



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Date Equality Impact Assessment Completed:	May 2021
Approved By:	Board
Date Approved:	(C&Q 22/06, Board 20/07)
Author:	Director (Quality & Learner Experience)
Review Date:	August 2023

Published on:	Website	Intranet	Learner Portal
	✓	✓	✓

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Safeguarding Policy

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

The College recognises that learners have a fundamental right to be protected from harm and that they should be given the opportunity to gain the maximum benefit possible from high quality education and training opportunities.

The College acknowledges its duties and responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. It has a statutory and moral duty to exercise its functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults receiving education and training at the College

The College is committed to working with relevant organisations, to take all reasonably practicable steps, to ensure that the legal and pastoral duties owed to learners in respect of child and vulnerable adult protection are discharged in accordance with current legislation, relevant professional guidance and best practice.

The College shares an objective with all Local Authorities, Police and stakeholders in the education service to help keep children and vulnerable adults safe by contributing to the creation of a safe learning environment; identifying where there are safeguarding concerns and taking action to address them with other agencies.

This Policy will be subject to an informal review every year by the Safeguarding Committee and a formal review every two years by the College Corporation unless changes are required to be approved following annual review by the Safeguarding Committee.

2.0 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Definitions:

In the context of Safeguarding, 'children and young people' applies to those under the age of 18. Where there is a reference to "parents" this includes those individuals with parental responsibility.

The definition of 'vulnerable adult' is one who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of himself or herself, or unable to protect himself or herself against significant harm or serious exploitation.

The College has a statutory duty to safeguard children and vulnerable adults and to assist Local Authorities, the police and other agencies if an allegation of abuse relating to a child or a vulnerable adult on the College's premises is made. The College will register significant safeguarding concerns through the agreed College system and participate as appropriate in follow-up action. Where there are concerns that a child or vulnerable adult has been abused or might be at risk of significant harm a referral will be made to the appropriate agencies – e.g. the police, Local Authority Social Services Departments.

3.0 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The paragraphs below set out the legal framework which establishes the role of the Governing Body of the College in relation to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults:

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 (which came into force June 2004) requires Local Authorities and governing bodies of Further Education Colleges (and schools) to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding the welfare of children. They must take note of any guidance issued by the Secretary of State in considering what arrangements they need to make.

Keeping Learners Safe: The role of local authorities, governing bodies and proprietors of independent schools under the Education Act 2002 (Welsh Government, 2020, guidance no 265/2020) sets out the role of Local Authorities and Governing Bodies of Schools and Further Education institutions and other organisations to provide advice on action which should be taken to enable cases of suspected or identified abuse to be properly considered and pursued. The *All Wales Child Protection Procedures Guidance 2008* sets out the procedures which all Local Safeguarding Children Boards in Wales have agreed to implement.

Note has also been taken of the Welsh Governments guidance “Working Together to Safeguard People” which provides guidance on how organisations and individuals should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The recommendations of HM Government publication ‘What to do if you are worried a child is being abused’ and of the recommendations of the English policy document ‘Safeguarding Children in Education (2004)’ have also been taken into account.

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 requires employers to carry out Criminal Record Checks before employees are allowed to come into contact with vulnerable adults. The College is required under this legislation to apply for an enhanced disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau for staff working with such learners.

Section 26 (1) of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015: The Prevent Duty Guidance: for further education institutions in England and Wales imposes a duty on further education when exercising its function, to help prevent people being drawn into terrorism, which includes both violent and non-violent extremism. As part of this duty, Coleg Gwent has compiled a Safeguarding Action Plan, which is reviewed within the termly Safeguarding Committee meetings.

The College will keep its policy and procedures on the protection of children and vulnerable adults under review to take account of any new Government legislation, regulations or best practice documents to ensure that staff are kept fully up to date with their responsibilities and duties with regard to the safety and well-being of children and vulnerable adults.

4.0 TRAINING AND AWARENESS

The College recognises that all staff who work with children and vulnerable adults need to have basic safeguarding training that equips them to recognise and respond to safeguarding welfare concerns. This procedure has also been designed to ensure that College staff are properly equipped (for their own benefit as well as that of the children and vulnerable adults). Accordingly, all members of staff including the Principal, volunteers and third party providers will receive adequate training to raise their awareness of safeguarding issues and to familiarise them with their duties and responsibilities as part of the introduction and operation of this policy. Refresher training will be provided at least once every two years.

5.0 CATEGORIES OF ABUSE

The following categories of abuse are taken from the Safeguarding Children: Working Together under the Children Act 2004:

Physical Abuse:

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or vulnerable adult. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child or vulnerable adult whom they are looking after. This situation may be described as fabricated or induced illness by carer.

Emotional Abuse:

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child or vulnerable adult such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child or vulnerable adult's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child or vulnerable adult that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children or vulnerable adults. It may involve causing children or vulnerable adults frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children and vulnerable adults. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child or vulnerable adult, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse:

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child or vulnerable adult is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children or vulnerable adults in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic materials or in watching sexual activities, or encouraging children or vulnerable adults to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. (For information and guidance on Child Sexual Exploitation, refer to Appendix D).

Neglect:

The persistent or severe neglect of a child or vulnerable adult, or the failure to protect a child or vulnerable adult from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold, starvation or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's or vulnerable adult's health or development.

Racial Abuse

The College is aware of its duty to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation etc on the grounds of sex, race, disability, and where appropriate this policy should be read in conjunction with the College's Single Equality Scheme. Staff should be aware that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults includes complying with statutory duties outlined in the Equality Act 2010.

