



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

2024-25

Date of Issue	September 2024
Approved by	Corporation
Contact	Assistant Principal of Learner Services, Marketing & Communication
Review Date	September 2025 or in line with statutory updates
Available on	College Website

Contents

1. Policy Statement and Principles	5
1.1 Scope	5
1.2 Who is responsible for Safeguarding?	6
1.3 The voice of the child	7
1.4 Terminology	7
2. Safeguarding Legislation and Guidance	8
2.1 Human Rights Act (HRA)	9
2.2 Equality Act 2010	9
2.3 Counter Terrorism and Security Act	10
2.4 Prevent Duty Guidance - England and Wales	10
2.5 Serious Crime Act	10
3. Roles and Responsibilities	11
3.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	12
3.2 The Principal and CEO	12
3.3 Governing Body	13
3.4 Chair of Governors	14
3.5 Link Governor for Safeguarding	14
3.6 All Staff	15
4. Types of Abuse	16
4.1 Child on Child Abuse	16
4.2 Serious Violence	17
4.3 Learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, physical or mental health difficulties.	17
4.4 Children Missing from Education	17
4.5 Contextual Safeguarding	18
4.6 Child Sexual Exploitation	18
4.7 Child Criminal Exploitation	18
4.8 Domestic Abuse	19
4.9 Female Genital Mutilation	19
4.10 Forced Marriage	19
4.11 Prevention of Radicalisation	19
4.12 Helping children to recognise risk and access support	20

4.13 Young Person’s Disclosures to Staff	21
4.14 Vulnerable students	21
4.15 Children who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)	22
4.16 Young people or vulnerable adults requiring mental health support	23
5. Reporting Procedures	23
5.1 Out of Hours Concerns	24
6. Information Sharing	24
6.1 The Data Protection Act 2018	24
6.2 Transitions	26
6.3 Recording	26
6.4 DSL Decision-Making	27
6.5 Referrals	29
6.6 Parents and Carers	29
6.7 Support for students, families and staff	30
6.8 Practitioners’ Code of Conduct	30
7. Staff training	32
8. Allegations against staff and volunteers (ASV)	33
8.1 Whistleblowing	34
8.2 Complaints Procedure	35
9. Visitors and security arrangements	35
9.1 Behaviour management	35
9.2 Use of reasonable force	35
9.3 Searching Learners	36
9.4 Off-site arrangements	37
9.5 Photography and images	38
9.6 Online safety	38
9.7 Remote learning	39
9.8 Online communication between staff and learners	39
9.9 Online filters and monitoring	39
Appendix 1: Specific Safeguarding Concerns	40
Appendix 2: Thresholds for social care intervention	57
Appendix 3: Designated Safeguarding Lead	60
Appendix 4 Standards for Effective Child Protection Practice	64

APPENDIX 5: Safer Recruitment 66
APPENDIX 6: Allegations of Abuse Made Against Members of Staff or Volunteers 69
Appendix 7: Missing From Education Protocols 74
Appendix 8: Home Visit Protocol 74
Appendix 8: Useful Contacts in Waltham Forest 76

1. Policy Statement and Principles

Waltham Forest College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare and wellbeing of young people and vulnerable adults and we aim to create a culture of vigilance. We expect everyone who works at Waltham Forest College to share this commitment and that all staff have read and understood Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2024.

This policy is underpinned by the Department for Education (DfE) updated version of the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2024 and a link to the full version of KCSiE can be found here – [Keeping children safe in education 2024 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/123456/keeping-children-safe-in-education-2024.pdf)

This Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed by the Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead on a regular basis to ensure it remains current and incorporates all revisions made to local or national safeguarding guidance. This policy will be, at a minimum, reviewed annually during the autumn term and submitted to the Governing Body for approval and sign-off at the first autumn term meeting.

Waltham Forest College will ensure that all parents/carers are made aware of our responsibilities regarding child protection procedures and how we will safeguard and promote the welfare of their Learners through the publication of this policy on the College website.

These duties and responsibilities, as set out within the Education Act 2002 sec175 and 157, DfE Statutory Guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (updated December 2020) are incorporated into this policy.

1.1 Scope

Waltham Forest College recognises that it has a moral and statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of those receiving education and training through the College. All learners have a right to feel safe and protected from all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and all staff are committed to recognising and reporting all concerns related to child protection, welfare and wellbeing and are appropriately trained to remain vigilant and spot signs of all forms of abuse and maltreatment. As such, we promise to:

- Be observant and alert to signs of all forms of abuse
- Be curious and question explanations offered by parents/ carers / learners / staff and visitors
- Be compassionate, honest and clear
- Ask for support when we feel there is a limit of our experience / skills
- Follow College policies and procedures linked to safeguarding referrals
- Work together with other agencies when appropriate to ensure support for young people and their families is effective and helps improve person-centred outcomes

Waltham Forest College aims to offer an environment where young people feel welcome, safe, stimulated and where young people are free to enjoy learning and developing in confidence. The purpose of this policy is to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults at Waltham Forest College.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

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

To take all necessary steps to keep young people safe and well, Waltham Forest College will:

- Ensure our approach is learner-centred, considering always what is in the best interest of the learner
- Safeguard learners both preventatively and responsively
- Ensure the suitability of adults who have contact with learners
- Promote good health, effective management of medical conditions, and the development of self-care in learners & young people
- Have clear standards of behaviour for staff / volunteers and learners / young people
- Manage behaviour by anticipating possible concerns, prevention strategies, and clear, fair responses to challenging behaviour
- Maintain records that document safeguarding concerns over time, including low-level worries about a learner or young person that together may paint a picture of concern
- Ensure that all policies and procedures relating to safeguarding and wellbeing are updated annually in collaboration with the board of governors (or similar).

1.2 Who is responsible for Safeguarding?

Everyone who works at Waltham Forest College understands they are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for learners and accepts safeguarding and promoting the welfare of learners is everyone's responsibility and everyone who comes into contact with Learners and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all our staff, including agency staff and volunteers will ensure their approach is learner-centred and will be supported to consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the learner.

We recognise no single professional can have a full picture of a learner's needs and circumstances. If Learners and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information, and taking prompt action.

Safeguarding Children is defined as: The actions we take to promote the welfare of Learners and protect them from harm are everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with Learners and families has a role to play.

This policy is readily available on the College website via www.waltham.ac.uk and is signposted to parents and carers. Support and consideration will be given to those parents/carers for whom English is not a first language.

1.3 The voice of the child

All staff will ensure that their approach is learner and family centred. This means that they will consider what is in the best interests of the young person, and how to approach families with compassion and respect. Staff will always seek to understand and give a voice to the lived experience of a given young person within Waltham Forest College, at home and within their wider community, even if the young person is unable / unwilling to express their experience themselves.

This policy covers local and national context to safeguarding and Prevent and factors the partnership arrangements and priorities of Waltham Forest Child Safeguarding Board and Prevent Steering Group, which the College holds active membership.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of Learners is defined as:

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

1.4 Terminology

This policy is written factoring various statutory documents and for ease the below terms may be used:

- **Young Person:** Throughout this policy, reference is made to young people, children and young people or child protection and these terms are used to mean those under the age of 18 (anyone up to their 18th birthday)
- **Learner:** Throughout this policy, reference is made to learners and this term means anyone who studies at Waltham Forest College
- **Vulnerable Adult:** The College recognises that some adults can fall under a vulnerable category and experience a form of abuse or place them at risk of abuse. The Lord Chancellor's Department defined a vulnerable adult or an adult at risk as a person "who is or may require community care services because of disability, age or illness; and is or may be unable to take care of, or unable to protect themselves, against significant harm or exploitation"
- **Child Protection:** Refers to the processes undertaken to protect learners who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering, significant harm
- **DSL:** Designated Safeguarding Lead
- **DDSL:** Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
- **Staff:** Refers to all those working for or on behalf of the College either a paid or in a voluntary capacity
- **BeSafe:** The team of safeguarding practitioners at Waltham Forest College

2. Safeguarding Legislation and Guidance

Section 175 of the [Education Act](#) 2002 requires local education authorities and the governors of maintained schools and further education (FE) colleges to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Section 157 of the [Education Act](#) 2002 and the [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations](#) 2014 require proprietors of independent schools (including academies and city technology colleges) to have arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school. Section 157 of the [Education Act](#) 2002 and the [Non-Maintained Special Schools \(England\) Regulations](#) 2015.

The [Teachers' Standards](#) state that teachers, including headteachers, must have regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions; and uphold public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.

The statutory guidance [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) 2018 covers the legislative requirements and expectations on individual services (including schools and colleges) to safeguard and promote the welfare of learners. It also provides the framework for the three local safeguarding partners (the local authority; a clinical commissioning group for an area, any part of which falls within the local authority; and the chief officer of Police for a Police area, any part of which falls within the local authority area) to make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local learners including identifying and responding to their needs. The guidance confirms that it applies, in its entirety, to all schools.

The statutory guidance [Keeping children safe in education 2024 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#) 2024 is issued under Section 175 of the [Education Act](#) 2002, the [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations](#) 2014 and the [Non-Maintained Special Schools \(England\) Regulations](#) 2015.

[What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#) 2015 - Advice for practitioners is non-statutory advice which helps practitioners (everyone who works with children) to identify abuse, neglect and exploitation and take appropriate action. Staff can contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead for advice and support.

Post-16 education Information has been included in KSCIE 2024 about the Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2022, which extends safeguarding provisions to providers of post-16 education. Some safer recruitment regulations don't apply to these providers, but recruitment checks are an essential part of safeguarding and providers should (rather than must) carry out pre-appointment checks.

[Keeping children safe in education 2024 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#) 2024. Staff can find a copy on [www.waltham.ac.uk](#) or the Staff Hub page. All staff who work directly with children must read Part One, Part Five and Annex B - as a minimum, it is recommended that this includes all school leaders, all classroom-based staff and all staff with defined pastoral responsibilities.

All staff are required to provide signed confirmation that they have read Part One of [Keeping children safe in education 2024 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#) 2024 or Annex A (whichever is applicable) a copy of which will be recorded electronically within the HR information system.

Where staff do not work directly with learners, they may read Annex A (condensed version of Part One). Relevant staff should be aware of Part 4, Part 5, Annex B and Annex C.

2.1 Human Rights Act (HRA)

The Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA) sets out the fundamental rights and freedoms that everyone in the UK is entitled to and contains the Articles and protocols of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) (the Convention) that are deemed to apply in the UK. It compels public organisations to respect and protect an individual's human rights when they make individual decisions about them.

Under the HRA, it is unlawful for schools and colleges to act in a way that is incompatible with the Convention. The specific convention rights applying to schools and colleges are:

- Article 3: The right to freedom from inhuman and degrading treatment (an absolute right)
- Article 8: The right to respect for private and family life (a qualified right) includes a duty to protect individuals' physical and psychological integrity
- Article 14: Requires that all of the rights and freedoms set out in the Act must be protected and applied without discrimination
- Protocol 1, Article 2: Protects the right to education

Being subjected to harassment, violence and or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of these rights, depending on the nature of the conduct and the circumstances. Further information (including on absolute and qualified rights) can be found at the [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#).

2.2 Equality Act 2010

Schools and colleges have obligations under the Equality Act 2010. According to the Equality Act, schools and colleges must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, or sexual orientation (protected characteristics).

Whilst all of the above protections are important, in the context of safeguarding, this guidance, and the legal duties placed on schools and colleges in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of learners, governing bodies and proprietors should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils and students with regard to particular protected characteristics - including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race.

Provisions within the Equality Act allow schools and colleges to take positive action, where it can be shown that it is proportionate, to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils or students with a particular protected characteristic in order to meet their specific need, this includes a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled learners and young people, including those with long term conditions. A school or college, could, for example, consider taking positive action to support girls if there was evidence, they were being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or sexual harassment.

Guidance to help schools understand how the Equality Act affects them and how to fulfil their duties under the act can be found at [Equality Act 2010](#).

2.3 Counter Terrorism and Security Act

Section 26 Applies to schools and other providers; to have due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism.

2.4 Prevent Duty Guidance - England and Wales

Covers the duty of schools and other providers in section 29 Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, to have due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

2.5 Serious Crime Act

Outlines the mandatory reporting of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Principal and CEO			
Name:	Janet Gardner	Email:	jgardner@waltham.ac.uk
Job Title:	Principal and CEO	Phone:	020 8501 8166
Link Governor for Safeguarding (Chair of Corporation)			
Name:	Paul Butler	Email:	naomi.shoffman@waltham.ac.uk
Job Title:	Chair of Corporation	Phone:	020 8501 8144
Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)			
Name:	Amir Ahmed	Email:	amir.ahmed@waltham.ac.uk
Job Title:	Assistant Principal: Learner Experience, Marketing & Communication	Phone:	020 8501 8079 07824 691 411
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSLs)			
Name:	Rob Winter	Email:	rob.winter@waltham.ac.uk
Job Title:	Head of Welfare and Wellbeing	Phone:	020 8501 8330
Name:	Melanie Price	Email:	melanie.price@waltham.ac.uk
Job Title:	Director of Human Resources	Phone:	020 8501 8298
Name:	Rachel Johnson	Email:	rachel.johnson@waltham.ac.uk
Job Title:	Head of ALS	Phone:	0208 501 8259
Name:	Catalin Caruntu	Email:	catalin.caruntu@waltham.ac.uk
Job Title:	Head of Maths	Phone:	020 8501 8282
Designated Teacher for Looked After / previously looked after			
Name:	Nicola Sands	Email:	nicola.sands@waltham.ac.uk
Job Title:	Welfare & Wellbeing Advisor	Phone:	020 8501 8104
Safeguarding Practitioners			
Name:	Evelyn Boakye	Email:	evelyn.boakye@waltham.ac.uk
Job Title:	Welfare & Wellbeing Advisor	Phone:	020 8501 8217
Name:	Cassandra King	Email:	cassandra.king@waltham.ac.uk
Job Title:	Welfare & Wellbeing Advisor	Phone:	020 8501 8262
Name:	Kimberley St.Hill	Email:	KimberleySt.hill@waltham.ac.uk
Job Title:	Mental Health Advisor	Phone:	020 8501 8262
Head of IT			
Name:	Kalim Uddin	Email:	kalim.uddin@waltham.ac.uk
Job Title:	Head of IT	Phone:	0208 501 8244

3.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is a member of the senior leadership team and during term time the DSL and/or a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) will always be available during college hours to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

The broad areas of responsibility for the DSL are to:

- Oversee the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy
- Oversee the management of referrals, record keeping and case work
- Champion the promotion of welfare and wellbeing cross-college
- Primary point of contact for safeguarding and Prevent concerns and provide staff with sound advice, support and expertise linked to safeguarding
- Primary point of contact for the LADO
- Oversee the training and induction for staff linked to safeguarding
- Ensure processes are in place for Safer Recruitment and Management of Allegations against Staff & Volunteers
- Participate in local authority Children's Safeguarding Board and subgroups.

It is important that DSL obtains a full and rich picture of the young person's experience. As soon as staff identify indicators of concern, they should record all concerns (including lower-level/pastoral, concerns about a learner's wellbeing – be it expressed in behaviour, presentation, relationships) on ProMonitor/CPOMs system, and if the concerns are serious, they should speak to the DSL/inform BeSafe without delay.

3.2 The Principal and CEO

The Principal and CEO of Waltham Forest College will ensure that:

- The policies and procedures adopted by the *governing body*, (particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation), are understood, and followed by **all** staff.
- The *College* maintains an up-to-date Single Central Record (SCR) which is reviewed regularly and is compliant with statutory guidance.
- Ensure that All staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice with regard to learners and that such concerns are handled sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistleblowing procedures
- The Principal will ensure all staff including supply teachers and volunteers have access to and read and understand the requirements placed on them through the *College Safeguarding Policy* and the *Staff Code of Conduct*.
- The Principal will ensure there are mechanisms in place to assist staff to fully understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in KCSiE 2024.
- Sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead and other staff to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and contributing to the assessment of learners

Ensure Safer Recruitment and Allegations against Staff & Volunteers (ASV):

- Where there is an allegation made against a member of staff (either paid or unpaid) that meets the criteria for a referral to the LADO the Principal will ensure that the Director of Human Resources or Senior DSL will make contact with the Designated Officer for the Local Authority (LADO) within one working day to any internal investigation.
- The Principal will ensure that all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring at induction. The training should be regularly updated. Induction and training will be in line with any advice from the safeguarding partners.

