

Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection

INTRODUCTION

Research suggests that more than 10 per cent of children will suffer some form of abuse. Due to their day-to-day contact with children, College staff are uniquely placed to observe changes in children's behaviour and to recognise the outward signs of abuse. Children may also turn to a trusted adult in the College when they are in distress or at risk. It is vital that all College staff are alert to the signs of neglect and abuse and understand the local procedures for reporting and acting upon their concerns.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and Governors. It aims to:

- provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their statutory responsibilities to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children
- ensure consistent good practice across the College, and
- demonstrate the College's commitment with regard to safeguarding children

BACKGROUND AND TERMINOLOGY

There is a statutory obligation on Governors to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing the impairment of their health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective and nurturing care and undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully. Statutory guidance is provided in [Keeping Children Safe In Education](#).

Child protection refers to the processes undertaken to meet statutory obligations laid out in the [Children Act 1989](#) and associated guidance (see [Working Together to Safeguard Children, An Interagency Guide to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children](#)) in respect of those children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering harm.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

Name: **Lynne Carter**

Email: **CAL@bodmincollege.co.uk**

Tel: **01208 72114**

- Has a working knowledge of LSCB procedures and acts as a source of support and expertise to the College community
- Develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies including the LSCB
- Keeps detailed written records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely and flagged on, but kept separate from, the pupil's general file
- Ensures that when a pupil leaves the College, their child protection file is passed to the new College (separately from the main pupil file and ensuring secure transit) and confirmation of receipt is obtained

- Refers cases of suspected abuse to children's social care or police as appropriate
- Coordinates the College's contribution to child protection plans
- Attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences
- Makes staff aware of LSCB training courses and the latest policies on safeguarding
- Makes this policy available on the College's website or by other means
- Ensures that this policy and procedures are reviewed and updated annually liaises with the nominated Governor **and Principal** as appropriate

Deputy designated lead(s)

Name: **Sue Gilbert**

Email: **SCG@bodmincollege.co.uk**

Tel: **01208 72114**

The deputy is trained to the same level as the DSL and, in the absence of the DSL, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protections of pupils. In the event of long-term absence of the DSL, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

Nominated child protection Governor

Name: **Jason Coad**

Email: **Sarah.ford@bodmincollege.co.uk**

Tel: **01208 72114**

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES

Good practice includes:

- Treating all pupils with respect
- Setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- Involving pupils in decisions that affect them
- Encouraging positive, respectful and safe behaviour among pupils
- Being a good listener
- Being alert to changes in pupils' behaviour and to signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation
- Recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- Reading and understanding this policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues
- Being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some pupils lead to an increased risk of abuse
- Referring all concerns about a pupil's safety and welfare to the DSL, or, if necessary directly to police or children's social care

ABUSE OF TRUST

All College staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable and that their conduct towards pupils must be exemplary.

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the staff and a pupil under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that child is over the age of consent.

Any such inappropriate activity will also be regarded as gross misconduct and is likely to lead to summary dismissal providing the allegation is proven to the required standard in accordance with the College's [Disciplinary and Grievance procedures](#).

In such cases, where a risk to the child or young adult has been established, a DBS referral will be required, making further employment in the Education sector very unlikely. For further details, please refer to the College's policy on [Allegations of Abuse Against Staff](#) and to the statutory guidance in [Keeping Children Safe In Education](#).

VULNERABLE CHILDREN

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. To ensure that all of our pupils are protected from abuse we will give special consideration to children who are:

- Disabled or have special educational needs
- Young carers
- Affected by parental substance misuse, domestic violence or parental mental health needs
- Asylum seekers
- Living away from home
- Vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- Living in temporary accommodation
- Live transient lifestyles
- Living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- Vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality
- At risk of sexual exploitation
- Do not have English as a first language
- At risk of female genital mutilation (FGM)
- At risk of forced marriage
- At risk of being drawn into extremism.

SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

Child neglect and abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved. We will support the children and their families and staff by:

- taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously
- nominating a link person who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact. Where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a child, a separate link person will be nominated to avoid any conflict of interest.

