

# Safeguarding Policy

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Approved by Governing Body: Interim approved by the Safeguarding Governor

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*Putting Students First*

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## 1.Introduction

At the Isle of Wight College, we are committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all our students, staff, and visitors. This policy outlines our approach to Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) and in accordance with the statutory guidance “Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025”.

## 2.Policy Statement

We believe that safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility and that all children and young people have the right to be protected from harm. We are committed to ensuring that our college provides a safe, nurturing, and inclusive environment where students can thrive. We will provide help and support to meet the needs of students as soon as problems emerge and we will work with external agencies to protect students from maltreatment inside or outside the home including online.

## 3.Scope

This policy applies to:

- **All Students** including full time, part time, distance students, adults and apprentices.
- **All Staff** including teaching, administration, support services, governors and other stakeholders
- **Visitors and Contractors** Anyone visiting or working on college premises
- **College Activities** All activities and interactions conducted under the college’s name, including both on and off campus activities and online interactions.

## 4.Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy is guided by the following legislation and guidance:

- [Children Act 1989](#) and [Children Act 2004](#)
- [Care Act 2014](#)
- [Education Act 2002](#)
- [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education 2025](#)
- [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#)
- [Children Missing Education - Guidance for Local authorities](#)
- [Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation | The Children's Society](#)
- [Promoting online safety for children | The Children's Society](#)
- [Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales \(accessible\) - GOV.UK](#)
- [Data protection in schools - Guidance - GOV.UK](#)

### 4b.Related College Policies, Procedures and Documents

- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy and Procedures
- Student Behaviour Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Absence Management Policy (staff)
- Student Attendance Policy

- Staff Discipline and Grievance Procedures
- Safer Recruitment and Selection policy
- Data Protection and GDPR Policy
- LADO referral process
- Whistle blowing policy

## 5. Definitions (see appendix 4 for more information)

**Children We Care For:** Used for more vulnerable students and replaces terminology such as Looked After Children (LACs) and Care Leavers (CL) to reflect a more inclusive and supportive language especially in reference to children in kinship care.

**Safeguarding:** Protecting children and vulnerable adults from maltreatment, preventing impairment of their health or development, ensuring they grow up in safe and effective care, and taking action, including **early help** action, to enable them to have the best outcomes.

**Child Protection:** Part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. Any activity undertaken to protect specific children/young people who are suffering or are likely to suffer significant harm.

Virtual School Head – have non statutory responsibilities to promote the educational achievement of children in kinship care, not just those under local authority care.

**DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead):** A senior member of staff (Assistant Principal) designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection.

DDSL (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead) A member of the safeguarding team designated to deputise for the DSL for safeguarding and child protection.

DSPs (Designated Safeguarding Persons) Members of the safeguarding team who manage referrals and student cases to ensure accurate records and multi-agency collaboration in safeguarding at college.

**LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer):** The role that is notified when it has been alleged that a professional or volunteer who works with children has: behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child.

## 6. Policy Objectives

- **To ensure the safety and well-being of all students:** We aim to create an environment where students feel safe, valued, and respected.
- **To ensure all staff, governors, visitors and contractors are clear of their responsibilities in safeguarding:** All staff, governors, visitors and contractors will be aware of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting safeguarding concerns.
- **To identify and respond to students in need of support and protection:** We encourage an open, transparent, proactive and vigilant culture where safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- **To comply with legal and regulatory requirements:** Our policy aligns with KCSIE 2025 and any other relevant legislation and guidance.

## 7. Responsibilities

- **Governing Body:** The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the college has effective safeguarding policies and procedures in place. They will appoint a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and ensure that safeguarding is a priority in all college activities.
- **Principal:** The principal is responsible for the implementation of this policy and ensuring that all staff are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities. They will support the DSL and ensure that safeguarding is embedded in the college culture.
- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – Assistant Principal:** The DSL is responsible for managing and overseeing all safeguarding concerns. They will provide support and training to staff, liaise with external agencies, and ensure that safeguarding records are maintained accurately.
- **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) – Head of Student Experience:** is responsible for the day to day operation and management of safeguarding processes ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures are managed in accordance with college policies and procedures and can act in the absence of the DSL.
- **Designated Safeguarding Persons (DSPs)** – responsible for triaging safeguarding concerns, supporting the development of safety plans, supporting staff training and inductions, handling safeguarding enquiries including police enquiries ensuring that these are communicated to the DDSL/DSL, managing internal communications about safeguarding and the college’s safeguarding reporting system, supporting professional meetings such as vulnerable student meetings and multi-agency meetings.
- **College Safeguarding Board** – meets half termly and consists of a broad college representation of areas from HR, IT and Health and Safety. The board ensures that the college meets and exceeds its statutory safeguarding responsibilities, ensuring that policies and procedures are up to date, promotion of a proactive safeguarding culture across the college and franchise provisions and oversees the implementation of matters such as PREVENT and British Values. The board receives updates from the safeguarding team and DSL and reviews items such as safeguarding referral data and identify patterns or trends, monitor safeguarding audits and actions plans and assess the effectiveness of safeguarding training and staff development.
- **Staff, Volunteers, Host Families and Contractors:** All staff, volunteers and contractors have a duty to safeguard students. They must be familiar with the International policy and its appendices, attend regular training, and report any concerns to the Safeguarding Team/DSL promptly.
- **Students:** Students are encouraged to speak out about any concerns they may have. The college will provide support and guidance to help them understand safeguarding issues and how to protect themselves and others and how to seek help.