3.3 Governing Body

The governing body will be collectively responsible for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are fully embedded within the College's ethos and reflected in the College's day to day safeguarding practices by:

- Recognising the importance of information sharing between agencies through the statutory guidance provided within KCSiE 2024.
- Ensuring cooperation with the local authority and other safeguarding partners.
- Appointing a Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead from the Senior Leadership Team to take lead responsibility for child protection/safeguarding and that a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children is appointed and appropriately trained.
- Ensuring there is an individual member of the governing body to take leadership responsibility for safeguarding and champion child protection issues in the College.
- Ensuring that the governing body understands it is collectively responsible Waltham Forest College's safeguarding arrangements, even though a governor will be nominated as the 'Safeguarding Governor' and person who will champion all safeguarding requirements.
- Ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures are in place for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to promote a learner's welfare.
- Ensuring that temporary staff and volunteers who work with learners are made aware of the College's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities. have read and understood the College's child protection and safeguarding policy and Staff Behaviour Policy (code of conduct) before they start work at the College
- Ensuring that all staff, agency staff and governors read and fully understand KCSiE 2024 Part One and or Annex A as a minimum and ensure that there are mechanisms in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as required within the guidance.
- Ensuring all members of the governing body will undertake safeguarding training to ensure they have the knowledge and information needed to equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place are effective and support the delivery of robust 'safeguarding arrangements and act as the 'critical friend'. This training must focus on their strategic role and not on operational procedures.

- Ensuring the Chair of Governors (Safeguarding Link Governor) will access role specific training to enable them to comply and discharge their child protection/ safeguarding responsibilities including should any allegations be made against the Principal.
- Ensuring the Governing body will collectively ensure there is a training strategy in place for all staff, so that child protection training is undertaken and refreshed in line with KCSiE 2024 and local guidance.
- Ensuring that staff undergo safeguarding child protection training at induction and that there are arrangements in place for staff to be regularly updated to ensure that safeguarding remains a priority.
- Ensuring that temporary staff and volunteers who work with learners are made aware of the college's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities.
- Ensuring that arrangements/procedures are in place to manage and provide clarity on the process for sharing 'low level' concerns, which should be referred to within the college Staff Code of Conduct.
- Ensuring when making a referral to the LADO Service a LADO referral form is fully completed and ensuring a timely response if there is an allegation against the Principal by liaising with the LADO or other appropriate officers within the local authority.
- Ensuring appropriate responses to learners who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse, including sexual exploitation and going missing in future.
- Be aware of the issues involving the complexity of serious violence and sexual violence and sexual harassment between learners and ensure the college has appropriate policy and procedures and that staff are trained to recognise and respond to incidents and resources to manage actions and support for those involved.
- Be alert to the growing concerns involving knife crime/low level crime and ensure the college works closely with the police and safeguarding partners to raise awareness of the impact of such crime and adopt proactive practice to address concerns locally and within the community.
- Ensuring appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to protect learners online and learners are taught about keeping safe online through the curriculum.
- Giving staff the opportunities to contribute and shape safeguarding arrangements and child protection policy.
- Be alert of when the college premises are used for non-college activities and seek assurances that the organisation has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place, and inspect them as needed, including liaising with the Principal.

3.4 Chair of Governors

The Chair of the Governor to be responsible for liaising with the Local Authority and other agencies in the event of an allegation being made against the Principal and CEO.

3.5 Link Governor for Safeguarding

The governing body has identified a named governor to take leadership responsibility for the College's safeguarding arrangements (Link Governor for Safeguarding). That governor will maintain regular contact with the DSL, meeting each half term, and will ensure that the governing body receives regular reports about safeguarding activity at College.

It is the responsibility of the governing body to ensure that the College's safeguarding, recruitment and managing allegations procedures consider the procedures and practice of the Local Authority, local safeguarding partnership and national guidance. The governing body is also responsible for overseeing Safeguarding Audits completed and returned to the Local Authority under s175 of the [Education Act 2002](#).

3.6 All Staff

All staff have a key role to play in identifying concerns and provide early help for learners. To achieve this Waltham Forest College will:

- Reads and understands Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 that includes the mandatory reporting duty of all child protection concerns
- Knows the name of the DSL/DDSL and the role of the BeSafe team
- Establishes and maintain an environment where learners feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Ensures learners know that there are adults in the College who they can approach if they are worried or have concerns.
- Plans opportunities within the curriculum for learners to develop the skills they need to assess and manage risk appropriately and keep themselves safe.
- Attends training in order to be aware of and alert to the signs of Maintains an attitude of "it could happen here" with regards to safeguarding.
- Records and refers their concerns if they are worried that a child is being abused and report these to the BeSafe Team as practical that day.
- Be prepared to refer directly to social care, and the police if appropriate, if there is a risk of significant harm and the BeSafe team is not available.
- Follow the Whistleblowing Policy if allegations procedures if the disclosure is an allegation against a member of staff.
- Follows the procedures set out by the College and take account of guidance issued by the DfE KCSiE 2024.
- Supports students in line with their child protection plan, child in need plan, LAC Care Plan.
- Treats information with confidentiality but never promising to "keep a secret."
- Notifies the DSL or their Deputies of any child on a child protection plan or child in need plan who has unexplained absence.
- Has an understanding of early help and be prepared to identify and support learners who may benefit from early help.
- Liaises with other agencies that support students and provide early help.
- Ensures they know who the DSL and Deputy DSLs are and know how to contact them.
- Has an awareness of the Child Protection Policy, the Behaviour Policy, the Staff Behaviour Policy (or Code of Conduct), procedures relating to the safeguarding response for learners who go missing from education and the role of the DSL.
- Have an understanding of professional boundaries and what constitutes inappropriate behaviour

All staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are

creating a problem by not reporting any form of abuse and/or neglect. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

All staff should be aware that young people and vulnerable adults may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, learners may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to their DSL and or a DDSL if they have concerns about a young person or vulnerable adults as it is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with young people and vulnerable adults which facilitate communication.

4. Types of Abuse

There are four main categories of abuse and neglect, exploitation:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect

4.1 Child on Child Abuse

Waltham Forest College may be the only stable, secure, and safe element in the lives of learners at risk of, or who have suffered harm. Nevertheless, whilst at school, their behaviour may be challenging and defiant, or they may instead be withdrawn, or display abusive behaviours towards other learners. Our school recognises that some learners may abuse their child and any incidents of child-on-child abuse will be managed in the same way as any other child protection concern and will follow the same procedures. We will seek advice and support from other agencies as appropriate.

Child on child abuse can manifest itself in many ways. This may include bullying (including cyber bullying), physical abuse or initiation / hazing type violence and rituals. We do not tolerate any harmful behaviour in school and will take swift action to intervene where this occurs. We use lessons and assemblies to help learners understand, in an age-appropriate way, what abuse is, and we encourage them to tell a trusted adult if someone is behaving in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable. This includes using online resources which highlight the risks associated with sharing nude images – <https://www.lqfl.net/online-safety/resource-centre?s=1>

Waltham Forest College understands the different gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with child-on-child abuse.

We take particular note of sexual violence/harm or harassment that takes place in college ensuring that all disclosures are taken seriously and that pupils are given support, reassurance, and information about laws in place to protect them from sexual violence and sexual harassment. Where possible, support to the victim and any disciplinary action will be maintained at the same time as appropriate and on a case-by-case basis. This will be determined by risk assessment, liaison with LA, family and with consideration of the victim's needs.

4.2 Serious Violence

All staff are aware of indicators which may signal those learners who are at risk from or involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in well-being, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that a child has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

4.3 Learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, physical or mental health difficulties

Our College understands that learners with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Barriers can exist when recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation in this group of learners. This can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability, without further exploration
- That they may be more prone to peer group isolation than others
- The potential to be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying, without outwardly showing signs
- Communication difficulties in overcoming these barriers

4.4 Children Missing from Education

All learners, regardless of their age, ability, aptitude, and any special education needs they may have, are entitled to a full-time education. Waltham Forest College recognises that a child missing education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation – particularly county lines. All staff will follow the College's procedures for unauthorised absence and for children missing education. It is also recognised that, when not in college, learners may be vulnerable to or exposed to other risks, so we work with parents and other partners to keep learners in college whenever possible. Parents should always inform us of the reason for any absence. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

Where contact is not made, a referral may be made to another appropriate agency i.e. Behaviour, Attendance and Children Missing Education (BACME), Social Care or Police. Parents are required to provide at least two emergency contact numbers to the College, to enable us to communicate with someone if we need to.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

Home Visit Protocol

Waltham Forest College has developed Home Visit Protocols as a strategy for key staff to undertake home visits where there is a concern around the learner's engagement with the College linked to attendance or a pattern of consistent absence. The Home Visit Protocols is a set of guidance to maximise safeguarding good practice for practitioners intending to visit learners' homes as and when required.

For more information, please access Appendix 8: Home Visit Protocol

4.5 Contextual Safeguarding

Safeguarding incidents and behaviours can be associated with factors outside our College. The safeguarding team will understand, and respond to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families and will consider whether wider environmental factors present in a child's life are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. To this end, we will consider relevant information when assessing any risk to a child and share it with other agencies to support better understanding of a child and their family.

4.6 Child Sexual Exploitation

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of child abuse, which can happen to any child or young person of any gender and from any background or community. In Waltham Forest, the definition of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) from the Department of Education (DfE, 2017) has been adopted:

"Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology".

It is understood that a significant number of learners who are victims of CSE go missing from home, care and education at some point. Our school is alert to the signs and indicators of a child becoming at risk of, or subject to, CSE and will take appropriate action to respond to any concerns. The DSL will lead on these issues and work with other agencies as appropriate.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/modern-slavery-how-to-identify-and-support-victims>

4.7 Child Criminal Exploitation

Child Criminal Exploitation is a geographically widespread form of harm which is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity (county lines is when drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban areas and seaside towns). Our College works with key partners locally to prevent and respond to child criminal exploitation in accordance with the latest government guidance:

<https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/information/professionals/resources/county-lines-toolkit>

4.8 Domestic Abuse

Domestic Abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

<https://www.gov.uk/domestic-violence-and-abuse>

4.9 Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse. As of October 2015, the Serious Crime Act 2015 (Home Office, 2015) introduced a duty on teachers (and other professionals) to notify the police of known cases of female genital mutilation where it appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18. Our school will operate in accordance with the statutory requirements relating to this issue, and in line with local safeguarding procedures.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/female-genital-mutilation-resource-pack>

4.10 Forced Marriage

Forced Marriage is one entered without the full consent of one or both parties. It is where violence, threats or other forms of coercion is used and is a crime. Our staff understand how to report concerns where this may be an issue in accordance with the latest government guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-right-to-choose-government-guidance-on-forced-marriage>

4.11 Prevention of Radicalisation

As of July 2015, the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (HMG, 2015) placed a new duty on schools and other education providers. Under section 26 of the Act, schools are required, in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty. It requires schools to:

- Teach a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of pupils and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life and must promote community cohesion
- Be safe spaces in which learners / young people can understand and discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, and learn how to challenge these ideas
- Be mindful of their existing duties to forbid political indoctrination and secure a balanced presentation of political issues

CHANNEL is a national programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people identified as vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Our College works in accordance

with local procedures for PREVENT and with other agencies, sharing information and concerns as appropriate.

4.12 Helping children to recognise risk and access support

A key mechanism for keeping learners safe in education is ensuring that they are given an understanding of how to recognise risk and where to go for help when they need it. Giving young people an understanding of what is and is not appropriate in professional conduct and in their home/care can improve identification of concerns and reporting about themselves and their peers. School staff can enhance this further by building trusting relationships with learners, using professional curiosity, and speaking to the DSL or a member of the BeSafe team about any concerns for a student.

Learners who identify as LGBTQ+ or are assumed to be LGBTQ+ are likely to be more vulnerable to abuse. At Waltham Forest College LGBTQ+ inclusion is promoted within the curriculum and through extra-curricular activities and societies.

Waltham Forest College encourages a range of ways for young people to report concerns. Using peer support is another way to give learner the opportunity to discuss difficult topics and get the help needed.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 requires governing bodies and proprietors to ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, as part of providing a 'broad and balanced curriculum.'

Learners are taught to understand and manage risk through our personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education and sex and relationships lessons and through all aspects of school life. Our approach is designed to help learners to think about risks they may encounter and with the support of staff work out how those risks might be reduced or managed. Learners are also reminded regularly about online safety, the risks of sharing content and images online and tackling bullying, including cyber bullying procedures. The school continually promotes an ethos of respect for learners and students are encouraged to speak to a member of staff of their choosing about any worries they may have.

Our college has the appropriate level of security protection procedures in place in order to safeguard our systems, staff and learners and review the effectiveness of these procedures periodically to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies.

Guidance on e-security is available from the National Education Network. In addition, colleges should consider meeting the Cyber security standards for schools and colleges.GOV.UK. Broader guidance on cyber security including considerations for governors and trustees can be found at Cyber security training for school staff - NCSC.GOV.UK.

Online safety and the college's approach is reflected in our child protection policy which includes the appropriate filtering and monitoring on devices and college networks. Considering the 4Cs (appendix 7.7) will provide the basis of an effective online policy. The college has a clear policy on the use of mobile and smart technology, which will also reflect the fact many learners have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks (i.e. 3G, 4G and 5G). This access means some learners, whilst at college, sexually harass, bully, and control others via their mobile and smart technology, share indecent images consensually and non-consensually (often via large chat groups) and view and share pornography and other

harmful content. Our college carefully considers how this is managed on their premises and reflect this in their mobile and safeguarding policy.

Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education, which can be found online, has been produced contains information on what colleges should do and sets out the legal duties with which schools must comply when teaching Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education.

Waltham Forest College understands the importance of preventative education in the context of a whole-school or college approach. Our aim is to ensure that it prepares pupils and students for life in modern Britain.

[Making sense of relationships](#) is an NSPCC resource to support learners and young people's development of healthy relationships through comprehensive PSHE lesson plans.

4.13 Young Person's Disclosures to Staff

Learners and young people may disclose concerns to staff and may do so knowing that what they are disclosing is a concern, and sometimes they will be unaware that their disclosure will signal concerns. Wherever possible, staff should make the time and space to listen and understand what the child / young person is disclosing. Staff should not be afraid to respond to learners naturally, as they would for any other disclosure, and should respond with compassion and empathy.

If disclosures are concerning but vague, the DSL or DDSLs may need to speak to the child further in order to obtain enough information to meet threshold. In these circumstances, DSL and staff should agree how this will take place and the practitioner should use open questions (including, questions starting with 'when', 'where', 'why', 'how', etc).

4.14 Vulnerable students

To ensure that all our students receive equal protection we will give special consideration to learners who are particularly vulnerable, especially:

- Mental health concerns
- Young carers
- Transgender learners / young people
- 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 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

This list provides examples of additional vulnerable groups and is not exhaustive.

At Waltham Forest College, we recognise that being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not inherently a risk factor for harm. However, we understand that students who identify as, or are perceived to be, lesbian, gay, or bisexual may sometimes be targeted by their peers. This makes them potentially vulnerable, regardless of their actual sexual orientation.

In cases where students are questioning their gender, the college acknowledges the findings of the Cass Review, which suggests that a cautious approach is necessary due to the complexities and unknowns involved in social transition. Such students may have additional vulnerabilities, including mental health challenges or conditions such as autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

When supporting students who are questioning their gender, Waltham Forest College will work closely with the student's parents or guardians, except in rare circumstances where involving them could cause harm to the student. We encourage families to seek clinical advice, and we aim to address any vulnerabilities, including the risk of bullying. Our staff are advised to refer to the *Guidance for Schools and Colleges in relation to Gender Questioning Children* to ensure the student's needs are met appropriately.

We also recognise that a lack of trusted adults can increase the risks faced by these students. Therefore, it is crucial for staff at Waltham Forest College to create a supportive environment where students feel safe to speak out and share their concerns. Our aim is to build a culture of trust and openness, ensuring all students have the support they need to thrive.

4.15 Learners who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)

Learners may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. A learner's experience of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour, and mental health.

Local authorities should share the fact a learner has a social worker, and the DSL should hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare, and educational outcomes, which should be considered as a matter of routine. There are clear powers to share this information under existing duties on both local authorities and schools and colleges to safeguard and promote the welfare of learners. Where learners need a social worker, this should inform decisions in relation to safeguarding and promoting welfare (i.e., responding to unauthorised absences or missing education episodes and the provision for pastoral and/or academic support).