- responding sympathetically to any request from a child or member of staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety
- maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- storing records securely
- offering details of help lines, counselling or other avenues of external support
- following the procedures laid down in our whistle blowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures
- cooperating fully with relevant statutory agencies.

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a child or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a child that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a child, using sarcasm or humiliation as a form of control, bullying or belittling a child or discriminating against them in some way. Complaints are managed by senior staff, the head teacher and Governors.

Complaints from staff are dealt with under the College's complaints and disciplinary and grievance procedures.

CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION

Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The DSL will monitor unauthorised absence and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions and/or are missing for periods during the College day. Staff must be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

CONCERNS ABOUT A COLLEAGUE

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a child are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation or whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount.

All concerns of poor practice or concerns about a child's welfare brought about by the behaviour of colleagues should be reported to the DSL or Principal as appropriate. Complaints about the Principal should be reported to the Chair of Governors.

STAFF TRAINING

It is important that all staff receive training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and to know what to do if they have a concern.

All staff, and Governors, are reminded and expected to read Part 1 of the statutory guidance.

New staff and Governors will receive a briefing during their induction, which includes the College's child protection policy, reporting and recording arrangements and contact details for the DSL. All staff, including the DSL, Principal and Governors will receive training that is regularly updated. All staff will also receive safeguarding and child protection updates via email, e-bulletins, website access and staff meetings throughout the year.

SAFER RECRUITMENT

The College complies with the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016 and the LSCB by carrying out the required checks and verifying the applicant's identity, qualifications and work history.

At least one member of each recruitment panel will have attended safer recruitment training.

The College obtains written confirmation from supply agencies or third party organisations that agency staff or other individuals who may work in the College have been appropriately checked.

Trainee Teachers will be checked either by the College or by the training provider, from whom written confirmation will be obtained.

The College maintains a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken.

Volunteers (including Governors) will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the College, their contact with pupils and the supervision provided to them. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left with children unsupervised.

Contractors working on site will have their identity checked and requests DBS checks where required by statutory guidance. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised during the College day.

SITE SECURITY

Visitors (including contractors) are asked to sign in and are given a badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. Parents who are simply delivering or collecting their children do not need to sign in. All visitors are expected to observe the College's safeguarding and health and safety regulations. The Principal will exercise professional judgement in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised while on site.

EXTENDED COLLEGE AND OFF-SITE ARRANGEMENTS

All extended and off site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements. Where extended College activities are provided by and managed by the College, our own child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site on behalf of our College we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

When our pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work related activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

ONLINE RELATIONSHIPS

The College provides advice to staff regarding their personal online activity and guidance regarding to online contact and electronic communication with pupils.

Staff found to be in breach of this guidance may be subject to disciplinary action or child protection investigation.

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

Recognising abuse

To ensure that our pupils are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, for example by leaving a small child home alone.

Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other children and young people.

[Keeping Children Safe In Education](#) refers to four categories:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect

These are set out at Appendix One along with indicators in each case.

Bullying

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause anxiety and distress. All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying should be reported and will be managed through our tackling-bullying procedures.

Taking action

Any child in any family in any College could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”. Key points for staff to remember for taking action are:

- In an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, if necessary call 999
- report your concern as soon as possible to the DSL, definitely by the end of the day
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a record of concern
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

Appendix Two sets out what action should be taken if a member of staff has concerns about a child.

Where a safeguarding concern arises, the child's wishes and feelings will be considered when determining what action to take and what services to provide. The child will be able to express their views and any process or action will be taken in the best interests of the child, law permitting.

If you are concerned about a pupil's welfare

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk. The pupil's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical signs may have been noticed. In these circumstances, staff will try to talk to the pupil and ask if they are okay or if they can help in any way. Following an initial conversation with the pupil, if the member of staff has concerns, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL.

Staff should use the **welfare concern form** to record these early concerns. If the pupil does reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below.

If a pupil discloses to you

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual; their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell; they may have lost all trust in adults; or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abusive.

