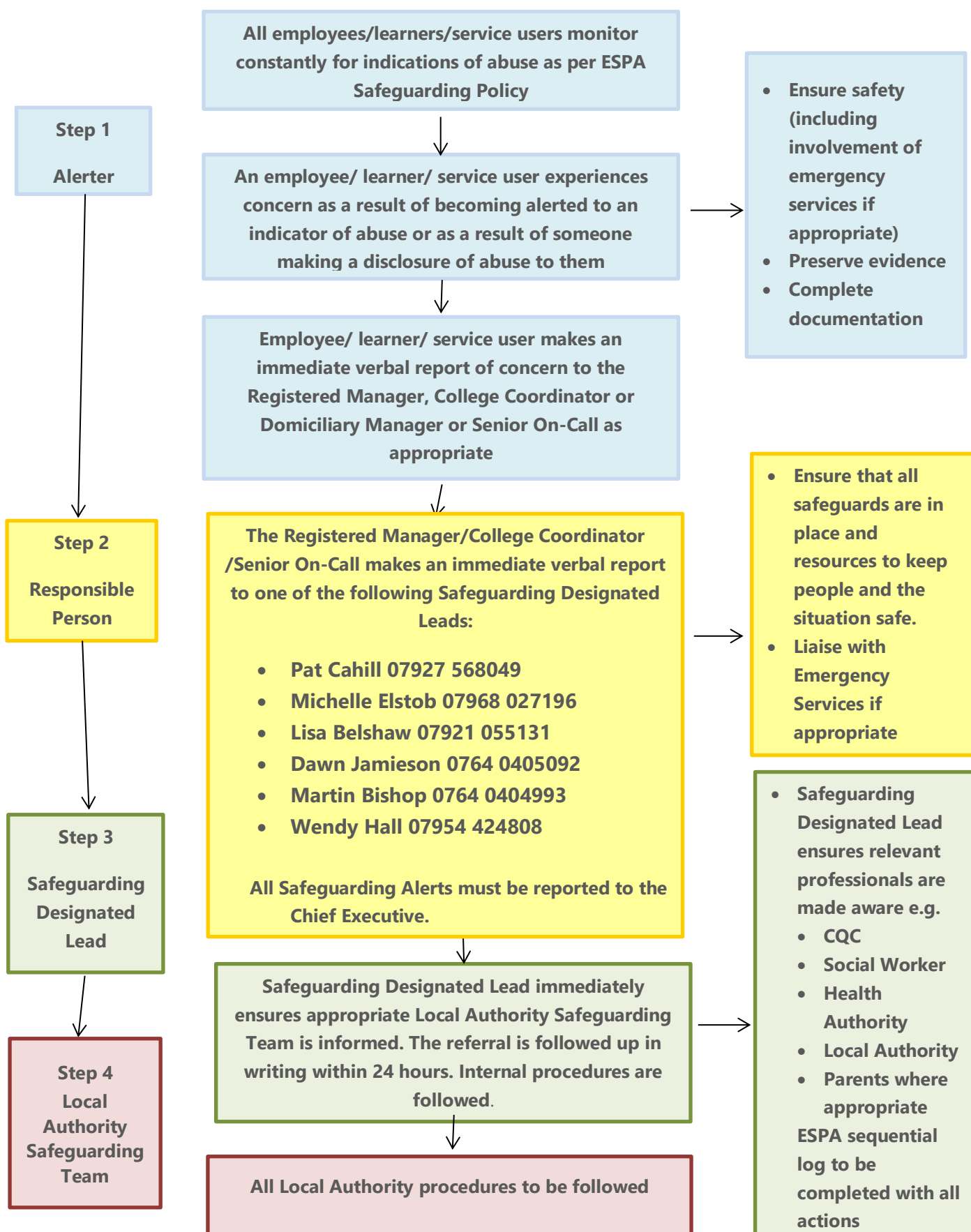
Staff will be made aware of some of the most significant risk factors that could increase a learner's vulnerability to becoming involved in serious violence. These risk factors include, but are not limited to:

- Being male.
- Having been frequently absent from College.
- Having experienced child maltreatment.
- 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 this to a manager or DSL.

ESPA INTERNAL PROCEDURE FOR SAFEGUARDING

(Sunderland, Durham, North Tyneside, Newcastle, Teesside, Gateshead)



INTERNAL ALERT NOTIFICATION

Name of Alerter: _____ Workplace: _____

Date: _____

Format of information received (verbal disclosure, written disclosure, event witnessed etc.):

Alleged perpetrator(s):

Alleged victim(s):

Details (facts only, exact words used, no interpretation):

Other documentation completed (e.g. Record of Discussion, Record of Concern re. expression of emotive language)

Alert passed on to: _____ (Responsible Person) _____ (Safeguarding Manager)

Alerter

Responsible Person

Safeguarding Manager

Signed:

Signed:

Signed:

Print Full Name:

Print Full Name:

Print Full Name:

