WEST THAMES COLLEGE

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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1. Statement

West Thames College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people, and adults deemed vulnerable. Our approach aligns with statutory guidance issued by the UK Department for Education, including the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004. Specifically, we adhere to the principles outlined in "Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023," which sets the framework for inter-agency working to ensure the safety and welfare of children.

Our safeguarding practices also comply with the requirements of:

- The Education Act 2002, Section 175.
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.
- The Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015.

These regulations require schools and colleges in England to uphold safeguarding protocols to protect students effectively.

In accordance with the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, West Thames College is obligated under the Prevent duty to “have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.” We work closely with the local Prevent lead to stay informed about local concerns and to refer students of concern to the Channel process. Our efforts aim to safeguard students from radicalisation and violent extremism through our tutorial programme, curriculum, and enrichment activities.

West Thames College is dedicated to the safety and wellbeing of all students, staff, and individuals associated with the College, including offsite students, apprentices, and subcontracted providers. We actively promote the welfare of all students, including those with additional needs, and mental and physical health concerns. All teaching and support staff, volunteers, and partner agencies are expected to adhere to these safeguarding practices at all times.

Staff are required to read this guidance alongside Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 (KCSiE), specifically part one. The College works with the local Safeguarding Partnership and Prevent multi-agency groups to ensure effective arrangements are in place for identifying, assessing, and supporting individuals who may be at risk of harm. Further details are provided in Appendix 3.

Our safeguarding approach is guided by the following principles:

- Every student, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation, or identity, is entitled to equal protection from harm or abuse.
- Safeguarding is a collective responsibility.
- Early intervention is preferable to prevent issues from escalating.
- Effective safeguarding involves collaboration with students, their families, and relevant agencies.

2. Human Rights Act 1998

The Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA) enshrines fundamental rights and freedoms derived from the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). It mandates that public organisations, including the College, respect and protect individual rights in decision-making processes.

Under the HRA, it is unlawful for the College to act in a manner that contravenes the Convention. The relevant Convention rights applicable to the College 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, which includes a duty to protect individuals' physical and psychological integrity (a qualified right).
- **Article 14:** The right to non-discrimination in the enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set out in the Act.
- **Protocol 1, Article 2:** The right to education.

Reports of harassment, violence, or abuse, including sexual misconduct, may involve breaches of these rights and will be addressed in accordance with the College's Safeguarding and Academic Misconduct Disciplinary policies and procedures.

3. The Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the protection of children and vulnerable adults participating in education and training at West Thames College. It aims to foster a comprehensive awareness among staff regarding safeguarding issues that may put children and vulnerable adults at risk. This includes recognising the indicators and signs of potential harm, and knowing how to identify and report such concerns effectively.

This policy applies to all individuals involved with West Thames College, including:

- Students
- College staff
- Governors
- Volunteers
- Visitors
- Contracted services such as agency staff, employers offering work placements, transportation companies, and contractors who have direct access to children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

4. Legal framework

This policy supports West Thames College in aligning its policies and procedures with the following legal and statutory requirements:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (including the Prevent Duty)
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Education Act 2002 and 2011
- Care Act 2014
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Data Protection Act 2018 (including GDPR)
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation – Procedural Information 2020
- Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Position of Trust)
- Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2018

For the purposes of safeguarding defined by KCSIE 2024:

- A child is anyone under the age of 18.
- Vulnerable adults are defined as individuals who meet the criteria outlined in the Care Act 2014. This includes adults who:
    - Need care and support due to mental or physical disability, age, or illness, and who are unable to care for themselves or protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation.
    - Are experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect and, as a result of their care and support needs, are unable to protect themselves from the risk of or experience of abuse or neglect.
    - May also include adults who are vulnerable due to factors such as caring responsibilities, special educational needs, addiction, or previous abuse or trauma.
    - Any individual up to the age of 24 with a current Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is considered a child for the purposes of safeguarding and child protection legislation.

5. Review Timing

The **Safeguarding for Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy** will be reviewed annually by the Operational Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Director of Student Experience to ensure its relevance and compliance with the latest local and national safeguarding guidance. This review process will be led by the Director of Student Experience, with support from the Vice Principal of Curriculum & Student Experience, and will be presented to the Governing Body for approval.

The policy will be updated as annually and published on the West Thames College website. It will also be accessible to all staff through Connect.

An annual report will be prepared by the Director of Student Experience, supported by the Vice Principal of Curriculum & Student Experience, to review how safeguarding duties have been carried out. This report will be submitted to the Governing Body for review.

The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the following groups and key staff:

- **Corporation:** Via the Annual Report
- **College Executive Team**
- **Vice Principal of Curriculum & Student Experience:** Via operational meetings
- **College Management Team:** Via reports to CMT meetings
- **Designated Safeguarding Team:** Via operational meetings and the Safeguarding Committee Group

To effectively safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults, we will:

- **Value, Listen to, and Respect:** Prioritise the well-being of children and vulnerable adults.
- **Adopt Safeguarding Practices:** Implement safeguarding procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- **Prevent Impairment:** Ensure safeguarding practices prevent harm to children's mental and physical health or development.
- **Implement E-Safety Strategies:** Develop and enforce robust e-safety procedures.
- **Develop Prevent Strategies:** Establish and maintain effective Prevent strategies.
- **Recruit Safely:** Ensure thorough checks are conducted during recruitment of staff and volunteers.
- **Share Information and Best Practices:** Communicate child protection information with students, parents, staff, and volunteers.
- **Collaborate with Agencies:** Share concerns with relevant agencies and involve students and parents appropriately.
- **Provide Effective Management:** Offer supervision, support, and training for staff and volunteers.
- **Promote a Safe Environment:** Ensure that our policies and values reflect a welcoming and tolerant community.
- **Support Student Success:** Educate and support students to help them achieve their full potential and succeed in their future endeavours.
- **Foster Community Relationships:** Build positive relationships with police and community partners to support student engagement and counteract extreme political views.
- **Develop Resilience and Critical Thinking:** Encourage resilience and critical thinking skills in learners through teaching, learning, and assessment strategies.
- **Equip Staff with Knowledge:** Provide staff with training to identify and address signs of extremist opinions, grooming, and abuse, and to refer concerns through

appropriate channels.

- **Share Best Teaching Practices:** Facilitate the development and sharing of effective teaching strategies related to resilience, e-safety, and critical thinking.
- **Recognise Abuse:** Train staff to identify signs and indicators of physical, emotional, sexual abuse, and neglect.

This approach ensures that our safeguarding measures remain robust and responsive to emerging needs and challenges.

6. Safeguarding Procedures Responsibilities

All members of the College community, including staff, governors, students, and contracted staff share the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. Each individual must always act in the best interests of those they support.

Responsibilities of All Staff
Every staff member who interacts with children and vulnerable adults in their day-to-day roles has a duty to safeguard and promote their welfare. Staff will receive training to understand their safeguarding responsibilities, and non-compliance with these duties will be treated seriously and may lead to disciplinary action. New employees will undergo initial safeguarding training as part of their induction process.

Responsibilities and Awareness

- **Recognising Vulnerability:** Staff should be aware that children might not always be ready or able to disclose abuse, exploitation, or neglect. They may not recognise their experiences as harmful due to feelings of embarrassment, humiliation, or threats, which could be related to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation, or language barriers. Staff should maintain professional curiosity and consult with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) if they have concerns about a child.
- **Building Trust:** It is crucial for staff to establish trusted relationships with children and young people to facilitate open communication.

Mandatory Staff Responsibilities

All staff must:

- **Complete Annual Safeguarding Training:** Engage in mandatory safeguarding training each year.
- **Read Key Documents:** Review "Keeping Children Safe in Education, Part One" and the College's Safeguarding for Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy, along with associated procedures.
- **Promote Welfare:** Actively safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.
- **Report Concerns:** Notify the DSL or Safeguarding Officer if they have any concerns about a child or vulnerable adult.
- **Follow Code of Conduct:** Adhere to the Staff Code of Conduct as detailed in the Staff Quick Guide.

Procedures for Reporting Concerns

As part of the mandatory online training, all staff must read and understand Part 1 of "Keeping Children Safe in Education." If the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is unavailable, please contact a member of the Safeguarding Team. Any staff member with concerns about a child's welfare should adhere to the referral processes outlined in KCSIE, coordinate with their manager, and report and document all communications using MyConcern. Additionally, staff should be ready to support social workers and other agencies following any referral.

This framework ensures that all staff are equipped to handle safeguarding issues effectively and consistently.

7. Designated Safeguarding Leads and Officers

The College's safeguarding arrangements are overseen by the Vice Principal of Curriculum & Student Experience, with operational support from the Director of Student Experience & Safeguarding (DSL). The DSL is responsible for managing the day-to-day delivery of safeguarding procedures.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has an overarching view of all safeguarding concerns reported. Along with the Safeguarding Officers, the DSL serves as the College's primary source of support, advice, and expertise on safeguarding matters and is tasked with handling allegations or suspicions of abuse. Key responsibilities of the DSL and the Safeguarding Team include:

- **Information Gathering:** Collecting information from staff, volunteers, students, parents, or carers regarding concerns related to the protection of children or vulnerable adults, and documenting this information.
- **Information Assessment:** Reviewing information promptly and thoroughly, and requesting additional details when necessary.
- **Consultation:** Engaging with relevant local safeguarding children partnerships and adult safeguarding teams to address doubts or concerns, ensuring consistency and integrity in local processes.
- **Referrals:** Making timely referrals to statutory child protection agencies, such as the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) or the Police, and cooperating fully with external agencies as needed.
- **Record Keeping:** Maintaining accurate records of all safeguarding referrals, complaints, or concerns, even if they do not result in a formal referral.
- **Policy Awareness:** Ensuring that parents are informed about the College's Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult policy.
- **External Collaboration:** Working with external agencies and organisations, including Prevent Leads, to ensure student safety.
- **Staff Training:** Collaborating with Human Resources to provide staff with fundamental training on child protection issues and ensure familiarity with the College's safeguarding procedures.

Additionally, the Designated Safeguarding Leads will:

In alignment with the requirements outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) will undertake the following responsibilities:

- **Regular Meetings:** Convene frequent operational and strategic meetings to ensure the coherence, integrity, and effective monitoring of safeguarding processes for children and vulnerable adults. This will involve reviewing current practices, discussing emerging issues, and ensuring that all safeguarding measures are aligned with the latest guidance and legislation.

- **Policy and Procedure Compliance:** Collaborate closely with the Vice Principal of Curriculum & Student Experience and the Director of Student Experience to ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures are fully compliant with current legislation and statutory guidance.

- **Risk Assessment for Offender Learners:** Coordinate with local Youth Offending Services and Probation Services to assess the risks associated with applications from learners who are offenders. This ensures that appropriate safeguards are in place.

- **Annual Policy Review:** Ensure that the Safeguarding for Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy is reviewed and presented to the Corporation for approval on an annual basis,

ensuring that it remains up-to-date and effective.

- **Annual Reporting:** Prepare and present an annual report to the Corporation detailing how the College has fulfilled its safeguarding responsibilities. This report will outline actions taken, effectiveness of safeguarding measures, and any areas for improvement.

- **Identifying and Reporting Deficiencies:** Notify the Principal and the Corporation of any identified deficiencies in safeguarding procedures or policies at the earliest opportunity to facilitate prompt resolution and improvements.

