

Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk Policy and Procedure

| | |
|--|--|
| Reviewed: September 2025 | Next review due: September 2026 |
| Approving Body: Corporation | ELT contact: Executive of Curriculum, Quality and Student Experience |
| Date Approved: 13 October 2025 | Owner: Safeguarding Coordinator |

*This procedure may need to be reviewed before the review date stated, to reflect changes in government and other agencies' advice, guidance and legislation

Revision Log

| Date | Version No. | Brief detail of change |
|---------|-------------|---|
| Sept 24 | 1 | New policy |
| Sept 25 | 2 | Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 replaced with 2025. Disciplinary process changed to behaviour management process. Updated Appendix 1 – contact details. Section 7 revised. |

Contents

- 1. Introduction 5
- 2. Policy Statement 5
- 3. Definitions 5
- 4. Key Points 7
- 5. The Designed Staff with Responsibility for Young People and Adults at Risk 12
 - Governors 12
 - Chief Executive/Principal 12
 - The Executive of Curriculum, Quality and Student Experience 12
 - Safeguarding Coordinator 14
 - Safeguarding Officer 15
 - Volunteer Safeguarding Officers 15
 - Estates Management Team 16
 - All Staff 16
- 6. Dealing with Disclosure of Abuse and Procedure for Reporting Concerns Including Prevent Training 17
- 7. Reporting and Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Members of Staff 19
- 8. Reporting and Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against other Students 19
 - Introduction 19
 - Receiving an allegation from a Young Person 20
 - Records 21
 - Monitoring Effectiveness 21
- 9. Recruitment And Selection Procedures 21
- 10. Records 22
- 11. Supporting Documentation Including Safeguarding 22
 - Internal 22
 - External 23
- Appendix 1 - List of College Safeguarding Contacts 24
- Appendix 2 - Flow Chart for Raising Safeguarding Concerns About a Student 25

| | |
|---|----|
| Appendix 3 – Extract from the Information and Records Management Society ‘Records Management Toolkit for Schools’ | 26 |
| Appendix 4 - Understanding and Managing Self-Harm | 27 |
| Introduction..... | 27 |
| Scope | 27 |
| Aims | 27 |
| Definition of Self-Harm..... | 27 |
| Risk Factors..... | 28 |
| Further Considerations | 30 |
| Linked Policies and supporting documents: | 31 |
| Appendix A: Self-harm at college and what to do | 32 |
| Appendix B: Things to consider when talking to students about self-harm..... | 33 |
| Appendix C – Useful resources..... | 35 |
| Appendix 5 - Reporting Low Level Concerns..... | 36 |

1. Introduction

City College Plymouth (the 'College') is a leading provider of vocational, professional and technical training in the South West, that strives to provide a learning environment and organisational culture that impacts positively on the health, wellbeing and sustainability of our community, to enable all our students and staff to achieve their full potential.

The term 'College Community' includes all staff, governors, students, parents/carers, volunteers and visitors.

Our vision:

The learning destination of choice.

Our core values:

- Respect
- Ownership
- Integrity

2. Policy Statement

The College has a statutory duty placed on it by Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 to have in place arrangements with regards to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and vulnerable persons. This is further supported by the Education Act 2011, the Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021 and the Children Act 1989. In order to comply with this duty of care, staff, students, parents, visitors, contractors, and subcontractors must be aware of the lines of communication and levels of responsibility which exist to ensure that matters of safeguarding can be dealt with.

Staff must follow this procedure, must meet the requirements and follow the guidance set out by the Colleges Safeguarding Coordinator and attend designated updating and training as required.

All College policies and procedures should be implemented with due regard to the safeguarding duties.

This Safeguarding procedure provides detailed guidance and instructions which support the College's overarching safeguarding policy. It explains the steps to be taken to keep children and young people safe and what to do when there are concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing.

3. Definitions

'Child' by law means anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

'Child', therefore, means 'child or children and a young person or young people' throughout. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital, in prison or in a Young Offenders' Institution, does not change their status or entitlement to services or protection under the Children Act 1989.

Although current terminology now refers to 'adults at risk' instead of 'Vulnerable Adults', it remains helpful to still consider the term 'vulnerable adult' which as defined in the document 'No Secrets' means a person aged 18 years or over, who is in receipt of, or maybe in need of community care services by reason of 'mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.'

City College Plymouth recognises its duty of care and places the highest importance on safeguarding, the safety, wellbeing and mental health of students which is paramount in all College activities. The College recognises that members of staff, students, partners, visitors, contractors and subcontractors working on behalf of the College have an important role to play in safeguarding, in particular, the welfare of young people and vulnerable persons and preventing abuse and/or harm. City College Plymouth recognises that 'safeguarding is everyone's responsibility', to adopt a 'child-centred approach' (taking into account a child's wishes and feelings) and to provide a safe learning environment.

This includes protecting children and adults at risk from maltreatment including:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Domestic abuse
- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based, discriminatory, homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying)
- Exploitation both sexual and criminal
- Honour based abuse
- Child on child abuse
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment (including child on the child)
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images/or videos
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- Radicalisation for violent extremism or terrorism
- Online and Offline grooming
- Sexting, up-skirting, Sextortion
- So called 'honour'-based abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)
- Knife crime
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the

best interests of the children

- taking action to enable all children and adults at risk to have the best outcomes and for children to enter adulthood successfully supported by a curriculum which will develop children's, young people's and adults' understanding, awareness and resilience of participating safely in a modern British community.
- Protecting children and adults from radicalisation and extremism through the implementation of the PREVENT duty.

In addition, the College also recognises that some individuals are potentially at greater risk of harm or potential harm (both online and offline), due to their particular circumstances, eg, but not limited to:

- Care Experienced or Care Leavers
- Unaccompanied asylum seekers
- Child In Need and Child Protection plans
- Mental health
- SEN or SEND

The college also has an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our young people.

*For the purpose of this policy, the term young person/people is used with the same definition as a child.

4. Key Points

Identification of abuse and 'significant harm' is difficult. All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another. The indicators given below are not prescriptive and must be regarded in the context of the individual's life.

Abuse

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill-treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing the ill-treatment of others. This can be relevant in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. 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 occur in intimate personal relationships between peers. 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.