Financial Abuse

Financial abuse is a form of mistreatment and fraud in which someone forcibly controls another person's money or other assets. It can involve, for instance, stealing cash, not allowing a victim to take part in any financial decisions or preventing a victim from having a job. The issue tends to occur most often in domestic relationships, such as between a husband and wife or an elderly parent and an adult child.

Bullying and Harassment:

The College should be aware of and where appropriate this Policy should be read in conjunction with the College's Anti-Bullying Policy. Staff should be aware that bullying and harassment can be viewed as another category of abuse that can also feature other elements of any of the above six main categories of abuse, e.g. it may involve bullying by isolation or making children or vulnerable adults feel excluded from social or educational groups.

All staff should be aware of the indicators that give rise to suspicion of abuse and in the event of concerns or suspicions of child or vulnerable adult abuse arising, safeguarding procedures should be implemented without delay.

6.0 RECOGNISING SUSPECTED ABUSE

Suspected abuse may be identified through visual/observation. For example, bruises, lacerations and burns may be apparent, indicating physical abuse. Possible indicators of physical neglect include inadequate clothing, poor growth, hunger or apparently deficient nutrition and indication of emotional abuse can include excessive dependence or attention seeking.

Sexual abuse may be exhibited by physical signs/injuries, or by reason of substantial/significant behavioural change including precocity or withdrawal.

This list is not exhaustive and evidence of one or more of the factors listed above can do no more than give rise to suspicion of abuse and are not evidence of abuse in themselves. However, if there are concerns about the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult for any reason, staff must act.

A child or vulnerable adult may specifically indicate that he or she had been abused. Equally, another person may indicate that a child or vulnerable adult has been abused.

When dealing with a young person or vulnerable adult with special educational needs, advice must be sought from the campus ALN Assessors, or College ALN Leader before proceeding.

If a member of staff has significant concerns about a child or vulnerable adult but does not consider that there is abuse or a risk of immediate harm, the member of staff should:

1. Speak to the campus Head of Learner Services who will consider whether the concerns about the child or vulnerable adult should be formally registered by the College; and
2. If the Head of Learner Services and the member of staff consider it appropriate, talk to the child or vulnerable adult about the concerns.

7.0 CONFIDENTIALITY AND DISCLOSURE

Clear boundaries of confidentiality will be communicated though not all information is confidential. Confidential information is information of some sensitivity, which is not already lawfully in the public domain or readily available from another public source, and which has been shared in a relationship where the person giving the information understood that it would not be shared with others. For example, a teacher may know that one of her learners has a parent who misuses drugs. That is information of some sensitivity but may not be confidential if it is widely known or it has been shared with the teacher in circumstances where the person understood it would be shared with others. If however it is shared with the teacher by the learner in a counselling session, for example, it would be confidential.

The duty of confidentiality owed to children and vulnerable adults is not absolute and confidential information can and should be disclosed in order to protect the child or vulnerable adult or another individual child or vulnerable adult from harm.

Confidence is only breached where the sharing of confidential information is not authorised by the person who provided it or to whom it relates. If the information was provided on the understanding that it would be shared with a limited range of people or for limited purposes, then sharing in accordance with that understanding will not be a breach of confidence. Similarly, there will not be breach of confidence where there is explicit consent to the sharing.

Whenever possible, consent should be obtained before sharing personal information with third parties but the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child or vulnerable adult must always override the general duty to maintain confidentiality or to obtain consent from a third party, for example, a family member if there is a risk of a child or vulnerable adult suffering significant or serious harm. The safety of the child or vulnerable adult is always the paramount consideration.

Staff have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children and vulnerable adults with other professionals, in particular, investigative agencies wherever possible with consent. An exchange of relevant information between professionals may be necessary in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult. Although staff may be concerned about the need to balance their duties to protect children or vulnerable adults from harm and their general duty towards a child or vulnerable adult, the overriding concern must always be the welfare of the child or vulnerable adult.

In all cases of suspected abuse, staff must not discuss the matter with another member of staff but should immediately report the details to the Designated Person, who is the Campus Head of Learner Services, and who will decide what action is to be taken. If the designated member of staff cannot be contacted the report should be made to the Safeguarding Lead, who is the Director (Quality and Learner Experience).

If a child or vulnerable adult's consent to disclosure of confidential information has not been sought, or has been sought and withheld, it is important that the staff member tells the child or vulnerable adult in an appropriately sensitive way that he/she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies (if it is considered by the Designated Person that this is not likely to increase the risk of harm to the child or vulnerable adult). The child or vulnerable adult should be assured that matters will be disclosed only to people who need to know and that the child or vulnerable adult will be kept informed. If the Designated Person considered that to tell the child or vulnerable adult that a report of the matter will be made to the appropriate agencies might increase the risk of harm to the child or vulnerable adult, then such information should not be communicated to the child or vulnerable adult.

In circumstances where the child or vulnerable adult consent to a disclosure has not been secured, staff must consider whether they nonetheless have an overriding duty to disclose such information. In making this decision, the following questions should be considered: -

- Is the disclosure necessary for the prevention or detection of crime, prevention of disorder, to protect public safety or protect the rights and freedoms of others?
- Is the disclosure necessary for the protection of children or vulnerable adults?
- What risks to others (*if any*) are posed by this individual?
- What is the vulnerability of those who may be at risk?
- Is the disclosure proportionate to the intended aim?
- Are there equally effective but less intrusive alternative means of achieving that aim?