- **Ultimate Responsibility:** The Vice Principal of Curriculum & Student Experience will retain overall responsibility for the College's safeguarding arrangements and procedures, ensuring that all aspects of safeguarding are effectively managed and upheld.

8. The Principal

The Principal is accountable for ensuring that:

- **Implementation of Safeguarding Policies:** The College's Safeguarding Policy and associated procedures are effectively implemented and adhered to by all staff.
- **Support for DSLs:** Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) are provided with adequate time and resources to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.
- **Staff Empowerment:** All staff members feel empowered to raise concerns about the safety and welfare of children and vulnerable adults without fear of reprisal.
- **Effective Handling of Concerns:** Concerns raised are addressed sensitively, effectively, and promptly.
- **Ongoing Training:** Governors and staff receive regular safeguarding training and updates to ensure ongoing awareness and compliance.

9. The Governing Body

In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024, the College Governing Body must ensure:

- **Compliance with Legislation:** The College meets its statutory obligations under safeguarding legislation.
- **Appointment and Training:** An appropriately trained Governor Safeguarding Lead is appointed.
- **Policy Oversight:** Safeguarding policies and procedures are in place, reviewed annually, and accessible to the public.
- **Unexplained and or persistent absences in education:** There are clear arrangements to address situations where children are absent from education.
- **Inter-Agency Collaboration:** The College engages in effective inter-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.
- **Local Procedures:** Safeguarding practices align with those of local authorities and Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships.
- **Information Sharing:** Information sharing between agencies is facilitated appropriately, ensuring that it supports the welfare of children and does not act as a barrier.
- **Training:** All staff receive safeguarding training during induction and at regular intervals thereafter.
- **Staff Expertise:** Opportunities are provided for staff expertise to contribute to and shape safeguarding policies and arrangements.
- **Online Safety:** Effective filters and monitoring systems are in place for online safety, including for issues such as sexting.
- **Curriculum Integration:** Safeguarding, including online safety, is integrated into the curriculum through teaching and learning opportunities.
- **Safe Recruitment:** The College has robust processes for safe recruitment and managing allegations of abuse against staff.
- **Student Involvement:** Students' wishes and feelings are considered in decisions affecting

their support and action.

- **Looked After Children:** Staff are equipped with the skills, knowledge, and understanding necessary to safeguard "Looked After Children," and a DSL is designated for this role.
- **External Speakers Policy:** There is a policy in place for managing external speakers and visitors to the College.

10. College Management Team

All College managers must ensure that:

- **Policy Awareness:** Staff in their areas are informed about and adhere to the College's safeguarding policies and procedures.
- **Curriculum and Tutorial Contribution:** Curriculum Managers (CQTMs) are responsible for delivering a curriculum that supports safeguarding and contributing to tutorial arrangements.

11. Contractors

Contractors working on College sites are required to:

- **Health and Safety Compliance:** Adhere to the College's Health and Safety and Safeguarding requirements.
- **Staff Briefing:** Agree to the College's requirements for briefing their staff, which will vary based on the nature, location, and duration of their work.
- **Identification:** Wear a pink lanyard to clearly identify themselves as contractors on College premises.

Ensuring that all aspects of safeguarding are comprehensively managed and that every individual and group involved with the College understands their roles and responsibilities.

12. Safer Recruitment and Training

West Thames College is dedicated to implementing comprehensive safer recruitment practices to ensure that all individuals working within the College, who are perceived by students as safe and trustworthy adults, are thoroughly vetted. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, and agency personnel. Our approach aligns with the statutory guidance provided in **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 (KCSIE 2024)** and **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.**

Safer Recruitment Practices

To ensure a safe and secure environment for our students, our safer recruitment processes include:

- **Rigorous Applicant Scrutiny:** All applications are carefully examined, including verification of identity, academic and vocational qualifications, and obtaining professional references.
- **Comprehensive Employment History Checks:** Detailed checks of previous employment history are conducted to identify any concerns or gaps that may indicate issues related to safeguarding.
- **Health and Fitness Assessments:** Candidates' health and physical capacity are evaluated to ensure they are fit to perform their roles effectively.
- **Thorough Interview Processes:** Comprehensive interviews are conducted to assess the suitability of candidates for the role, with a focus on safeguarding competencies.
- **Enhanced DBS Checks:** All candidates undergo an Enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check in accordance with statutory requirements to ensure they are safe to work with children and young people.

In compliance with statutory regulations, West Thames College maintains a **Single Central Record (SCR),** which includes details of all staff, volunteers, and agency personnel involved in providing education to children. The SCR also tracks compliance with mandatory safeguarding and Prevent training, which is updated annually to ensure all staff are knowledgeable about the latest safeguarding practices.

Maintaining a Safe and Professional Working Environment

To maintain a safe and professional working environment, all staff members are required to:

- **Uphold Professional Conduct:** Staff must adhere to high standards of behaviour, avoiding any actions that could be seen as inappropriate or questionable. It is essential to work transparently and, where possible, in pairs or groups in situations that could be open to scrutiny.
- **Seek Advice and Report Concerns:** Staff should consult with college management if they encounter any incidents that may raise concerns. All incidents must be reported in accordance with the College's safeguarding procedures to ensure timely and appropriate action.

Adherence to Professional Standards

- **Commitment to Equality and Compliance:** All staff are expected to adhere to professional standards regardless of gender, sexuality, or disability. Any breaches of the law or professional guidelines may result in disciplinary or criminal action.
- **Reporting Concerns About Conduct:** If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's conduct, they should report these concerns to an appropriate manager or the Head of HR & Professional Development. Concerns involving the Principal should be directed to the Chair of Governors, and concerns about the Chair of Governors should be reported to the Principal and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Whistleblowing and Safeguarding Concerns

West Thames College encourages all staff and volunteers to report any concerns about poor or unsafe practices or potential failures in safeguarding procedures. These concerns will be taken seriously by the Executive Team and addressed promptly.

- **Whistleblowing Procedures:** Details of whistleblowing procedures are available in the staff handbook. Staff are urged to use these procedures to report concerns to the Executive Leadership Team.
- **External Reporting Options:** If staff feel unable to raise issues within the College or believe their concerns are not being addressed, they can contact the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line at 0800 028 0285 (Monday to Friday, 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM) or email help@nspcc.org.uk. Written concerns can be sent to: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), Weston House, 42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH.

By adhering to these practices and guidelines, West Thames College ensures a safe and supportive environment where students and staff can thrive, free from harm and misconduct.

Staff development and training

In alignment with the Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 (KCSIE 2024) and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, West Thames College is committed to providing comprehensive safeguarding training for all staff and individuals who have direct contact with learners. This training is essential to maintaining a safe, supportive, and vigilant environment for our students.

Initial and Ongoing Safeguarding Training

Initial Training:

- **New Starters:** All new staff members, including agency staff and consultants, are required to complete mandatory initial training on Safeguarding, Prevent, and the College's specific safeguarding procedures. This training includes a thorough review of the latest version of "Part One: Safeguarding Information for all Staff" from KCSIE 2024. Additionally, new starters must complete training on Equality and Diversity, Health & Safety Induction, and Fire Safety as part of their induction process. This training must be completed within the probationary period, and for agency staff and consultants, within four weeks of starting their role.
- **Acknowledgement of Understanding:** New starters will be provided with the Staff Quick Guide, which outlines the relevant College policies and procedures. They will be required to acknowledge in writing that they have read and understood these policies and procedures to ensure clarity and compliance.

Ongoing Training:

- **Annual Refresher Training:** All staff members are required to participate in annual refresher training, which includes reviewing the most recent version of "Part One: Safeguarding Information for all Staff" from KCSIE 2024. This training will be integrated into Continuing Professional Development (CPD) days to reinforce and update their understanding of safeguarding responsibilities and procedures.
- **Regular Updates:** In addition to formal training, staff will receive regular updates through emails, meetings, or bulletins to ensure their safeguarding knowledge and awareness remain current and effective. These updates will provide information on any changes to policies, emerging risks, and best practices in safeguarding.

By ensuring all staff receive both initial and ongoing safeguarding training, West Thames College reinforces its commitment to creating a safe, supportive, and proactive environment where the welfare of students is a top priority. This approach ensures that all staff are equipped to recognize, respond to, and manage any safeguarding concerns appropriately and effectively.

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)

- **Specialised Training:** All Designated Safeguarding Leads will undergo specific training on inter-agency working and must complete refresher training at least every two years to keep their knowledge and skills up to date.
- **Lead Governor Training:** The Lead Governor will also participate in inter-agency training to ensure effective oversight and governance of safeguarding practices.

13. Prevent

West Thames College is committed to fostering an inclusive environment that upholds our Shared Values of **Integrity, Excellence, Equality, and Respect**. As part of this commitment, and in line with statutory requirements set by the government, the college plays a critical role in countering the risk of individuals being drawn into terrorism, whether violent or non-violent extremism.

Prevent Strategy Objectives
The Prevent Duty 2023 outlines three key strategic objectives that guide our approach:

- **Respond:** Address the ideological challenge of terrorism and confront the promotion of extremist views.
- **Prevent:** Support individuals who may be vulnerable to radicalisation by offering appropriate advice and intervention.
- **Work with Sectors and Institutions:** Collaborate with various sectors to identify and mitigate the risks of radicalisation.

Our Commitment
At West Thames College, we are dedicated to creating a safe learning environment that actively addresses the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism while promoting a culture of respect and tolerance. Our commitments include:

- **Empowering Students:** We are committed to developing a community that is resilient to extremism, ensuring the well-being of students who may be vulnerable to radicalisation or crime. We provide support, education, and intervention to help them navigate these challenges safely.
- **Promoting Free Debate:** We support the creation of environments where open and honest discussions can occur, reinforcing our Shared Values while safeguarding students from harm and abuse. Through education and dialogue, we encourage critical thinking and a deeper understanding of democratic values.

Key Definitions

- **Extremism:** Defined as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance for different faiths and beliefs. This also includes advocating violence against members of the armed forces.
- **Radicalisation:** The process by which an individual adopts extremist ideologies that may be associated with terrorist groups.
- **Terrorism:** Actions that cause serious violence to individuals, significant damage to property, or disruption of electronic systems, with the intent to influence government policy or intimidate the public for political, religious, or ideological purposes.

Our Approach to PREVENT

West Thames College recognises the importance of early identification and intervention to prevent individuals from being drawn into extremism. To support this, we focus on:

- **Raising Awareness and Training:** All staff receive training on the Prevent Duty during their induction period and annually thereafter to ensure they are equipped to identify signs of radicalisation and extremism. This mandatory training must be completed each year to keep staff up to date with the latest guidance and best practices.
- **Robust Reporting and Referral Procedures:** Any concerns about potential radicalisation or extremism must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a member of the Safeguarding Team using the MyConcern platform. This ensures all concerns are documented, assessed, and acted upon promptly.

- **Collaboration with Partners:** We work closely with external agencies, including the local authority, police, and community organisations, to identify risks and provide appropriate support for those at risk of radicalisation.
- **Online Safety and Monitoring:** Recognising the increasing risk of radicalisation through online channels, we implement strict online safety measures and educate students about safe internet use, promoting critical thinking and resilience against extremist influences.