## 8. Procedures

### Reporting a Student Concern:

- Any member of staff, contractor or volunteer who has a concern about a student’s welfare which presents a situation of immediate harm must report this on 999 and then contact the Safeguarding Team and DSL.
- Any member of staff, contractor or volunteer who has a concern about a student’s welfare must report it to the Safeguarding Team/DSL **immediately**.
- Concerns can be reported in person, via email, via the central safeguarding phoneline **01983 550847 or internal line \*\*33**

- All concerns, referrals must also be recorded on the college's safeguarding reporting system – **My Concern**.
- The Safeguarding Team will assess any My Concern referral through a triage system and will take appropriate action, which may include referring the matter to external agencies such as social care or the police.

#### Reporting a Staff Concern:

- Any member of staff, contractor or volunteer who has a concern about a staff member's behaviour, conduct or safeguarding practices must report their concerns to the DSL and the Head of HR
- Please do not report this on My Concern, this will be recorded as appropriate through HR systems.
- The DSL and Head of HR will determine next steps and processes, for example, contact to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

#### Responding to Disclosures:

- If a student discloses a safeguarding concern, staff must listen carefully, reassure the student, and avoid making promises they cannot keep. The staff member should clarify by asking open questions and non-leading questions, but should not investigate.
- Staff can use the **TED** framework for recording the student's concerns using questioning '**tell me**', '**explain to me**', '**describe to me**'
- Staff should record the disclosure as closely to the words spoken by the student and ensure that the disclosure is signed, dated, timed and the location recorded.
- Note any observations e.g. emotional state, visible injuries, without interpretation.
- Staff should record the disclosure on My Concern accurately and report it to the Safeguarding Team **without delay**.
- Staff should not make any promises to keep the disclosure to themselves.
- Staff should only share the information with those who need to know to protect the student and should not discuss the disclosure with colleagues, friends or family.
- The Safeguarding Team/DSL will follow up on the disclosure, ensuring that the student receives the necessary support and protection.
- Disclosures can be emotionally challenging. Staff should seek support from the DSL, HR or their line manager if needed.

#### Record Keeping:

- All safeguarding concerns, disclosures and actions taken must be documented accurately and securely on the My Concern system.
- Staff should scan and upload any written notes to the My Concern referral as these may be required at a later date.
- Records should include the date, time, location and details of the concern, as well as any observations, actions taken and outcomes.
- The Safeguarding Team/DSL is responsible for maintaining and storing safeguarding records in accordance with data protection regulations.

### Safer Recruitment:

- The college will follow safer recruitment practices to ensure that all staff and volunteers are suitable to work with children and vulnerable adults. This includes mandatory Section 128 checks for governors, use of the DfE Check a Teacher's Record portal and a disqualification criterion for governors where this needs to be applied.
- The college will maintain a Single Central Record (SCR) in the HR department which maintains details for all staff, contractors and volunteers and individuals who are on college site or in college activity for longer than three days.
- This includes conducting enhanced DBS checks, obtaining references, and verifying the applicant's identity and qualifications.

The recruitment process will include safeguarding questions and scenarios to assess the applicant's understanding of safeguarding issues.

### Online Safety:

- The college will implement measures to protect students from online risks, including cyberbullying, PREVENT (extremism), exploitation, and exposure to inappropriate content.
- Online safety has an expanded content risk category (KCSIE 2025) which includes misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories as safeguarding risks.
- The college will maintain a filtering system for online safety which filters access to unsafe or age-inappropriate web content. This is monitored and reviewed by the safeguarding team and IT team for different levels of access as may be required for the curriculum. The college maintains a monitoring system 'FastVue' for student online activity.
- The filtering and monitoring system will be reviewed, audited and adjusted by Head of IT and the safeguarding team for AI-related risks, for example, copying AI-generated text and accessing harmful AI content.
- Staff will receive training on online safety and how to support students in staying safe online.
- The college will provide guidance to students and parents on safe internet use and the risks associated with online activities.
- The college will provide guidance to students on Artificial Intelligence (AI) which includes generative AI e.g. chatbots, content creators, deep fakes and AI-generated misinformation.
- Teaching teams will be clear with students about acceptable and unacceptable use of AI and AI misuse for example use of AI for cheating, cyberbullying and grooming bots. Misuse of AI is included under misconduct and malpractice procedures.
- Teaching teams will ensure that curriculum and digital literacy form part of teaching and learning delivery and provide examples of AI generated content, support the understanding of risks associated with deep fakes, misinformation and AI bias and teach students how to use AI responsibly and ethically.