Physical abuse

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be

caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse

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

Sexual abuse

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

Sexual Harassment and Violence of Children by other Children

Sexual harassment and violence of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and we must be aware that this can happen in or outside college as well as online and there is a need for an 'it could happen here' approach.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two or more children of any age and sex. It can occur also through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face-to-face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable.

Neglect

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

Bullying

City College Plymouth will not tolerate any form of bullying and all staff and students are responsible for making sure that the college is free from bullying. Any bullying issues should be dealt with under the procedures specified in the specific documents Student Anti-Bullying Policy and Student Anti-Bullying Procedures. All staff must challenge and deal with any form of bullying and, if necessary, seek advice and support from the Safeguarding Officers in the college.

Health and Safety

City College Plymouth 'actively promotes an excellent health and safety culture' and will actively promote the concept of the 'safe learner' in a safe environment. Any risk to the welfare and safety of the college community is to be safeguarded by the practices and procedures laid down in the Corporate Health, Safety and Welfare Policy Statement and the college's risk assessment and health and safety checks.

Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

City College Plymouth 'believes that every individual has the right to fair treatment, respect and understanding'. The college's Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy makes it clear that issues of equality and diversity contribute to the college's safeguarding commitment by requiring that all staff, students, governors, agents and visitors make a contribution to a safe environment and the welfare of the college community combating mistreatment and unfairness.

PREVENT

Part of the college's safeguarding duty also includes protecting vulnerable individuals from the risk of radicalisation and extremism. This is called the 'Prevent Duty'. Prevent is a government initiative aimed at stopping people from becoming involved with or supporting violent extremism. The government has defined extremism as 'vocal or active opposition to British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs'. These values are shared and promoted across our college community.

SUMMARY

The College recognises that the types of abuse and neglect and the specific safeguarding issues detailed in this section do not provide an exhaustive list and is committed to responding to all concerns around students in relation to any form of abuse or welfare concerns, (both online and offline). This includes any form of child-on-child abuse, harassment or bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based, discriminatory or HBT. Further advice, guidance and support for staff and students about what to do if they have a concern about any safeguarding issue can be obtained from members of the Safeguarding Team, from the Safeguarding site on the College intranet or from the Plymouth Safeguarding Children Partnership (PSCP) website (www.plymouthscb.org.uk).

We recognise that because of the regular contact with young people, college staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse, maltreatment (including bullying and exploitation) or risks to health and development.

The College will:

- Establish and maintain an environment where young people and adults at risk feel secure, are encouraged to talk, are listened to and the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account.
- Ensure young people and adults at risk know that there are adults in the College whom they can approach if they are worried.
- include opportunities in the tutorial curriculum for young people and adults at risk to develop the skills they need to recognise risk and stay safe.
- We will follow the procedures set out by the PSCP, and take account of guidance issued by the Department of Education to:
 - Designate a member of the Senior Leadership Team to assume responsibility for all safeguarding matters.
 - Ensure we have designated Safeguarding Officers who have received appropriate training and support for this role.
 - Ensure that the Governors monitor arrangements for young people and adults at risk and receive a report at least annually from the Safeguarding Coordinator.
 - Ensure that all staff scheduled to work with 14-18-year-old students and adults at risk will have received the College's safeguarding training prior to involvement with such students.
 - Ensure that all staff have received awareness-raising training about young people and adults at risk issues at induction of new staff.
 - Ensure that all staff plus new governors have been DBS checked.
 - Ensure all members of staff, including volunteers, know the names of the Safeguarding Team and their roles.

- Ensure all staff, partners, visitors, volunteers, contractors and subcontractors, understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse or other safeguarding issues and for referring any concerns to the Safeguarding Coordinator.
- Promote Prevent and Fundamental British and Community Values to develop student resilience to extremism and radicalisation and preparation for work and life in the modern British Community.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the College and staff for young people and adults at risk by setting out its obligations in the appropriate College publication.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding young people and adults at risk matters including attendance at case conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns about young people and adults at risk, even where there is no need to refer to the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main student file, and in locked locations.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- Develop and then follow procedures to handle allegations against other children and young people.
- Ensure that safer recruitment practices and pre-employment vetting are always followed.

The College recognises that young people and adults who are at risk of harm and/or abuse or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The College may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of these young people. When at college their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The college will endeavour to support the student through:

- The content of the curriculum includes online safety, personal safety, resilience and British values.
- The College ethos which promotes a positive, fair, supportive and secure environment and gives students a sense of being valued.
- Ensuring that young people and adults at risk know that certain behaviours are unacceptable but that they personally are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the student such as (but not limited to) Children's Services, Adult Care Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and Careers South West.

- Ensuring that when a student on the safeguarding register leaves the College their information is transferred to their new school or college immediately and that the young person's social worker is informed.

5. The Designed Staff with Responsibility for Young People and Adults at Risk

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Governors

The Governing Body is responsible for the endorsement, approval, implementation and compliance of the College's safeguarding policies and procedures. A member of the Governing Body is appointed as 'The Designated Governor with responsibility for Safeguarding and Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection' and can be contacted through the Director of Governance. The designated Governor will:

- Be an active member of the Safeguarding Committee to ensure the College has a Safeguarding Policy (which incorporates child and vulnerable adult protection) and procedures which reflect the PCSP policy and procedures and are available to all stakeholders upon request.
- Receive appropriate PCSP training to level 2 or above.
- Through membership of the Safeguarding Committee undertake an annual review of how duties are discharged and ensure that deficiencies or weaknesses are remedied promptly.
- Ensure that the Governing Body considers the College policy on safeguarding each year; and
- Ensure that each year the Governing Body is informed of how the College and its staff have complied with the policy, including but not limited to a report on the training that staff have undertaken.

The designated Governor is responsible for overseeing the liaison between agencies such as the police and social services, in connection with allegations against the Chief Executive/Principal or the senior staff member with Lead Responsibility. This will not involve undertaking any form of investigation but will ensure good communication between the parties and provide information to assist enquiries. To assist in these duties, the designated governor shall receive appropriate training.

Chief Executive/Principal

The Chief Executive/Principal has overall accountability for safeguarding within the College.