8.0 PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING ALLEGED INCIDENTS OF CHILD OR VULNERABLE ADULT ABUSE

8.1 Identifying an alleged safeguarding incident

If a child or vulnerable adult discloses abuse or if abuse is suspected staff should:

- Listen carefully and stay calm
- Allow the child or vulnerable adult to provide an uninterrupted account of their concerns. If you need to ask questions for clarification, question normally and without pressure in order to be sure that what the child or vulnerable adult is saying is fully understood so that you can ensure that you make an accurate record.
- Note the main points carefully, be factual and use the child's or vulnerable adult's own words.
- Make a detailed note of:
 - Dates
 - Times/places where the alleged abuse happened
 - What the child or vulnerable adult said and did
 - Any questions you ask and the child or vulnerable adults reply
 - Observations of any injuries
 - Your name and the name of any other people present and the date, time and location of the meeting

Inform the child or vulnerable adult that the College has a legal obligation to report instances of alleged abuse to the appropriate authorities for investigation, but that the number of people involved will be kept to a minimum and that information will be disclosed on a need to know basis and that the child or vulnerable adult will always be kept informed of action taken (unless this is likely to increase the risk of harm to the child or vulnerable adult).

Reassure the child or vulnerable adult throughout, that by telling a member of staff they have done the right thing. Advise the child or vulnerable adult that counselling support is available from the campus Counsellor (or elsewhere in appropriate cases).

If the child or vulnerable adult reporting the alleged abuse has a disability and/or difficulties in communicating, extra care should be taken to ensure that the child or vulnerable adult has access to any member of staff or support worker (as appropriate) and that member of staff concerned has the appropriate communication skills to allow the child or vulnerable adult to communicate effectively the abuse he or she wishes to report, e.g. campus Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator or College ALN Manager

Staff should **NOT**:

- Put words into the child's or vulnerable adult's mouth or ask leading questions.
- Investigate concerns or allegations. The Individual staff members have no investigative role but should report allegations immediately to the Designated Person or Safeguarding Lead.
- Promise confidentiality. The child or vulnerable adult should understand that if there is a criminal prosecution and/or disciplinary proceedings are undertaken then anything the victim or the witnesses say may not remain confidential.
- Forget to record what you have been told in writing, recording the time, date, place and people who are present. The child or vulnerable adult's answers should be recorded in exactly the way they were said as far as possible.
- Fail to pass on the information as required by this procedure to the Designated Person or Safeguarding Lead.
- Assume someone else will take the necessary action.

8.2 Reporting to Designated Staff

Staff should report any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of abuse as soon as possible and within 24 hours to the Designated Person or Safeguarding Lead. The Designated Person should ensure that the person who reported the concern completes a report. The Designated Person shall retain a copy of:

- The report
- Any notes or correspondence dealing with the matter
- Any other relevant material

A copy of the reports, notes and all documents should be kept securely locked at all times and access to records will be confined to designated staff.

8.3 Reporting to the Senior Member of Staff with Lead Responsibility

The Designated Person or the Safeguarding Lead in his/her absence must notify the senior member of staff with lead responsibility, who is the Vice Principal (Curriculum & Quality), as soon as practicable and in any event within 24 hours of the disclosure or suspicion being raised.

In the case of a School Link learner, the Designated Person should liaise closely with the school's designated member of staff. Refer to Appendix F for the College's 14-19 Learning Pathway Safeguarding Statement (Including EHE).

In the event of an allegation of actual abuse of a child or vulnerable adult at the College where the alleged abuser is a learner at the College, the Designated Person should pay due regard to other College procedures as appropriate whilst following safeguarding procedures.

8.4 Contact with Children's Service

The Designated Person must report the matter as soon as possible by telephone to the Children's Services Department for the local authority where the child or young person lives. A Multi Agency referral form should be requested from the social work duty officer.

A written record of the date and time of the report should be made and the report must include the name and the position of the person to whom the matter is reported. A telephone report must be confirmed in writing using the appropriate referral form where possible to the Children's Services department within a further 24 hours. Staff should be aware that well kept records are essential for good child and vulnerable adult protection practice.

The Designated Person should discuss with the social worker:-

- What action (if any) should be taken to inform the parent/carer and/or child/vulnerable adult? A note of that conversation should be made.
- The process for keeping the College informed of further action taken.

Legal advice should be sought if there is any doubt as to the amount of or appropriateness of the information which can be shared.

Where a member of staff is contacted outside of college hours by a learner who is in imminent danger or threatening suicide, the member of staff should ring 999 and offer the Police as much information as possible, which should include the learner's whereabouts as well as any information relating to the reported incident or disclosure. Whether the learner is in imminent

danger or not, the member of staff must report the disclosure to the Designated Person or Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible

Where the Police and/or Social Services require further information, the member of staff must contact the Designated Person, who will access the College's management information system (EBS) to obtain the information e.g. names and addresses of classmates and emergency contact numbers, etc.

If the learner is under 18, the parent, guardian or carer, should normally be informed, unless:

- There is a risk of significant harm to the child
- If staff feel threatened
- The child is competent and has expressed a wish that his or her parents are not informed.

In all cases, the overriding concern must be the welfare of the child. Where there are any doubts about seeking permission from parents, they should not be approached or, further advice can be sought from the relevant Social Services Department. The reasons for any decision should be fully recorded.