By aligning with the Prevent Duty 2023 objectives and promoting our Shared Values, West Thames College remains committed to safeguarding our community against the risks of extremism and ensuring a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all.

14. Confidentiality and sharing information

Data protection laws, including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), do not obstruct the sharing of information necessary for safeguarding and protecting children. The legal and secure exchange of information between educational institutions, Children's Social Care, and other local agencies is vital to ensuring children's safety and well-being and providing the support they need.

Key Principles for Information Sharing:

- **Prioritising Safeguarding Over Consent:** Information can be shared without consent if obtaining consent would place a child at greater risk. The primary concern is always the safety and welfare of the child, and decisions should be made in their best interest.
- **Overcoming Data Protection Concerns:** Concerns about data protection should not prevent the sharing of information when it is essential for protecting and supporting children. It is crucial to have appropriate organisational and technical measures in place to maintain the confidentiality and security of any shared data, ensuring it is handled responsibly and ethically.
- **Handling Parental Consent:** When seeking consent from parents for sharing information, it is important to consider situations where there is disagreement between parents. In such cases, it is considered that consent has not been granted. This approach respects the views of all parties and helps the college avoid potential civil liability issues. For example, for activities such as trips where parental consent is needed, ensuring agreement from all parties helps protect the college's position and prevents possible complications.

By adhering to these principles, West Thames College ensures that information is shared appropriately and securely to safeguard children while complying with data protection laws. The college is committed to a proactive approach that balances the need for effective safeguarding with the responsible handling of personal information.

15. Safeguarding Students aged under 16

West Thames College accommodates a considerable number of pre-16 students, and it is imperative that any allegations or suspicions of abuse involving these students are addressed immediately in line with the college's safeguarding procedures.

Procedures for Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

- **Mandatory Reporting:** All staff have a duty to report any allegations or concerns about abuse involving pre-16 students in accordance with the college's safeguarding procedures. This ensures that every concern is managed consistently, effectively, and with the utmost seriousness to protect the student's welfare.
- **Collaboration with Schools:** A designated member of the 14-16 Department will work closely with the relevant schools to coordinate a response to any safeguarding concerns. This collaboration ensures that concerns are communicated to the appropriate

safeguarding agencies, whether through the school or the college, depending on the specifics of the situation.

- **Accurate Documentation:** It is essential that all discussions, actions, and referrals related to safeguarding concerns are thoroughly documented. These records must be logged in MyConcern, following the college's procedures, to provide a clear and accessible record of all actions taken and to ensure accountability and transparency.

By following these procedures, West Thames College maintains a robust safeguarding framework that protects the welfare of pre-16 students. Clear, documented communication between the college, schools, and relevant agencies ensures a coordinated and effective response to any safeguarding concerns.

The process of safeguarding 14-16 Direct Entry students will remain as per Appendix 4

16. Shared Site Providers

Ambitious College, The Rise, and The Woodbridge Park Education Service, located at the Isleworth main campus and the Skills + Logistics Centre in Feltham, are dedicated to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable adults. All institutions share a collective commitment to creating a safe and supportive environment.

Key Responsibilities:

- **Adherence to Safeguarding Policies:** All staff members across these institutions must strictly adhere to their respective safeguarding policies, which are required to align with the safeguarding standards and practices established by West Thames College. This ensures a consistent approach to safeguarding across all settings.
- **Centralised Access to Policies:** To promote consistency and ease of access, safeguarding policies for all three institutions are stored in a centralised location. This allows staff to readily access, review, and stay informed about the relevant policies and procedures, ensuring everyone is aware of their safeguarding responsibilities.
- **Collaboration and Compliance:** Each institution is responsible for implementing safeguarding measures that are in line with West Thames College's protocols. This includes ensuring that all staff members are well-informed, adequately trained, and fully compliant with these safeguarding standards.

By upholding these practices, Ambitious College, The Rise, and The Woodbridge Park Education Service ensure a cohesive and unified approach to safeguarding, thereby enhancing the safety, security, and welfare of all individuals in their care.

2. External Referrals - Early Help

In line with the guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 (KCSIE 2024) and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, if early help is deemed necessary, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a member of the Safeguarding Team will be responsible for coordinating with relevant agencies and initiating a multi-agency assessment. This ensures that a comprehensive, multi-agency approach is taken to provide the necessary support for the child and their family.

Responsibilities and Procedures:

- **Coordinating Early Help:** The DSL or a member of the Safeguarding Team will lead the coordination with other agencies, initiating and managing an multi-agency assessment to address the child's needs effectively. This collaborative approach ensures the child and family receive the right support at the earliest opportunity.
- **Ongoing Monitoring and Escalation:** Staff must continuously monitor cases where early help is being provided. If there is no improvement in the child's situation or if the circumstances worsen, a referral to children's social care should be made for further assessment and access to statutory services.
- **Identifying the Need for Early Help:** All staff should remain vigilant for signs that a child

may benefit from early help.

Key indicators include:

- **Disability or Health Conditions:** Children with disabilities or specific additional needs due to health conditions.
- **Special Educational Needs:** Children with special educational needs (SEN), whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan.
- **Mental Health Needs:** Children experiencing mental health difficulties that require additional support.
- **Young Carers:** Children who provide substantial care for family members, which may affect their own well-being.
- **Involvement in Anti-Social or Criminal Behaviour:** Indications of involvement in anti-social behaviour, gang activities, organised crime, or county lines exploitation.
- **Children Missing in Education (CME):** Regular absences from education, home, or care settings, which could indicate underlying issues.
- **Risk of Exclusion:** Multiple suspensions or risk of permanent exclusion from educational settings, including schools and alternative provisions.
- **Exploitation Risks:** Children at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, or sexual and criminal exploitation.
- **Risk of Radicalisation:** Signs that a child may be at risk of radicalisation or exploitation by extremist groups.
- **Parental Custody or Offending Issues:** Impact of a parent or carer being in custody or affected by criminal activity.
- **Family Challenges:** Situations involving drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues, or domestic abuse within the family.
- **Substance Misuse:** The child's own misuse of alcohol or drugs, requiring early intervention.
- 'Honour'-Based Abuse Risks: Risks associated with 'honour'-based abuse, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage.
- **Private Fostering Arrangements:** Children who are privately fostered and may require additional support.

By adhering to these procedures and being vigilant for these indicators, staff will ensure early help interventions are timely and effective, ensuring that the child's needs are addressed appropriately and that they receive the necessary support to thrive.

17. Addressing Knife Crime, Exploitation and Abuse

West Thames College is dedicated to maintaining a safe and supportive environment for all students. As part of our commitment to safeguarding, we take a proactive stance against knife crime, child exploitation, and abuse, in line with the guidance provided in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 (KCSiE 2024).

Understanding Knife Crime and Its Impact

Knife crime affects children and communities across the UK, not just in London. It is crucial to understand that knife crime does not occur in isolation; children involved, whether as victims or perpetrators, often face multiple vulnerabilities and risk factors.

What Constitutes Knife Crime:

While knife crime is often discussed in the media in the context of street-based assaults or carrying knives, it encompasses a range of illegal activities, including:

- **Threats and Harm:** It is illegal to threaten or cause harm with a bladed weapon.
- **Sales Restrictions:** Certain knives are prohibited from being sold or purchased, particularly to individuals under 18.
- **Aggravated Offences:** Crimes such as robbery or assault become more severe when a knife is involved.

- **Carrying in Public:** It is an offence to carry a knife in public without a legitimate reason.

West Thames College's Approach to Knife Crime Prevention

As a member of the Hounslow Education Partnership, West Thames College works closely with local schools and the Metropolitan Police Service to address knife crime and enhance student safety. Our approach includes:

- **Educational Outreach:** Raising awareness among parents, carers, and guardians about the warning signs and dangers of knife crime.
- **Weapons Possession Policy:** Maintaining a consistent approach to handling weapons possession on campus and ensuring safety through a zero-tolerance policy towards bladed objects.
- **Standards for Success:** Upholding clear expectations for student behaviour to promote a safe learning environment.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Both CSE and CCE involve exploiting children through coercion, manipulation, or deception for the perpetrator's gain. This exploitation can be either opportunistic or highly organised and may occur through physical, psychological, or online methods. Staff should be vigilant for signs, including:

- **Unexplained Gifts or Possessions:** Children with new, unexplained items or money.
- **Association with Older Individuals:** Relationships with significantly older individuals who may be exploiting them.
- **STIs or Pregnancy:** Signs of sexually transmitted infections or unexpected pregnancy.
- **Emotional and Behavioural Changes:** Notable changes in mood, behaviour, or emotional well-being.
- **Substance Misuse:** Use of drugs or alcohol as a coping mechanism or due to coercion.
- **Absenteeism:** Frequent absences from college, home, or care settings, or going missing.
- **Indicators of Exploitation:** Direct evidence of involvement in criminal activities or exploitation.

If staff suspect that a child is at risk of CSE or CCE, they must follow the college's safeguarding procedures to report their concerns immediately.

County Lines Exploitation

County lines refers to the exploitation of children by gangs or organised criminal networks to distribute illegal drugs using dedicated phone lines or other methods. This often involves coercion, threats, or violence. Indicators of county lines involvement may overlap with those for CSE and CCE, such as:

- **Unexplained Absences:** Regularly going missing or sudden changes in behaviour.
- **Association with Criminal Groups:** Links to gangs or known criminal entities.

Child-on-Child Abuse and Sexual Violence

Children may be involved in abuse either as perpetrators or victims, both in person and online. Staff must be aware of the various forms of abuse, including:

- **Bullying:** All forms, including cyberbullying, homophobic, racist, and discriminatory bullying.
- **Physical Abuse:** Acts such as hitting, shaking, or other forms of physical harm.
- **Sexual Violence and Harassment:** Including rape, sexual assault, and sexual harassment.
- **Online Exploitation:** Non-consensual sharing of explicit images, sexting, and other forms of online abuse.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff at West Thames College are responsible for maintaining a safe environment by:

- **Maintaining Vigilance:** Recognising signs of abuse, exploitation, or involvement in knife crime and reporting concerns immediately.
- **Promoting a Zero-Tolerance Approach:** Addressing any inappropriate behaviour promptly and ensuring it is managed effectively.
- **Following Safeguarding Procedures:** Reporting any concerns using established safeguarding procedures and not assuming that others will take action.

By adhering to these guidelines, West Thames College reinforces its commitment to safeguarding the welfare of all students and fostering a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment. All staff must uphold the college's safeguarding policies and actively contribute to preventing and addressing knife crime, exploitation, and abuse.

18. Children who are lesbian, gay, bi or trans + (LGBTQ+)

A child or young person's LGBTQ+ identity does not, in itself, increase their risk of harm. However, LGBTQ+ children and young people may be particularly vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or targeting by their peers. Additionally, children who are perceived to be LGBTQ+, regardless of their actual identity, can face similar levels of vulnerability and risk.

To address and mitigate these risks, it is essential for staff to create a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment where all LGBTQ+ students feel secure and empowered to share their concerns and experiences. This includes ensuring that every student, particularly those who may not have trusted adults to turn to outside of college, has access to appropriate support, resources, and a reliable network within the college. By cultivating an inclusive and accepting atmosphere, staff can help break down barriers and effectively respond to any instances of harassment, discrimination, or bullying, ensuring that all students feel safe, valued, and respected. A range of resources can be found in link in **Appendix 10**.