The Executive of Curriculum, Quality and Student Experience

Is the Designated Safeguarding Lead for the College and has lead responsibility for:

- Overseeing the successful implementation of the Policy and Procedures, including the PREVENT duty.

- Dealing with child protection and vulnerable person issues.
- Ensuring that the College operates safer recruitment practices in accordance with statutory requirements and in conjunction with the Head of People Management.
- Taking a lead role in liaising and working with Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships, Safeguarding Adults Boards and other agencies as required. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult.
- Ensuring that the College operates procedures for dealing with allegations in accordance with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023: a Guide to Inter Agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 and the document 'No Secrets' to protect at-risk adults from abuse.
- Ensuring that the Department for Education has been contacted if the College or one of its subcontractors is subject to investigation by the local authority or the police.
- Ensuring college protocols are followed following the death of a student.
- Taking the lead for raising awareness of issues relating to the wellbeing and welfare of young people and the promotion of a safe learning environment for the young people learning at the College.
- Taking the lead for online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place.
- Ensuring that staff receive basic training in safeguarding issues and are aware of the College's safeguarding procedures.
- The delivery of the safeguarding procedures.
- Attending, when necessary, case strategy meetings with the designated officer from the relevant local authority in respect of safeguarding issues.
- Ensuring that the College has appropriate resources available for safeguarding.
- Ensuring the college's PREVENT duty is fully implemented.
- Providing supervision, advice and support to the Safeguarding Coordinator and other staff on issues relating to young people and adults at risk.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will have received training in young people and adults at risk issues and inter-agency working, as required by the Plymouth Safeguarding Children's Partnership Board (PSCP) and Plymouth Safeguarding Adults Board (PSAB) and will receive refresher training at least every 2 years.

Safeguarding Coordinator

The Safeguarding Coordinator is responsible for:

- Receiving, recording and passing on external agencies, where appropriate and following consultation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, disclosures in accordance with College procedures.
- Liaising with the Designated Safeguarding Lead as appropriate.
- Providing advice and support to other employees/volunteers on issues related to young people and vulnerable persons.
- Informing parents/carers, where appropriate, and following consultation with the College's Designated Safeguarding Lead in line with the College's Disclosure to parents/carers Policy.
- Attending training commensurate with the role.
- Keeping themselves up to date with any changes in College policy/procedures or legislative changes.
- Attending College meetings to report on safeguarding matters.
- Conducting Criminal Convictions Reviews liaising with Designated Safeguarding Lead as appropriate.
- Reporting to the senior member of staff with lead responsibility.
- Making an appropriate referral.
- Providing advice and support to other staff on issues relating to young people and adults at risk.
- Dealing with individual cases, including attending case conferences, supporting any relevant assessment processes and attending review meetings as appropriate.
- Ensuring that a proper record is kept of any young people and adults at risk of referral, (even where that concern does not lead to a referral to another agency or authority).
- Taking a lead role in liaising and working with Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships, Safeguarding Adults Boards and other agencies as required.
- The operational management of the Safeguarding Officers, including the provision of supervision, support, training, advice and guidance as appropriate.
- Ensuring that the procedures contained within the Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023; a Guide to Inter-Agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 and 'No Secrets' are followed at an operational level.
- Liaising and working with other agencies to ensure a 'multi-agency approach' to safeguarding in the College and to contribute to safeguarding in the wider community.

- Liaising with schools that send pupils to the College to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made.
- Ensuring that systems are in place for the safe and secure transfer and receipt of confidential safeguarding files, in accordance with relevant local authority requirements
- Managing and liaising with the Virtual School.
- Ensuring an Annual Report is produced and presented to the Governing Body to ensure the effectiveness of the College's safeguarding policy and procedures and enabling the Governing Board to make any recommendations for revisions where appropriate

The Safeguarding Coordinator will have received training in young people and adult issues and inter-agency working, as required by the PSCP, and will receive refresher training every 2 years.

Safeguarding Officer

The Safeguarding Officer will support the Safeguarding Coordinator by:

- Receiving, recording and passing onto external agencies, where appropriate and following consultation with the Safeguarding Coordinator, disclosures in accordance with College procedures.
- Liaising with the Safeguarding Coordinator and Designated Safeguarding Lead as appropriate.
- Providing advice and support to other employees/volunteers on issues related to young people and vulnerable persons.
- Informing parents/carers, where appropriate, and following consultation with the College's Safeguarding Coordinator, in line with the College's Disclosure to parents/carers Policy.
- Attending training commensurate with the role.
- Keeping themselves up to date with any changes in College policy/procedures or legislative changes.
- Attending College meetings to report on safeguarding matters.
- Partake in conducting Criminal Convictions Reviews liaising with the Safeguarding Coordinator and Designated Safeguarding Lead as appropriate.

Volunteer Safeguarding Officers

The Volunteer Safeguarding Officers are responsible for:

- Reporting to the Safeguarding Coordinator.
- Dealing with and making an appropriate referral.
- Providing advice and support to other staff on issues relating to young people and adults at risk.
- Responding to a disclosure and listening to young people studying at the College.

- Dealing with individual cases, including attending case conferences, supporting any relevant assessment processes and attending review meetings as appropriate.
- The Volunteer Safeguarding Officers will have received training in young people and adult issues and inter-agency working, as required by the PSCP, and will receive refresher training every 2 years.

A full list of staff with responsibility for safeguarding can be found in **Appendix 1**.

Estates Management Team

The Estates Management Team are responsible for:

- Ensuring that all contractors satisfy safeguarding requirements under their statutory obligations and provide information to contractor employees.
- Liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead for issues related to safeguarding the welfare of young persons and vulnerable persons.
- Periodically conduct a review of the college estate in relation to safeguarding staff, students and visitors and report findings to the Executive of Curriculum, Quality and Student Experience / Designated Safeguarding Lead.

All Staff

All staff have a responsibility under the Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk Policy to:

- Promote and apply our Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk Policy and procedures.
- Raise any safeguarding concern about a student through the safeguarding referral process.
- Raise any safeguarding concerns about another staff member to the DSL or Chief Executive/Principal.
- Be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the safeguarding team if they have concerns.
- Raise any concerns regarding safeguarding practices within the College.
- Be aware of and follow their statutory duties as detailed in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025', 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2023, 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' 2015, and 'Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults working with Children and Young People' 2015.
- Wear their College Lanyard and ID badge at all times while on College premises (with the exception of hazardous areas such as workshops).