9.0 ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST A MEMBER OF STAFF

There may be occasions when a child or vulnerable adult accuses a member of staff of abuse. In such cases and in addition to the above procedure which should be strictly followed both in content and in timing, the Designated Person must notify the Director (*Human Resources*) immediately. The Director (Human Resources) will inform the Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality) and will nominate an Investigating Officer in line with the College's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure. Any action taken as a result of the allegation will be taken in accordance with that policy although no action will be taken to jeopardise or interfere with any investigations undertaken by the relevant authorities. Appendix C sets out the provisions for reporting and dealing with such allegations detailed.

10.0 DEALING WITH CONCERNS ABOUT RADICALISATION

The duty to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm extends to protecting them from involvement in groups which set out to radicalise individuals. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.

Further Education colleges have been identified within the government's Prevent Strategy as potential sites for radicalisation.

Factors which are considered when determining whether an individual may be vulnerable to involvement with terrorism are broadly described as:

- Engagement with a group, cause or ideology
- Intent to cause harm
- Capability to cause harm

Staff or learners may be concerned about someone due to changes in behaviour or appearance. For example:

- An individual may stop contact with peers and only be interested in contact with members of a particular ideological group

- An individual may change their habitual style of dress
- An individual may condone violence in support of their espoused ideology

There may be many reasons for such changes which is why a safeguarding approach should be adopted to enable relevant services within and outside the college to identify an individual's needs and vulnerabilities. This includes deciding whether the Channel Process may be of benefit.

If a member of staff or learner is concerned that an individual may be becoming radicalised s/he should speak to the Designated Person or Safeguarding Lead. If concerns are about an ACL learner, staff or learners should contact the Head of Bilingualism and Community Learning.

11.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

There is a designated College Governor, a senior member of staff and designated persons all of whom have specialist responsibility for safeguarding issues. The College has developed procedures in line with and taking account of guidance issued by the Department of Children Schools and Families, the Welsh Government and other relevant bodies and groups including the Association of Colleges. The College's safeguarding procedures are in line with the All Wales Child Protection Procedures.

Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body is committed to ensuring that the College:

- Provides a safe environment for children and vulnerable adults.
- Raises awareness of issues relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults in the College.
- Identifies children and vulnerable adults who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm and takes appropriate action to see that such children and vulnerable adults are kept safe at the College.
- Have procedures for reporting and dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff, other learners and volunteers.
- Operates safe recruitment procedures.
- Designates a member of staff with sufficient authority to take lead responsibility for child and vulnerable adult protection
- Remedies any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to child and vulnerable adult protection arrangements that are brought to the Governing Body's attention

Designated Governor (Safeguarding)

The Designated Governor will be responsible for liaising with the Principal and Designated Persons to ensure that:

- The College's Policy meets the South East Wales Regional Safeguarding Children Board requirements;
- The Policy is subject to review every two years by the Governing Body.
- The Governing Body is informed of how the College and its staff have complied with the Policy.

The Designated Governor will also be responsible for overseeing liaison with appropriate agencies in connection with allegations against the Principal or one of the Designated Persons. This will not involve undertaking a formal investigation but will ensure communication between parties and provide information to assist enquiries. The Designated Governor will also ensure that the senior member of staff with lead responsibility fulfils their responsibilities.

To assist the Designated Governor to fulfil these duties he/she shall receive appropriate training.

Contact details for the Designated Governor are available from the Governance Officer.

Senior Member of Staff with Lead Responsibility

The Senior Member with lead responsibility is the Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality) and is responsible for:

- Taking the lead responsibility for raising awareness within the staff of issues relating to the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and the promotion of a safe environment for the children and vulnerable adults learning and being cared for within the College.
- Ensuring that the Safeguarding Lead and Designated Persons fulfil their responsibilities
- Reporting annually to the Governing Body of the College on how the College has discharged its duties.
- Reporting deficiencies (which may be identified internally or by outside agencies) in procedure to the Governing Body at the earliest opportunity.
- Chairing the College's Safeguarding Committee.
- Ensuring that the Policy is referred to and available on the College website.
- Contributing to the updating and review of the Safeguarding Policy annually.

The staff member with lead responsibility will have received training in child and vulnerable adult protection issues and inter-agency working as required and will receive refresher training at least every three years. The staff member with the lead responsibility will keep up-to-date with developments in child and vulnerable adult protection issues.

Safeguarding Lead

The Safeguarding Lead will be the Director (Quality & Learner Experience) and is responsible for:

- Ensuring that Designated Persons (or any other person as appropriate in these such circumstances) maintain a proper record of any referral, complaint or concern (even where this does not lead to a referral);
- Ensuring that Designated Persons maintain appropriate liaison with external agencies and ensure that staff, parents, partner organisations and learners are aware of the College's Safeguarding Policy;
- Providing advice and support to other staff on issues relating to safeguarding;
- Ensuring that when a child or vulnerable adult leaves the College, their child or vulnerable adult protection file is copied to their new education establishment and transferred separately from the main learner file;
- Dealing with individual cases including attending case conferences and review meetings as appropriate;
- Discussing the situation with the appropriate Local Authority (refer to Appendix A) including advice and discussion regarding whether a formal referral for child or vulnerable adult protection is required;
- Acting as the contact for agencies needing to contact the College about child or vulnerable adult protection matters;
- Undertaking training in child and vulnerable adult protection issues and inter-agency working as required and to undertake refresher training at least every three years;
- Where an inter-agency child or vulnerable adult protection plan is in place, ensuring the College is if necessary, involved in the preparation of the plan and ensuring the College's role is clearly defined;
- Maintaining confidential records of all action taken in respect of any case involving allegations of child or vulnerable adult abuse;
- Contributing to the updating and review of the Safeguarding Policy.