19. Tackling female genital mutilation and sexual exploitation

As per the updated Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Act 2003, amended in 2023, protections have been strengthened, and reporting obligations have been clarified to ensure a robust response to FGM cases. This legislation reaffirms that FGM is a serious form of violence against women and girls and represents a critical safeguarding issue that all professionals must address.

Understanding FGM and Reporting Obligations

FGM is recognised as a criminal offense under the Act, and there is a statutory duty to report any known or suspected cases of FGM. This duty requires professionals, including those in educational settings like West Thames College, to report any evidence or suspicion of FGM to the appropriate authorities. The goal is to ensure that victims receive the protection and support they need.

West Thames College's Approach to FGM Safeguarding
At West Thames College, we adhere strictly to safeguarding protocols concerning FGM. If a student shows signs of FGM or if there is a suspicion that FGM has occurred, it will be reported immediately in line with our safeguarding procedures. In such cases:

- The student will be treated as a potential victim of a crime.
- The incident will be reported to the Police and appropriate support services for further investigation and to provide necessary assistance.

Commitment to Protecting Students from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

West Thames College is equally committed to safeguarding our students from sexual exploitation and abuse. If there is any evidence or suspicion that a student is being sexually exploited, it will be reported to the Police and relevant support agencies to ensure timely interventions and comprehensive support.

20. Early Help

West Thames College is dedicated to providing Early Help to all students who are identified as needing support. By addressing issues early, we can be more effective in promoting the welfare of children, rather than responding reactively to problems that have escalated. Early Help involves offering support as soon as a concern arises, from the early years through to adolescence. It aims to prevent the development of more significant issues, such as providing support when a child returns home from care.

Effective Early Help requires collaboration among local agencies to:

- **Identify** children and families who would benefit from Early Help;
- **Assess** the needs for Early Help; and
- **Deliver** targeted support services to address these needs and significantly improve the child's outcomes.

Under Section 10 of the Children Act 2004, local authorities have a duty to promote inter-agency cooperation to enhance children's welfare.

While any child may benefit from Early Help, staff should be particularly vigilant for those who may need it, including children who:

- Are disabled or have specific additional needs;
- Have special educational needs, with or without a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan;
- Have mental health needs;
- Are young carers;
- Show signs of being involved in anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement or county lines;
- Frequently go missing from home or care;
- Are at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation;
- Are at risk of radicalisation or exploitation;
- Have a family member in prison or are affected by parental offending;
- Face challenges at home, such as drug and alcohol misuse, mental health issues, or domestic abuse;
- Misuse drugs or alcohol themselves;
- Have returned home from care;
- Are at risk of 'honour'-based abuse, such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage;
- Are privately fostered;
- Are persistently absent from education, including partial absences from their timetabled day.

By maintaining vigilance and taking a proactive approach, West Thames College aims to ensure that all students receive the appropriate support they need to thrive and overcome any challenges they may face.

21. Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

If staff suspect that abuse is occurring, either inside or outside the College, or if a student discloses safeguarding issues, they must contact a Safeguarding Officer immediately. All safeguarding disclosures must be reported promptly using the MyConcern platform. For urgent safeguarding issues, contact the Safeguarding Team directly by phone or email.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible for establishing and maintaining effective communication with relevant agencies and cooperating fully with any child or vulnerable adult protection inquiries, including participating in case conferences as required.

22. What to do if you witness abuse

If a staff member directly witnesses abuse, they must take immediate action, considering the risks of delay and prioritising their own safety. After ensuring the immediate safety of the victim, the staff member should stay with them until they are handed over to a responsible adult. The incident must be reported to a Safeguarding Team Member, Security, or a line manager as appropriate, and detailed notes of the incident must be recorded, including the date and the staff member's signature. Refer to the Safeguarding Reporting Procedure in Appendix 4 for further guidance.

23. Opportunities to teach Safeguarding

West Thames College is committed to educating students on how to keep themselves and others safe, including online safety. This education is tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of each student, including those who are victims of abuse and those with special educational needs or disabilities.

The Tutorial provision plays a crucial role in delivering preventative education and covering relevant Personal, Social, Health, and Economic (PSHE) topics. This is done in collaboration with the Student Experience and Curriculum teams to provide a comprehensive approach that prepares students for life in modern Britain.

The college maintains a zero-tolerance approach to sexism, misogyny, homophobia, biphobia, and all forms of sexual violence and harassment. Our Standards for Success outline our core values and expectations, supported by the Academic and Misconduct Disciplinary Procedure and an inclusive tutorial programme. This programme covers age-appropriate topics such as:

- Healthy and respectful relationships.
- Boundaries and consent.
- Body confidence and self-esteem.
- Recognising and responding to abusive relationships, including coercive and controlling behaviour.
- Understanding sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, 'honour'-based violence (including forced marriage and FGM), and accessing support.
- Identifying sexual harassment and sexual violence and understanding why these behaviours are never acceptable.

Resources for teaching these topics can be found in the Tutorial resources and in Appendix 10.

24. Online Safety, Social Media, and Technology Use

West Thames College recognises the integral role technology plays in safeguarding issues and the educational environment. We are committed to safeguarding the college community by promoting safe and responsible use of technology and online platforms. This involves implementing measures to identify, address, and escalate concerns related to online safety when necessary.

Categories of Online Safety Issues:

Online safety concerns are categorised into four main areas, known as the 4Cs:

- **Content:** Exposure to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful material, such as pornography, misinformation, hate speech, or extremist content.
- **Contact:** Harmful interactions with others, including peer pressure, manipulative advertising, and adults posing as peers for exploitation.
- **Conduct:** Personal behaviours online that increase risk, such as sharing explicit images or engaging in cyberbullying.
- **Commerce:** Risks related to online transactions, including gambling, phishing, and financial scams.

Monitoring and Filtering:

The college has established appropriate filters and monitoring systems tailored to the age and needs of students, ensuring these measures do not unduly restrict educational access. These systems are in line with our Prevent Duty obligations and aim to balance safety with effective learning.

Use of Social Media:

The college's strategic plan supports the use of social media as an educational tool. Staff responsible for these initiatives must ensure that students learn to protect their identities and personal information online. This education is integrated into our tutorial and enrichment programmes.

Staff Responsibilities:

All staff must adhere to the college's IT Acceptable Use and E-Safety Policies, which include:

- Refraining from giving personal mobile phone numbers to students and only using official college communication channels.
- Not storing students' personal contact information on personal devices.
- Using only the college's email system for communication with students.
- Following college policies regarding internet access and usage.

Concerns about inappropriate use of social media, technology, or issues such as sexting or cyberbullying should be reported immediately to the relevant manager and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Remote Learning

For remote learning, staff must provide clear guidelines on online safety and ensure parents and carers are aware of the online platforms and interactions their children will encounter.

25. Safeguarding Apprentices, Work Experience, and Volunteering Students

In accordance with the guidance outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 (KCSIE 2024), West Thames College is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all students, including apprentices, those undertaking work experience, and students engaged in volunteering activities. This policy highlights the shared responsibilities of the college and employers to ensure a safe, supportive, and compliant environment for all students participating in these programs.

Key Principles of Safeguarding for Apprentices, Work Experience, and Volunteering Students

Safeguarding Responsibilities for Apprentices:

- The college and employers share a joint responsibility to ensure that apprentices are safeguarded from harm, abuse, and exploitation while in the workplace. This includes creating a safe and supportive learning environment that prioritises their well-being.
- Employers must have appropriate safeguarding measures in place, including a named Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or person responsible for safeguarding, who is aware of their obligations to protect apprentices.
- Apprentices should be provided with clear information about how to report any safeguarding concerns they may have, both within the workplace and through the college's safeguarding channels.

Safeguarding During Work Experience and Volunteering:

- The college will ensure that all work experience and volunteering placements are subject to thorough risk assessments to evaluate the suitability and safety of the environment. This includes considering the nature of the work, the level of supervision, and any potential safeguarding risks.
- Employers offering placements must be informed of their responsibilities to safeguard students and adhere to relevant policies, including having safeguarding procedures in place and providing appropriate training for their staff.
- Students must be briefed on how to stay safe in their work environment, understand the boundaries of acceptable behaviour, and know who to contact if they have any concerns.

Collaboration Between College and Employers:

- West Thames College and employers must work closely to ensure a coordinated approach to safeguarding. This includes sharing information, where appropriate, to manage risks and respond effectively to any safeguarding concerns.
- Regular communication should be maintained between the college and the workplace to monitor the welfare and progress of students on placement. Any concerns raised must be addressed promptly and in accordance with safeguarding protocols.
- Employers are required to notify the college immediately if there are any safeguarding incidents or concerns involving a student on work experience or apprenticeship.

Training and Awareness:

- The college will provide safeguarding training and guidance to all students before they begin work experience or volunteering placements. This training will cover key aspects of staying safe, recognising potential risks, and knowing how to report concerns.
- Employers must also ensure that their staff are trained in safeguarding practices and understand their role in maintaining a safe environment for students.

Reporting and Support:

Any safeguarding concerns that arise during work experience, volunteering, or apprenticeship placements must be reported to the college's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately

using the established reporting procedures.
The college is responsible for providing ongoing support to students who raise safeguarding concerns, including referrals to external agencies if necessary.

Commitment to Safeguarding Standards:

West Thames College is dedicated to upholding the highest standards of safeguarding for all students. By working in partnership with employers and ensuring clear lines of communication and responsibility, we strive to provide safe, enriching experiences that support the development and well-being of every student involved in apprenticeships, work experience, or volunteering opportunities.

All stakeholders, including college staff, employers, and students, must adhere to these safeguarding guidelines to create a safe and supportive environment where students can learn, grow, and thrive.

Managing Visitors

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 (KCSIE 2024), West Thames College is committed to safeguarding all students and ensuring a secure environment for everyone on site. This policy outlines the procedures for managing visitors to ensure compliance with safeguarding standards.

Key Principles for Managing Visitors:

- **Visitor Definition and Approval:** A "visitor" is anyone who is not a current student, staff member, or volunteer but has a legitimate reason to be on campus. This includes guest speakers, contractors, parents, and professionals. All visits must be pre-arranged, approved by a senior staff member, and include a Visitor Request Form detailing the visit's purpose, duration, and areas accessed.
- **Risk Assessment for External Speakers:** External speakers or visitors in contact with students require a risk assessment to ensure compliance with the college's safeguarding and Prevent Duty obligations.
- **Registration and Identification:** Visitors must sign in at reception, provide valid ID, and wear a visible visitor badge at all times. They will be briefed on the college's safeguarding procedures and emergency protocols upon arrival.
- **Supervision on Campus:** Visitors must stay with their designated host and are not allowed unsupervised access to students or restricted areas. Those involved in student activities must be supervised unless vetted.
- **Code of Conduct:** Visitors must adhere to the college's Code of Conduct, maintaining professionalism and following safeguarding protocols. They should avoid inappropriate interactions with students.
- **Managing External Speakers:** All external speakers must be vetted to ensure their content aligns with the college's values and does not pose any risk. Approval from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the safeguarding team if required.
- **Reporting Concerns:** Any safeguarding concerns involving visitors must be reported immediately to the DSL or a member of the Safeguarding Team. Visitors are also encouraged to report any concerns they witness.
- **Visitor Departure:** All visitors must sign out at reception and return their visitor badge before leaving to maintain accurate records.