- Comply with the established Visitor Protocol by ensuring that all visitors sign in at Reception on arrival, wear their Visitor ID badge at all times whilst on College property and sign out on departure.

IMPLEMENTATION

6. Dealing with Disclosure of Abuse and Procedure for Reporting Concerns Including Prevent Training

Any member of staff who has knowledge of or a suspicion that a child / vulnerable adult is or has been suffering significant harm must refer their concern to a Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible. They must also pass any written notes to the Safeguarding Officers and not retain any written information. All allegations or suspicions must be taken seriously. The student must be advised that this information cannot be kept confidential and will be passed on to the designated member of staff in the College in the first instance. **(Appendix 2)**.

If a young person or adult at risk tells a member of staff about possible abuse or safeguarding concern staff should:

- Listen carefully and stay calm; do not interview the young individual, let them talk and without pressure, in order to be sure that you understand what the young person is telling you; questions should be kept to the minimum required for clarity, and leading questions must be avoided.
- Reassure the individual that by telling you, they have done the right thing.
- Inform the individual that you must pass the information on and only those that need to know about it will be told. Inform them of whom you will report the matter.
- Note the main points carefully.
- Make a detailed note of the date, time, place, what the individual said, did and your questions and any injuries observed if any.
- Pass, by hand, or other secure method of delivery (not email) such detailed notes into the care and control of the Designated Staff Members. The Designated Staff Members shall store the notes in a secure and central location and will use them to assist in the identification of possible patterns of concerns.
- Contact the police or the appropriate local authority service in the event of the risk of significant or immediate harm to the individual.

Staff should not investigate concerns or allegations themselves and report them immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Staff Members.

PREVENT Referral

Part of the College's safeguarding duty also includes protecting vulnerable individuals from the risk of radicalisation and extremism. This is called the 'Prevent Duty'. Prevent is a government

initiative aimed at stopping people from becoming involved with or supporting violent extremism. The government has defined extremism as: ‘vocal or active opposition to British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs’. These values are shared and promoted across our College community.

All staff should be able to recognise signs and indicators of concern and respond appropriately. The following lists are not exhaustive and all or none may be present in individual cases of concern. Nor does it mean that vulnerable young people experiencing these factors are automatically at risk of exploitation for the purposes of extremism. There is no such thing as a ‘typical extremist’ and those involved in extremism come from a range of backgrounds and experiences.

The following indicators may help to identify factors that suggest a vulnerable adult, a young person or their family that may be vulnerable or involved with extremism.

Association with those known to be involved in extremism

- Possession or distribution of extremist literature/other media material likely to incite racial/religious hatred or acts of violence.
- Use of closed network groups via electronic media for the purpose of extremist activity.
- Evidence of fraudulent identity/use of documents to support.
- Accessing extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element.

Experiences, behaviours and influences

- Experience of peer, social, family or faith group rejection.
- International events in areas of conflict and civil unrest had a personal impact on the young person resulting in a noticeable change in behaviour.
- Verbal or written support of terrorist attacks, left / right wing activities.
- First-hand experience of racial or religious hate crime.
- Extended periods of travel to locations known to be associated with extremism.
- Significant changes to appearance/behaviour.
- Articulating support for extremist causes or leaders.
- Experience of disadvantage, discrimination or social exclusion.
- History of criminal activity.
- Pending a decision on immigration/national status.

Prevent Risk Assessment and Action Plan

The College Prevent Risk Assessment and Action plan identifies risks associated with national, regional and local profiles, control measures and actions.

Channel Referral Process

Where staff have a concern, they should report this to the Safeguarding Coordinator who will raise the concern with the PREVENT Regional, HE/FE Co-ordinator – Southwest. Once identified a multi-agency meeting will be convened to agree on actions to support the individual. If it is deemed that there are no concerns around radicalisation, appropriate and targeted support will be considered for the young person.

DfE Referrals, where the college or one of its subcontractors becomes the subject of a prevent-related police or Local Authority investigation, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will work with the Chair and/or Chief Executive/Principal to report this to the DfE.

7. Reporting and Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Members of Staff

The procedures apply to all staff, whether teaching, administrative, management, senior management or support, supply/agency staff as well as to volunteers and contractors. The word 'staff' is used for ease of description. The procedures are to be applied and managed in accordance with Working Together 2023 guidance and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025, the principal requirements of which are contained herein.

Any allegations against members of staff will be dealt with through the Staff Disciplinary Policy.

8. Reporting and Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against other Students

The procedures are applied and managed in accordance with the Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 guidance and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025, the principal requirements of which are contained herein.

Introduction

Occasionally, allegations may be made against students by others within the college, which are of a safeguarding nature. Safeguarding issues raised may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation and exploitation connected with crime or attempts at radicalisation for violent and non-violent extremism.

An allegation may:

- Be made against another student and refer to their behaviour towards a fellow student or a young person within the College community.
- Be of a serious nature, possibly including a criminal offence.
- Raise risk factors for other students and young people within the College community.

- Indicate that other students and young people within the College community may have been affected by this student.
- Indicate that young people outside of the College community may be affected by this student.

If a young person may have suffered significant harm, or there may be a criminal prosecution, social services or the police, as appropriate, should consider what support the young person may need.

Every effort shall be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity while an allegation is being investigated/considered.

The College shall keep clear and comprehensive records of any allegations made, details of how the allegations were followed up and resolved and of any actions taken and decisions reached. These shall be kept in accordance with the paragraph below ('Records').

Receiving an allegation from a Young Person

A member of staff who receives an allegation about a student or young person within the College community from another student should follow the guidelines in Section 6 for dealing with disclosure.

The allegation should be reported immediately to the Safeguarding Coordinator in line with the College's internal procedures. Staff should not investigate concerns or allegations themselves and report them immediately to the Safeguarding Coordinator.

The Safeguarding Coordinator should contact social services to discuss the case where required. It is possible that social services are already aware of safeguarding concerns around this student. The Safeguarding Coordinator will follow through with the outcomes of the discussion and make a social services referral where appropriate.