4.16 Young people or vulnerable adults requiring mental health support

We have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils. Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Where learners have suffered abuse, neglect and exploitation, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these learner's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff, however, are well placed to observe learners day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Immediate action should be taken in response to any mental health concerns about a child. Action will also be taken where there is a safeguarding concern already present, through reporting the concern to the DSL as with any other safeguarding concern. The DSL will respond to the report by consulting Children's Social Care to establish whether a referral is required, or the situation should be managed by discussion with parents/carers and possibly the offer of early help.

Advice to help identify learners in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies can be found in the [mental health and behaviour in schools guidance](#), colleges may also wish to follow this guidance as best practice.

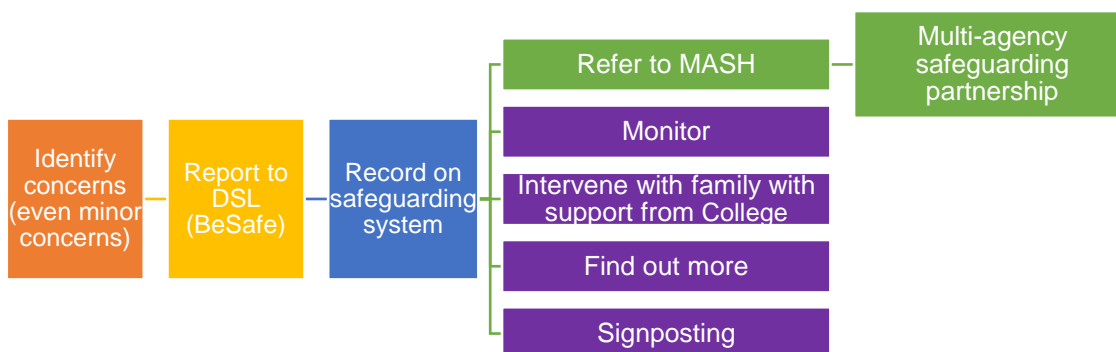
Public Health England has produced a range of resources to support secondary school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among young people including its guidance [Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing](#). Its resources include social media, forming positive relationships, smoking and alcohol. See [Rise Above](#) for links to all materials and lesson plans.

5. Reporting Procedures

All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, will be recorded by the BeSafe team. This will also help if/when responding to any complaints about the way a case has been handled by the college. Information will be kept confidential and stored securely. Records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- A note of any action undertaken, decisions reached and the outcome

Actions where there are concerns about a young person or a vulnerable adult:



All members of staff are aware of the signs and indicators of abuse and their responsibility for reporting any concerns in a timely manner. All staff are expected to do the following:

- **LISTEN** carefully and remain calm; do not express shock or embarrassment
- **DO NOT** guarantee confidentiality and be clear that you will act sensitively and explain what will happen next
- **GIVE REASSURANCE** that you are taking the information seriously
- **DO NOT** ask leading questions
- **DO NOT** examine any physical injuries
- **DO NOT** attempt to investigate the allegations yourself
- **NEVER JUDGE** even if the allegation is against a colleague
- **RECORD** what was said, also date, time and place that conversation took place
- **CONTACT** a member of the BeSafe team as soon as reasonably possible

If the staff member suspects that the young person or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger, they will contact the Police straight away by dialling 999. All incidents and actions will be reported to the BeSafe Team in a timely manner.

5.1 Out of Hours Concerns

The Duty Manager will lead on undertaking an assessment of what actions is necessary and provide staff with advice, information and signposting during out of hours or in the event of an emergency.

6. Information Sharing

6.1 The Data Protection Act 2018

The Data Protection Act 2018 controls how personal information is used by organisations, businesses or the government and is the UK's implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). For a guide to GDPR see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation>.

The DPA (2018) does not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. See [Data protection: a toolkit for schools](#) 2018, guidance developed to support schools with data protection activity, including compliance with GDPR.

When deciding whether information needs to be shared with practitioners within the setting or with other agencies, practitioners should take account of the following principles, bearing in mind that the most important consideration is whether sharing information is likely to support the safeguarding and protection of a child:

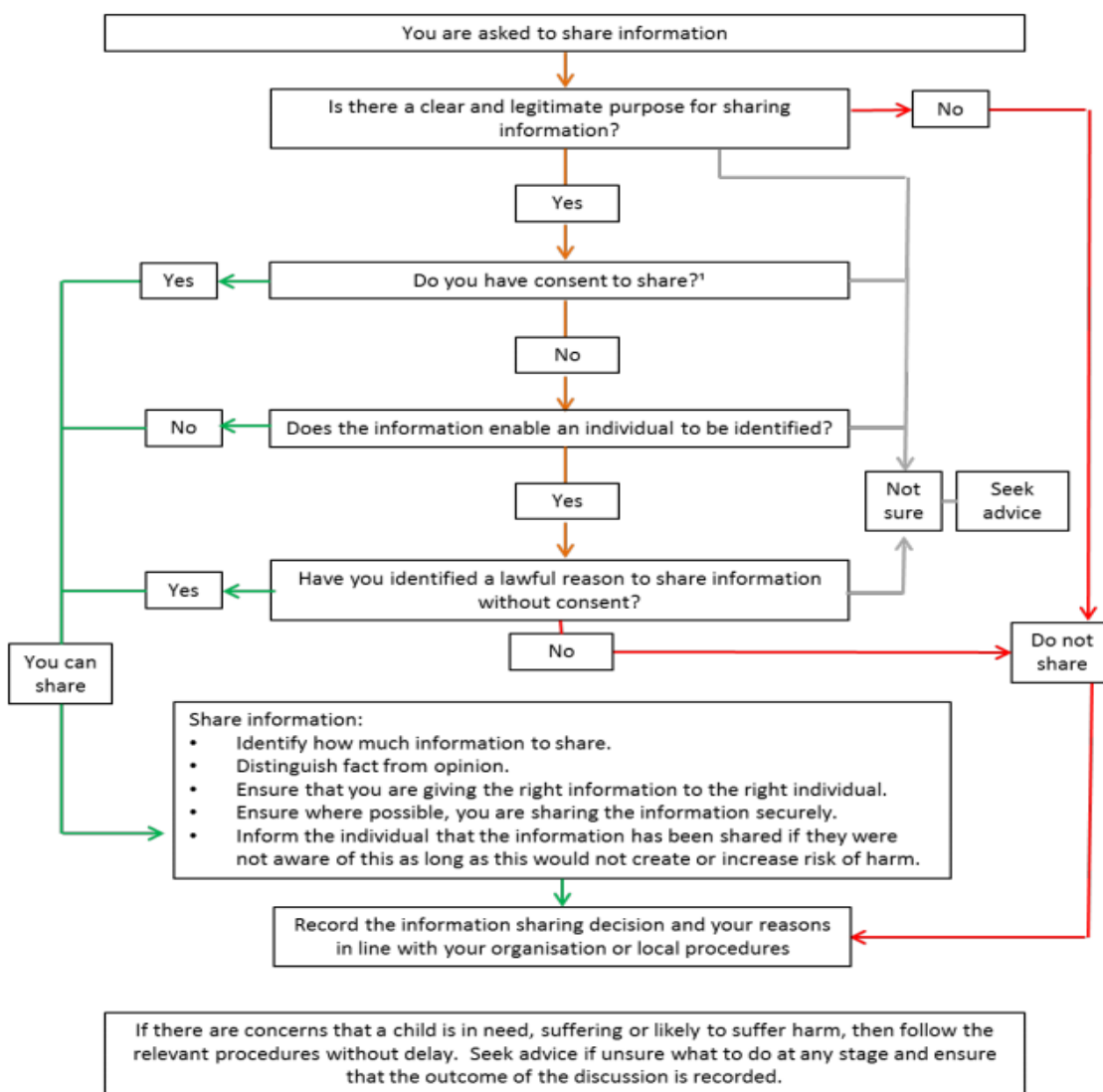
- Necessary & Proportionate
- Relevant
- Adequate
- Accurate
- Timely
- Secure
- Recorded

Practitioners should consider when they share information, how and how much they share, and where possible they should be transparent about the fact that they're sharing. It is important to acknowledge that sharing of all information that could be regarded big or small is essential for the protection of the child.

Although the process for deciding whether to share information is the same within and outside the setting, in terms of proportionality and the need to know, sharing information with practitioners from other agencies (even if based in school / college) needs to be documented. It is reasonable for staff to discuss day-to-day concerns about pupils with colleagues in order to ensure that learner's general needs are met in school. However, staff should report all child protection and safeguarding concerns to the DSL or headteacher or – in the case of concerns about the headteacher – to the chair of governors. The person receiving the referral will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

The DSL/DDSs will normally obtain consent from the pupil and/or parents to share sensitive information within the school or with outside agencies. Where there is good reason to do so, the DSL/DDSs may share information *without* consent, and will record the reason for not obtaining consent. 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 Data Protection Officer. Every effort will be made to prevent unauthorised access to sensitive information.

Flowchart of when and how to share information



6.2 Transitions

All Colleges are responsible for ensuring appropriate transitions from one setting to another. This includes preparing learners and welcoming them appropriately and sharing the full pastoral and safeguarding context of a child, required for the new setting to understand behaviours within a full context of experiences by the child – this would also include tried and tested strategies.

Where possible, College transitions teams must endeavour to meet every new learner within their setting, prior to secondary transfer. The learner's safeguarding file should be transmitted electronically via the online safeguarding system (CPOMS). Otherwise, PDF versions can be sent by secure email or by recorded delivery to the named DSL/DDSLs in the new setting.

6.3 Recording

Recording of concerns should take place as close in time to the incident as reasonably possible, by notifying the safeguarding team.

- Records will include:
- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved, and
A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

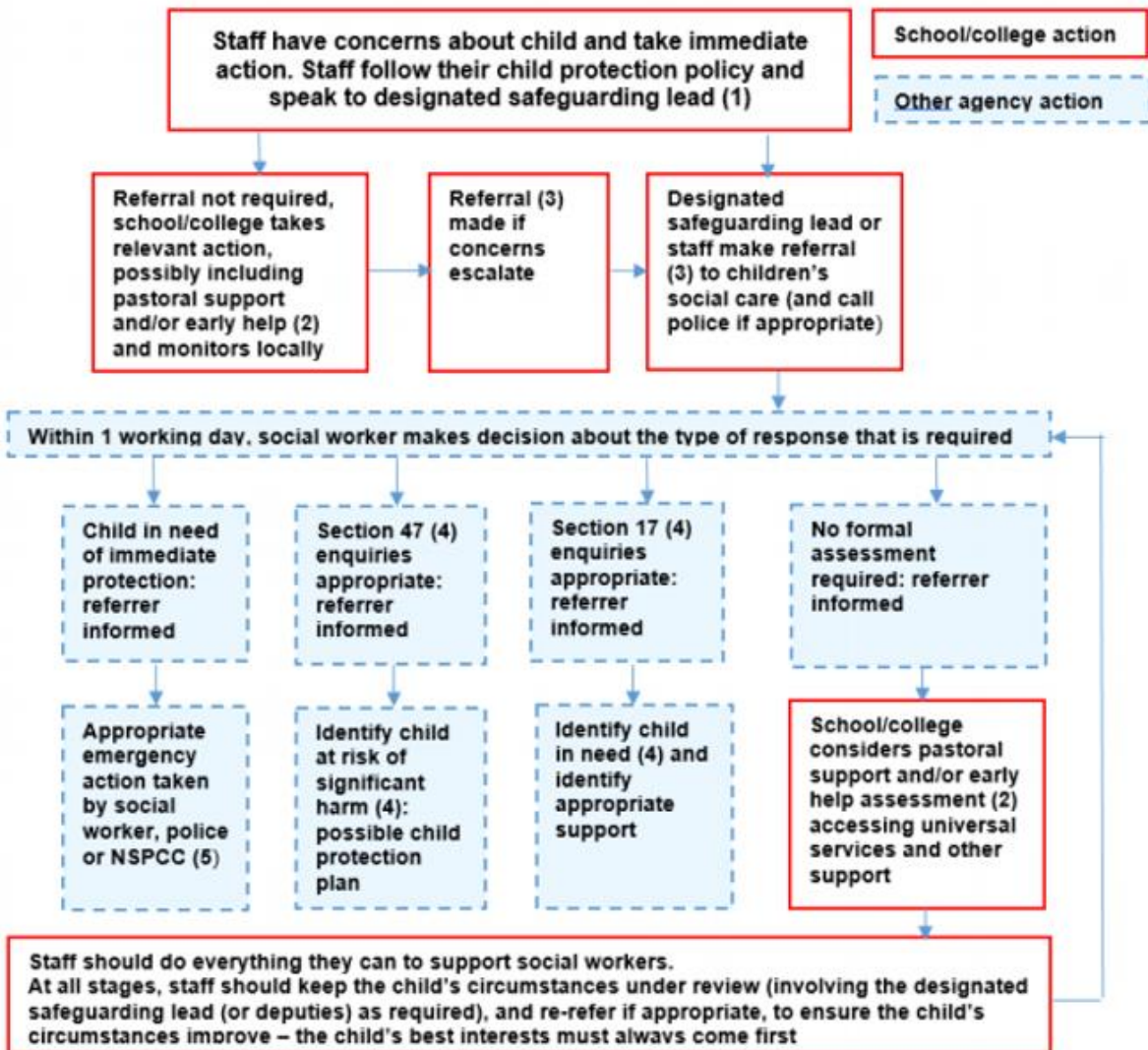
The safeguarding practitioners will record all actions onto CPOMS. All concerns, discussions and decisions made including the rationale for those decisions will be recorded on CPOMS. These should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency. Where concerns are serious, in addition to logging concerns, staff should seek to speak to a DSL immediately either in person or by phone.

6.4 DSL Decision-Making

Once concerns are identified and shared with DSL/DDSLs, they will decide together how best to proceed to support the child and to mitigate the risk. DSL/DDSLs can consult with MASH at any point. Options for action are:

Pastoral Care	Keeping children safe in education 2024 (publishing.service.gov.uk) 2024 acknowledges the casework that schools undertake on a pastoral level. This includes managing any support for the child internally via the school’s own pastoral support processes. If pastoral staff are engaged, they must work alongside safeguarding staff, and DSLs would take the lead on decisions about progressing a case.
Early Help (MASH)	The College can refer learners and families for early help assessment and support, with the informed consent of parents.
Referral to statutory services (MASH)	A referral must be made to MASH/children’s social care (and if appropriate the police) immediately if the child is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A child in need; defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled • Suffering, or likely suffering, harm.
Allegation of harm to a child by a practitioner	If the alleged harm to a child is caused by a practitioner or a volunteer, the headteacher should be notified immediately and LADO should be consulted.

Actions where there are concerns about a child



(1) In cases which also involve a concern or an allegation of abuse against a staff member.

(2) Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help, an early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard learners provides detailed guidance on the early help process.

(3) Designated Safeguarding Lead and their Deputies should be aware that the criteria for early help have been broadened. This includes children who frequently go missing from education, home, or care, those who have experienced multiple suspensions or are at risk of permanent exclusion, and those affected by parental offending or having a parent or carer in custody.

(4) Referrals should follow the process set out in the local threshold document and local protocol for assessment. Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children.

(5) Under the Children's Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children's Act 1989. Under section 47 of the Children's Act 1989, where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to make enquiries to decide whether to take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. Full details are in Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children.

(6) This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

6.5 Referrals

[Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub \(MASH\)](#) is Waltham Forest's single point of referral to social care for concerns regarding learners, young people and vulnerable adults:

- Early Help (parental consent needed)
- Child in Need
- Child Protection
- Adult Safeguarding

Referrals to the MASH should be made immediately when there is a concern that the child is suffering significant harm or is likely to do so. It is good practice to notify MASH by phone and/or email to discuss the situation prior to sending a written referral. This will help determine the level of intervention and will also give children's social care and the police time to decide to come and see the child that same day in school, if deemed necessary.

In Waltham Forest College the DSL/DDSL ordinarily takes responsibility for the referral process, in consultation with staff who know the child. Still, there are circumstances where another member of staff must refer without delay: If for some reason (e.g., during the summer break), the DSL or DDSL are not available, the referral should be made without delay by any other member of school staff.

If you disagree with your DSL's/DDSL's decision not to refer a case to MASH, it is your responsibility to refer the case, and to respectfully inform the DSL/DDSL that you are doing so. Should another member of staff refer instead, the DSL/DDSL must be consulted and updated as soon as possible.

6.6 Parents and Carers

Waltham Forest College firmly believes that the relationships between the College and parent and/or carer should be based on openness, honesty, trust and respect. The College will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. This must be handled sensitively, and the DSL/DDSL will make usually 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 be sought first from Children's Social Care.