If a pupil talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, **the staff member will, at the appropriate time, let the pupil know that in order to help them they must pass the information on to the DSL.** The point at which they tell the pupil this is a matter for professional judgement. During their conversations with the pupils staff will:

- allow them to speak freely
- remain calm and not overreact
- give reassuring nods or words of comfort – 'I'm so sorry this has happened', 'I want to help', 'This isn't your fault', 'You are doing the right thing in talking to me'
- not be afraid of silences
- **under no circumstances** ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings, or what does the pupil's mother think about it
- at an appropriate time tell the pupil that in order to help them, the member of staff must pass the information on and explain to whom and why
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as 'I do wish you had told me about this when it started' may be interpreted by the child to mean that they have done something wrong
- tell the pupil what will happen next
- report verbally to the DSL even if the child has promised to do it by themselves
- complete the **record of concern form** and hand it to the DSL as soon as possible
- seek support if they feel distressed.

Notifying parents

The College will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and the DSL will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

Our focus is the safety and wellbeing of the pupil. Therefore, if the College believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's social care and/or the police before parents are contacted.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the pupil and staff involved but also to ensure that information being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the DSL, Principal or the nominated child protection Governor. That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

Any child who reports child on child sexual abuse should not be told that the matter will remain confidential as it is likely to be necessary that the information be shared with other agencies.

However, following a number of cases where senior leaders in College had failed to act upon concerns raised by staff, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016 emphasises that **any** member of staff can contact children's social care if they are concerned about a child.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. Information sharing is guided by the following principles. The information is:

- necessary and proportionate
- relevant
- adequate
- accurate
- timely
- secure

Information sharing decisions will be recorded, whether or not the decision is taken to share.

Records of written information will be stored safely and electronic information will be protected and only made available to relevant individuals with access to the MY Concern recording software.

Child protection information will be stored separately from the pupil's College file.

The DSL will normally obtain consent from the pupil and/or parents to share sensitive information within the College or with outside agencies. Where there is good reason to do so, the DSL may share information *without* consent, and will record the reason for not obtaining consent.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a pupil or parent to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the Principal.

The Data Protection Act does not prevent College staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

The College's confidentiality and information-sharing policy is available to parents and pupils on request.

REFERRAL TO CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

The DSL will make a referral to children's social care if it is believed that a pupil is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The pupil (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

Any member of staff may make a direct referral to children's social care if they genuinely believe independent action is necessary to protect a child.

REPORTING DIRECTLY TO CHILD PROTECTION AGENCIES

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care, police or the NSPCC if:

- the situation is an emergency and the DSL, their deputy, the Principal and the nominated child protection Governor are all unavailable
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil's safety
- for any other reason they make a judgement that direct referral is in the best interests of the child.

CHILDREN WITH SEXUALLY HARMFUL BEHAVIOUR

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the College's **anti-bullying procedures** where necessary. However, there will be occasions when a pupil's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures.

Young people who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator. Staff who become concerned about a pupil's sexual behaviour, including any known online sexual behaviour, should speak to the DSL as soon as possible.

PEER ON PEER SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap. They can occur both online and offline, both physically and verbally. This policy should be considered in conjunction with the DfE guidance, [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in Colleges and colleges](#).

Peer on peer abuse of any nature will not be tolerated. Any child found to have breached the College's policy on the use of technology will be sanctioned in line with the behaviour policy.

Children will be taught about safeguarding to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse. A whole-College approach will be taken to educate children in an age and stage of development appropriate manner, and may tackle issues such as:

- healthy and respectful relationships;
- what respectful behaviour looks like;
- consent;
- equality;
- body confidence and self-esteem;

- that sexual violence and sexual harassment is always wrong.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities are three times more likely to be abused than their peers. Additional barriers can sometimes exist when recognising abuse in SEND children, including any symptoms of disability masking indicators of possible abuse and communication barriers.

Staff should ensure that their response to sexual violence and sexual harassment between children of the same sex is equally as robust as it is for sexual violence and sexual harassment between children of the opposite sex.

The DfE guidance, [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#), provides information for staff on indicators to look out for and advice on what they should do if they have concerns about a child.

All children who report abuse will be taken seriously, supported and kept safe. The child will be informed as to how the report will be dealt with.

Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes. Where the sexual abuse is of this nature, the matter must be referred to the police.

Where a criminal investigation leads to a conviction or caution, the College, if it has not already done so, will consider any suitable sanctions in line with the behaviour policy.

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN

Sexual exploitation involves an individual or group of adults taking advantage of the vulnerability of an individual or groups of children or young people, and victims can be boys or girls. Children and young people are often unwittingly drawn into sexual exploitation through the offer of friendship and care, gifts, drugs and alcohol, and sometimes accommodation. Sexual exploitation is a serious crime and can have a long-lasting adverse impact on a child's physical and emotional health. It may also be linked to child trafficking.

The College includes the risks of sexual exploitation in the PSHE and SRE curriculum. A common feature of sexual exploitation is that the child often doesn't recognise the forced nature of the relationship and doesn't see themselves as a victim. The child may initially resent what they perceive as interference by staff, but staff must act on their concerns, as they would for any other type of abuse.

All staff are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation and all concerns are reported immediately to the DSL.

HONOUR-BASED VIOLENCE

'Honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of HBV are abuse.

FGM is the collective name given to a range of procedures involving the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the practice is a criminal offence under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. The practice can cause intense pain and distress and long-term health consequences, including difficulties in childbirth.

FGM is carried out on girls of any age, from young babies to older teenagers and adult women, so College staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators. Many such procedures are carried out abroad and staff should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns expressed by female pupil about going on a long holiday during the summer vacation period.

A forced marriage is a marriage in which a female (and sometimes a male) does not consent to the marriage but is forced into it. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse. In England and Wales the practice is a criminal offence under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

A forced marriage is not the same as an arranged marriage. In an arranged marriage, which is common in several cultures, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.

Children may be married at a very young age, and well below the age of consent in England. College staff receive training and should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns raised by a pupil about being taken abroad and not be allowed to return to England.

RADICALISATION AND EXTREMISM

The government defines extremism as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Some children are at risk of being radicalised: adopting beliefs and engaging in activities which are harmful, criminal or dangerous. Islamic extremism is the most widely publicised form and Colleges should also remain alert to the risk of radicalisation into white supremacy extremism.

College staff receive training to help to identify signs of extremism. Opportunities are provided in the curriculum to enable pupils to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and the College follows the DfE advice Promoting fundamental British Values as part of SMCS (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education) in Colleges (2014).

PRIVATE FOSTERING ARRANGEMENTS

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16, or aged under 18 if the child is disabled. By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children's services as soon as possible.

Where a member of staff becomes aware that a pupil may be in a private fostering arrangement they will raise this with the DSL and the College should notify the local authority of the circumstances.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Looked after children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse or neglect. The College ensures that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after legal status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child. The designated teacher for looked after children and the DSL have details of the child's social worker and the name and contact details of the local authority's virtual head for children in care.

Work Experience

The College has detailed procedures to safeguard pupils undertaking work experience, including arrangements for checking people who provide placements and supervise pupils on work experience which are in accordance with the guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2016)*.

Children staying with host families

The College may make arrangements for pupils to stay with a host family during a foreign exchange trip or sports tour. Some overseas pupils may reside with host families during College terms and we will work with the local authority to check that such arrangements are safe and suitable. In such circumstances the College follows the guidance in Annex E of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016 to ensure that hosting arrangements are as safe as possible.

APPENDIX ONE

Four categories of abuse

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is 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 (this used to be called Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy, but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).

Emotional abuse

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

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

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Indicators of abuse

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead.

It is the responsibility of staff to report their concerns. It is not their responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

A child who is being abused, neglected or exploited may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- be concerned about changing for PE or swimming
- look unkempt and uncared for
- change their eating habits
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety or self-harm
- frequently miss College, arrive late or leave the College for part of the day
- show signs of not wanting to go home

- display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- challenge authority
- become disinterested in their College work
- be constantly tired or preoccupied
- be wary of physical contact or appear fearful
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol
- display sexual knowledge/behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age
- acquire gifts such as money or a mobile phone from new ‘friends’.

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DSP to decide how to proceed.

APPENDIX TWO

Actions where there are concerns about a child