If the allegation indicates a potential criminal offence has taken place, the police should be contacted at the earliest opportunity and parents informed (of both the student being complained about and the alleged victim).

It may be appropriate to suspend the student being complained about for a period of time in accordance with the College's Behaviour Management Procedure.

Where neither social services nor the police accept the complaint, a thorough investigation should take place into the matter using the College's Behaviour Management Procedure.

In situations where the College considers a safeguarding risk is present, including a report of sexual violence or harassment, a risk assessment should be prepared along with a preventative supervision plan. The risk assessment shall be led by the Safeguarding Coordinator.

The plan should be monitored and a date set for a review with everyone concerned.

Records

It is important that records relating to the concern and any investigation are retained in a secure place, together with a written or electronic record of the outcome. The Safeguarding Coordinator shall ensure that records are retained on both students' files.

Records will be retained in accordance with the Information and Records Management Society 'records management toolkit for schools' of 2019.

Monitoring Effectiveness

Where an allegation has been made against another student, the Safeguarding Coordinator, together with the Senior Staff Member with Lead Responsibility, should, after the investigation and any disciplinary procedures, consider whether there are any matters arising from it that could lead to the improvement of the College's practices, procedures and policies. This should occur regardless of whether the case is accepted by social services and/or the police. Consideration should also be given to the training needs of staff and student induction.

9. Recruitment And Selection Procedures

The College has safer recruitment and selection procedures which meet the requirements of the existing legislation and associated statutory guidelines. These are regularly reviewed in order to ensure that they take account of the following:

- They should apply to all staff, workers and volunteers who may work with young people.
- The post or role should be clearly defined.
- The key selection criteria for the post or role should be identified.
- Vacancies should be advertised widely in order to ensure a diversity of applicants.
- Require documentary evidence of academic/vocational qualifications.
- Obtain professional references.
- Verify previous employment history.
- Inform shortlisted candidates that online searches may be done as part of due diligence checks.
- Disclosure and Barring Service (maintain sensitive and confidential use of the applicant's disclosure).
- Use a variety of selection techniques (eg qualifications, previous experience, interview, reference checks).
- Agency staff working at the College.
- Recruitment of ex-offenders.
- Reporting of criminal records.

- People banned from working with children.

10. Records

All paper records handed to or created by the Safeguarding team must be retained securely and remain in confidence. Records will be stored in a locked filing cabinet contained within the office of the Safeguarding Coordinator (K030). This office shall be locked when unattended. Only members of the Safeguarding Team are authorised to gain access to the records.

All electronic information is stored securely on Pro Monitor, which is password protected and only available to relevant staff.

Should records need to be disclosed to another member of the Safeguarding Team or to other authorised (by law) individuals, then such disclosure must take place securely and confidentially (eg Via hand delivery or postmarked 'Strictly Private and Confidential'). Email is not a secure method of communication and as such can be intercepted and read in the same way as a postcard.

Records will be retained in accordance with the Information and Records Management Society 'records management toolkit for schools' of 2019

Records may only be destroyed by the Safeguarding team and shall be destroyed firstly by shredding before utilising the confidential waste system as provided by the College.

Any breaches of security concerning safeguarding records shall be investigated by the Designated Safeguarding Lead or member of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT).

11. Supporting Documentation Including Safeguarding

Internal

- College Charter
- Induction documentation
- Student Handbook
- Recruitment & Selection Policy
- Health and Safety policy
- Anti Bullying Policy & Procedure
- Student Disciplinary Procedure
- Staff Disciplinary Procedure
- Harassment Policy
- Data protection policy
- Whistleblowing Policy & Procedure
- Mental Health Strategy
- HE Sexual Harassment and Misconduct policy

External

- Children Acts 1989 and 2004
- Education Act 2002 – Section 175
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Childcare Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- What To Do If You Are Worried A Child Is Being Abused 2015
- Information Sharing – Advice for Practitioners providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers 2024
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021

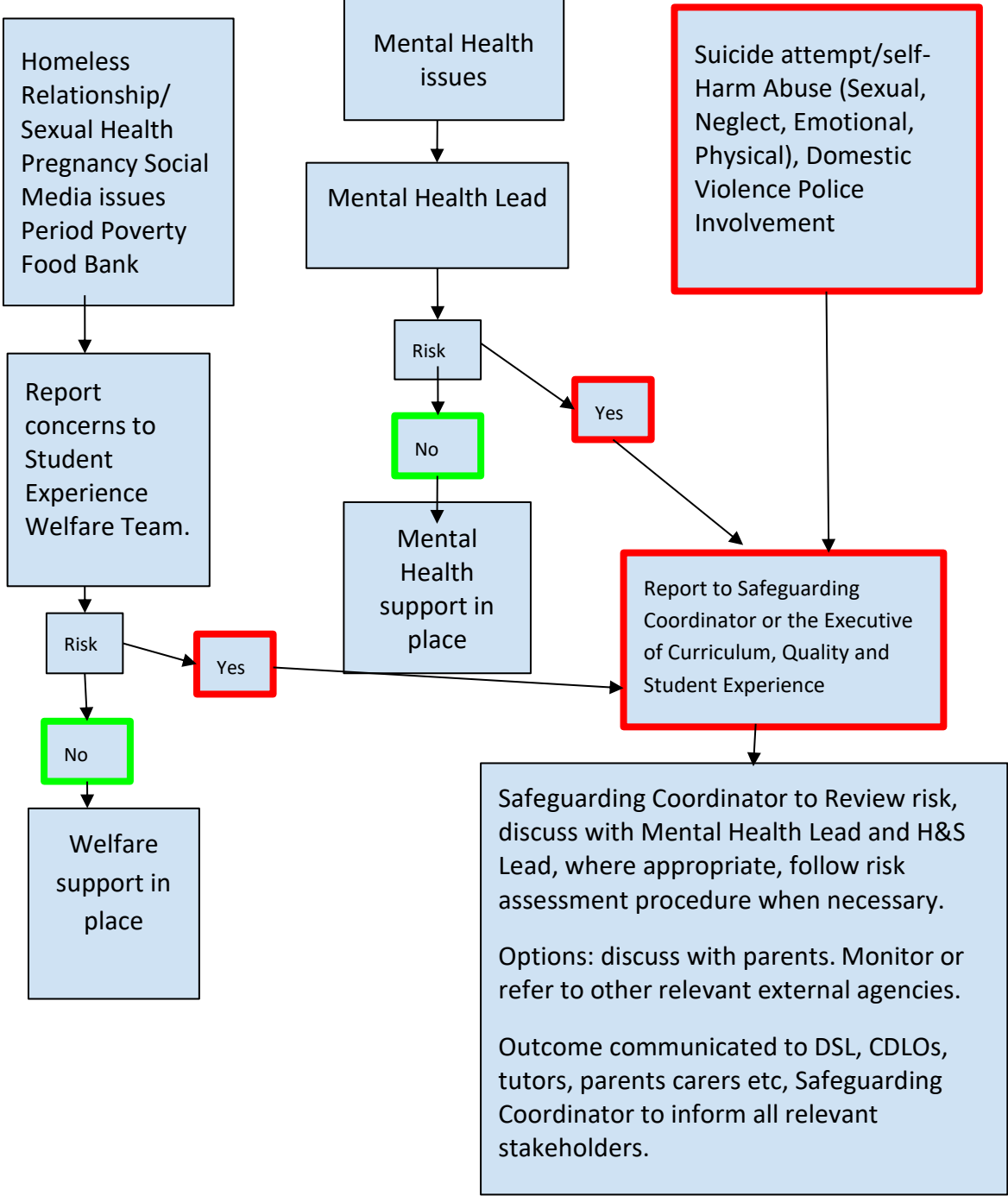
Appendix 1 - List of College Safeguarding Contacts

