Safeguarding Policy 2023/24

1. Background

In September 2023 the Department for Education and Skills statutory guidance document "Keeping Children Safe in Education" will come into effect replacing the previous year's version. This document focuses on the safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children under the provisions of the Children Act 1989 and 2004, and following publication of Section 175 of The Education Act 2002 and 2011.

Section 175 places a duty of care on Local Education Authorities, and on governing bodies of schools and further education institutions to make arrangements for carrying out their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

In accordance with the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, there is a statutory duty on colleges to "have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This is known as the Prevent duty. To fulfil this duty the college liaises closely with the local area prevent lead to receive updates regarding local concerns and to refer students of concern to the Channel process. To further safeguard our students in regard to the threats of terrorism the college has also implemented a procedure in the case of critical incidents based on the Run Hide Tell guidance 2015.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children covers more than child protection. The requirements for the College are for policies and procedures that cover arrangements not just for meeting the welfare and safeguarding needs of children, but also the needs of vulnerable adults and young people as well as ensuring appropriate practices for staff recruitment and selection and providing a safe and secure environment in which to study. Schools and colleges and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is described in statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

2. Definitions

- Children and young people - those aged under 18 years
- Adults at Risk – anyone aged 18 years of above who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of disability, age or illness; and is or may be unable to take care of unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation
- Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership – local area safeguarding board which has replaced separate local boards for young people and adults.
- LADO – Local Authority Designated Officer
- Work experience – short and clearly defined as work experience with the aim of improving employability skills as well as curriculum focus if appropriate.
- Work placement – students undertaking work placement over a long period of time (one or two days per week over a period of two months or more)

3. Scope

3.1. The Safeguarding Policy applies to all College staff, students and contracted staff, whether they work or study in the main College campuses, outreach centres, remotely (e.g. home working) or other designated areas, volunteers and governors.

3.2. The policy applies to students on work experience and placement programmes and those engaged on any College organised off site activity.

3.3. The policy applies to working arrangements with other agencies to support the College's Safeguarding Policy, including local education authorities, Learning Partnership West, schools, support agencies and employers.

4. Intent

The intent of the Safeguarding Policy is to ensure that:

4.1. A safe environment is provided for students at all times.

4.2. Students who are at risk of and/or likely to suffer significant harm are identified, and appropriate action is taken. This includes the risk of radicalisation as noted in the Prevent duty.

4.3. There exist safe recruitment practices in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with or in proximity to children and students. The College's Recruitment and Selection Policy cover these in more detail.

4.4. Staff are made aware of issues relating to the welfare of students (more detail of specific safeguarding issues is included in the College Safeguarding Procedures).

5. Confidentiality and sharing information

5.1. Once a disclosure and referral have been made, the incident should be considered confidential – unless the information indicates that the person is at risk of harm from others or to themselves. Then the information will be shared with the DSL (or Safeguarding Team) and/or other agencies/professionals who are able to take protective action.

5.2. All information regarding child protection issues will be kept, under lock and key, or secure electronic file.

5.3. The College is obliged to work and share information with external agencies charged with the protection of children and young people. This includes Social Services, the police, local schools, Keeping Bristol Safe etc., based on the 'need to know' principle.

5.4. The College has representation on a range of working groups relevant to safeguarding including Building the Bridge (Prevent) , Serious Youth Violence Crime group, The cities substance misuse working group, the Thrive Mental Health Partnership and has the college DSL has also taken part in other project focused groups such as the group set up by Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership to investigate sharing of safeguarding information at the point of transition to FE.

5.5. The College commits to share information with Social Services and other official support organisations to allow access to students on-site if required and appropriate.

5.6. The College works closely with the area Prevent team and through them refers to the Channel process when necessary.

5.7. The College has developed systems to ensure effective communication between local agencies.

5.8. Note: 'confidentiality' is often misunderstood. An over emphasis on confidentiality can leave young people or vulnerable adults in danger of harm. If something is confidential, this does not mean that it cannot be shared. GDPR should be no barrier to information sharing about a person in need, as long as appropriate protocol is followed. However, it is important to:

- Share only what it is necessary to share to protect a young person or an adult at risk
- Record what you shared, and with whom
- Record your reasons for sharing for further information refer to; Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners

providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers.