The ‘Designated Person’

The Designated Person will be the Head of Learner Services of the appropriate Campus and is responsible for:

- Raising awareness within the staff, of issues relating to the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and the promotion of a safe environment for the children and vulnerable adults learning and being cared for within the campus;
- Providing support to staff potentially involved in the operation of the policy by:
 - Ensuring training needs are established, arranging individual consultation and in-service training for staff, which will include the completion of refresher training by campus staff at least every three years;
 - Ensuring all staff know who the Designated Person is;
 - Ensuring that all staff know that concerns about abuse or possible abuse are to be brought to the Designated Person or in his/her absence to the Safeguarding Lead;
 - Dealing with individual cases including attending case conferences and review meetings as appropriate;
- Providing advice and support to other staff on issues relating to child and vulnerable adult protection;
- Liaising with secondary schools which sends pupils to the College to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for the pupils;
- Liaising with employers and training organisations that receive children or vulnerable adults from the College on placements to ensure that appropriate safeguards are put in place;
- Discussing safeguarding situations with the appropriate Local Authority (refer to Appendix A) including advice and discussion regarding whether a formal referral for child or vulnerable adult protection is required;
- Acting as the contact for agencies needing to contact the College about child or vulnerable adult protection matters;
- Reporting to the staff member with lead responsibility;
- Undertaking training in child and vulnerable adult protection issues and inter-agency working as required, including refresher training at least every three years;
- Identifying the need for support that any employee may have when involved in an abuse case and liaising with the Director (HR) to ensure that the employee is aware of support mechanisms available;
- Ensuring that all enquiries from parents are referred to the appropriate Local Authority Department;
- Contributing to the updating and review of the Safeguarding Policy;
- Ensuring that the Policy is referred to and available in hard copy at specified locations within the campus.

If the Designated Person at the Campus is suspected of child or vulnerable adult abuse, the staff member or members forming such suspicions must go to the Vice Principal (Curriculum & Quality), who will fulfil the role of the Designated Person in this context.

Safeguarding Training Officer

The Safeguarding Training Officer will be the Director of Human Resources and is responsible for:

- Ensuring that all College staff undertake training at the appropriate level on a regular basis, which will include the completion of refresher training by staff at least every three years;
- Ensuring training needs are established, arranging individual consultation and in-service training for College staff;

- Undertaking training in child and vulnerable adult protection issues and inter-agency working as required including refresher training at least every three years;
- Contributing to the updating and review of the Safeguarding Policy.

12.0 COLLEGE COUNSELLORS

Anyone reporting suspected abuse to a member of staff should be offered the opportunity to receive counselling from a College Counsellor. If the person concerned does not wish to see a Counsellor, this wish must be respected. The child or vulnerable adult should be informed that he or she may speak to a counsellor in the future if they wish to do so.

In addition, the member of staff to whom the abuse was disclosed and/or was concerned about possible abuse is able to access a Counsellor via the Employee Assistance Programme, and may wish to avail himself or herself of this opportunity at his or her own convenience.

The procedure for allegations of abuse received by Counsellors is addressed in the supplementary document, Child Protection Procedure – Guidance for counsellors (Appendix B).

It is recommended that a College Counsellor to whom allegations of abuse are disclosed should consult with his or her supervisor in such cases, although the identity of the “client” should be protected as far as possible.

The College Counsellors should inform a child or vulnerable adult at the outset about the limits on the Counsellor’s ability to keep confidential matters which the child or vulnerable adult raises. Any such limitations should be clearly stated in any written contract.

13.0 DISSATISFACTION WITH INVESTIGATION/WAY IN WHICH COMPLAINT WAS HANDLED

If any person wishes to complain about the way in which the matter was handled, this complaint should be made in writing to the Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality) who will review the details.

If any allegations are found to have merit, the Vice Principal will review the evidence in order to ascertain whether the College’s disciplinary procedures should be enacted and whether any sanctions should be imposed and whether external agencies need to be informed of the findings.

APPENDIX A

Contacting the appropriate Local Authority Department

The appropriate Local Authority Department to be contacted in instances of alleged child and vulnerable adult abuse will be the one which covers the area within which the incident occurred.

Therefore, if the incident occurred at the learner's home, the appropriate Local Authority Department would be the Department for that Geographical Area.

If the incident occurred at the Campus, the appropriate Local Authority Department would be the Department covering that Campus.

The appropriate Social Services Departments for each Campus are as follows:

Campus	Social Services Dept	
BGLZ	Ebbw Vale C2BG Emergency Duty Team Safeguarding Manager	(01495) 315700 (0800 3284432) (01495) 354792
Usk	Monmouthshire	(01291 635669)
City of Newport	Newport	(01633) 235273
Pontypool	Pontypool	(01633) 628914
Crosskeys	Gellihaf	(01443) 873 514
Child Protection Development Officer	Caerphilly	(02920) 858 850

Out of normal office hours, the Emergency Social Services Team can be contacted via the police. (*Gwent Police HQ. Croesyceiliog, Cwmbran 01633 838111*).

APPENDIX B

Safeguarding Procedure – Guidance for Counsellors

Initial Contact

Counsellors must always emphasise at the commencement of counselling that they cannot guarantee confidentiality in circumstances where they would be required to disclose information by law.