| Name | Contact Number | Area of support |
|--------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Charlotte Corfield | 01752 305302 | ELT Designated Lead |
| Bridgette Henry | Ext 5296 or 07891 573177 | Any |
| Lindsay Edmonds | Ext 5034 or 07800 810593 | Any |
| Sheryl Jenkins | Ext 5728 or 07971 943034 | Any |

Appendix 2 - Flow Chart for Raising Safeguarding Concerns About a Student

Guide for raising safeguarding concerns about a student.

FLOW CHART FOR RAISING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS



Note: The process above aims to ensure students are referred quickly and signposted to the most appropriate support. If you have a safeguarding concern use the chart above as a guide only to report the concern to the relevant team. If in any doubt contact the Safeguarding Coordinator or Director of Student Journey.

Appendix 3 – Extract from the Information and Records Management Society ‘Records Management Toolkit for Schools’

The following is an extract from the Information and Records Management Society ‘records management toolkit for schools’ 2019.

Young people and adults are at risk. The retention and use of records relating to safeguarding matters concerning pupils, young people, and adults at risk allegations against staff require specific guidance in this schedule. This will be subject to update following the implementation of the recommendations by Sir Michael Bichard.

| Basic file description | Data Protection Issues | Statutory Provisions | Retention Period [operational] | Action at the end of the administrative life of the record | |
|--|------------------------|---|---|--|---|
| Child Protection files | Yes | Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance Sept 2025, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 | DOB +25 years | Secure disposal | <p>Young people and adults at risk information must be copied and sent under separate copy to a new school/college, whilst the young person is under 18 (ie the information does not need to be sent to the university for example).</p> <p>When a young person is removed from the roll to be educated at home, the file should be copied to the Local Education Authority.</p> |
| Allegation of a safeguarding nature against a member of staff, including where the allegation is unfounded | Yes | <p>Employment Practices Code:</p> <p>Supplementary Guidance</p> <p>2.13.1 (Records of Disciplinary and Grievance) Education Act 2002 guidance ‘Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and Other Staff’ November 2005.</p> | Until the person’s normal retirement age, or 10 years from the date of the allegation if that’s longer. | Secure disposal | <p>Employment Practices Code:</p> <p>Supplementary Guidance 2.13.1 (Records of Disciplinary and Grievance) ‘Records of allegations about workers who have been investigated and found to be without substance should not normally be retained once an investigation has been completed. There are some exceptions to this where for its own protection the employer has to keep a limited record that an allegation was received and investigated, for example, where the allegation relates to abuse, and the worker is employed to work with young people or other vulnerable individuals.</p> <p>Summary record to be retained on a confidential personnel file, and a copy given to the person concerned.</p> |

Appendix 4 - Understanding and Managing Self-Harm

Introduction

There are many reasons why students try to harm themselves and once they start, it can become a compulsion. This is why it is so important to spot self-harming as soon as possible and do everything you can to help.

Self-harm is common in young people; at least 10% report having self-harmed. It is more common in females than males, especially in early adolescence. Self-harm is much less frequent in younger children and under the age of 11 self-harm is more common in boys than in girls.

Self-harm is an act of survival and not a final act or a cry for attention. It is often a way for students to release overwhelming emotions. It is a way of coping and so whatever the reason, it should be taken seriously, as with repeated self-harm comes a greater risk of attempted suicide.

Self-harm may include overdose (self-poisoning), hitting, cutting, burning, pulling air, picking skin, eating disorders, head banging and self-strangulation, although this is not an exhaustive list.

Scope

This document describes the College's approach to self-harm and is intended as guidance for all staff and those in governance.

This document covers self-harm (section 6) and does not cover other issues such as over-eating, food restriction or risk-taking behaviours such as consuming drugs and alcohol.

Aims

This document aims to:

- To increase understanding and awareness of self-harm.
- To alert staff to warning signs and risk factors associated with self-harm.
- To provide support to staff dealing with students who self-harm.
- To provide support to students who self-harm, their peers and parents/carers.