Sometimes MASH social workers and police will want to see a child on the day of referral to ensure that they are safe to go home. In such cases, they will ask you to keep the child in college until the visit has taken place. This is because it can take time to organise the visit with

an available social worker and/or police officer, sometimes families will be asked to wait at college before a child is released to them, and they may be asked not to see their child during this time. This can be stressful and uncomfortable for both colleges and families and sometimes all are kept at college until late in the evening. College should prepare families for the length of time this process can take and treat them with compassion and understanding and make every attempt to facilitate this difficult process.

College's do not have powers to prevent a child from leaving their school when a parent arrives. As such, if a parent refuses to comply with the request for their child to remain in college until a professional can speak to them, the school should inform the parent that they will be alerting emergency services. The College should then inform the social worker and police immediately.

6.7 Support for students, families and staff

Child abuse is devastating and traumatic for learners. Even those parents who hurt their learners will be distressed. It can also result in secondary trauma in those staff who are involved in these cases. The College will support learners, their families, and staff by:

- Taking all concerns and disclosures seriously
- Nominating a link person (usually the DSL) who will keep all parties informed
- Appointing a separate link person where the DSL is the subject of an allegation
- Prioritising mental health and resilience, and accepting that everyone can have a bad day
- Responding sympathetically to any request from pupils or staff for time out to deal with distress
- Maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- Storing records securely
- Signposting to helplines, counselling, or other avenues of external support
- Following procedures in safeguarding, whistleblowing, complaints, and disciplinary procedures
- Co-operating fully with relevant statutory agencies

Staff will have access to Employee Assistance Programme and all safeguarding practitioners will have access to external safeguarding supervision.

6.8 Practitioners' Code of Conduct

This policy should be read alongside Waltham Forest College's staff Code of Conduct. Practitioners are in a position of trust and authority and have a duty of care towards the learners and young people we work with.

All practitioners are likely to be a role model and are expected to act appropriately; this includes:

- Prioritising the welfare of learners and young people
- Providing a safe environment for learners and young people
- Following principles, policies and procedures and staying within the law

- Challenging all unacceptable behaviour & reporting any breaches of the Code of Conduct immediately

All practitioners must ensure that the rights of the child are upheld throughout their practice, including:

- Treating learners and young people fairly and without prejudice or discrimination
- Understanding that learners and young people are individuals with individual needs
- Respecting differences in gender, sexual orientation, culture, race, ethnicity, disability and religious belief systems, and appreciate that all participants bring something valuable and different
- Challenging discrimination and prejudice
- Encouraging young people & adults to speak out about attitudes / behaviour that makes them uncomfortable.

In forming appropriate relationships with young people, all practitioners should endeavour to:

- Promote relationships that are based on openness, honesty, trust, and respect
- Be patient and considerate of any individual child's developmental capacity
- Exercise caution when you are discussing sensitive issues with learners or young people
- Ensure all contact with learners and young people is appropriate and relevant to the work
- Ensure that whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities with learners and young people, or that the practitioner is in sight of others (e.g., classroom doors open, glass walls, etc)
- Only provide personal care in an emergency and make sure there is more than one adult present, if possible, unless personal care is explicitly part of your role and you have been trained to do this safely.

Practitioners should always demonstrate respect towards learners, including:

- Listening to and respecting learners
- Valuing and taking learner's contributions seriously, actively involving them in planning activities
- Respecting a young person's right to personal privacy as far as possible
- If breaking confidentiality to follow child protection procedures, it is important to explain this to the child or young person at the earliest opportunity, and to keep them updated as to what is happening.

Inappropriate / unacceptable behaviour in practitioners, that must always be reported, includes:

- Allowing concerns or allegations to go unreported.
- Taking unnecessary risks.
- Smoking, consuming alcohol or use illegal substances.
- Developing inappropriate relationships with learners and young people, including any private communications.
- Showing favouritism or forming exclusive relationships with learners.
- Making inappropriate promises to learners and young people

- Engaging in behaviour that is in any way abusive, including having any form of sexual contact with a young person.
- Letting learners and young people have your personal contact details (mobile number, email, or postal address) or have contact with them via a personal social media account.
- Acting in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive.
- Patronising, belittling learners and young people or making sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to, or in front of, learners and young people, including sexual staring.

If practitioners fail to act within the above guidelines, or fail to report breaches, they will be subject to disciplinary procedures. Depending on the seriousness of the situation:

- Practitioners may be asked to leave the school, temporarily or permanently
- School may make a report to statutory agencies such as the police and/or the local authority child protection services or LADO.

All reports should be made in confidence to the Principal.

7. Staff training

It is important that all staff have training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation, and radicalisation and to know what to do if they have a concern. New staff, volunteers, and governors, including casual and agency staff, will receive a safeguarding induction:

- The College's safeguarding policy
- The staff behaviour policy (code of conduct)
- The identity and role of the DSL and all Deputy DSLs
- The College's behaviour policy
- The College's safeguarding response to learners who go missing from education.

All staff, including the Principal, volunteers and governors will receive appropriate and regularly updated safeguarding and child protection training and thematic updates as required (at least annually) during CPD days and regular discussions at staff meetings, to provide them with the requisite skills and knowledge to safeguard learners effectively in line with statutory guidance and any requirements of the local safeguarding partnership.

The DSL and BeSafe Team will attend training for newly appointed DSLs and refresher training within a two-year period. In addition, the DSL and BeSafe Team will update their knowledge and skills at least annually to keep up with any developments relevant to their role and will be supported to access inter-agency training as part of their continuing professional development. This includes attendance at the DSL Forums.

All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap one another. All staff should also be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the college and/or can occur between learners outside of these environments. All staff but especially the DSL and DDSL should consider whether learners are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. All staff will be made aware of the increased risk of abuse to certain groups, including learners with special

educational needs and disabilities, looked after learners, previously looked after children, young carers and risks associated with specific safeguarding issues including child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, child on child abuse, sexual harassment and sexual violence/harm in school, extremism, female genital mutilation and forced marriage; and will receive training in relation to keeping learners safe online.

In addition, the Principal, Senior Leadership Team and at least one governor (usually the chair) will attend safer recruitment training and the College will ensure that every interview panel includes a Safer Recruitment trained panel member.

8. Allegations against staff and volunteers (ASV)

To manage allegations against professionals, every Local Authority appoints a Designated Officer (LADO). The LADO should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

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

The term “professional” in this context includes paid employees, volunteers, casual/agency staff and self-employed workers who will have contact with children as a part of their role. The LADO ensures that all allegations or concerns about professionals or adults working or volunteering with children are recorded appropriately, monitored and progressed in a timely and confidential way. The LADO is involved from the initial phase of the allegation through to the conclusion of the case. The LADO provides advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations, liaising with the police and other agencies and monitoring the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process.

The LADO is available for consultation via email [lodo@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:lado@walthamforest.gov.uk) or by telephone discussion 0208 496 3646 for anyone who has a concern that a person who works or volunteers in a capacity that brings them into contact with children in Waltham Forest, may pose a safeguarding risk.

Any allegations or concerns **MUST** be reported to the LADO within 24 hours (or one working day) of it coming to notice.

Low level concerns should always be undertaken in consultation with the LADO in congruence with local procedures and guidance. The consultation process allows for concerns to be evaluated objectively and to ascertain whether similar concerns may have been raised by a previous employer but not met the threshold for investigation. Whilst the LADO will only record those allegations which appear to meet the threshold for consideration within these procedures, the employer should record any concern that arises in respect of a member of their staff, volunteers, and contractors. All such concerns will be promptly shared with the headteacher/principal, who may wish to consult the DSL to consider the most appropriate response. Employers of supply staff or contractors must also be notified to ensure any emerging patterns can be identified. Consultation with the LADO should be undertaken to verify whether a perceived low-level concern meets the harm threshold.

In normal circumstances the LADO will be contacted by the DSL. It is important to note that anyone can contact the LADO if they are concerned about a person's conduct with children. In Waltham Forest the LADO will accept a referral from any person who wishes to report a concern that meets the criteria above.

If there are any concerns that a member of staff (including supply teachers) or volunteer has caused harm (emotional, physical, sexual, neglect) to a child, this represents an allegation against staff and volunteers. All allegations against staff (including agency teachers) and volunteers must be reported to the Principal in the first instance. The person against whom the allegation is made should not be notified at this point. If the allegation is against the Principal, the concerns must be reported to the chair of governors and the LADO.

Staff should:

- Report it to the Principal as soon as possible, however trivial it may seem.
- Maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity while an allegation is being considered or investigated and follow local information sharing protocols

Staff should not:

- Attempt to deal with the situation yourself.
- Make assumptions, offer alternative explanations or diminish the seriousness of the behaviour or alleged incidents.
- Keep the information to yourself or promise confidentiality.
- Take any action that might undermine any future investigation or disciplinary procedure, such as interviewing the alleged victim or potential witnesses, or informing the alleged perpetrator or parents or carers.

The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in Part 4 of [Keeping children safe in education 2024 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#) 2024, and Part 7 of the London Child Protection Procedures, which can be found online.

8.1 Whistleblowing

The College's Public Interest Disclosure ('Whistleblowing') Procedure policy enables staff to raise concerns or allegations, initially in confidence, and for a sensitive enquiry to take place. Whistleblowing is 'making a disclosure in the public interest' and occurs when a worker (or member of the wider College community) raises a concern about danger or illegality that affects others.

All staff are made aware of the duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of staff in line with the College's Code of Conduct / Public Interest Disclosure policy. Staff are expected to report all concerns about poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues - including what may seem minor contraventions of the College's Staff Code of Conduct to the Principal; to facilitate proactive and early intervention in order to maintain appropriate boundaries and a safe culture that protect children and reduce the risk of serious abuse in College.

Concerns or complaints about the Principal should be reported to the Director of Governance. For those who feel unable to raise these concerns internally, for whatever reason, they can contact the local authority designated officers (LADOs) who have oversight of allegations

against practitioners and volunteers in the borough: lado@walthamforest.gov.uk or 0208 496 3646.

Alternatively, staff can call the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline on: 0800 028 0285 (the line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday) or email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is also available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 between 8.00a.m. and 8.00p.m., Monday to Friday or email help@nspcc.org.uk.

8.2 Complaints Procedure

The College's complaints procedure will be followed where a learner or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a learner that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection / LADO action.

Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a learner or attempting to humiliate them, bullying or belittling a student or discriminating against them in some way. Complaints are managed by the Executive Manager.

9. Visitors and security arrangements

Visitors to the College, including contractors, will be asked to sign in and are given an identity badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. All visitors and contractors are expected to observe the College's commitment to safeguarding and health and safety regulations to ensure learners and staff in college are kept safe.

Professionals and social workers attending the College to carry out statutory work with young people or vulnerable adults will be allowed to do so if they supply appropriate identification and this is agreed beforehand. Should the College have concerns about their identity of the professional then further clarity will be sought by arranging further contact with appropriate organisation.

9.1 Behaviour management

The behaviour policy is set out in a separate document and is reviewed regularly by the senior leadership team. It is shared with all staff before the start of the academic year. This policy is transparent to staff, parents and learners.

9.2 Use of reasonable force

The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain learners. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a child needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a learner by the arm out of the classroom.

All staff will deploy every possible strategy to prevent the need for physical intervention. Those strategies would include de-escalation whenever there is a threat of violence or aggression towards an individual or property; communicating calmly with young people or vulnerable adults; using non-threatening verbal and body language; helping learners to recognise their own 'triggers' and 'early warning signs', and distracting or helping learners to see a positive way out of a difficult situation.

However, the College supports staff to intervene physically and to use reasonable force when all those strategies are unsuccessful in calming a situation and a risk of violence, serious damage to property or disruption to the College remains. Staff should always be able to demonstrate that any such intervention is reasonable, proportionate and necessary in the circumstances, is used for the shortest possible period, deploys the minimum force that is necessary and is never used as a sanction.

When using reasonable force in response to risks presented by incidents involving learners with SEND, mental health problems or with medical conditions, schools and colleges should in considering the risks carefully recognise the additional vulnerability of these groups as well as consider duties under the Equality Act 2010.

9.3 Searching Learners

Waltham Forest College has a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which learners can learn and thrive and searching can play a critical role in ensuring a safe environment for all learners and staff.

In accordance with DfE guidance [Searching, Screening and Confiscation](#). Waltham Forest College will consider our obligation under the European Convention on Human Rights. Under Article 8, learners have a right to respect for their private life. In the context of these rights and obligations, this means that learners have the right to expect a reasonable level of personal privacy. The right under Article 8 is not absolute; it can be interfered with, but any interference with this right will be justified and proportionate.

It is a vital measure to safeguard and promote staff and pupil welfare, and to maintain high standards of behaviour through which learners can learn and thrive and authorised staff hold statutory power to search a learner or their possessions where we hold reasonable grounds to suspect that the learner may have a prohibited item, listed below:

- Knives or weapons
- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs
- Stolen items
- Tobacco and cigarette papers
- Fireworks
- Pornographic images
- Any article that a member of staff reasonably suspects has been or is likely to be, used to commit an offence or to cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the learner).

The authorised staff will make it clear that the learner understands the reason for the search and how it will be conducted so that their agreement is informed. College staff can confiscate any prohibited item found as a result of a search. They can also confiscate any item they consider harmful or detrimental to college discipline.

Searching staff must be the same gender as the learner being searched and there must be a witness (also a staff member) and, if possible, they should be the same sex as the learner being searched. There is a limited exception to this rule. You can carry out a search of a student of the opposite sex to you and / or without a witness present, but only where you reasonably believe that there is a risk that serious harm will be caused to a person if you do not conduct the search immediately and where it is not reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff.

What the law says:

- The person conducting the search may not require the pupil to remove any clothing other than outer clothing.
- 'Outer clothing' means clothing that is not worn next to the skin or immediately over a garment that is being worn as underwear, but 'outer clothing' includes hats; shoes; boots; gloves and scarves.
- 'Possessions' means any goods over which the pupil has or appears to have control – this includes desks, lockers and bags.
- A learner's possessions can only be searched in the presence of the pupil and another member of staff, except where there is a risk that serious harm will be caused to a person if the search is not conducted immediately and where it is not reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff.
- The power to search without consent enables a personal search, involving removal of outer clothing and searching of pockets; but not an intimate search going further than that, which only a person with more extensive powers (e.g. a police officer) can do.
- The DSL/DDSL must be aware of the requirement for learners to have an Appropriate Adult where an intimate search is being considered/conducted. Further information in respect of the role and duties of an appropriate adult can be found in the Statutory guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pace-code-c-2019/pace-code-c-2019-accessible>

9.4 Off-site arrangements

All extended and off-site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements. When learners attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work-related activities, we will check that effective child protection, Health & safety, and whistleblowing arrangements are in place.

Where extended college activities are provided by and managed by the college, the College's child protection policy and procedures apply. If another body provides services or activities on the college site, the college will seek assurance that the provider's child protection policy and procedures are robust and sufficient. In addition, ensuring there are appropriate arrangements in place to liaise should there be any child protection concerns raised.

9.5 Photography and images

To protect learners, we will:

- Seek their consent for photographs or video images to be taken, including consent for the reasons for which photos will be used and how long they will be kept as per Data Protection legislation
- Seek parental consent for the same
- Ensure learners are appropriately dressed
- Encourage learners to tell us if they are worried about any photographs/images that are taken of them

Furthermore, when using images for publicity purposes (e.g. on our website or in newspapers or publications), we will:

- Avoid naming learners when possible
- If it is necessary to name a learner, use first names rather than surnames
- Establish whether the image will be retained for further use, where and for how long
- Ensure that images are stored securely and used only by those authorised to do so

For the protection of learners and staff, only college-owned equipment will be used to record, and store images taken by staff or volunteers on the college site or during offsite college activities including residential visits.

9.6 Online safety

Young people commonly use electronic equipment including mobile phones, tablets and computers daily to access the internet and share content and images via social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, MSN, Tumblr, Snapchat, TikTok and Instagram. Those technologies and the internet are a source of fun, entertainment, communication and education. Unfortunately, however, some adults and young people will use those technologies to harm learners and the use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation: technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm.