When a disclosure is made:

- a. Where an individual appears to be at risk of significant harm, but no risk to others:
 - Seek client agreement to disclose to Designated Person and Social Services. If agreed, inform Designated Person at first practicable opportunity;
 - If not agreed, the counsellor must make a judgement in relation to whether to disclose.

If a child or vulnerable adult confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the child or vulnerable adult that he or she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies for the child's or vulnerable adult's own sake.

If the child is or may be a child in need, this should be referred the child to social services. This may include a child who is believed to be at risk of suffering significant harm.

Counsellors may be anxious about the legal or ethical restrictions on sharing information, particularly with other agencies. Awareness of the law and compliance with the code of conduct or other guidance applicable to the profession should be adhered to. These rarely provide an absolute barrier to disclosure. The counsellor's judgement should be exercised. A failure to pass on information that might prevent a tragedy could expose counsellors to criticism in the same way as an unjustified disclosure. A decision whether to disclose information may be particularly difficult if it may damage the trust between counsellor and patient/client. Wherever possible counsellors should explain the problem, seek agreement and explain the reasons if a decision is taken to act against a parent/carer or child/vulnerable adult's wishes. It is often helpful to discuss such concerns.

Some circumstances may override the conscious endeavour to seek a client's consent, particularly the urgency of the situation, the seriousness of the impending harm to the client or others, the client's lack of sufficient understanding to give consent or where seeking the client's consent would expose the client to greater harm

The key factor in deciding whether or not to disclose is proportionality, i.e. is the proposed disclosure a proportionate response to the need to protect the welfare of the child or vulnerable adult? In a situation where a child or vulnerable adult makes a threat to commit suicide if information they have given is disclosed to social services, the overriding duty to safeguard the child's or vulnerable adult's welfare is likely to override the need to involve social services at that stage. However, the counsellor in that situation would be expected to explore other ways of protecting the child's or vulnerable adult's welfare with them and/or persuade them to consent to the disclosure. The child's or vulnerable adult's welfare must always be the paramount consideration.

- b. Where there is a risk to others

In cases where there is a risk to other individuals, the counsellor must once again exercise his/her professional judgement, as above. However, as at least one other individual is at risk, the factors to be taken into consideration have to change also.

- a. Seek client agreement to disclose to Designated Person and Social Services. If agreed, inform Designated Person at first practicable opportunity;
- b. If not agreed, the counsellor must make a judgement in relation to whether to disclose, taking into account the guidance contained above.

APPENDIX C

Reporting and Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Members of Staff

The College recognises that an allegation of child or vulnerable adult abuse made against a member of staff may be made for a variety of reasons and that the allegation may or may not be true. It is also recognised that hasty or ill informed decisions can potentially damage an individual's reputation, confidence and career. Therefore, allegations of abuse by a member of staff shall be handled with sensitivity.

It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a member of staff is dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently. These procedures apply to all staff whether teaching, administrative, management or support and to volunteers.

Receiving an Allegation from a Child/ Vulnerable Adult

A member of staff who receives an allegation about another member of staff should follow the guidelines in section 8.0 for dealing with disclosure.

The allegation should be reported immediately to the Principal unless the Principal is the person against whom the allegation is made in which case the report should be made to the staff member with lead responsibility or to the designated governor.

The Principal (or designated person if the allegation is against the Principal) should

- Obtain written details of the allegation from the person who received it, dated and signed. The written details should be countersigned and dated by the Principal (or designated person).
- Record information in relation to time, dates, location and names of any potential witnesses. This information should be kept secure.

Initial Assessment by the Principal (or designated person)

The Principal (or designated person) must make an initial assessment of the allegation consulting with the senior staff member with lead responsibility as appropriate.

Where the allegation is considered to be a potential criminal act or indicates that the child has suffered, is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm the matter must be reported immediately to the appropriate Social Services Department.

It is important that the Principal (or designated person) does not investigate the allegation. The initial assessment should be on the basis of the information received and this will determine whether or not the allegation warrants further investigation.

Other potential outcomes are:

- That the allegations are so serious that they require investigation by the police and/or social services.
- That the allegation represents inappropriate behaviour or poor judgment by the member of staff and it is neither potentially a crime nor a cause of significant harm to the child or vulnerable adult. The matter should be addressed in accordance with the College's disciplinary procedures.
- The allegation can be shown to be false because the fact or facts alleged could not possibly be true.

Enquiries and Investigations

Child and vulnerable adult protection enquiries by social services or the police are not to be confused with the internal disciplinary enquiries by the College. The College may be able to use the outcome of external agency enquiries to assist its own procedures. Child and vulnerable adult protection agencies including the police have no power to direct the College to act in a particular way however the College should assist the agencies with their enquiries.

The College may consider holding in abeyance its own internal enquiries while the formal police or social services investigations proceed; if there is a risk that these investigations would be prejudiced by the College's enquiries.

Any internal enquiry shall conform to existing staff disciplinary procedures.

If there is an investigation by an external agency for example the police, the Principal (or designated person) should normally be involved in and contribute to the inter-agency strategy discussion. The Principal (or designated person) is responsible for ensuring that the College gives every assistance with the agency's enquiries. He/she will ensure that appropriate confidentiality is maintained in connection with the enquiries in the interest of the member of staff against whom the allegation is made.

The Principal (or designated person) shall advise the member of staff that he or she should consult with a representative for example trade union.