Commitment to a Safe Environment:

West Thames College is dedicated to providing a safe and secure environment. By following these visitor management procedures, the college ensures robust safeguarding measures are in place to protect students from harm and maintain high safety standards. All staff and visitors are expected to comply with these protocols to support the college's safeguarding commitment.

Multi-Agency Collaboration

West Thames College actively collaborates with safeguarding partners, including local authorities, police, and clinical commissioning groups, to provide a coordinated response to safeguarding issues. We recognise that effective information sharing is vital for protecting children and young people. Therefore, the college ensures that data protection concerns do not hinder the sharing of information necessary for child protection. We adhere to legal frameworks and best practices to facilitate prompt and effective communication with relevant agencies.

Safeguarding Procedures

To align with government guidance and provide a safe environment for all students, the college has established the following safeguarding procedures:

- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Appointment:** The college appoints a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) with appropriate training and expertise to oversee and coordinate all safeguarding efforts.
- **Governor for Safeguarding & Child Protection:** A dedicated governor is designated to take responsibility for overseeing child protection and safeguarding within the college.
- **Awareness Among Staff and Volunteers:** All staff and volunteers are made aware of the DSL and their specific role in safeguarding. Regular training ensures they understand their duties to recognise and report any signs of abuse, including extremism and radicalisation.
- **Clear Understanding of Responsibilities:** Staff are trained and regularly updated on their responsibilities for identifying and reporting safeguarding concerns. This includes recognising signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation, and other safeguarding risks.
- **Parental Communication:** Parents are informed about the college's safeguarding policies and procedures, reinforcing our commitment to child protection and the steps we take to ensure student safety.
- **Immediate Notification to Children's Social Care:** In cases where a student with a protection plan has an unexplained absence, the college immediately notifies children's social care to prevent further risk.
- **Collaboration with Relevant Agencies:** The college actively collaborates with relevant agencies, participating in case conferences and multi-agency meetings to ensure comprehensive support and intervention for students at risk.
- **Secure Record-Keeping:** All safeguarding concerns are documented securely, separate from the main student file, to ensure confidentiality and facilitate effective follow-up actions.
- **Safe Recruitment Practices:** The college follows stringent safe recruitment practices to ensure that all staff and volunteers are properly vetted and suitable to work with children and young people.

Commitment to a Robust Safeguarding Framework

By adhering to these procedures and fostering strong multi-agency partnerships, West Thames College maintains a robust and responsive safeguarding framework. This approach allows the college to address both online and offline concerns effectively, ensuring the safety and well-being of all students. All staff, volunteers, and partners are expected to comply with these standards to uphold the college's commitment to safeguarding.

25. Safeguarding Team

All designated staff (with the exception of the Designated Corporation Member for Safeguarding) can be contacted on the College's dedicated safeguarding email:

Email: safeguardingdisclosure@west-thames.ac.uk, names and contact details are given below:

Designation	Post Held	Name	Extension
Executive Safeguarding and Prevent Lead (DSL)	Vice Principal Curriculum Quality & Student Experience	Marta Gajewska Kopczyk	2034
Designated Safeguarding & Prevent Lead (DSL)	Director of Student Experience & Safeguarding	Samantha Louisy	6827
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (Skills Centre + 14-16)	Director of Skills + Logistic Centre	Beverley McGuire	6850
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) 14-16	Alternative Provision Manager (14-16)	Kerry Hamilton	2041
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Skills Centre Manager: Engineering & Motor Vehicle	Terrie Carter	6473
Safeguarding Officers (DSL)	Safeguarding Officer	Derin Adeyemi-Smith	2014
Safeguarding Officer	Student Experience Coordinator	Jaskaran Sidhu	2393
Safeguarding Administrator	Student Experience & Safeguarding Administrator	Ewa Celinska	2076
Allegations against or Staff Concerns	Head of HR	Louise Owen	2296
Allegations against the Principal	Chair of Governor	Stuart McGeoch	2323
Governor Safeguarding Lead	College Governor	Annita Cornish and George Casley	2323

Appendix 1 – Indicators of abuse and neglect

All staff must be aware of safeguarding issues that could put children at risk. Signs of risk include behaviours related to drug or alcohol misuse, truancy, and the sharing of explicit images. Staff should be familiar with Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 to understand their legal responsibilities.

Abuse
Abuse involves maltreatment that harms a child's health or development. It can occur in various settings and can involve physical, emotional, or sexual harm, or neglect. Abuse may be facilitated through technology, both online and offline, and can involve adults or other children.

Physical Abuse
Physical abuse includes hitting, shaking, poisoning, burning, or causing any physical harm. It also covers cases where a caregiver fabricates or induces illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse
Emotional abuse entails persistent maltreatment affecting a child's emotional development. It may involve degrading treatment, preventing a child from expressing themselves, or imposing unrealistic expectations. Emotional abuse can occur alongside other forms of abuse.

Sexual Abuse
Sexual abuse involves engaging a child in sexual activities, whether through physical contact or non-contact acts such as creating or viewing sexual images. This can include grooming and exploitation, and may involve both adults and peers.

Neglect
Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic physical or emotional needs, which can significantly impair their health or development. It includes inadequate provision of food, shelter, protection, or medical care and can also occur during pregnancy due to maternal substance abuse.

Other Safeguarding Issues

- **Abuse of Trust:** Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is illegal for individuals in positions of trust to have sexual relationships with children under 18, even if consensual.
- **Serious Violence:** Indicators include changes in attendance, relationships, performance, and unexplained injuries or possessions. These signs may suggest involvement in violent crime or criminal networks.
- **Honour-Based Abuse (HBA):** Includes crimes committed to protect or defend a family's or community's 'honour', such as FGM and forced marriage. All forms of HBA should be reported and managed according to safeguarding procedures.
- **Mental Health:** Mental health issues can indicate abuse or neglect. Staff should observe and report behavioural changes that might signal underlying problems, following safeguarding procedures.
- **Cyber-Bullying:** Involves targeted online harassment by one minor against another. It should be addressed promptly, differentiating it from adult-perpetrated harassment.
- **Radicalisation:** The process of adopting extremist views can affect individuals without a typical profile. Staff should be aware of the signs and report concerns accordingly.
- **Financial Abuse:** Includes controlling or exploiting a person financially, such as restricting access to money or forcing criminal activity. It can occur both in personal relationships and beyond.
- **Modern Slavery:** Encompasses various forms of exploitation, including human trafficking and forced labour. Staff should be vigilant for signs of such abuses.
- **Unexplained absences**: Frequent absence or unexplained withdrawal from school can indicate serious safeguarding risks. Staff should follow the college's procedures for managing these situations.
- **Looked After and Previously Looked After Children:** These children are particularly vulnerable due to their experiences of abuse or neglect. The Head of Inclusion and

Designated Safeguarding Lead are responsible for maintaining information about these children and coordinating with their social workers.

- **Care Leavers:** The Head of Inclusion liaises with the allocated Personal Advisor for support and guidance on care leavers' issues.
- **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):** Each council has a duty to manage allegations and concerns about individuals working with children. Staff should be familiar with LADO procedures to ensure proper management of any such issues.

Appendix 2 - Possible Signs & Symptoms of Abuse

The following signs may indicate abuse but are not definitive. They can overlap across different categories, and not all behaviours are indicative of abuse. Students with learning difficulties may display some of these signs, which might be related to their condition rather than abuse. However, it's important to remember that disabled children are at a higher risk of abuse or neglect compared to their non-disabled peers.

Physical Abuse

- Unexplained or "accidental" injuries, burns, or bruises
- Inconsistent or unlikely explanations for injuries
- Reluctance to undress for physical activities
- Self-harming behaviours
- Aggression towards others
- Fear of physical contact or flinching when touched
- Admission of excessive punishment
- Fear of contact with a suspected abuser

Emotional Abuse

- Delays in physical, mental, or emotional development
- Sudden speech or communication issues
- Frequent self-criticism or negative self-talk
- Overreaction to minor mistakes
- Extreme fear or anxiety in new situations
- Inappropriate response to pain or punishment
- Unusual attention-seeking behaviour
- Extreme mood swings, ranging from passive to aggressive

Sexual Abuse

- Inappropriate sexual knowledge or behaviour for the child's age
- Pain or discomfort in the genital area
- Severe emotional responses such as depression, self-harm, or eating disorders
- Noticeable personality changes, such as increased insecurity or clinginess
- Withdrawal or social isolation
- Difficulty concentrating
- Anxiety about clothing being removed
- Drawing or discussing sexually explicit content
- Striving to be overly compliant or perfect, overreacting to criticism

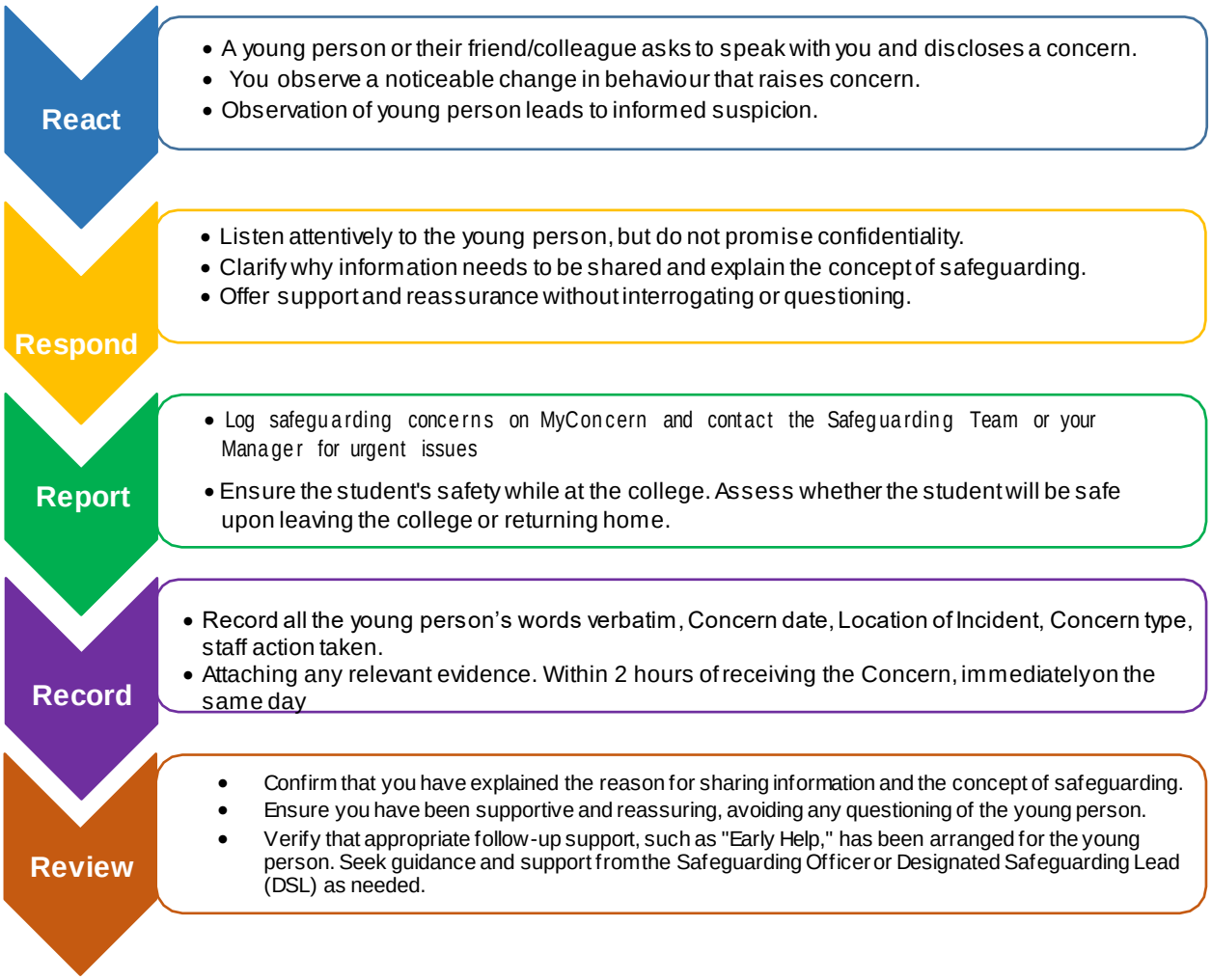
Neglect

- Persistent hunger or food insecurity
- Poor personal hygiene and unsuitable clothing
- Constant fatigue
- Unexplained weight loss or emaciation
- Untreated medical issues
- Lack of social interactions or relationships
- Compulsive scavenging or stealing food
- Destructive behaviours
- Poor school/college attendance
- Excessive attention-seeking behaviour