Definition of Self-Harm

Self-harm is any self-injurious behaviour where the intent is to deliberately cause harm to one's own body, or suicidal thoughts or actions. Examples of self-harm behaviour are:

- Cutting, scratching, scraping or picking skin
- Swallowing inedible objects
- Taking an overdose of prescription or non-prescription drugs
- Swallowing hazardous materials or substances

- Burning or scalding
- Hair-pulling
- Banging or hitting the head or other parts of the body
- Scouring or scrubbing the body excessively

Risk Factors

The following risk factors, particularly in combination, may make a student vulnerable to self-harm:

Individual Factors:

- Depression / anxiety
- Poor communication skills
- Low self-esteem
- Poor problem-solving skill
- Hopelessness
- Impulsivity
- Drug or alcohol abuse / misuse
- Having additional needs / SEND
- Adverse Childhood Experiences / trauma

Family Factors:

- Unreasonable expectations being placed on the young person
- Neglect or physical, sexual or emotional abuse
- Poor parental relationships and arguments
- Depression, self-harm or suicide in the family
- Adverse Child Experiences / trauma

Social Factors:

- Difficulty in making relationships / loneliness
- Being bullied or rejected by peers
- Interest in social networking/websites that focus on self-harm or suicide

Warning Signs

College staff may become aware of warning signs that indicate a student is experiencing difficulties that may lead to thoughts of self-injury or suicide. These warning signs should always

be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should seek further advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL).

Possible warning signs include:

- Changes in eating / sleeping habits (eg student may appear overly tired if not sleeping well)
- Increased isolation from friends or family / becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood (eg more aggressive or introverted than usual)
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in appearance, including clothing (eg wearing long sleeves in a heatwave)

Working to prevent self-harm

Helping children and young people learn healthy and adaptive ways of coping with stress, building resilience and self-esteem helps to promote good mental health for life. The risk of self-harm can be significantly reduced by creating a supportive environment in which healthy relationships are fostered.

City College Plymouth will:

- Support student's social and emotional development
- Teach effective emotional coping skills
- Build a positive college community that encourages children to seek support when they are distressed
- Educate college staff to understand self-harm and what may underlie self-harming behaviour
- Work with families and provide them with information about promoting student's social and emotional learning and understanding self-harm
- Increase resilience through the curriculum and other college-based activities
- Provide activities that enable students to raise their self-esteem and feelings of self-worth

Staff Roles in working with students who self-harm:

Students may choose to confide in a member of college staff if they are concerned about their own welfare, or that of a peer. College staff may experience a range of feelings in response to self-harm in a student such as anger, sadness, shock, disbelief, guilt, helplessness, disgust and rejection. However, in order to offer the best possible help to students it is important to try and maintain a supportive and open attitude. A student who has chosen to discuss their concerns with a member of college staff is showing a considerable amount of courage and trust.

Students and staff need to be made aware that it may not be possible for staff to offer complete confidentiality. **If you consider a student is at serious risk of harming themselves then confidentiality cannot be kept.** It is important for staff not to make promises of confidentiality that cannot be kept even if a student puts pressure on them to do so.

Any member of staff who is aware of a student engaging in, or suspected to be at risk of engaging in self-harm, should immediately follow the College's safeguarding referral process.

Following the report, the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will make an assessment of the level of risk and decide on the appropriate course of action.

This may include:

- Contacting parents / carers.
- Contacting the relevant statutory agencies eg children's social care or the police.
- Arranging other professional assistance, eg doctor, nurse, etc.
- Consulting with another agency, eg CAMHS or the Educational Psychology Service.
- Arranging an appointment with a counsellor.
- Immediately removing the student from lessons if their remaining in class is likely to cause further distress to themselves or their peers.

In the case of an acutely distressed student, the immediate safety of the student is paramount and an adult should remain with the student at all times.

If a student has self-harmed in college a first aider should be called for immediate help and the appropriate action taken, including calling 999 for an ambulance if needed.

Further Considerations

Any meetings with a student, their parents/carers or their peers regarding self-harm should be recorded on Pro Monitor, under the category 'self-harm.' The following details should be included:

- Date and time
- Outline of concerns raised
- Details of the action(s) taken
- Details of anyone else who has been informed
- Notes of supervision or consultation and any risk assessment requirements

It is important to encourage students to let a member of staff know if one of their peers is in trouble, upset or showing signs of self-harming. Friends can worry about betraying confidence so they need to know that self-harm can be very dangerous and that by seeking help and advice for a friend they are taking responsible action and being a good friend. They should also be aware that their friend will be treated in a caring and supportive manner.

The peer group of a student who self-harms may value the opportunity to talk to a member of staff either individually or in a small group. Any member of staff wishing for further advice on this should consult the Designated Lead for Safeguarding or their Deputy.

When a student is self-harming, it is important to be vigilant in case close contacts with the individual are also self-harming (so called 'contagion'). Occasionally colleges discover that a number of students in the same peer group are harming themselves.