Subject to objections from the police and/or other investigation agencies the Principal (or designated person) shall:

- Inform the child/vulnerable adult or parent/carer making the allegation that the investigation is taking place and what the likely process will involve.
- Ensure that parent/carers of all children/vulnerable adults making the allegation have been informed that the allegation has been made and what the likely process will involve.
- Inform the member of staff against whom the allegation was made of the fact that the investigation is taking place and what the likely process will involve.
- Inform the Chair of Governors and the Designated Governor of the allegation and of the investigation.

The Principal or designated person shall keep a full written record of the action taken in connection with the allegation

Suspension of Staff

The possible risks of harm to children and vulnerable adults posed by an accused person need to be effectively evaluated, managed and in some cases that will require the College to consider suspending the person until the case resolved. Suspension should not be automatic in every case where an allegation is found to warrant further investigation. It should be considered:

- Where a child or vulnerable adult is at risk
- Where the allegations are potentially sufficiently serious to justify dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct
- Where necessary for the good and efficient conduct of the investigation.
- Suspension will be in accordance with the College's Disciplinary Procedures.

Where a member of staff is suspended, the Principal (or Chair or Vice Chair of Governors) should address the following issues:

- Where the Principal has been suspended the Chair or Vice Chair of Governors will need to take action to adjust the management of the College.
- The Parent/carers of the children or vulnerable adults at the centre of the allegations should be informed of the suspension. They should be asked to treat the information as confidential. Consideration should be given to informing the children or vulnerable adults subject to the alleged abuse of this suspension.
- Senior staff that needs to know of the reason for the suspension should be informed.
- Depending on the nature of the allegation, the Principal should consider with the nominated Governor whether a public statement to the students of the College and/or Parent and/or carer should be made having due regard of the need for confidentiality or to avoid unwelcome publicity.
- The Principal shall consider carefully and review the decisions as to who is informed on the suspension and the investigation. The appropriate local authority agencies and external investigating authorities should be consulted.
- The suspended member of staff should be given appropriate support during the period of suspension including access to College counsellors is appropriate. He or she should be provided with information on progress and development in the case at regular intervals.
- The suspension should remain under review in accordance with the College's disciplinary procedures.

The Disciplinary Investigation

The disciplinary investigation should be conducted in accordance with the College' existing staff disciplinary procedures.

The child or vulnerable adult at the centre of the allegation and/or their parents should be informed of the outcome of the investigation and proceedings. This should occur prior to the return to College of the member of staff (if suspended).

The Principal (or Chair/Vice Chair of Governors) should give consideration to what information should be made available to the general population of the College.

Allegations without foundation

False allegations may be indicative of problems of abuse elsewhere. A record should be kept and consideration given to a referral to the Children's Social Services Department in order that other agencies may act upon the information.

In consultation with the member of staff with lead responsibility for child and vulnerable adult protection and/or the designated Governor, the Principal shall:

- Inform the member of staff against whom the allegation is made orally and in writing that no further disciplinary or child protection action will be taken.
- Inform the parents/carers of the alleged victim that the allegation has been made and of the outcome.
- where the allegation was made by a child or vulnerable adult other than the alleged victim, consideration to be given to informing the parent/carers of that child/vulnerable adult
- Prepare a report outlining the allegation and giving reasons for the conclusion that it had no foundation and confirming that the above action had been taken.

Staff should not feel concerned about reporting any suspected abuse by a member of staff for fear of disciplinary action in the event that the allegations are unfounded.

Records

It is important that documents relating to an investigation are retained in a secure place, together with a written record of the outcome and, if disciplinary action is taken, details retained on the member of staff's personal and confidential file.

If a member of staff is dismissed or resigns before the disciplinary process is completed, he/she should be informed about the College's statutory duty to inform the Disclosure and Barring Scheme.

Legal advice should be sought if in doubt as to the amount of information which can be shared.

Monitoring Effectiveness

Where an allegation has been made against a member of staff, the Designated Governor, together with the Staff Member with Lead Responsibility should, at the conclusion of 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 procedures and/or policies and/or which should be drawn to the attention of the SEWSCB. Consideration should also be given to the training needs of staff.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURES

The College will have in place recruitment procedures which will ensure that every care is taken to ensure that children/vulnerable adults are protected from unsuitable people.

The recruitment procedures will apply to all staff and volunteers within the College who may work with children or vulnerable adults. The recruitment procedures will include the following:

- Identity check;
- The post or role will be clearly defined;
- The key selection criteria for the post or role will be identified;
- The requirement to produce documentary evidence of academic/vocational qualifications;
- Obtaining professional and character references;
- Verification of previous employment history;
- Standard Disclosure and Barring Scheme (DBS), checks for any Applicant or Adult Volunteer that is not applying to work/volunteer to liaise with children or vulnerable adults whilst maintaining sensitive and confidential use of the applicant's disclosure
- Enhanced DBS check where the Applicant or Volunteer is applying to work in regulated activity
- Use of a variety of selection techniques (e.g. qualifications, previous experience, interview, reference checks).

As a result of the introduction of the DBS:

- The College must not knowingly employ, or use as a volunteer, a person who has been barred from working with children and vulnerable adults in regulated activity.

APPENDIX D

Child Sexual Exploitation

Barnardo's Cymru advise that 'the sexual exploitation of children and young people is a hidden form of abuse and as such is difficult to define. A number of different definitions have been developed through the work of researchers and practitioners though the concepts of exploitation and exchange are central to each'.