- Inform the individual making the disclosure that information they provide will be shared, why and with whom.
- Share information in accordance with the college's police communication procedure regarding students (referenced in safeguarding procedures)

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1. Designated Senior Staff Member for Child Protection

6.1.1. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) with lead responsibility for child protection and safeguarding issues is **Chantelle Thompson – Head of Safeguarding.**

6.1.2. The DSL has a key duty to take lead responsibility for raising awareness amongst staff of issues relating to the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults, and the promotion of a safe environment for the students learning within the College.

6.1.3. The Assistant Safeguarding and Prevent Lead Annette Easy will support however responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, as set out above, remains with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. This responsibility cannot be delegated.

6.1.4. The DSL will oversee the referral of alleged harm or abuse to the relevant investigating agencies in line with "Keeping Bristol Safe" procedures.

6.1.5. The DSL is also responsible for ensuring that:

- Advice and support to staff on issues relating to safeguarding and child protection, including e-safety, is provided.
- The DSL takes lead responsibility for understanding the filtering and monitoring systems in place at the college.
- A proper record of any child protection referral, complaint or concern is maintained (even where that concern does not lead to a referral).
- Ensuring that parents of young people and vulnerable adults within the College are aware of the College's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.
- The College liaises with local authorities and Keeping Bristol Safe and other appropriate agencies. The College liaises with secondary schools which send pupils to the College to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for their pupils.
- The College liaises with Youth Offending Teams to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made.
- Staff receive initial safeguarding training and are aware of the College safeguarding and child protection procedures.
- The College's Safeguarding Committee meets as a minimum once per term.
- A Safeguarding Operational Plan is prepared and reviewed annually and forms part of the College's annual Operational Plan, and is therefore subject to Senior Management team scrutiny.

6.1.6. The DSL will provide an annual report to the Governing Body of the College setting out how the College has discharged its duties.

6.1.7. The college will have a designated governor for safeguarding who will link at least termly with the college DSL and will also be provided with fortnightly executive summaries including referral data, changes to the safeguarding team and high-profile safeguarding concerns. The designated governor will also be involved in any strategic changes to service.

6.2. Designated Staff Members for Safeguarding (Safeguarding Officers)

The College will appoint an appropriate number of designated Safeguarding Advisors. These will be based across all sites. In addition to this team, key safeguarding staff also includes Head of ICT Network and Engineering Services and Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development. Appropriate training and support will be provided to enable the designated staff to fulfil their role.

6.2.1. The Safeguarding Advisors:

- Report to the Head of Safeguarding via the Assistant Prevent and Safeguarding Lead.
- Will know how to make an appropriate referral
- Will be available to provide advice and support to other staff on issues relating to Safeguarding
- Have particular responsibility to be available to listen to children and young people studying at the College
- Will deal with individual cases, including attending case conferences and review meetings as appropriate
- Have received training in safeguarding issues and inter-agency working, as required by the "Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership" and will receive refresher training at least every 2 years

In addition to working with the safeguarding team all staff members should be aware that they may be asked to support social workers to take decisions about individual cases.

7. Procedures

To underpin this policy, the College has a number of related procedures and processes. These include:

- Safeguarding Procedures, including referrals to Channel for Prevent issues
- Human Resource procedures including grievance and discipline
- Student Discipline and Behaviour Procedure
- Data Protection procedures
- Single Equality Scheme
- Visiting Speakers, Organisations and Events Protocol
- Weapons and firearms threat-critical incident response procedure.

8. Monitoring and Review

8.1. This policy will be reviewed annually and will be referred to in the College's Corporate Services.

8.2. The DSL/Head of Safeguarding will monitor and review this policy annually.

8.3. The DSL/Head of Safeguarding will prepare an annual report for the Governing Body, which reviews how the duties have been discharged.

8.4. Any significant deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to safeguarding and child protection arrangements will be remedied without delay and will be brought to the attention of the College's Strategic Leadership Team and the Governing Body.

8.5. This policy should not be read in isolation and should be cross-referenced with all relevant College employment and student policies and procedures.

9. Linked policies

- Admissions Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Student disciplinary policy
- Student DBS procedures
- Physical Contact, Restraint and Search Policy
- Anti Harassment and Sexual Misconduct policy.
- IT Policy & Procedure
- Safer Recruitment & Selection Policy

Review frequency: Annually

Lead Officer: DSL/Head of Safeguarding

Executive Lead: Director of Curriculum and Quality

Last reviewed: July 2023

Date for next review: September 2023

APPROVED: Corporation Board: July 2023