## Attendance:

- Working Together to Improve School Attendance and Missing Children in Education are statutory guidance. In KCSIE 2025 there is clarification that 'absence', not just missing in education, can be a safeguarding concern.
- Students absent from education can be a warning sign of safeguarding concerns including sexual abuse or child criminal exploitation and therefore curriculum staff are required to maintain accurate daily records of attendance.
- College staff will follow the absence management policy (for students) and ensure prompt registration and recording of attendance for all students with unexplained absences followed up with the support of the Student Engagement Coaches and regular reviews of attendance conducted
- Concern for attendance below 79% will be targeted by the Student Support team and contact made to parent/carers.
- Concerns about attendance should be reported to the Teaching and Learning Manager and Head of Learning. Where work with external agencies such as the virtual school is required, this may also involve the College Safeguarding Team.

## Collaboration and Support:

- KCSIE (2025) emphasises the importance of Early Help and multi-agency collaboration. The Safeguarding Team will work closely with external agencies such as early help, local authority, social services, and police to stay informed and provide input to safeguarding cases and safeguarding issues such as PREVENT current threats and best practices.

### Gender Questioning Students (See Appendix X):

Following the Supreme Court ruling in April 2025 which clarified that 'man', 'woman' and 'sex' in the Equality Act 2010 refer to biological sex, not gender identity, or the legal gender recorded on a Gender Recognition Certificate (GCR), colleges must safeguard and promote the welfare of all young people including those questioning their gender.

Gender reassignment remains a protected characteristic under the Equality Act, 2010, but does not override sex based provisions in law.

Colleges are not legally required to allow social transitioning (e.g. name/pronoun changes). Each case must be assessed individually.

For students under 18 years, colleges are required to include parent/carers in social transitioning decision making unless this would pose a significant safeguarding risk.

Colleges need to evaluate the effects of requests such as social transitioning and the use of facilities, not only on the individual student but also on the broader college community.

Colleges need to provide single-sex spaces and services (e.g. toilets, changing rooms, sports teams) based on biological sex, not self-identified gender. Trans students cannot automatically access facilities aligned with their gender identity.

Alternative arrangements can be offered which are private, secure and respectful, but do not undermine the legal status of single-sex spaces.

Roles involving intimate care or safeguarding may now be lawfully designated by sex-at-birth.

Initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality (e.g. STEM for girls) must be based on biological sex not gender identity.

## 9. Training and Awareness

- **Staff training** Mandatory training for all staff and governors to complete every three years. Ongoing staff updates via In the Loop and training sessions on staff development days. Yearly staff email update of the safeguarding policy and any relevant KCSIE changes provided at the start of the academic year, which includes a safeguarding presentation for staff and a separate one for students.
- Staff updates around AI use and how to recognise AI-related safeguarding risks e.g. deep fakes, hallucinated content.
- Staff updates on inclusive practices.
- **Student Awareness** Safeguarding processes and the safeguarding team introduced/refreshed in induction weeks. Safer IT user guide provided to all students. Safeguarding focus groups in the academic year and safeguarding is part of the student survey.
- **Safer recruitment training:** Training for managers and staff who are involved in recruitment procedures. Single Central Record (SCR) maintained in Human Resources department and audited a minimum of three times a year by the DSL. Safeguarding training, guidance and process provided and completed for volunteers and contractors.

## 10. Monitoring and Review

- The safeguarding policy will be reviewed annually by the DSL and approved by the governing body to ensure its effectiveness.
- The college safeguarding board will have oversight of the policy in practice in college and review safeguarding issues and processes as part of their termly meetings
  - The Safeguarding Team/DSL will monitor the implementation of the policy and report any issues or concerns to the governing body.
  - Feedback from staff, students and parents will be considered in the review process.

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains compliant with current legislation and is still effective.

## 11. Approval

Reviewed by Assistant Principal.

Approved by Principal or Chief Operating Officer and Deputy CEO.

Final sign off Chair of Corporation.

Author:	Samantha Rooney & Susan Churches
Approved by Governing Body:	Approved by the Safeguarding Governor from 1 <sup>st</sup> Sept as an interim policy until first Curriculum and Quality in September 2025
Effective date:	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2025
Target audience:	All staff, students, visitors, partners, volunteers and external contractors
Available:	College website, Intranet, staff and student induction, employee code of conduct
Review:	Annual review of safeguarding guidance according to Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
Policy review date:	August 2026

## Appendices

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