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

- Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example, pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views;
- Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example, commercial advertising as well as adults posing as learners or young adults; and
- Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying;
- Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If any young person or vulnerable adult are at risk, it can be reported to the Anti-Phishing Working Group <https://apwg.org/>

Chatrooms and social networking sites are the more obvious sources of inappropriate and harmful behaviour and students are not allowed to access those sites in college. Many learners

own or have access to handheld devices and parents are encouraged to consider measures to keep their child safe when using the internet and social media at home and in the community.

Cyberbullying and sexting by learners will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures (see 'Sexting' below). Serious incidents may be managed in line with our sexual exploitation policy or child protection procedures.

All staff receive online safety training and are trained to be vigilant about and to report any concerns about the risk to young people online in the same way that they notice and report offline concerns. Staff are also made aware of the acceptable use policy which outlines personal online activity, use of social networking and electronic communication. Staff will not communicate via personal devices / social media with any learners. Staff found to be in breach of these rules may be the subject of a referral to the Designated Officer in the Local Authority and/or may be subject to internal disciplinary action.

Staff should be prepared to respond to online challenges and online hoaxes and can refer to this useful guidance for help and support <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/harmful-online-challenges-and-online-hoaxes/harmful-online-challenges-and-online-hoaxes>

9.7 Remote learning

It is essential that information is shared with parents and carers which outlines how online learning is being delivered. This should include explicit details of sites that will be accessed, staff that pupils will interact with, and how this is being monitored. There must also be robust strategic oversight to ensure that monitoring systems are effective, and that staff are able to identify and report concerns.

9.8 Online communication between staff and learners

Staff must be aware of the acceptable use policy, and this should give advice regarding personal online activity, use of social networking and electronic communication. Under no circumstances is it acceptable for staff to communicate via personal devices / social media with pupils. Staff found to be in breach of these rules may be the subject of a referral to the Designated Officer in the Local Authority and/or may be subject to disciplinary action.

9.9 Online filters and monitoring

Governors and/or proprietors will regularly review the filters and monitoring systems in place to ensure effectiveness.

All relevant staff have been given information about the provisions in place and know how to identify concerns and escalate matters to the senior leadership team and Governors will regularly review the filters and monitoring systems in place to ensure effectiveness.

Appendix 1: Specific Safeguarding Concerns

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of different forms, including hitting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child. Physical abuse can happen in any family, but learners may be more at risk if their parents have problems with drugs, alcohol, and mental health or if they live in a home where domestic abuse happens.

Babies and disabled learners also have a higher risk of suffering physical abuse, and physical abuse in young learners is more likely to lead to permanent injury or fatality.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. Physical abuse can also occur outside of the family environment.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. Although the effects of emotional abuse might take a long time to be recognisable, practitioners will be able to observe it, for example, in the way that a parent interacts with their child.

Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. 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 learners. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction.

It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another, which includes coercive control and domestic abuse. It may also involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing learners 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 & Exploitation

Sexual abuse is any sexual activity with a child. You should be aware that many learners and young people who are victims of sexual abuse do not recognise themselves as such. A child may not understand what is happening and may not even understand that it is wrong.

Sexual abuse can have a long-term impact on mental health. Sexual abuse 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 clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving learners in the production of sexual images, forcing learners to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging learners 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 and learners are also perpetrators.

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse where learners are sexually exploited for Money, power, or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection, or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation doesn't always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of learners who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care, and education at some point.

Resources are available from the Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse - <https://www.csacentre.org.uk/knowledge-in-practice/practice-improvement/supporting-practice-in-tackling-child-sexual-abuse/>

Neglect

Neglect is a pattern of failing to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter. It is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development. Learners who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse. Neglect usually indicates a relationship issue between the parent and child.

A key task for staff and volunteers is to record all instances of neglect, however minor. This builds up a picture of the child's lived experience and provides the crucial evidence required at point of referral. There are many different aspects in which neglect can manifest:

- Physical Neglect or Deprivation of Needs
- Medical Neglect
- Supervisory Neglect
- Environmental Neglect
- Educational Neglect
- Emotional Neglect

Domestic Abuse

Waltham Forest has adopted the Safe & Together model of working with learners affected by domestic abuse. This includes working in partnership with the abused parent and holding the perpetrating parent to account. Domestic abuse is defined as any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality, including where they see, hear, or experience its effects. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional abuse

All learners can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on learners. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave

the family home as a result. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life.

All concerns about learners being affected by domestic abuse will be reported to the DSL/DDSLs as with any other safeguarding concern. The DSL/DDSLs will respond to the report by consulting Children's Social Care in order to establish whether a referral is required, or the situation should be managed by discussion with parents/carers and possibly the offer of early help.

The College works in partnership with Police and Children's Services to support pupils who are affected by incidents of domestic violence and abuse. This scheme is called [Operation Encompass](#). It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to learners. The system ensures that when police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are learners in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will forward the information securely to the DSL before the learner or learners arrive at college the following day. On receipt of any such notification, the Principal and/or DSL will ensure that teachers and other staff directly in contact with affected learners support them with due care and sensitivity. This ensures that the College has up to date relevant information about the learner's circumstances and can enable support to be given to the learner according to their needs. This information is managed and stored with the utmost sensitivity and discretion consistent with all other confidential safeguarding records. Operation Encompass offers an advice and helpline available between 8am and 1pm from Monday to Friday – 0204 513 9990. All domestic abuse concerns outside of these times should be reported to Waltham Forest MASH Team.

Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, which can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247.

Additional advice on identifying learners who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at:

- [NSPCC- UK domestic-abuse Signs Symptoms Effects](#)
- [Refuge what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children](#)
- Safe Lives which can be found here: www.safelives.org.uk

Learners who are looked after or were previously looked after

Learners who were previously looked after, such as those adopted or under Special Guardianship Orders, potentially remain vulnerable. The school ensures that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep learners who are looked after and learners who were previously looked after safe and ensures that appropriate staff have information about a learner's looked after status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the learner.

The designated teacher for learners who are looked after and previously looked after, and the DSL, hold details of the social workers for all learners who are looked after or were previously looked after; and the name and contact details of the Local Authority's virtual school head for learners who are looked after. The virtual school head works in partnership with the designated teacher to ensure that pupil premium plus funding is appropriately used to promote the needs and educational achievement of looked after learners or formerly looked after learners. The

virtual school head also has strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment and progress of all learners who have an allocated social worker.

Care Experienced Young People

Local authorities have ongoing responsibilities to young people who cease to be looked after and become care leavers. That includes keeping in touch with them, preparing an assessment of their needs and appointing a Personal Advisor who develops a pathway plan with the young person. This plan describes how the local authority will support the care leaver to participate in education or training. The DSL/DDSLs will have details of the local authority Leaving Care Coach appointed to guide and support all care leavers; and should liaise with them as necessary regarding any issues of concern affecting an experienced young person.

Learners with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

Learners with special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation in this group of learners, which can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- The potential for learners with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Staff are trained to manage these additional barriers to ensure this group of learners are appropriately safeguarded. Staff can recognise the additional risks that learners with SEND face online, for example from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capacity to support SEND learners to stay safe online.

Contextual safeguarding

Contextual safeguarding means that assessments of learners should consider whether wider environmental factors which are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Staff will listen to learners and be vigilant about any signs or indicators that would suggest learners may be at risk in the community and will share intelligence with the Police in order to prevent learners suffering harm. Waltham Forest College will provide as much information as possible when asked to do so as part of a police investigation and/or when making referrals to Children's Social Care.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Waltham Forest has taken a public health approach to learners and young people's criminal exploitation by organized criminal groups (OCGs) and gangs. CCE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual and/or criminal activity:

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or
- For the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.
- Through violence or the threat of violence

The victim may have been criminally exploited even if child does not view themselves as a victim. CCE does not always involve physical contact; they can also occur using technology.

CCE can include learners being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (see section below on County Lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket or to threaten other young people. Victims of CCE can be of any gender. Learners and young people are often unwittingly drawn into criminal exploitation through the offer of friendship, relationships and care, gifts, drugs, alcohol, money and accommodation. Some of the following can be indicators of CCE.

- Learners who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Learners who associate with other young people involved in exploitation
- Learners who suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- Learners who misuse drugs and alcohol
- Learners who go missing for periods of time, regularly come home late or are found far from home
- Learners who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education
- Learners involved in serious violence, either as victim, perpetrator, or alleged perpetrator.
- Learners owing a debt to exploiters.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity:

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

The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact; they can also occur using technology. Victims of CSE can be of any gender, under the age of 18, including 16 and 17 years old who can legally consent to have sex. It can include both contact and non-contact sexually activity and may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge. Some of the indicators of CCE can also be indicators of CSE, as can:

- Learners who have older boyfriends/girlfriends
- Learners who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant
- Learners who have concerning use of internet or other social media applications

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 other criminal activity including trafficking and illegal drugs. Drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. The Department for Education have produced: [Child sexual exploitation: definition and guide for practitioners](#)

County Lines

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with learners and vulnerable adults exploited

to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence/harm) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

Learners can be targeted and recruited into county lines in several locations including schools, further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children's homes, and care homes. Learners are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection. Learners can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

One of the ways of identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes (both from home and school), when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the [National Referral Mechanism](#) should be considered.

All concerns about learners suspected to be at risk of or involved in county lines will be reported to the DSL/DDSLs as with any other safeguarding concern. The DSL/DDSLs will respond to the report by consulting Children's Social Care in order to establish whether a referral is required. The Home Office and the Children's Society published guidance:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/863323/HOCountyLinesGuidance - Sept2018.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/863323/HOCountyLinesGuidance_-_Sept2018.pdf)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-exploitation-disruption-toolkit>

Serious violence

All staff are made aware of indicators that learners are at risk from or are involved with serious violent crime; and are trained to record and report any concern about learners at risk of or involved in perpetrating serious violence as with any other safeguarding concern.

Indicators may include increased absence, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts could also indicate that learners have been approached by or are involved with individuals associated with criminal gangs.

Mental Health

Waltham Forest College is committed to fostering a supportive and inclusive environment that promotes the mental health and well-being of all students. College can represent a key transitional period and important milestone for many students, bringing with it a number of new and exciting experiences. These experiences can be challenging, stimulating and complex. Although this new environment may provide students with a range of opportunities to develop and flourish, the intensity and pace of College may put a strain on mental health and bring pre-existing difficulties to the surface.

The College is committed to the duty of care for all students and aims to foster positive mental health and well-being. In accordance with this commitment, the College strives to provide a safe, non-judgemental, and supportive environment for all students.

The College has a Mental Health Policy and this policy does not offer an alternative or replacement for external community mental health services and does not replicate NHS Mental Health provision. The college does not offer a crisis service and its services are not available 'out of hours'.

While the support services available at the College are designed to assist students, they are not intended to replace or duplicate clinical external support. Professional external services are better equipped to meet the clinical needs of students, and we encourage students to seek such support when necessary.

Where learners have suffered abuse, neglect or exploitation, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these learner's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education. Immediate action should be taken with in response to any mental health concerns about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, through reporting the concern to the DSL/DDSLs as with any other safeguarding concern. The DSL/DDSLs will respond to the report by consulting Children's Social Care in order to establish whether a referral is required, or the situation should be managed by discussion with parents/carers and possibly the offer of early help.

Advice and guidance on [Preventing and Tackling Bullying](#), and [Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools](#) (which may also be useful for colleges) has been published. In addition, Public Health England has produced a range of resources to support secondary school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among young people including its guidance [Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing](#). Its resources include social media, forming positive relationships, smoking and alcohol. See [Rise Above](#) for links to all materials and lesson plans.

Learners with a family member in prison

Learners and young people who have a family member in prison should be supported appropriately. Approximately 200,000 learners have a parent sent to prison each year. These learners are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. Waltham Forest College] will seek to support pupils/students in this position through pastoral care, early help and discussions with parents/carers and other family members as appropriate.

For more information, see: www.prisonersfamilies.org/ The Prisoners' Families Helpline is 0808 808 2003.

Learners Missing from Education

Full attendance at College is important to the wellbeing of all pupils and enables them to access the opportunities made available to them at College. Non-attendance is also an indicator in all forms of abuse. The attendance policy is set out in a separate document and is reviewed regularly by the governing body. The College operates in accordance with statutory guidance [Children Missing Education \(DfE 2016\)](#). All learners, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.

A learner going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse, neglect or exploitation, including sexual abuse or exploitation, child criminal exploitation, radicalisation or mental health problems. Staff will also be alert to signs of learners at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

Effective information sharing between parents, Colleges and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all learners of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education. Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored, and same day checks are undertaken on the first morning of absences.

The College has introduced Missing Education Protocols and the DSL/DDSLs will monitor unauthorised absence and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority, particularly where learners go missing repeatedly and/or are missing for periods during the school day.

A conversation should take place with the Home Education Lead in the local authority BACME service if the DSL/DDSLs has concerns about learners whose parents wish to elect to home educate.

Learners who go missing from home or care

Waltham Forest College recognises that learners who run away or go missing (particularly repeatedly) and are thus absent from their normal residence are potentially vulnerable to abuse, neglect or exploitation, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It could also indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage.

[Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024](#) highlights that [Statutory Guidance on Children who Run Away or go Missing from Home or Care 2014](#) requires that every child or young person who runs away or goes missing must be offered a Return Home Interview (RHI) within a period of 72 hours of their return. RHIs are intended to ascertain the factors that triggered the young person's absence. Those factors may include difficulties at home, in school and in the community. The short timescale of 72 hours is imposed in order to ensure that the RHI remains relevant to the young person and enables any required action to be initiated at the earliest opportunity. RHIs are undertaken by practitioners who are independent in order to facilitate a discussion with the young person that is as open as possible. As soon as the Local Authority receives notification that a young person has gone missing from home or care, a letter will be sent to parents/carers seeking their consent to an RHI with their son/daughter. Direct contact will then be made with parents/carers and the young person to plan for the interview. In

order to fulfil the timescale of within 72 hours, it is essential that all opportunities to interview young people including times during the school/college day are utilised.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is the collective name given to a range of procedures involving the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons or other injury to the female genital organs. It has no health benefits and harms girls and women in many ways. The practice, which is most carried out without anaesthetic, can cause intense pain and distress and long-term health consequences, including difficulties in childbirth and risks to the unborn child. FGM is carried out on girls of any age, from new-born to older teenagers and adult women, so school 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 pupils about going on a long holiday during the summer vacation period.

The practice is illegal under the [Female Genital Mutilation Act](#) 2003. Any person found guilty of an offence under the [Female Genital Mutilation Act](#) 2003 is liable to a maximum penalty of 14 years imprisonment or a fine, or both.

Teachers are subject to a statutory duty defined by Section 5B of the [Female Genital Mutilation Act](#) 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act](#) 2015) to report to the Police personally where they discover (e.g., by means of a disclosure) that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl who is aged under 18. This is known as mandatory reporting. Teachers in that situation will record their concerns and inform the DSL, who will support the teacher in making a direct report to the Police.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation>

Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is a marriage in which a female (and sometimes a male) does not consent to the marriage but is coerced into it. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence/harm and abuse. 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 to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses. Guidance created by the Forced Marriage Unit should be reviewed for further information - [The right to choose: government guidance on forced marriage - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Learners may be married at a very young age, and well below the age of consent in England. College staff should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns raised by a pupil about being taken abroad and not being allowed to return to England. Since June 2014 forcing someone to marry has become a criminal offence in England and Wales under the [Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act](#) 2014.

In addition, since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The DSL/DDSLs refer any concerns to the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, this does not replace a referral into Children's Social Care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homelessness-code-of-guidance-for-local-authorities>

Prevent: Protecting Learners from Radicalisation & Extremism

All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act](#) 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. This duty is known as the [Prevent duty](#).

Some learners are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Protecting learners from the risk of radicalisation is part of the school's wider safeguarding duties and is similar in nature to protecting learners from other forms of harm and abuse. As such, the DSL/DDSLs are responsible for the school's strategy for protecting learners from those risks.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups. Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces. Even very young learners have been exposed, in rare circumstances, to extremism at home and elsewhere including online. Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

As learners get older, they look for adventure and excitement and they may start to ask questions about their identity and belonging. During that stage of their development, they are vulnerable to extremist groups that may claim to offer answers, identity and a social network apparently providing a sense of belonging. Many of those extremist groups make sophisticated use of the internet and social media to target and groom young people. Young people who feel isolated or disaffected in some ways are particularly vulnerable to radicalisation as they are other forms of abuse and exploitation.

Waltham Forest College has defined responsibilities to ensure that learners are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in college. During the process of radicalisation, it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being radicalised. College is committed to preventing pupils from being radicalised and drawn into any form of extremism or terrorism. Waltham Forest College promotes the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs by providing pupils with opportunities through the curriculum to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and learn how to discuss and debate points of view; and by ensuring that all pupils are valued and listened to within school.