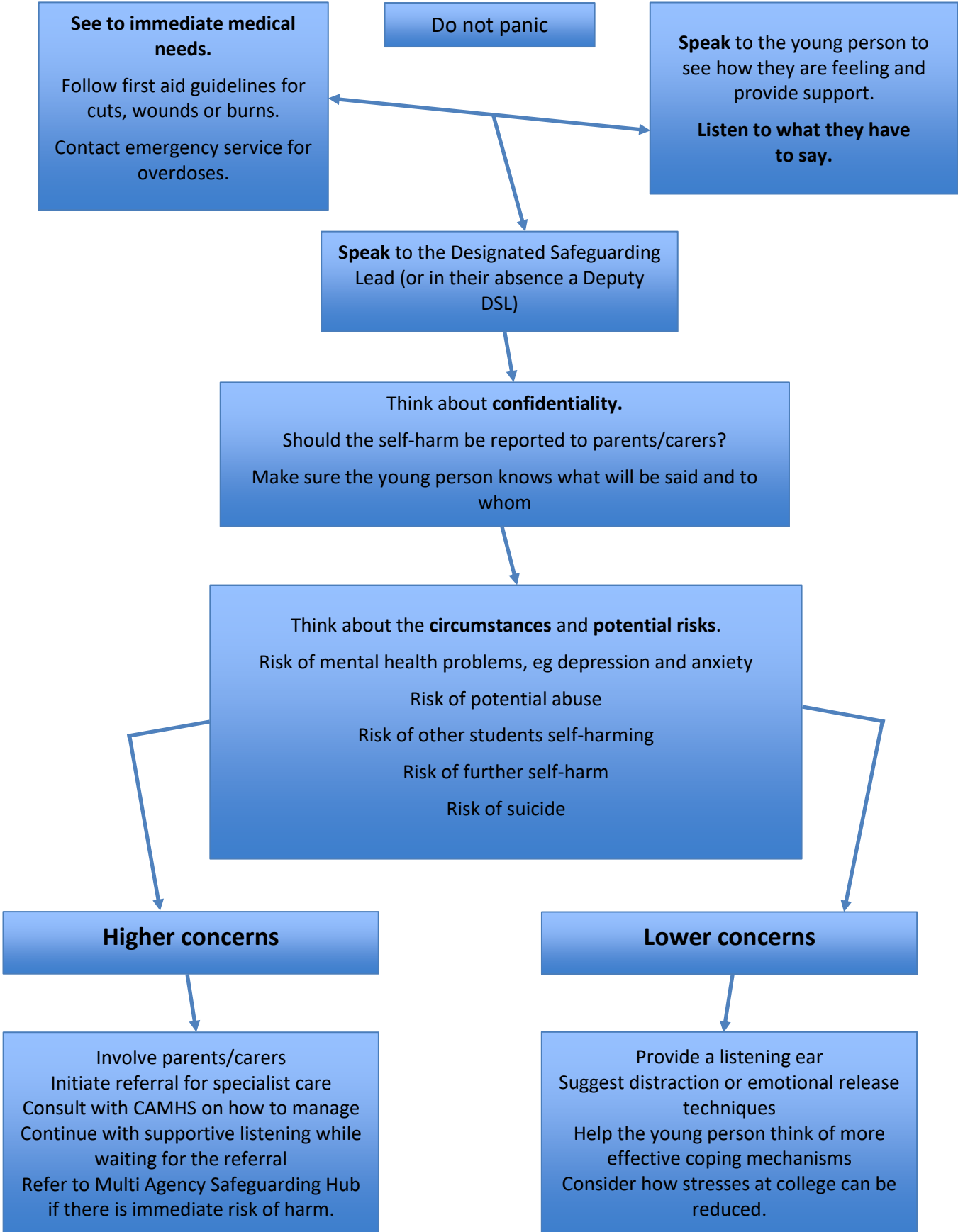
Where a student has been self-harming and the protective factors that have been put in place are outweighed by the remaining risks, advice should be sought from the childrens' social services to determine whether or not the threshold for formal child protection intervention has been met.

Linked Policies and supporting documents:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Suicide Prevention Policy
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Young people who self-harm. A guide for School Staff \(Oxford University, 2018\)](#)

Appendix A: Self-harm at college and what to do

(to be used in conjunction with the safeguarding policy)



Appendix B: Things to consider when talking to students about self-harm

How to approach the topic of self-harm

You may be the first person to notice that a student has been self-harming. This can be distressing and it can be hard to know what to do. It is important that you don't ignore signs of self-harm. If you suspect self-harm, let the student know that you have noticed a difference in their behaviour and be open about your concerns in an empathetic and caring manner. Students will respond best if your action is calm, non-judgmental and understanding.

Start with sharing your concerns about their wellbeing and encouraging them to open up, such as by saying:

'I have noticed that [then state the changes you have observed in their behaviour, eg becoming withdrawn or irritable or angry] and I am wondering if maybe things are difficult for you at the moment?'

If you have explicit concerns around self-harm move on to more specific questions about self-harm, such as:

'I have also noticed that you have [voice your observations, eg some scars or have been covering up] I know that sometimes this can be a sign that someone is harming themselves. Can I ask if you have self-harmed?'

Helpful questions and statements

To understand why a student may be self-harming it is important to have an open conversation about their reasons. It can be helpful to convey that you understand some of the functions of self-harm to encourage the young person to open up. For example, you could say:

'I wonder what are the sorts of things that make you feel like harming yourself?'

If this does not lead to the student opening up, you could add something like:

'Sometimes people self-harm as a way of managing strong and difficult feelings or emotions. I am wondering if that might be why you hurt yourself?'

or

'I know that people self-harm for many different reasons and that they often experience a range of different emotions. I wonder if you are able to help me understand what leads you to self-harm?'

It is best to be direct

Some people are concerned about talking about self-harm. However, research shows that asking about self-harm or suicidal thoughts does not put the idea into people's heads. Ask direct questions but in a kind and empathetic manner. Ensure that what you say, your facial expression and your body language all convey compassion, non-judgement and empathy.

Language to avoid

Sometimes negative terms are used for self-harm, such as 'attention-seeking' or 'manipulative'. This language is unhelpful and may make it harder for a person to open up or ask for help. Some people do need attention but are not able to find a positive way to get it. Creating a supportive and non-judgemental atmosphere will make it easier for a person to seek help.

Appendix C – Useful resources

Information and support for children and young people:

- Childline: 0800 1111
- Papyrus: www.papyrus-uk.org
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- Samaritans: www.samaritans.org 116 123
- Harmless: www.harmless.org.uk

Resources for Schools/Colleges

- [Building suicide-safer schools and colleges: a guide for teachers and staff](#)
- [Young people who self-harm. A guide for school staff](#)

Resources for Parents

- Coping with self-harm: a guide for parents and carers.
- Healthtalk.org modules on parents' experiences of self-harm
- No Harm Done (information for school staff and parents)
- The Parent's Guide to Self-harm. (By Jane Smith, Oxford: Lion Hudson)

Appendix 5 - Reporting Low Level Concerns

Sharing Low-level Concerns

We recognise the importance of creating a culture of openness, trust and transparency to encourage all staff to confidentially share low-level concerns so that they can be addressed appropriately.

We will create this culture by:

- Ensuring staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour in themselves and others
- Empowering staff to share any low-level concerns.
- Empowering staff to self-refer.
- Addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage.
- Providing a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised.
- Helping to identify any weakness in the school's safeguarding system.

Responding to Low-level Concerns

If the concern is raised via a third party, the Head of People Management will collect evidence where necessary by speaking:

- Directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously
- To the individual involved and any witnesses. The Head of People Management will use the information collected to categorise the type of behaviour and determine any further action, in line with the College's Code of Conduct.

The Head of People Management/relevant ELT Member will be the ultimate decision-maker in respect of all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL.

References

We will not include low-level concerns in references unless:

- The concern (or group of concerns) has met the threshold for referral to the designated officer at the local authority and is found to be substantiated; and/or
- The concern (or group of concerns) relates to issues which would ordinarily be included in a reference, such as misconduct or poor performance

REPORTING LOW-LEVEL CONCERNS