For further guidance on recognising signs of abuse, refer to Part A, Chapter 1, Section 1.1 of the London Safeguarding Children Procedures: Recognising Signs of Abuse

Appendix 3 - Detecting and Responding to Safeguarding

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All college staff must be vigilant to changes in the behaviour of students and their parents or carers that may indicate safeguarding concerns. Prioritizing the safety of young people should take precedence over fears of damaging relationships with adults. For guidance, refer to the following 5 R's:



Handling safeguarding concerns

Abuse can occur at any time and in any setting. If a staff member is the first person a child or vulnerable adult confides in about abuse, their response is critical.

When a staff member is informed of actual or suspected abuse, they must:

- Listen attentively and remain calm.
- Avoid conducting an interview; instead, clarify to ensure accurate understanding of the information provided.
- Refrain from suggesting or leading the person's responses.
- Document the details of the disclosure, including date, time, location, and the individual's statements and actions, using MyConcern.
- Report any actions taken.

Staff should not investigate the concerns themselves but should promptly report them to a Safeguarding Officer. For the reporting procedure, refer to Appendix 4, and for detailed management procedures for Safeguarding Concerns and allegations, see Appendix 5.

Appendix 4: Safeguarding Reporting Procedure

When a student expresses a desire to discuss a serious matter and requests confidentiality, refer to the 5 R's outlined in Appendix 3. Explain that you cannot guarantee complete confidentiality in all situations, especially concerning child protection issues that must be reported.

If the student chooses not to proceed:

- Encourage them to seek support from a Student Learning Advisor, Safeguarding Team member, or the College Counsellor.
- If you remain concerned about the student's safety, report your worries to the Safeguarding Team.

You should:

- Inform the student that you must share the information, but only those who need to know will be informed. Reassure them that they will be kept updated.
- Use MyConcern to document the student's disclosure, including their own words, the date, time, location, and any relevant details, and submit this report to the Safeguarding Team immediately.
- Notify the student that a Safeguarding Team member will follow up with them.

If the concern is raised by a parent or guardian, follow the same procedure and refer them to the Safeguarding Team.

Important Points:

- Staff should not handle safeguarding concerns alone but should always involve the Safeguarding Team. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will generally decide whether to refer the matter to Social Services or the Police, though any staff member can make a direct referral if necessary. If you do so, you must discuss it with the DSL as soon as possible.

- Do not share personal contact information with students or engage with them through personal social media accounts.

After Referral:

- The Safeguarding Team will assess the allegation, consult relevant staff and the DSL, and prioritise the student's immediate safety. If needed, they will seek medical attention for serious injuries.
- The student will be asked to repeat their concern, and this must be recorded on MyConcern.
- If the concern meets the referral threshold, the DSL will support the student by contacting relevant agencies such as Social Services, the Police, or the College Counsellor.

If a student is uncertain about proceeding, the Safeguarding Team can discuss the matter with Social Services requesting a consultation or the Police without identifying the individual, to help make an informed decision. If appropriate, discuss the concern with the student's parents or guardians, unless this might cause further risk. Document any discussions with parents or guardians.

In the event of a referral, inform the student of the action taken and the reasons behind it, ideally before notifying the relevant agency, unless this would increase the risk to the student.

The Safeguarding Team should contact Social Care or the Police by phone initially and document this communication. A written confirmation of the referral must be sent within 48 hours. All records, including concerns, decisions, and reasons, should be securely stored and kept confidential in line with the Data Protection Act 2018, though they may need to be disclosed to the police if required.

The DSL will act as the college's contact for Social Services or the Police and may represent the college in multi-agency meetings. Other Safeguarding Team members may also be involved as needed.

For 14-16-Year-Old Students:

- The college will obtain information from the school to assess support needs.
- Support or risk assessment meetings will involve the college, school, and parents/students if needed.
- Students will be given a **yellow lanyard** for identification.
- Induction will follow the college's standard process.
- Attendance will be monitored, and absences communicated to parents/carers promptly, with records kept on Promonitor.
- Tutors will address absences and punctuality issues, documenting all interventions on Promonitor.
- Disciplinary actions will follow the college's policy, with the school and/or Local Authority being notified as necessary.
- Schools will receive weekly attendance reports, including any issues or concerns.
- In cases of abuse, the college's Alternative Provision Manager will contact the school's Designated Person.

WEX & Apprentices

- An Employability Coach or the Apprenticeship Team will conduct a Health and Safety audit, inspection, and risk assessment of employers as necessary.
- Employers must provide the college with the name and contact details of their Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Employers will receive and confirm understanding of the college's relevant policies and procedures.
- Students on work experience or apprenticeships will receive an induction covering safety and Prevent.
- Students will be given the contact details of the college's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Appendix 5 - Procedure for Managing Allegations against a Member of Staff

Allegations of abuse against staff can have serious repercussions, regardless of the investigation's outcome. Following the guidelines in Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 4) and Working Together to Safeguard Children, the College has a clear procedure for handling such allegations, including low-level concerns (see Appendix 6).

Receiving and Recording Allegations

- **Reporting:** If a staff member receives an allegation about another staff member from a child or vulnerable adult, they must report it immediately to the Manager, Head of HR & Professional Development, or Principal. If these individuals are implicated, the report should go to the Chair of the Corporation.
- **Documentation:** Obtain and document written details of the allegation, including times, dates, locations, and potential witnesses. This should be signed and dated by the person who received the information and countersigned by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- **Assessment:** Conduct an initial assessment in consultation with the Safeguarding Partner or Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). If the allegation involves potential criminal activity or significant harm, report it to the relevant Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Handling the Allegation

- **Investigation:** The Head of HR, Principal, or Executive Director decides on the next steps but does not investigate the allegation personally. If external agencies are involved, the Principal or Designated Safeguarding Lead should contribute to strategy discussions and ensure confidentiality.
- **Suspension:** Suspension is not automatic but may be considered at any stage. Follow the College's Staff Disciplinary Policy and consult with external authorities as needed. The suspended staff member should receive appropriate support and updates on the case.
- **Disciplinary Investigation:** Conduct internal inquiries according to the College's Staff Disciplinary Policy. Inform the person making the allegation and their parents (if under 18) of the investigation's outcome. Consider what information should be shared with the College community.

Unsubstantiated or False Allegations

- **Action**: Record and evaluate unsubstantiated, malicious, or false allegations. Consider referring the case to the LADO if needed. Inform the accused staff member and consider offering support. Report the findings and actions taken.

Resignations

- **Follow-up:** If a staff member resigns during an investigation, the College will continue to follow up on the allegation to ensure child welfare is addressed.

Referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

- **Requirement:** If a staff member is deemed to have harmed or poses a risk to vulnerable groups, including children, refer them to the DBS. For teachers, also consider referring the case to the Teaching Agency for serious misconduct.

Support for Staff

- Counselling: Staff involved in safeguarding cases can seek confidential support from the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a trained counsellor. Contact HR for counselling referrals.

Appendix 6 - Guidance on the conduct of College Staff

The College acknowledges that it is not feasible to provide specific instructions for every possible scenario involving children or vulnerable adults. Therefore, the following standards outline the expected behaviour for staff to protect both individuals and themselves. These guidelines also apply to volunteers, visitors, and contractors.

Staff Must:

- Adhere to this protocol consistently.
- Be vigilant to potential risks at all times.
- Take reasonable precautions when interviewing students, such as having another person present and ensuring the meeting occurs in an observable location.

Staff Must Never:

- Develop personal relationships with students beyond a professional teacher-student dynamic.
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate physical contact. Touch should be responsive to the student's needs, suitable for their age and development, and always with their consent.
- Participate in rough play or physical games with students.
- Perform tasks of a personal nature that students can do independently or that should be done by a parent.
- Use physical restraint except to prevent harm. Restraint must be appropriate and reasonable to avoid being deemed assault.
- Make sexually suggestive comments in the presence of or within earshot of students.
- Transport a student alone in a vehicle. If transport is necessary, another staff member or volunteer must accompany them, and the vehicle must be adequately insured. In emergencies, inform another teacher and the student's parent immediately.
- Assist a student with personal hygiene unless another adult is present or informed, as specified in the student's personal plan.
- Spend time alone with a student outside the regular educational setting. If alone with a student, ensure visibility to others.
- Communicate with students through personal electronic channels such as social media, email, or text. Professional communication should be conducted through College-approved systems.

Appendix 7 - Prevent radicalisation

Children are susceptible to extremist ideologies and radicalisation. It is the responsibility of staff to protect students from these risks as part of the college's safeguarding strategy.

Understanding Extremism and Radicalisation:

- **Extremism:** Active opposition to fundamental values such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect for different faiths and beliefs. This includes advocating violence against the armed forces.
- **Radicalisation:** The process by which individuals begin to support terrorism and extremist ideologies linked to terrorist groups.
- **Terrorism:** Actions that cause serious harm to people, damage property, or disrupt systems, intended to influence government or intimidate the public for political, religious, or ideological objectives.

There is no single indicator of susceptibility to extremist ideologies, but staff should be alert to various signs, considering factors such as changes in behaviour, background influences, and radicalisation methods (e.g., social media).

For Students:

- **Concerned about another student:** Check with your Student Learning Advisor (SLA) and share with the Safeguarding Team.
- **Concerned about a staff member or a guest:** Check with the Safeguarding Team and share with the Director of Student Experience Manager or Executive Director.

For Staff:

- **Concerned about a student:** Check with and share concerns with the Safeguarding Team. **Concerned about another staff member:** Check with your Line Manager and share with the Head of HR & Professional Development and Executive Director.
- **Concerned about a non-staff individual:** Check with and share concerns with the Director of Student Experience.