Waltham Forest College recognises the importance of providing a safe space for learners to discuss controversial issues; and building their resilience and the critical thinking skills they need in order to challenge extremist perspectives. However, the DSL or DDSL will make appropriate referrals to the Police PREVENT team and Channel programme in respect of any pupil whose behaviour or comments suggest that they are vulnerable to being radicalised and drawn into extremism and terrorism in order to ensure that learners receive appropriate support.

Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

Prevent referrals may be considered at the Local Channel panel. The Channel panel is made up of multi-agency professionals who discuss the individuals referred to determine whether they are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. The DSL/DDSLS may be asked to attend the Channel panel to help with this assessment. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages.

Guidance on Channel is available at: [Channel guidance](#).

The Home Office has developed three e-learning modules:

- [Prevent awareness](#) e-learning offers an introduction to the Prevent duty.
- [Prevent referrals](#) e-learning supports staff to make Prevent referrals that are robust, informed and with good intention.
- [Channel awareness](#) e-learning is aimed at staff who may be asked to contribute to or sit on a multi-agency Channel panel.
- [Educate Against Hate](#) is a government website designed to support FE teachers and leaders to help them safeguard their students from radicalisation and extremism.
- The Education and Training Foundation (ETF) hosts the [Prevent for FE and Training](#).

Private Fostering

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 learners under the age of 16, or under 18 if the child is disabled. Private fostering occurs in all cultures, including British culture and learners may be privately fostered at any age.

Most privately fostered learners remain safe and well, but safeguarding concerns have been raised in some cases, so it is important that schools are alert to possible safeguarding issues, including the possibility that a child has been trafficked into the country.

By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify Children's Social Care as soon as possible. When the school becomes aware of a private fostering arrangement for a pupil that has not been notified to Children's Social Care, the school will encourage parents and private foster carers to notify Children's Social Care and will share information with Children's Social Care as appropriate.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-act-1989-private-fostering>

So-called 'honour based' abuse

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of a family and/or community. Such crimes include Female Genital

Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving 'honour' often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take.

Staff will be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA or already having suffered HBA.

Regardless of the motivation, staff will record and report any concerns about a child who might be at risk of HBA to the DSL/DDSLs as with any other safeguarding concern. The DSL/DDSLs will consider the need to make a referral to the Police, and/or Children's Social Care as with any other child protection concern; and may also contact the Forced Marriage Unit for advice as necessary.

Bullying and child on child abuse

Waltham Forest College believes that all learners have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Learners should be free from harm, both from adults and other students in the College.

Learners may be harmed by other learners or young people; research suggests that 30% of child abuse is perpetrated by those under 18.

All staff recognise that learners can abuse their peers and are trained to understand and implement the school's policy and procedures regarding child-on-child abuse. All child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. Advice and guidance has been produced [Preventing and Tackling Bullying](#)

It is most likely to include, but is not limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying).
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- Sexual violence/harm, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- Up skirting is where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence, which comes under The Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim;
- Teenage relationship abuse - defined as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual or emotional abuse, perpetrated against a current or former partner;
- Initiation/hazing - used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as sports team or school groups by subjecting them to a series of potentially humiliating, embarrassing or abusing trials which promote a bond between them; and

- Prejudiced behaviour - a range of behaviours which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless or excluded and which relates to prejudices around belonging, identity and equality, prejudices linked to disabilities, special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender and sexual identity.
- Bullying is a very serious issue that can cause learners considerable anxiety and distress. At its most serious level, bullying can have a disastrous effect on a child's well-being and in very rare cases has been a feature in the suicide of some young people. All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying should be reported and will be managed through the [school/college]'s anti-bullying procedures.
- All pupils and parents receive a copy of the procedures on joining the school and the subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in PSHE education. All members of staff receive a copy of the school's behaviour policy, which contains the anti-bullying procedures, as part of their induction and are trained to be aware of the harm caused by bullying and to respond to all incidents of bullying and child on child abuse proactively.
- Abuse is abuse and will not be tolerated, minimised or dismissed as 'banter'; 'just having a laugh'; 'part of growing up'; 'boys being boys'; or 'girls being girls. It is important for the College to consider the wider environmental factors and context within which child on child abuse occurs.

Waltham Forest College will also consider the potential for the impact of the incident to extend further than the school /college's local community (e.g. for images or content to be shared around neighbouring schools/colleges) and for a victim (or alleged perpetrator) to become marginalised and excluded by both online and offline communities.

There is also the strong potential for repeat victimisation in the future if abusive content continues to exist somewhere online. Online concerns can be especially complicated. Support is available from The UK Safer Internet Centre at 0344 381 4772 and helpline@saferinternet.org.uk and the Internet Watch Foundation at <https://www.iwf.org.uk/>

Learners who identify as lesbian, gay, bi, or trans, queer + (LGBTQ+)

Young people who identify as LGBTQ+ can be targeted by other learners. In some cases, a learner who is perceived by other learners to be LGBTQ+ (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as learners who identify as LGBTQ+.

LGBTQ+ inclusion is part of the statutory Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education curriculum and there is a range of support available to support our school/ college counter homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and abuse.

Sexual violence/harm/and sexual harassment

Sexual violence/harm, sexual harm and sexual harassment can occur between two learners of any age and gender and between learners of the opposite or the same gender. They can also occur through a group of learners sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single learner or group of learners. Staff are aware of sexual violence/harm and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. Sexual violence/harm and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable.

Learners who are victims of sexual violence/harm and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, likely, adversely affect their educational attainment. While it is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate

support, staff are trained to be aware that it is more likely that girls, learners with SEND and LGBTQ+ learners are at greater risk of sexual violence/harm and sexual harassment and more likely it will be perpetrated by boys.

When referring to sexual violence/harm, this policy uses the definitions of sexual offences in the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as follows:

- Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- Assault by Penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- Sexual Assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal, or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

- A child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity
- A child under 18 cannot consent to any sexual activity with a person in a position of trust
- The age of consent is 16.
- Sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

Sexual harassment is 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded, or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. Online sexual harassment may happen on its own or as part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence/harm.

Sexual harassment creates an atmosphere that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviours and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence/harm. Waltham Forest College therefore recognises the importance of identifying and challenging sexual violence/harm and sexual harassment in its wider approach to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of learners; through policies; and through the curriculum. All staff recognise the importance of:

- Making clear that sexual violence/harm and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up
- Not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence/harm or sexual harassment as "banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys"
- Challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts, and genitalia, flicking bras, lifting skirts and up skirting.
- Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

The College will respond to reports in accordance with Part 5 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) 2024. Colleges may also find it useful to refer to the [Farrer child on child abuse toolkit](#). All responses to reports of sexual violence/harm will be subject to an immediate risk and needs assessment undertaken by the DSL/DDSLs using their professional judgement, and supported by other agencies, such as children's social care and the Police. The need for a risk and needs assessment in relation to reports of sexual harassment will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Risk assessment

- The risk and needs assessment will consider:
 - the victim, especially their protection and support.
 - the alleged perpetrator/s (if she/he/they attend the same college); and
 - all the other learners (and, if appropriate, adult students and staff) at the college, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them.
- The DSL or DDSL should ensure they are engaging with children's social care and specialist services as required.
- Police are notified when a crime may have occurred.
- Where there has been a report of sexual violence/harm, it is likely that professional risk assessments by social workers and or sexual violence/harm specialists will be required.

Action following a report of sexual violence, harm and/ or sexual harassment - what to consider

The DSL/DDSLs are likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and will therefore be the most appropriate person to lead the school/college's initial response. Important considerations will include:

- The wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence/harm and sexual harassment. Victims will be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered. However, if the victim asks the school/college not to tell anyone about the sexual violence/harm or sexual harassment, the DSL (or a deputy) will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other learners. It is likely to be justified and lawful to share the information if doing so is in the public interest, e.g. to protect the victim and other young people from harm and to promote the welfare of learners;
- The nature of the alleged incident(s), including whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour.
- The ages of the learners involved.
- The developmental stages of the learners involved.
- Any power imbalance between the learners. For example, is the alleged perpetrator significantly older, more mature, or more confident? Does the victim have a disability or learning difficulty?
- If the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse.
- Whether there are ongoing risks to the victim, other learners, adult learners, or College staff.
- Informing parents/carers unless this would put the victim at greater risk;

- Only sharing information with those staff who need to know in order to support the learners involved and/or be involved in any investigation. For instance, vocational staff may be asked to monitor the victim's welfare without needing to know that they are a victim of sexual violence/harm or harassment.

Learners sharing a classroom - initial considerations following a report of sexual violence/harm/harassment

Any report of sexual violence/harm or harassment is likely to be traumatic for the victim. However, reports of rape and assault by penetration are likely to be especially difficult regarding the victim and proximity with the alleged perpetrator is likely to be especially distressing. Whilst the college establishes the facts of the case and starts the process of liaising with Children's Social Care and the Police, the alleged perpetrator will usually be removed from any classes they share with the victim. Consideration will also be given to how best to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator a reasonable distance apart on college premises and on transport to and from the college, where appropriate. These actions are in the best interests of both learners and should not be perceived to be a judgment on the guilt of the alleged perpetrator.

For other reports of sexual violence/harm and sexual harassment, the proximity of the victim and alleged perpetrator and considerations regarding shared classes, sharing college premises and transport, will be considered immediately. In all cases, the wishes of the victim, the nature of the allegations and the protection of all learners in the College will be especially important when considering any immediate actions.

Sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as Youth Produced Sexual Imagery YPSI or 'sexting').

The school will act in accordance with advice endorsed by DfE which can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people>. (UK Council for Child Internet Safety 2017).

All incidents of consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as Youth Produced Sexual Imagery -YPSI) will be dealt with as safeguarding concerns. The primary concern always will be the welfare and protection of the young people involved. Young people (under 18) who share sexual imagery of themselves or their peers are breaking the law. Still, authorities will avoid criminalising young people unnecessarily.

All incidents of YPSI should be reported to the DSL. If there is a YPSI issue in relation to a device (e.g., mobile phone, tablet, digital camera), the member of staff will secure the device (i.e. it should be confiscated). This is consistent with DfE advice [Searching, Screening and Confiscation - Advice for headteachers, school staff and governing bodies](#) 2018. Staff will not look at (unless directed to do so by police), copy or print any indecent images as this would be a criminal offence. The confiscated device will be passed immediately to the DSL. The DSL will discuss the concerns with appropriate staff and speak to young people involved as appropriate. Parents/carers will be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put the young person at risk of harm. If, at any point in the process, there is concern that a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral will be made to Children's Social Care and/or the Police via the MASH immediately. The Police will always be informed when there is reason to believe that indecent images involve sexual acts and any child in the imagery is under 13 years of age.

The DSL/DDSLs will make a judgement about whether a reported YPSI incident is experimental (e.g., a child sending an image to a child with whom they are romantically involved) or aggravated. Aggravated incidents involve criminal or abusive elements beyond the creation, sending or possession of sexual images created by young people. These include possible adult involvement or criminal or abusive behaviour by young people such as sexual abuse, extortion, threats, malicious conduct arising from personal conflicts, or creation or sending or showing of images without the knowledge or against the will of a young person who is pictured. Aggravated incidents of sexting will be referred to MASH.

For further reference on how to support with concerns around HSB within your school please refer to <https://www.csnetwork.org.uk/en/beyond-referrals-levers-for-addressing-harmful-sexual-behaviour-in-schools>.

Appendix 2: Thresholds for social care intervention

Level 1 – Universal



Universal services are key partners in the delivery of a preventative approach to improving outcomes for learners and young people. Services delivered at the universal level meet the needs of most learners and young people. These 'universal services' are those services (sometimes also referred to as mainstream services) that are provided to or are routinely available to, all learners and their families. Universal services are designed to meet the sorts of needs that should enhance the lives and wellbeing of all our learners.

Most learners will not require intervention beyond the universal level of support within the borough available to all learners – these will not require social care intervention.

Level 2 – Vulnerable

Vulnerable needs requiring targeted support, when the needs of the child can no longer be fully met within Universal provision. These learners and their families may have low level additional needs that are likely to be short term and that are sometimes known but unmet. In this context, a Common Assessment should be completed with the family and child or young person. At this point the Team around the Child and Family processes should commence if support is required from more than one professional service. The team is coordinated by a Lead Professional to provide a consistent link for the family.

Waltham Forest's Early Help and Thresholds Criteria for Intervention which can be found here www.walthamforest.gov.uk/sites/default/files/early_help_thresholds.pdf details the agreed thresholds for intervention at different levels of risk to children and young people within Waltham Forest. Early Help intervention requires parental consent and engagement. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. The aim is to prevent further issues arising and current issues escalating.

In cases where consent is not given for an early help assessment, practitioners should consider how the needs of the child might be met. If at any time it is considered that the child may be a child in need, or that the child has suffered significant harm or is likely to do so, a referral should be made immediately to [MASH](#).

Level 3 – Complex

For learners and young people whose needs are complex, the lead professional will be a social worker who will work closely with the child and family to ensure a single assessment and deliver the right support and intervention. These learners will be eligible for social care services, outlined in a Children in Need plan, because they are at risk of moving to a higher threshold for intervention from specialist services. In most cases the social worker will act as the lead professional to coordinate the work of all agencies with the child and family. "Asset" is the risk assessment tool used to assess the likelihood of a Young Person going on to commit an offence and to identify what areas of work need to be undertaken to reduce this risk.

Section 17 of the Children's Act 1989 places a general duty on every Local Authority to safeguard and promote the welfare of learners living within their area who are in need and to promote the upbringing of such learners, wherever possible by their families, through providing an appropriate range of services. A child in need is defined under the Children's Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Local authorities are required to provide services for learners in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Learners in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children's Act 1989.

Level 4 – Acute

Acute Specialist Services are required where the needs of the child or young person are so great that statutory and /or specialist help, and intervention is required to keep them safe or to ensure their continued development. These span the multi-agency partnership including Children's Social Care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and Level 3 and 4 Youth Offending Services.

By effective integrated working in Waltham Forest, we aim to reduce the escalation of those learners and families requiring targeted support to prevent more learners requiring specialist and statutory interventions. To ensure the right support, in the right place at the right time.

In Waltham Forest we are developing a confident integrated workforce with a common core of knowledge and understanding to support and intervene effectively to safeguard learners, young people, and families.

A very small number of learners for whom targeted support will not be enough will have more significant and acute needs which meet the threshold for Stage 4 intervention. This includes learners who are experiencing significant harm or where there is a likelihood of significant harm and children at risk of removal from home.

s47 or Child Protection intervention is the process for learners where there is reasonable cause to suspect that the learner is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm (this includes immediate protection for learners at serious risk of harm).

Appendix 3: Designated Safeguarding Lead

A Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is a member of the Senior Leadership Team, appointed to support the management of safeguarding cases within College. The DSL should take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety). The DSL should be given the time, funding, training, resources and support undertake duties as listed below. Whilst the activities of the DSL can be delegated to DDSLs, the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection remains with the DSL, this lead responsibility should not be delegated.

The DSL and DDSL should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge, skills and confidence required to carry out the role. This training should be updated every two years. In addition to the training, DSLs and DDSLs should update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually. The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead/s (DDSL) are trained to the same level as the DSL and can take over seamlessly in the event of the DSL being absent.

During term time, the DSL and/or DDSL should always be available (during College hours) for staff in the College] to support and/or discuss any safeguarding concerns.

A duty rota will be organised to provide staff with advice, information and signposting out of hours and over weekends / school holidays in the event of an emergency.

The DSL role includes, but is not limited by, the following:

Management of referrals

- Refer cases of suspected abuse to children's social care and police as appropriate. [NPCC- When to call the police](#) should help DSLs to understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do.
- Refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as appropriate.
- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as appropriate.

Provides Advice and Support

- Acts as a source of advice, support, expertise and liaison to the College community.
- Liaise with the principle to inform him or her of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigation
- Liaises with staff (especially pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT Technicians, and SENCOs) on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
- Support staff who make referrals to Children's Social Care
- Support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme

Provides Expertise

- Has a working knowledge of relevant national guidance in respect of all specific safeguarding issues highlighted in Parts 1, 4 & 5, and Annex A, B and C of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) 2024, ensuring that all staff receive necessary training, information and guidance

- Understands the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including the criteria making a referral to MASH.
- Has working knowledge of how a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference is undertaken by children's social care and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so
- Understands relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations;
- Understands the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with the three safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners; [Data protection: a toolkit for schools](#) 2018, guidance developed to support schools with data protection activity, including compliance with GDPR.
- Understands and supports the College with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and can provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;
- Understands the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school or college;
- Can recognise the additional risks that learners with SEN and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support SEND learners to stay safe online
- Understands that learners can be at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families.
- Understands the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and procedures and links with the safeguarding partners to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements.