Date: _____

Date: _____

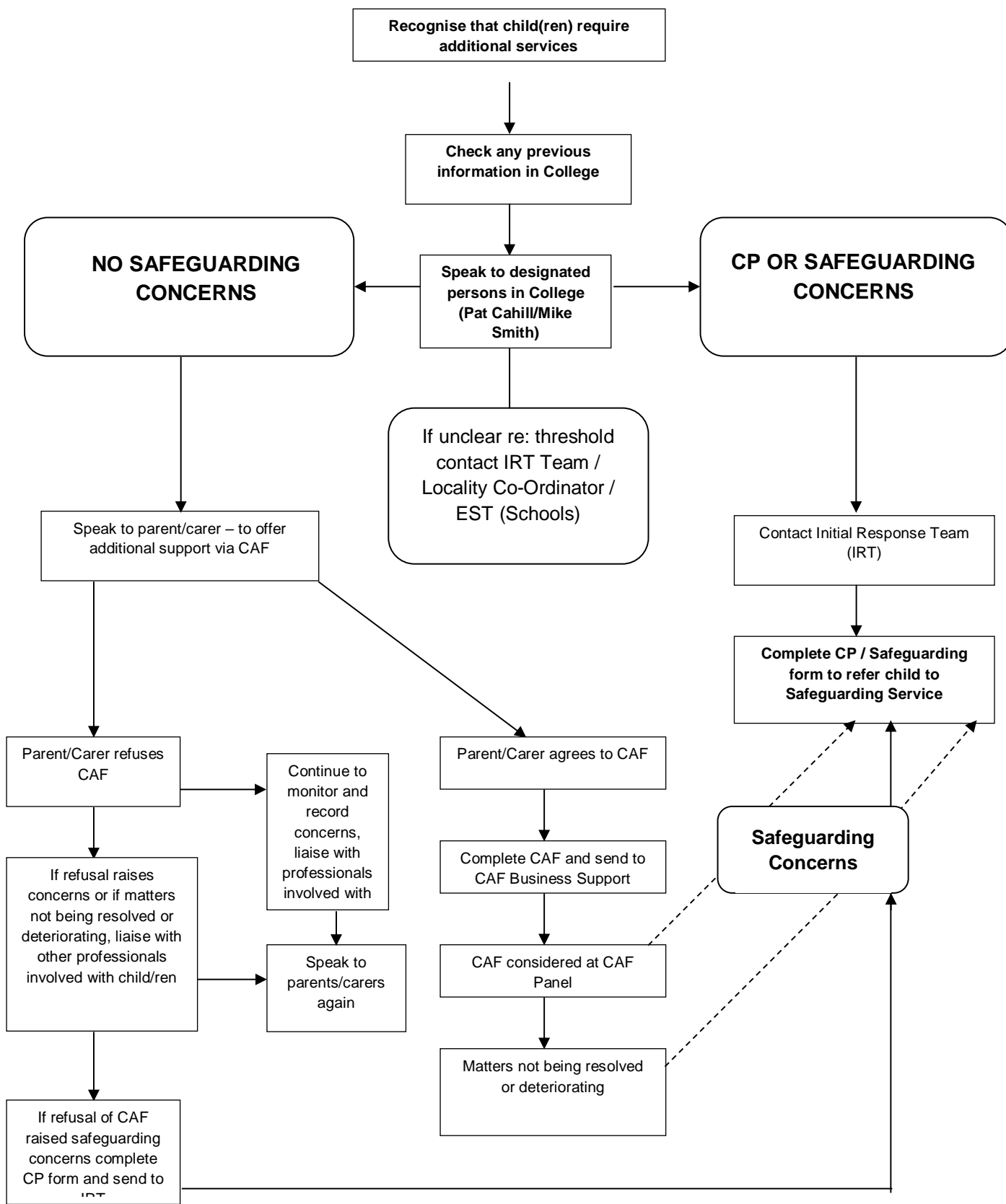
Date: _____

Safeguarding Sequential log:

Name:	Date of Entry:
Site name:	Did the incident happen within ESPA:
Has a safeguarding referral been made? <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Safeguarding reference number (if available)</u>	
<u>Description of initial alert/concern:</u> 	
<u>Action to be taken:</u> 	
<u>Additional information and follow up:</u> 	

Site Coordinator:		<input type="checkbox"/>
Principal:	Pat Cahill	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health and Social Care Lead:	Michelle Elstob	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vice Principal:	Dawn Jamieson	<input type="checkbox"/>
ESPA PBS team:	Wendy Hall	<input type="checkbox"/>
ESPA H&S Advisor:	Ray Barrett	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is this a notifiable incident (Please consult notifiable incident table)	Mike Smith	<input type="checkbox"/>
ESPA safeguarding oncall: (If applicable)		<input type="checkbox"/>
Social worker:		<input type="checkbox"/>
On call duty worker:		<input type="checkbox"/>
Outcome of safeguarding concern:		
Completed by:		

Additional guidance for managing safeguarding alerts for Children



Local Safeguarding Authority Contact details

Sunderland

0191 520 5552

(24 hours)

[Report a safeguarding concerns - members of the public - Sunderland City Council](#)

Hartlepool

01429 523390

Out of Hours – Duty Team Teeswide

08702 402994

https://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/info/20076/adults_and_older_people/275/teeswide_safeguarding_adults_board

Durham

03000 267979

(24 hours)

<http://www.safeguardingdurhamadults.info>

Redcar & Cleveland

01642 771500

(24 hours)

https://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/info/20076/adults_and_older_people/275/teeswide_safeguarding_adults_board

Newcastle

0191 278 8377

Out of Hours

0191 278 7878

<https://www.newcastlesafeguarding.org.uk/report-a-concern/>

Stockton on Tees

01642 527764

Out of Hours – Duty Team Teeswide

08702 402994

https://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/info/20076/adults_and_older_people/275/teeswide_safeguarding_adults_board

Northumberland

01670 536400

Out of Hours

0345 6005252

<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Care/Safeguarding.aspx>

South Tyneside

0191 424 4049

<http://www.southtyneside.gov.uk/article/4460/safeguardingadultsandchildren>

North Tyneside

0191 6432777

Out of Hours

0330 3337475

Emergency duty team

0330 3337475

<https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/1033/safeguarding-adults>

Middlesbrough

01642 726004

Out of Hours

0870 2402994

https://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/info/20076/adults_and_older_people/275/tees-wide_safeguarding_adults_board

Gateshead

0191 433 7033

(24 hours)

<https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/10277/Tell-us-about-a-safeguarding-concern>