Referral Protocol:

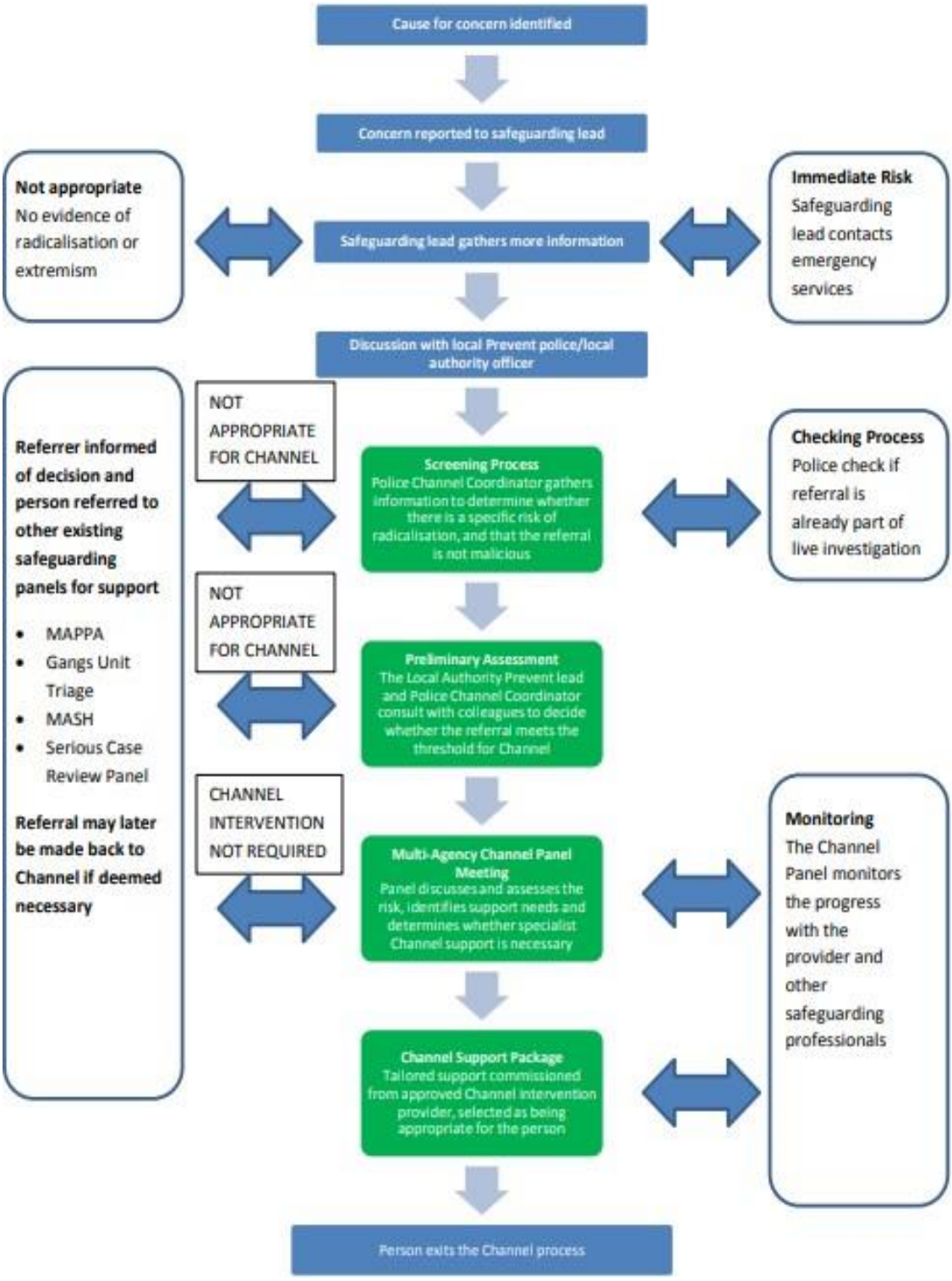
- **Raising Concerns:** If you suspect a student or colleague might be vulnerable to radicalisation based on their appearance, opinions, or changes in behaviour, report these concerns to a Safeguarding Team Member without approaching the individual directly.
- **Initial Assessment:** A member of the Safeguarding Team will assess the risk and gather additional information without contacting the individual initially.
- **Further Action:** If the risk is deemed credible, the Safeguarding Member will consult the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Executive Director. For staff concerns, the Head of HR & Professional Development will also be involved.
- **External Reporting:** If necessary, the matter will be reported to the local Prevent Coordinator for further advice.

Possible Outcomes:

- The issue may be resolved without further action.
- A background investigation by the police may be conducted.
- The case may be referred to the local Channel Panel, which will assess the risk and develop a tailored support plan if the individual is deemed at risk.

The college will follow the Prevent Coordinator's guidance and will only approach the individual if directed to do so.

The Channel Process within FE Colleges (Prevent) *also used with WTC sub-contractors.*


Cause for concern identified
Concern reported to safeguarding lead
Not appropriate
No evidence of radicalisation or extremism
Safeguarding lead gathers more information
Immediate Risk
Safeguarding lead contacts emergency services
Discussion with local Prevent police/local authority officer
Referrer informed of decision and person referred to other existing safeguarding panels for support
MAPPA
Gangs Unit Triage
MASH
Serious Case Review Panel
Referral may later be made back to Channel if deemed necessary
NOT APPROPRIATE FOR CHANNEL
Screening Process
Police Channel Coordinator gathers information to determine whether there is a specific risk of radicalisation, and that the referral is not malicious
Checking Process
Police check if referral is already part of live investigation
NOT APPROPRIATE FOR CHANNEL
Preliminary Assessment
The Local Authority Prevent lead and Police Channel Coordinator consult with colleagues to decide whether the referral meets the threshold for Channel
CHANNEL INTERVENTION NOT REQUIRED
Multi-Agency Channel Panel Meeting
Panel discusses and assesses the risk, identifies support needs and determines whether specialist Channel support is necessary
Monitoring
The Channel Panel monitors the progress with the provider and other safeguarding professionals
Channel Support Package
Tailored support commissioned from approved Channel intervention provider, selected as being appropriate for the person
Person exits the Channel process

Appendix 8 - Notifications of infectious diseases (NOIDs)

Procedure for Reporting:
Concerns about infectious diseases should be reported using the same procedures as for safeguarding concerns.

Purpose and Legislation:
Notifying infectious diseases is a statutory duty aimed at facilitating the prompt investigation and response to cases that pose significant health risks. This measure has been in place in the UK for over a century and was modernised by health protection legislation from 6 April 2010. The key legislation includes:

- Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 (as amended)
- Health Protection (Local Authority Powers) Regulations 2010
- Health Protection (Part 2A Orders) Regulations 2010

These laws give local authorities powers to manage health risks by requiring actions such as:

- Excluding a child or young person from school/college.
- Requesting contact details of students from the Head Teacher/Principal.
- Disinfecting or decontaminating premises or items as needed.

Notification Process:
If there are reasonable grounds or disclosures about an infectious disease, inform the Director of Student Experience and/or the Head of HR & Professional Development immediately.

Notifiable Diseases:
Examples include:

- Acute meningitis
- COVID-19
- Diphtheria
- Food poisoning
- Malaria
- Measles
- Meningococcal septicaemia
- Mumps
- Tuberculosis (TB)

For a full list, visit: notifiable diseases

Appendix 9 – Linked College policies, procedures and Government Guide Lines

The following policies which are held on Connect should also be looked at for reference:

- Recruitment and Selection Handbook
- Whistle blowing procedure)
- E-safety Policy
- Work Experience Policy
- Searching of Students Policy and Physical Restraint Policy
- Data Protection Policy (Sept 2011) and Data protection Guidelines
- Code of Conduct
- Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy – Students
- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- How to Complain – A guide to the complaints procedure
- Academic and Misconduct Disciplinary Procedures
- Policy on Employment of ex-offenders
- Policy statement on recruitment of ex-offenders
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy – Staff
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy – Students
- E-Safety checklist – staff
- Procedures and guidelines for staff)
- Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults: quick guide for staff
- Safeguarding and Prevent duty for employers
- Staff Disciplinary Procedure
- Partner Schools Safeguarding Policies - Onsite
- Hounslow Thresholds and Referral Protocol and HSCP Escalation Policy

Government Guidelines

- Working together to Safeguard Children
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Prevent Duty Guidance
- Promoting children and young peoples emotional health and wellbeing
- Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults county lines
- Understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility
- Mental health and behaviour in schools
- Preventing and tackling bullying
- London Safeguarding Children Procedures, Chapter 1
- Preventing youth violence and gang involvement
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- Disclosure and Barring Service

Appendix 10: Recommended Support Teaching Resources

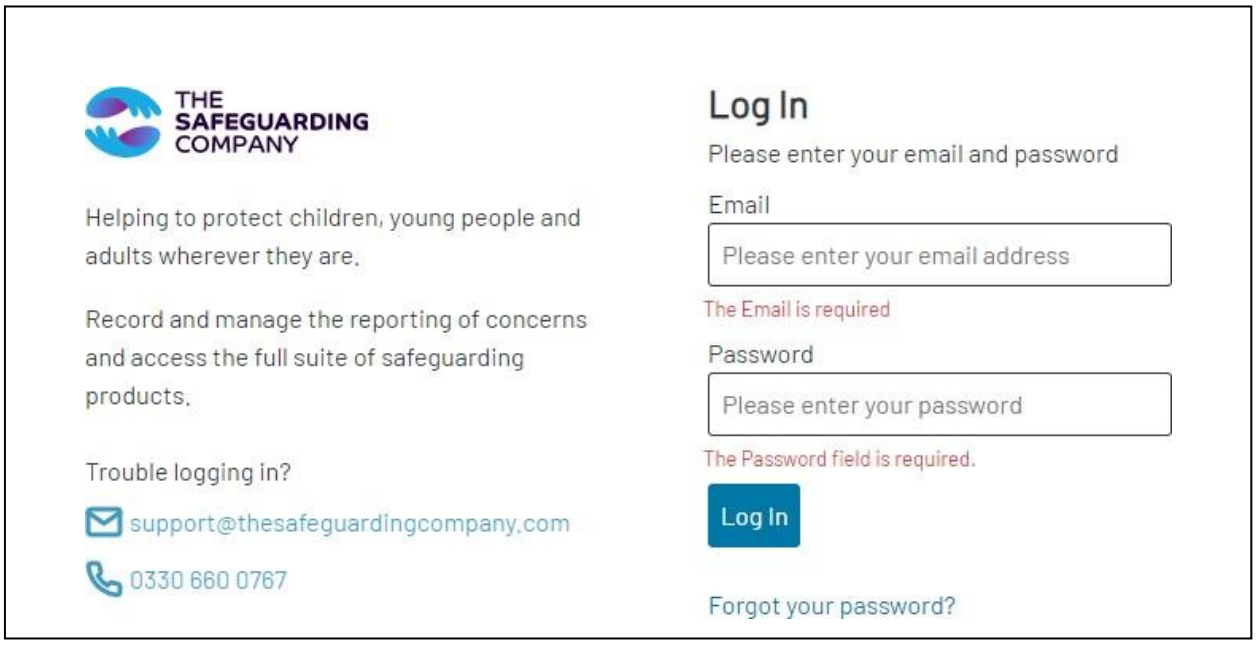
- DfE advice for schools: Teaching online safety in schools
- UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) Education for a connected world
- UKCIS guidance: Sharing nudes and semi nudes advice for education settings working with children and young people
- The UKCIS external visitors guidance will help schools and colleges to ensure the maximum impact of any online safety sessions delivered by external visitors
- National Crime Agency's CEOP education programme: thinkuknow
- Harmful online challenges and online hoaxes this includes advice on preparing for any online challenges and hoaxes, sharing information with parents and carers and where to get help and support.
- LGBT inclusion is part of the statutory Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health-education

Appendix 11: Myconcern

MyConcern is a secure platform for recording and managing safeguarding concerns, ensuring staff can communicate their worries effectively and access policy guidance easily.