One definition is:

'Child sexual exploitation is the coercion or manipulation of children and young people into taking part in sexual activities. It is a form of sexual abuse involving an exchange of some form of payment which can include money, phones and other items, drugs, alcohol, a place to stay, protection or affection. The vulnerability of the young person and grooming process employed by perpetrators renders them powerless to recognise the exploitative nature of relationships and unable to give informed consent' Clutton. S and Coles. J (2008)

The main and inter-related forms of child sexual exploitation (CSE) are:

- abuse through the exchange of sexual activity for some form of payment
- abuse through the production of indecent images and/or any other indecent material involving children whether photographs, films or other technologies
- abuse through grooming whether via direct contact or the use of technologies such as mobile phones and the internet
- abuse through trafficking for sexual purposes

Child sexual exploitation is a particularly hidden form of abuse and disclosures of this form of abuse are extremely rare. It is therefore important that all staff are familiar with the Sexual Exploitation Risk Assessment Framework (SERAF) to be able to identify children at risk. The vulnerability and risk indicators of child sexual exploitation are well established and are outlined below.

The vulnerability factors for children and young people are:

- isolated from peer / social network
- family history of mental health difficulties
- low self – esteem
- physical abuse by parent/carer/family member
- emotional neglect by parent/carer/family member
- family history of substance misuse
- family history of domestic abuse
- breakdown of family relationships
- unsuitable/inappropriate accommodation
- lack of positive relationship with a protective adult

The risk indicators which are important to be aware of to help recognise "at risk" children and young people are:

Significant risk indicators:

- periods of going missing overnight or longer
- older “boyfriend” relationship with controlling adult
- physical / emotional abuse by that “boyfriend” / controlling adult
- entering / leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults
- unexplained amounts of money, expensive clothes or other items
- frequenting areas known for sex work
- physical injury without plausible explanation

Moderate risk indicators:

- staying out late
- multiple callers (unknown adults / older young people)
- use of mobile phone that causes concern (e.g. constant calls / texts / different men calling)
- expressions of despair (self-harm, overdose, eating disorder, challenging behaviour, aggression)
- disclosure of sexual / physical assault followed by withdrawal of allegation
- sexually transmitted infection
- peers involved in clipping (agreeing exchange for a sexual act but without intending to carry it out) and or sexual exploitation
- drug / alcohol misuse
- use of internet that causes concern
- exclusion from school or unexplained absence or not engaged in college / training
- living independently and failing to respond to attempts by worker to keep in touch

In line with the College child protection procedures, if a member of staff is concerned that a learner is at risk of any form of sexual exploitation, they should alert the Designated Person or the Safeguarding Lead, in their absence.

The Designated Person or Safeguarding Lead will complete the SERAF risk assessment form and refer to the Local Authority Social Services, where the child lives.

APPENDIX E

Forced Marriage

The Difference between an Arranged and a Forced Marriage:

The tradition of arranged marriages has operated successfully within many communities and many countries for a very long time. A clear distinction must be made between a forced marriage and an arranged marriage. In arranged marriages the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice whether to accept the arrangement remains with the individuals. In forced marriage at least one party does not consent to the marriage and some element of duress is involved.

Forced marriage is primarily an issue of violence against women. Most cases involve young women and girls aged between 13 and 30 years, although there is evidence to suggest that as many as 15% of victims are male.

Forced marriage is a criminal offence, the offences can include abduction, physical violence, threatening behaviour. Sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

What action should be taken if you suspect that a learner may be forced into a marriage against their will?

- Contact the Designated Person or Safeguarding Lead at your campus who will make an assessment of the case and decide whether to contact MEWN, Social Services or go directly to the Forced Marriage Unit with the Police.
- If an ethnic minority learner leaves College unexpectedly and without explanation, contact the Designated Person or Safeguarding Lead at your campus who will liaise with MEWN ([E: administration@mewn-cymru.org.uk](mailto:administration@mewn-cymru.org.uk)) in order to determine why the learner has 'suddenly' left the College without explanation and monitor any concerns.

Contact Numbers:

BAWSO	01633 213213 0800 731 8147
Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) London	020 7008 0151
Gwent Police Public Protection Unit	01633 838111

For Greater Gwent contact your Duty and Assessment Teams

APPENDIX F

14-19 Learning Pathways Safeguarding Statement (Including Elected Home Educated)

As part of the 14-19 Learning Pathways, school pupils have the opportunity to study a range of vocational subjects outside of the school environment (Learning Base). Coleg Gwent is a collaborative partner with many schools and has formal agreements with its local authorities, which set out the operational arrangements to ensure that all parties have an awareness and understanding of their commitments and responsibilities as part of this collaboration. This sets out the following specific criteria as part of its Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy:

1. Child protection takes precedence over Data Protection.
2. Coleg Gwent will contact the Learning Base in the event of a child protection issue. If this is not possible, Coleg Gwent will contact the Local Authority Child Protection Officer who will support the child until the Learning Based can resume responsibility.
3. The Learning Base is responsible for its own policy covering collaborative working and for ensuring collaborative provision is suitable for its learners.
4. The Learning Base is responsible for carrying out DBS checks and for ensuring Coleg Gwent have carried out enhanced DBSs.
5. The Learning Base and Coleg Gwent must ensure that proper and appropriate induction on safeguarding is provided to learners during induction.
6. The Learning Base and Coleg Gwent must ensure appropriately trained designated persons are identified in each institution.
7. Agreements should set out the obligations and entitlements of all signatories