Maintains & Manages Records

- Keeps detailed records in confidential files, ideally via an online safeguarding recording system, that are separate from the main pupil file and stored securely. Files records need to be dated with a clear record of who entered the record
- Ensures that, when a pupil under the age of 18 years leaves College, all child protection records are passed to the new setting (separately from the main pupil file and ensuring secure transit) and confirmation of receipt is obtained. If the child is the subject of an open case to Children's Social Care, the pupil's social worker is also informed.

Champions Children's Wellbeing

- Encourages a culture of listening to and taking account of children's wishes and feelings.
- Is alert to the specific needs of learners with special educational needs, learners in need, learners subject to child protection or care proceedings, learners in care, young carers, learners with particular vulnerabilities in order to provide effective pastoral support and liaison with other agencies.
- Ensures that learners and young people are supported to be able to identify risk in their lives or those of their peers in an age-appropriate way, and that they know how they can report it.
- Is responsible for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that learners in need are experiencing, or have experienced,

and identifies the impact that these issues might be having on learner's attendance, engagement and achievement at College.

- Oversees pastoral care in the College.
- Ensure the appointment of a Designated Teacher for Learners who are looked after by the local authority and those who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders, or who were adopted from state care outside of England.
- Helps promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that learners, including learners with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and school and college leadership staff.
- Supports teaching staff to identify the challenges that learners who are experiencing or have experienced welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues might face and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to best support these learners.
- Understands that learners may find it difficult to approach staff to express their concerns therefore has put in place additional measures that help to support learners to be able to do this.

Primary point of contact for safeguarding

- Acts as a point of contact with the three safeguarding partners
- Attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences, strategy meetings and multi-agency sexual exploitation (MASE) meetings.
- Co-ordinates College's contribution to child protection plans as part of core groups, attending and actively participating in core group meetings.
- Develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies, including the local safeguarding partnership.
- Works in partnership with social workers and with safeguarding partnership to support the child.
- Notifies social care if a child-on-child protection is absent for more than two days.

Supports and Liaises with Parents, Carers & Families

- Ensures parents are aware of the school/college's role in safeguarding and that referrals about suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation may be made.
- Ensures that the safeguarding policies are made publicly available (e.g., on the website) and are easily accessible to all (staff, parents, learners, those for whom English is not a first language).

Sets and Communicates Policy

- Updates safeguarding policies (safeguarding, child protection, online safety, safer recruitment, code of conduct, etc) annually in line with the Local Safeguarding Partnership and statutory requirements
- Ensures staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood:
 - [Keeping children safe in education 2024 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk) 2024 Part 1 or Annex A (whichever is applicable).
 - The child protection and safeguarding policy
 - The staff behaviour policy (code of conduct)
 - The behaviour policy including de-escalation tactics, and are trained on acceptable restraint

- College's safeguarding response to learners who go missing from education
- The role of the designated safeguarding lead & how to get in touch
- Ensures that the child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures are reviewed and updated at least annually, working with the whole school/college community of pupils, parents, staff, volunteers and governors and/or proprietors regarding this.
- Keeps a record of staff attendance at child protection training.

Coordinates Training & Induction

- Develops a training strategy to ensure that all staff obtain the appropriate training / updates, skills and knowledge to safeguard learners effectively within the local Safer Partnership requirements.
- Undertakes appropriate training themselves, including attending regular DSL Forums, and is given appropriate time and resources to carry out the role.
- Ensures that all staff understand that if they have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately, either by speaking to the DSL or DDSL or, in exceptional circumstances, taking responsibility to make a referral to Children's Social Care.
- Ensures that all staff know how to make a referral to Children's social care.
- Quality assures casework by other staff, possibly through supervision.
- Ensures each member of staff has access to, and understands, the school's or college's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff;

Ensures Safer Recruitment / Management of Allegations against Staff & Volunteers

- Ensures Safer Recruitment as per the Safer Recruitment policy; develops safeguarding induction strategy for all new / temporary staff.
- Ensures all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers have read the school's safeguarding policy and the Code of Conduct / Behaviour Policy prior to access to learners.
- Ensures that the Principal is aware of the responsibility under [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) 2018 to refer all allegations that a learner has been harmed by or that learners may be at risk of harm from a member of staff (including supply staff) or volunteer to the Designated Officer in the Local Authority (LADO) within one working day prior to any internal investigation; and to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) as appropriate.

Appendix 4 Standards for Effective Child Protection Practice

The College's child protection and safeguarding responsibilities are inspected under the 'Leadership and Management' judgement in Ofsted inspections. The following standards may assist schools in evaluating their practice. They should be used jointly by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Designated Link Governor for Safeguarding to ensure the school is effective in safeguarding and child protection matters.

In best practice, Colleges:

- Have an ethos in which learners feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, and they are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Provide suitable support and guidance so that pupils have a range of appropriate adults to whom they can turn if they are worried or in difficulties.
- Work with parents to build an understanding of the school's responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of all learners and a recognition that this may occasionally require learners to be referred to investigative agencies as a constructive and helpful measure.
- Ensure all staff can identify learners who may benefit from early help; provide co-ordinated offers of early help; and ensure that learners receive the right help at the right time to address concerns and risks and prevent issues escalating.
- Are vigilant in cases of suspected child abuse, recognising the signs and symptoms, have clear procedures whereby all members of staff report such cases to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or – in her/his absence – the deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, and are aware of Local Authority and procedures so that information is passed on effectively to the relevant professionals.
- Monitor learners who have been identified as in need of early help or at risk; maintain clear records of pupils' progress and welfare *in a secure place*; maintain sound policies on confidentiality; provide appropriate information to other professionals; and submit reports to and attend child protection conferences.
- Provide and support regular child protection training and updates for all school staff and ensure that DSL and DDSLs attend refresher training every two years to ensure their skills and expertise are up to date; and ensure that targeted funding for this work is used solely for this purpose.
- Contribute to an inter-agency approach to safeguarding and child protection by developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies.
- Use the curriculum to teach learners about safeguarding and raise their awareness and build confidence so that pupils have a range of contacts and strategies to identify risk, know who they can talk to about anything causes them concern and understand the importance of protecting others.
- Provide clear policy statements for parents, staff and learners and young people on this and on both positive behaviour policies and the school's approach to bullying.
- Have a clear understanding of the various types of bullying and child on child abuse – face to face, online, physical, verbal, sexual, prejudice based and indirect - and act promptly and firmly to combat it, making sure that pupils are aware of the school's position on this issue and who they can contact for support.
- Have a clear understanding of the signs and impact of racist, disability, homophobic, transphobic, and teenage relationship abuse; and a clear commitment to identifying and challenging those forms of abuse in order to safeguard learners and maintain the safeguarding culture of the college.

- Take particular care that learners with SEN in mainstream and special schools, who may be especially vulnerable to abuse, are supported effectively with attention paid to ensuring that those with communication difficulties are enabled to express themselves to a member of staff with appropriate communication skills.
- Have a clear policy about the handling of allegations of abuse by members of staff, ensuring that all staff are fully aware of the procedures and that they are followed correctly at all times, using the guidance set out [Keeping children safe in education 2024 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/121212/keeping-children-safe-in-education-2024.pdf) and London Child Protection Procedures which can be found online,
- Have a written whole school safeguarding policy, which is produced, owned and regularly reviewed by all school staff, considering the views of learners, parents/carers and governors, and which clearly outlines the College's position and positive action in respect of the standards;
- Ensure that specified information is passed on in a timely manner to the Local Authority for monitoring purposes;
- Have a Single Central Record in place that fully complies with the guidance in [Keeping children safe in education 2024 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/121212/keeping-children-safe-in-education-2024.pdf) 2024.
- Ensure appropriate arrangements are in place in relation to external professionals visiting learners on site including ensuring they have read and understood the child protection policy.

For advice and support about any safeguarding matter in school or for information about a range of safeguarding training courses, please contact the Education Safeguarding Service:

Email: safeguardingineducation@walthamforest.gov.uk

Telephone: 020 8496 3646

Caroline Coyston, LADO and Safeguarding in Education Team Manager

Susannah Bennett, LADO and Safeguarding in Education Assistant Team Manager (Schools Lead)

Jennifer Knight, Education Safeguarding Early Years Lead

For Escalations contact:

Gillian Nash, Head of Settings and Workforce Safeguarding

Email: Gillian.Nash@walthamforest.gov.uk

Telephone: 020 8496 3682

APPENDIX 5: SAFER RECRUITMENT

Waltham Forest College will ensure that their Safer Recruitment and Selection policy is in place and updated annually, and that it is followed meticulously for the recruitment of all permanent and temporary staff and volunteers.

Safer recruitment means that the **Waltham Forest College** will ensure the following:

Planning and Advertising

- Every job description and person specification include responsibility for safeguarding
- Job adverts include statements relating to the safer recruitment process such as the possibility of online searches

Interview

- At least one interview question about attitude to safeguarding and working with children
- Verify the preferred candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- At least one member of each recruitment panel will have attended safer recruitment training

Vetting

- Obtain references for all successful candidates via reference proforma where possible, including internal candidates.
- Carry out additional or alternative checks for applicants who have lived or worked outside the UK
- Applicants only begin work after providing DBS certificates. Exceptionally, if an individual starts work in the regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available, the individual must be appropriately supervised, and the employment remains conditional on suitably clear checks.
- Barred List checks will always be taken prior to the individual starts to work in the College.

Appointment

- Offers of employment are fully conditional on a clear DBS certificate (or a risk-assessed DBS certificate if it contains cautions/reprimands or convictions and full references, using a references proforma (that requests whether candidates would be re-employed for the same post and whether there have ever been any safeguarding concerns).

Induction

- Once appointed, a full safeguarding induction process must be put in place for all new staff, which includes rigorous monitoring in order to pick up any concerns early.
- All staff are required to sign to confirm they have received a copy of the safeguarding policy and Staff Code of Conduct), and that they have read [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) 2024.
- All relevant staff (teachers, teaching assistants, other classroom-based staff, lunchtime supervisors and members of the senior leadership team) and all those who work in

before or after College care for children under eight are made aware of the disqualification legislation.

Third Party Organisations

- Waltham Forest College obtains written confirmation from supply agencies and third party organisations that they have satisfactorily undertaken all appropriate checks in respect of individuals they provide to work in the College that the College would have undertaken if they were employing the individual directly; and that those individuals are suitable to work with children.
- Waltham Forest College will ensure that any staff from third party organisations have suitable and up-to-date training in safeguarding.
- Trainees and Students on placements should be subject to the same checks as other members of staff. However, fee-funded trainee teachers' checks should be carried out by the training provider and should be judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children. The College is not required to record details of fee-funded trainees on the Single Central Record. However, the college requires written confirmation from the provider that these checks have been carried out and are satisfactory.

Recording

- Waltham Forest College maintains a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken and ensures that the record is maintained in accordance with section 3 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) 2024 and guidance.

Ongoing training & management of concerns and allegations

- See sections above

Safer recruitment means that all **job applicants** will:

- Complete an application form that includes their employment history and explains any gaps
- Provide two referees, including the current employer, and at least one who can comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children. References should be requested by using a proforma that asks directly about whether there have ever been any safeguarding concerns raised and whether the applicant would be hired again for the same position.
- Provide evidence of identity and qualifications
- Be checked in accordance with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) regulations as appropriate to their role if offered employment. This will include:
 - an enhanced DBS check and a barred list check for those including unsupervised volunteers engaged in Regulated Activity;
 - an enhanced DBS check without a barred list check for all volunteers not involved in Regulated Activity but who have the opportunity of regular contact with children;
 - an enhanced DBS check for all governors (not including associate members), which will only include a barred list check for governors involved in Regulated Activity
- Provide evidence of their right to work in the UK, if offered employment

Waltham Forest College endeavours to only employ suitable staff and allow suitable volunteers to work with children by complying with the requirements of [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024](#) together with the College's *Safer Recruitment and Selection* policy.

Waltham Forest College are 'specified places' which means that most staff and volunteers will be engaged in Regulated Activity.

Volunteers

Volunteers will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the College and contact with students. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised or be allowed to engage in regulated activity. Volunteers who work only in a supervised capacity and are not in regulated activity will undergo the safer recruitment checks appropriate to their role, in accordance with the College's risk assessment process and statutory guidance.

Contractors

The College checks the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the college and requests DBS checks where appropriate. As required by statutory guidance, where contractors and/or their staff are engaged in regulated activity, barred list checks are also requested.

Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or in regulated activity.

APPENDIX 6: ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE MADE AGAINST MEMBERS OF STAFF OR VOLUNTEERS

These procedures should be used in all cases in which it is alleged that a member of staff or volunteer has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a young person or vulnerable adult;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to a young person or vulnerable adult; or
- Behaved towards a young person or vulnerable adult in a way that indicates he/she would pose a risk of harm.

The College also has a duty of care to its employees and will act to manage and minimise the stress inherent in the allegations process. Support will be made available to anyone facing an allegation; such support may include access to counselling/medical advice, or, where applicable, support from a trade union representative or workplace colleague.

It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a member of staff is dealt with very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the young person/vulnerable adult, and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

Receiving an Allegation from a Young Person or Vulnerable Adult

- If a member of staff receives an allegation against a member of staff, this should be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), unless this manager is the person against whom the allegation is made. In these circumstances, the report should be made to the Principal. In the event of the Principal being unavailable, the allegation will be reported to the Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality. The Principal will be subsequently notified of the allegation at the earliest opportunity. In the case of allegations against the Principal, the report should be made to the Chair of the Corporation.
- Due regard must be given to the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 when dealing with any allegations against staff or volunteers. The following procedures take account of that guidance accordingly.

Receiving an allegation from a member of staff

- Where a member of staff has a concern about another member of staff, the concern should be referred to the DSL. Where the concern relates to the Principal, the Chair of Governors should be informed.
- In the first instance, the DSL and Director of Human Resources will immediately discuss the allegation with the Local Authority's Designated Officer for safeguarding. The purpose of the initial discussion will be for the Designated Officer and the case manager to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation, and agree on a course of action. The Designated Officer may also ask the case manager to provide or obtain relevant additional information, such as previous history, whether the young

person/vulnerable adult or their family have made similar allegations previously, and the individual's current contact with young people/vulnerable adults.

- There may be situations when the case manager will want to involve the police immediately, for example, if the person is deemed to be an immediate risk to young people/vulnerable adults, or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. Where there is no such evidence, the case manager will discuss the allegations with the Designated Officer in order to help determine whether police involvement is necessary to support the investigation process.
- The initial sharing of information and evaluation may lead to a decision that no further action is to be taken in regard to the individual facing the allegation or concern. In such circumstances, this decision and a justification for it will be recorded by both the case manager and the Designated Officer, and an agreement reached on what information should be put in writing to the individual concerned and by whom. The case manager will then consider with the Designated Officer what action should follow both in respect of the individual and the person who made the initial allegation.
- The case manager will inform the member of staff about the allegation as soon as possible after consulting the Designated Officer. Wherever possible, the case manager will provide him/her with as much information as possible at that time; however, where a strategy discussion is needed, or the police or Social Care need to be involved, this will not be possible until those agencies have been consulted, and have agreed what information can be disclosed to the accused.
- The case manager will provide the employee with a named contact who will keep the employee informed of the progress of the case and consider what other support may be available to the individual.
- If there is cause to suspect a young person/vulnerable adult is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, a strategy discussion will be convened in accordance with the statutory guidance contained within the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024' document. Where the strategy discussion or initial evaluation decides that it is clear that an investigation by the police or Social Care is unnecessary, the Designated Officer will discuss the next steps with the case manager. In those circumstances, the options open to the College will depend on the nature and circumstances of the allegation and the evidence and information available. This will range from taking no further action, dismissal after proceeding to the College's disciplinary procedure, the provision of relevant training, or, where the individual concerned is not an employee of the College, taking the decision not to use the person's services in the future.
- If further enquiries are needed to enable a decision to be made about how to proceed, the Designated Officer will discuss with the case manager, how and by whom, any investigation will be undertaken. It is likely that in straightforward cases, any investigation would normally be undertaken in line with the College's Disciplinary Policy.