You will receive an email invitation with a link to the MyConcern login screen. Use your email address as the username to create your initial password. After logging in, you'll be directed to the

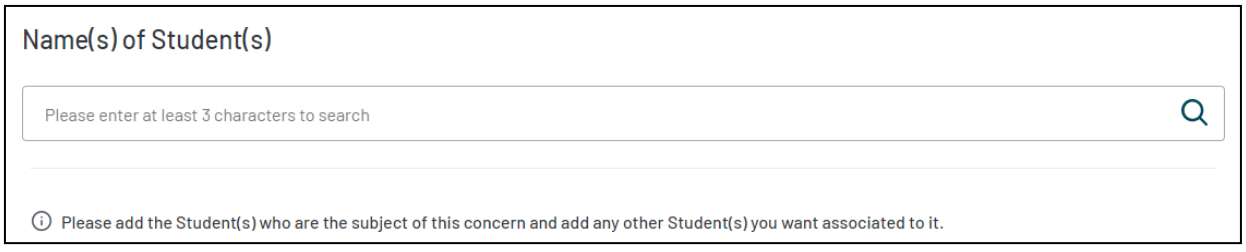
Home Page where you can report concerns.



Under *"My Establishments"* click West Thames College. A red button will appear *"Report a Concern"*

*Select **'Report a Concern'** from the Home Page and complete the on-screen form. There is guidance on how to fill this in when you click on the individual sections.*

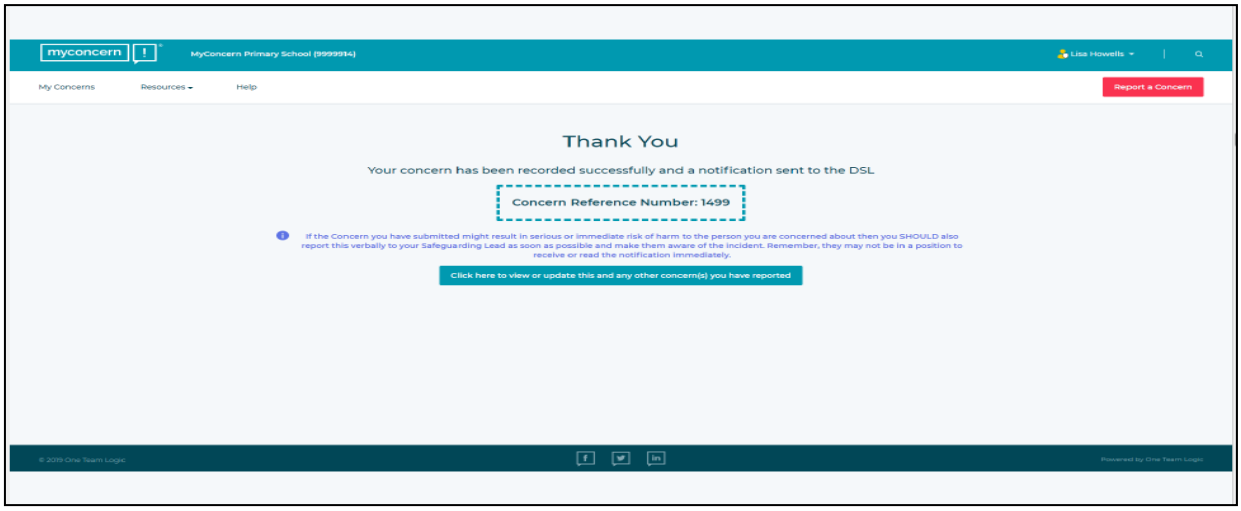
Start typing a student's name and then PAUSE – Click on the relevant name from the drop down list.



Concern Type: (Mental, Emotional, Physical Health, Neglect, Domestic Violence, Sexual Exploitation, Cyber-Bullying, FGM, Forced Marriage, Radicalisation)

If required you will also have the option to submit documents by uploading them.

Once you have submitted your concern the system will forward an automated email notification to the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) and you will see an on-screen receipt with a reference number for your concern.



Please note: The Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) may not be in a position to view the notification immediately. If the concern you are reporting is of an urgent nature then it is recommended that you contact the Safeguarding Officer on duty.

For instant access MyConcern has been placed on CONNECT.

Appendix 12 - Case studies for discussion

Case Study One: Rebecca

Rebecca, aged 16, shares with you after a lesson that her mother's new boyfriend has led to her being left in charge of her younger brothers frequently. Her mother works long hours and often goes out on weekends, leaving Rebecca to manage the household, including providing food and care for her siblings. Rebecca reports struggling to get enough food, caring for her sick younger brother alone, and experiencing fatigue and concentration issues, which are affecting her school performance.

Primary Type of Abuse:

- **Inadequate Supervision:** Rebecca is left in charge of her younger siblings for extended periods, often without adequate support or supervision from her mother.
- **Lack of Basic Needs:** Rebecca reports that there is often no food available at home and she had to manage a sick sibling alone, suggesting a failure to provide essential care and nourishment.
- **Impact on Well-being:** Rebecca is experiencing significant fatigue and difficulty concentrating, which affects her school performance, highlighting the adverse impact of the neglect on her overall well-being.

Action:

- Report to Safeguarding using MyConcern, discuss with DSL and or manager if required
- Following an assessment, a referral to Social Services/Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Analysis:

Rebecca's situation suggests possible neglect due to inadequate supervision and care provided by her mother, impacting her well-being and academic performance. Given her responsibilities and the lack of food and proper care, it is crucial to consult with the safeguarding team and who will potentially make a referral to Social Services/MASH for a comprehensive assessment and support.

Case Study Two: Tunde

Tunde, a 16-year-old student known for his outgoing nature, arrives at college with a visible cut under his right eye. He reports that the injury resulted from a physical altercation with his father, who was angry with him for taking food from the fridge. Tunde mentions that his father was injured more severely during the incident.

Primary Type of Abuse: Physical Abuse

Staff Action Required:

- Consult with a Safeguarding Team: Discuss the situation with a safeguarding colleague to gain a clear understanding of the potential risks and appropriate next steps.

- The Safeguarding Team/ DSL will referral to Social Services/MASH: Given the nature of the injury and the reported violence, refer the case to Social Services or the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for further assessment and intervention to ensure Tunde's safety and address any ongoing risk of

Case Study Three: Maria

Maria, a 32-year-old adult learner who is studying English as a second language, has been attending classes at the college for several months. Recently, she has begun to show signs of distress. During a one-on-one session with her tutor, Maria reveals that she is experiencing significant problems at home. She explains that her partner has been controlling and abusive, frequently belittling her and limiting her access to money. She also discloses that her partner has threatened her if she tries to leave or seek help.

Maria's English language skills are limited, making it difficult for her to communicate her concerns fully and seek help independently.

Primary Type of Abuse: Domestic Abuse

Staff Action Required:

- **Consult with the Safeguarding Colleague:** Discuss Maria's situation with a safeguarding team to gain advice on the appropriate steps to take, considering the complexity of domestic abuse and the language barrier.
- **The Safeguarding Team**: as required will support Maria to report abuse to the police.
- **Provide Support and Resources:** Offer Maria information on support services for domestic abuse, including those that provide help for individuals with language barriers. Ensure she is aware of local support agencies and emergency services that can assist her.

Follow Up: Ensure that Maria has access to continued support and check in with her to offer assistance as needed, maintaining confidentiality and sensitivity throughout the process.

PREVENT

To better understand how to identify and respond to potential cases of radicalisation and extremism, here are two training case studies. These are designed to help staff apply the Prevent Duty guidance effectively.

Case Study 1: Ahmed, Aged 16-18

- **Background:** Ahmed is a 17-year-old student enrolled in a Level 3 Business Studies course. He is generally well-liked by his peers and has been an active participant in classroom discussions. Recently, however, his behaviour has changed. Ahmed has become increasingly withdrawn, avoids group activities, and often isolates himself in the library. Some classmates have noticed that he has started to express more extreme views about global political issues during class debates, which are not typical of his previous opinions.

Signs of Concern:

- Ahmed has started posting and sharing material on social media that supports controversial or extremist viewpoints.
- He has become more vocal about his dissatisfaction with Western governments and frequently talks about conspiracy theories.
- When challenged on his views, he becomes defensive and cites obscure, unreliable sources that he claims are "the truth."

Action Taken:

- A concerned teacher notices Ahmed's behaviour and documents these observations on the MyConcern platform.
- The teacher discusses their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who decides to have a confidential conversation with Ahmed to understand the underlying reasons for his behaviour.
- The DSL, in consultation with the Safeguarding Team, determines that Ahmed may be

vulnerable to radicalisation and contacts the local PREVENT coordinator for further support.
- Ahmed is offered additional support through the college's mentoring program to address his concerns and to provide a safe space for open discussion.

Outcome:

Ahmed begins to engage more positively with his peers during Tutorial and Student Experience workshops on critical thinking and media literacy. He is also linked to community programs that promote understanding and resilience against extremist narratives.

Case Study 2: Priya, Aged 35, Adult Learner

- **Background:** Priya is a 35-year-old adult learner studying an IT course at West Thames College. She is originally from London and has two young children. Priya attends evening classes and is generally a quiet and diligent student. Recently, her tutor has noticed some changes in her behaviour; she has become more vocal about her dissatisfaction with the government and expresses distrust towards mainstream media. She has mentioned attending meetings in her local community where alternative political ideologies are discussed.

Signs of Concern:

- Priya frequently brings up controversial topics in class, steering conversations towards anti-government rhetoric.
- She has been distributing pamphlets about a local group that promotes non-violent but radical changes to the political system.
- During a recent class discussion, Priya expressed sympathy for groups that advocate for civil disobedience and non-violent resistance, stating that "sometimes, breaking the law is the only way to get justice."

Action Taken:

- A fellow student, concerned about Priya's comments, speaks to the course tutor. The tutor reports the concerns to the DSL using the MyConcern platform.
- The DSL meets with Priya privately to discuss her views and any support she might need. During the conversation, Priya reveals she is feeling isolated and frustrated with her personal and financial situation.
- The college Safeguarding Team refers Priya to local community support services that can help address her grievances constructively and provide a positive outlet for her concerns.
- The Safeguarding Team also monitors Priya's progress and ensures she continues to feel supported within the college environment.

Outcome:

- Priya becomes more engaged in class and starts to participate in student-led debates that focus on constructive discussion and understanding diverse perspectives.
- She attends workshops on critical engagement and community involvement, helping her channel her frustrations into positive activism and community support initiatives.

These case studies highlight the importance of identifying signs of vulnerability to radicalisation and ensuring timely intervention and support for students at risk. Staff are encouraged to remain vigilant, foster open discussions, and work closely with the Safeguarding Team to uphold our shared values and ensure a safe learning environment for all.