Suspension

- The case manager must give careful consideration to whether the circumstances of the case warrant the member of staff being suspended from contact with young people/vulnerable adults, or whether alternative arrangements can be put in place until the allegation or concern is resolved. Suspension will not be an automatic response when an allegation is reported; all options to avoid suspension will be considered prior to taking that step. Suspension should be considered only in cases where there is cause to

suspect a young person/vulnerable adult, or other young people/vulnerable adults at College, is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal.

- If immediate suspension is considered necessary, the rationale and justification for such a course of action will be agreed upon and recorded by the case manager. This will also include what alternatives to suspension were considered, and why they were rejected.
- Where it has been deemed appropriate to suspend the individual, written confirmation of this decision will be issued within one working day and will give as much detail as appropriate for the reasons for the suspension. The individual will also be informed who their named contact is within the organisation and be provided with their contact details.

Confidentiality

- It is extremely important that when an allegation is made, every effort is made to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. The case manager will take advice from the Designated Officer, police and Social Care services (if applicable), to agree on the most appropriate way in which to manage the situation.
- Parents/carers of the young person/vulnerable adult (without mental capacity) involved in the safeguarding issue, will be told about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know of it. However, where a strategy discussion is required, or police or Social Care services need to be involved, the case manager should not do so until those agencies have been consulted and have agreed on what information can be disclosed to the parents/carers.
- Parents/carers will also be kept informed about the progress of the case and told the outcome where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process. Although the deliberations of a disciplinary hearing, and the information taken into account in reaching a decision, cannot normally be disclosed, the parents/carers will be told the outcome in confidence.
- Parents/carers should also be made aware of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against individuals while investigations are ongoing.

Disciplinary Action

- The College shall hold in abeyance its own internal enquiries while any formal police or Social Care investigations proceed; if it may prejudice the investigation.
- At the point at which criminal/Social Care proceedings have been completed, or where, after consideration of the allegation such proceedings are not deemed necessary, the College will instigate disciplinary proceedings where appropriate. If there are ongoing safeguarding concerns whilst managing the allegation through the College's internal processes, the case manager will discuss these with the Designated Officer.
- Where the College does proceed to disciplinary action as a result of a safeguarding concern, the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018' and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024' will be followed in respect of timescales and inter-agency sharing of information where appropriate and will take precedence over the College's internal disciplinary processes.
- Where the police have been involved, wherever possible the case manager will ask the police to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements or and evidence for use in the College's disciplinary process. This will be done as the police

investigation proceeds and will enable the police to share relevant information without delay at the conclusion of their investigation or any court case.

- If the accused member of staff resigns or ceases to provide their services, this will not prevent an allegation from being followed up in accordance with the statutory guidance. The College will make every effort to reach a conclusion in all cases of allegations relating to the safety or welfare of young people or vulnerable adults, including any in which the person concerned refuses to co-operate with the process. Wherever possible the accused will be given a full opportunity to answer the allegation and make representations about it.
- However, the process of recording the allegation and any supporting evidence and reaching a judgement about whether it can be substantiated on the basis of all the information available, will continue even if that cannot be done, or the accused does not co-operate. Whilst it may be difficult to reach a conclusion in those circumstances, and it may not be possible to apply any disciplinary sanctions if a person's period of notice expires before the process is complete, it is nevertheless important to reach and record a conclusion.

Timescales

- It is in everyone's interest to resolve cases as quickly as possible, consistent with a fair and thorough investigation. The statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 outlines clear expectations in relation to timescales for the resolution of cases of allegations against staff, which will take precedence over any timescales outlined in the College's internal disciplinary procedure.

Specific Actions

- Following a criminal investigation or a prosecution, the police will inform the case manager and Designated Officer immediately when a criminal investigation and any subsequent trial is complete, or if it is decided to close an investigation without charge, or not to continue to prosecute the case after the person has been charged.
- In those circumstances, the Designated Officer will discuss with the case manager whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed. The information provided by the police and/or Social Care services should inform that decision. The options will depend on the circumstances of the case and consideration will need to take into account the result of the police investigation or the trial, as well as the different standard of proof required in disciplinary and criminal proceedings.

On conclusion of a case

- If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed following a disciplinary hearing, or the College ceases to use the individual's services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide his/her services, the College will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.
- If an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the case manager should consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual who

made it, or whether the police should be asked to consider if action might be appropriate against the person responsible.

Effectiveness and Monitoring

- At the conclusion of a case in which an allegation is substantiated, the Designated Officer will review the circumstances of the case with the case manager and other colleagues as appropriate to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the College's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future, including staff training. This should include issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff if applicable, the duration of the suspension and whether or not suspension was justified.
- The Designated Officer and case manager should also consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual.

Record Keeping

- Details of allegations that are found to have been malicious will not be kept on an individual's personnel file. However, for all other allegations, a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, and a note of any action taken and decisions reached, will be kept on the personnel file of the staff member concerned, and a copy provided to the person concerned.
- The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference, where appropriate. It will also provide clarification in cases where future DBS checks reveal information from the police about an allegation that did not result in a criminal conviction and will help to prevent unnecessary re-investigation if an allegation re-surfaces after a period of time.
- The record should be retained at least until the member of staff concerned has reached normal pension age or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

Appendix 7: Missing From Education Protocols

All learners, regardless of their age, ability, aptitude and any special education needs they may have, are entitled to a full-time education. Our college recognises that a child missing education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and will follow the college procedures for unauthorised absence and for children missing education. It is also recognised that, when not in college, young people may be vulnerable to or exposed to other risks, so we will work proactively with parents and other partners to keep our learners in college whenever possible.

All staff must maintain:

- High expectations for every learners' attendance at college.
- Communicate these expectations clearly, strongly, and consistently.
- Ensure that attendance is always recorded accurately and timely.

Waltham Forest College staff are aware of the signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation so we are able to identify learners who may be in need of help or protection. All staff are aware of environmental factors which may impact on a young person's welfare and safety and understand safeguarding in the wider context (contextual safeguarding). Staff are aware of safeguarding issues that can put learners at risk of harm and understand that behaviours linked to issues such as substance misuse, unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education, e-safety, sexting can put a learner in danger.

Parents and carers should always inform us of the reason for any absence. Where contact is not made, a referral may be made to another appropriate agencies to complete a welfare check (Social Care or Police). Learners are required to provide two emergency contact numbers at the time of enrolment, to enable the college to communicate with someone if the need arises.

MISSING EDUCATION – SHORT MISSING SPELLS

This protocol is in place to help safeguard the learners of Waltham Forest College and help identify any issues that may be affecting learner's attendance. The process is as follows:

<p>Consecutive absence less than 2 weeks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal tutors will engage contact with the learner and emergency contacts. • All forms of contact made must be recorded onto ProMonitor. • If curriculum staff are unable to make contact and reach a trigger for concern then they should inform their Head of Department, who will decide on appropriate course of action, either disciplinary or BeSafe intervention.
<p>Consecutive absence more than 2 weeks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The BeSafe will lead on the operational actions and work with the Curriculum teams to carry out welfare checks on the students, based on previous follow-up. • If contact cannot be made with a learner, the BeSafe team will then inform the local authority via MASH or contact the Police to facilitate a home welfare visit.
<p>Learners classed as Vulnerable</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initially, Tutors hold lead responsibility to follow up non-attendance. • The BeSafe/ALS team will monitor consecutive absence for more than 1 week for vulnerable learners.

If the staff member suspects that the child is in immediate danger, they must contact the Police straight away by dialling 999. All incident and actions taken need to be reported back to the BeSafe Team in a timely manner.

Appendix 8: Home Visit Protocol

Waltham Forest College recognises that a child missing education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation. The home visit protocols has been developed to protect and assist Waltham Forest College staff to undertake home visits to maximise safeguarding good practice for practitioners intending to visit learners' homes as and when required.

The aims of the home visit would be:

- To provide clear accurate information about the college services and expectations around attendance and engagement
- To gather information about the learner/family and routines which may assist the implementation of a support plan to drive attendance and engagement

There are two main reasons why staff may undertake a home visit:

- There is a safeguarding concern where the communication between learner and their family has lapsed, and every other engagement attempt has been explored
- There is a concern around the learner's attendance and a pattern of consistent absence. The learner may fall into a vulnerable category or trigger of concern may be reached due to consistent absence, and every other engagement attempt has been explored

The Home Visit Protocols sits under the Safeguarding Policy and should be read alongside Missing From Education Protocols.

Who will conduct the Home Visit

The home visits will be conducted by the BeSafe team who are trained safeguarding practitioners and supported by the Senior Leadership Team.

Home visit planning and preparation

Staff must consider initially is it appropriate for someone from the College to visit this family at their home address. Before staff consider a home visit you need to think about:

- What is the purpose of the visit? Can you liaise with other agencies?
- Have you read and understood the risk assessment for home visits
- Have you got as much information as possible about the child, family and location to be visited?
- What contact has already been made with the family e.g. a phone call or written appointment to let the family know that you will be visiting and what your role is?
- How much time will you need to make the journey and the visit without rushing?
- Can you communicate with the key family members? Can you foresee any language barriers?
- Are you taking appropriate information and resources?
- Is your style of clothing appropriate? Does it show respect for the family's culture and values?

Health and Safety

- Home visits must be undertaken by at least two people on the first occasion, but can then be carried out individually if the risk assessment deems it appropriate
- Inform members of all safeguarding team and ensure they have your mobile phone number.
- Members of staff should formally sign out and sign back in
- Details of the visit should be recorded on CPOMs
- Staff must carry a form of ID and show parents/carers identification and always wear their college lanyard
- Staff must demonstrate normal courtesy and always wait to be invited into the home
- If a child answers the door, staff must ask if an adult is present in the house before deciding about entering. If an adult is not present, staff must not enter the property
- If staff are concerned about the safety of a child left at home alone or for any other reason, appropriate safeguarding procedures must be followed
- If staff need to speak to a child in confidence, a member of the family or a colleague should be present or within sight during the visit. Staff must not enter any bedrooms
- Staff must adopt appropriate actions that cannot be misinterpreted
- If the parent/carer or guardian appears at all uncomfortable about the visit continuing, staff should leave, offer to continue the contact with a telephone call and offer the parent/carer or guardian their work contact details
- Staff must record all contact and actions with the learner and the parent/carer or guardian family on CPOMs

Working in partnership with parents/carers and guardians

- Be aware of parent/carer or guardians' responsibilities for the child and check parental responsibility
- Be a good listener
- Whenever possible make appointments in advance for home visits except in the case of safe and wellbeing checks
- With pre-arranged appointments ensure that parents/carers know when you will arrive, how long you will stay, what will happen, what kinds of questions you will be asking and what information you will bring
- Confirm parents/carers or guardians' actual name and title and keep on record
- Do not presume that there are two parents with the same surname as the learner or at the same address
- Make sure you consider contextual safeguarding risks and consider other attributes linked to diversity of social, cultural, racial, religious and sexual orientation

Working in Partnership with other Agencies

- Communicate with other agencies that are already involved with the learner or the family
- Clarify the role of professionals involved to avoid duplication and so that you are not working at cross-purposes with other agencies

- Evidence of good practice is where services liaise and support each other with a clear and common aim of assisting the learner and family to overcome barriers to learning

During a Home Visit

- Remember you are a guest who has been invited into the family's home. You may ask people for information but they are under no legal obligation to give it to you. They can also ask you to leave at any time.
- When you arrive, assess if it is appropriate for you to be there. For example, do you feel welcome? Do you feel unsafe? Have you turned up in the middle of a family occasion?
- Make sure you have appropriate identification and wear your college lanyard and encourage the family to check it properly, particularly if they haven't met you before.
- Before you enter the house or flat, ask the family to put any uncaged animals in a separate room.
- Maintain professional boundaries in your relationship with the family
- Consider confidentiality at all times. Do not chat about other families that the family is in contact with. Do not discuss anything in front of other family members without checking beforehand or privately that it is ok to do so.
- Consider safeguarding policies and procedures at all times. You need to be prepared to deal with the unexpected e.g.
 - Young Learners 'home alone'
 - Poor home conditions that pose an immediate risk to child's safety or wellbeing
 - You notice marks or bruises on a child that give you cause for concern
 - You are told about sexual abuse or domestic abuse
- Before you leave, check that family members are satisfied with the outcome of the visit and are clear about the next steps
- If you have child protection concerns, and providing it is safe to do so, tell the family what you are concerned about and who you will share the information with and what is likely to happen next
- If you have child protection concerns, and providing it is unsafe to do so, note the concerns and seek advice urgently, once you have left the family home.
- You may wish to discuss the situation with Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or contact 999 if there is an immediate threat and risk to abuse taking place

Remember: The focus of home visit should be the learners, is it easy to lose focus when conducting home visits and get involved in the dynamics and issues of the adults. The voice of the learner should be heard and reflected in your home visit and case recordings.

After a Home Visit

- Ensure you record all visits and outcomes on CPOMs and follow up any safeguarding or wellbeing actions
- Continue to monitor the impact of the home visit and the agreed next steps
- Reflect on your own emotional response during your safeguarding supervision session

Remember: Home visits should build meaningful relationships with the learner and the family and be open and honest with them about what you are doing and what they need to do to make progress towards positive changes and outcomes.

Appendix 9: Useful Contacts in Waltham Forest

<p>Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)</p> <p>Single point of referral for Early Help, Child Protection and Adults' Safeguarding in Waltham Forest</p>	<p>Phone: 020 8496 2310 Mon-Thurs, 9am-5.15pm and Fri, 9am-5pm Out of Hours: 020 8496 3000 Email: MASHrequests@walthamforest.gov.uk</p> <p>N.B.: If you cannot get through by phone, send an email with your contact details, and you will get a same-day phone response during normal business hours</p>
<p>LADO Team</p> <p>Allegations against staff and volunteers (ASV)</p>	<p>Phone: 020 8496 3646 Email: LADO@walthamforest.gov.uk</p> <p>N.B.: If you cannot get through by phone, send an email with your contact details, and you will get a same-day phone response during normal business hours</p>
<p>Safeguarding in Education Team</p> <p>Consultations / Training / Support (traded service)</p>	<p>Phone: 020 8496 3646 Email: safeguardingineducation@walthamforest.gov.uk</p> <p>N.B.: If you cannot get through by phone, send an email with your contact details, and you will get a phone response within 24 hours during normal business hours</p>
<p>Early Help</p>	<p>Phone: 020 8496 1517 Email: earlyhelp@walthamforest.gov.uk</p>
<p>Virtual School</p>	<p>Phone: 020 8496 1741 Email: virtual.school@walthamforest.gov.uk Head of Virtual School: fay.blyth@walthamforest.gov.uk</p>
<p>Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Service [formerly known as Disability Enablement Service (DES)]</p>	<p>Phone: 020 8496 6503 Email: senteam@walthamforest.gov.uk</p>
<p>Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)</p> <p>Local Safeguarding Partners (LSPs)</p>	<p>Email: strategicpartnerships@walthamforest.gov.uk</p>
<p>Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) notifications</p>	<p>Phone: 020 8496 3691 Email: CDOP@walthamforest.gov.uk</p>
<p>Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)</p> <p>Community Safety</p>	<p>Refer via MASH. Phone: 020 8496 3281 Email: sylvie.lovell@walthamforest.gov.uk</p>

Prevent Community Safety	Refer via MASH . Phone: 020 8496 3000 Mob: 07816150037 Email: PREVENT@walthamforest.gov.uk
Gangs Community Safety	Refer via MASH . Email: communitysafety@walthamforest.gov.uk
Adolescent Safeguarding Lead Children's Social Care	Refer via MASH . Email: reanne.turner@walthamforest.gov.uk
Harmful Sexual Behaviour Lead Children's Social Care	Refer via MASH . Email: tracey.goddard@walthamforest.gov.uk Tel: 020 8496 5027 Mob: 0797 476 8433
MARAC / DRM queries	Refer via MASH . MASHrequests@walthamforest.gov.uk
Mental Health First Aid / Public Health	catherine.hutchinson@walthamforest.gov.uk
Private Fostering	Refer via MASH . Email: charlotte.andrews@walthamforest.gov.uk Phone: 020 8496 1235 Mob: 07730 766 429
Violence against women and girls (VAWG) & Domestic Abuse one-stop-shop	Refer via MASH . Email: vawg@walthamforest.gov.uk ; domesticabuseadvice@walthamforest.gov.uk