


Author: HR Project Manager	Last Review Date: August 2025
Responsible Person: Daryl Newsome Chair of Trustees	New Review Date: August 2026
Version: 6.0	Signature: 

SUMMARY OF KEY CONTACTS:

College Designated Safeguarding Lead & Prevent Lead	Charlotte Carroll safeguarding@abdocollege.org.uk
College Safeguarding Officers	Paula Hall Rachel Blazyca-White safeguarding@abdocollege.org.uk
College Mental Health First Aiders	Katie Nicholls Rachel Blazyca-White
How do I...?	
Report a non-urgent Safeguarding concern to the College	Email the Designated Safeguarding Lead, via safeguarding@abdocollege.org.uk
Report a non-urgent Prevent concern to the College	Email the designated Prevent Lead via prevent@abdocollege.org.uk
Report an urgent Prevent concern outside of College hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For immediate concerns please call the Police on 999 Email the Kent Prevent Team: You can email the Prevent team at preventreferrals@kent.police.uk to discuss your concerns before making a referral or call 0800 011 3764
For mental health support	Urgent Mental health Helpline - 24/7 Contact Centre – 0800 783 9111
Samaritans	116 123, or email jo@samaritans.org

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to report concerns about professionals working with children or vulnerable adults	lesasenquiries@kent.gov.uk
Kent County Council Adult Safeguarding – to report a Safeguarding concern outside of college hours	03000 419191

1. POLICY STATEMENT

ABDO College is committed to ensuring the safety of everyone involved in our activities, and in accordance with the Department for Education's Statutory Guidance for Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024, the Prevent Duty (Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015) and Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults (Care Act 2014). This includes safeguarding children and adults at risk during their interactions relating to our activities, irrespective of their relationship, duration or location.

We teach in a tertiary level educational setting, which is predominantly an adult-based learning environment. We expect all our employees and students to demonstrate behaviours, subject and study skills levels appropriate to thriving in this environment.

Our policy extends to our course delivery (including in person teaching, face to face teaching during residential block delivery and blended learning), research activities, recruitment and other initiatives.

All of our employees including permanent staff, contractors, guest lecturers, shared services, trustees, student applicants, college visitors and partner organisations are expected to act within the remit of this policy statement. We use the term students to refer to all types of learners including apprentices.

2. PURPOSE

This policy's purpose is to:

1. Ensure effective arrangements to: always act in the best interests of children and students to protect them online and offline, including when they are receiving remote (blended) education.
2. Identify children or adults at risk who may need early help, and who are at risk of harm or have been harmed. This can include, but is not limited to, neglect, abuse (including by their peers), grooming or exploitation, sexual abuse and online harm.



3. Ensure staff know how to secure the help that children, adults at risk and students need and, if required, refer concerns in a timely way to those who have the expertise to help manage safe recruitment and allegations about adults who may be a risk to children and vulnerable adults.
4. Promote an environment free from harm, assuring employees, students, applicants and college visitors that their experience at ABDO College will be positive.
5. Set out our responsibility relating to the safeguarding of children and adults at risk.
6. Identify the key roles and responsibilities relating to the safeguarding of children and adults at risk.
7. Facilitate the management of the risk associated with the duty to protect vulnerable groups.
8. Ensure IT usage is monitored with appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place to block internet access to harmful sites and inappropriate content.
9. Ensure all staff maintain an attitude of *it could happen here* where safeguarding is concerned.

3. KEY DEFINITIONS

In our **safeguarding arrangements**, we use the following terms:

Child: References to “child” or “children” means anyone under 18 years of age. The definition is derived from the Children Act 1989 Section 105.

Adult at Risk: An “Adult at Risk” is someone over 18 years of age who
(i) has needs for care and support; and
(ii) is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
(iii) is unable to protect themselves from the abuse or neglect due to their care and support needs.

The definition is derived from the Care Act 2014 Section 42(1).

Our **safeguarding responsibilities** extend to:

- a. all current students
- b. prospective students engaged in ABDO College activities
- c. adults at risk who are applicants and students
- d. children and adults at risk engaged in College activities, whether on campus or elsewhere

- e. external organisations/individuals where College activities engage children and adults at risk, e.g. patients who students interact with as a part of their exams.

Prevent – the duty embedded in Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and placed on certain bodies in exercising their functions to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.” It is called Prevent in this Policy.

Channel – a multi-agency approach to safeguarding, supporting and protecting children and vulnerable adults at risk of radicalisation, extremism or terrorist-related activity.

Terrorism – any action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person or people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system.

Radicalisation – Process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

Extremism – the vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Academic freedom – the principle that academic staff shall have freedom within the law to question and test received wisdom and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions, without placing themselves in jeopardy of losing their jobs or privileges they may have at the provider (Higher Education and Research Act 2017 s14(7)).

Freedom of Speech – the principle that governing bodies are required to ‘take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that freedom of speech within the law is secured for members, students and employees of the establishment and for visiting speakers’ (Education (No.2) Act 1986 s43). Freedom of speech includes written materials and other forms of expression and is not limited to the spoken word.

Vulnerable individual – an individual shown to be, on some significant level, a risk to themselves or others if assistance is not provided.

4. OUR APPROACH

In implementing our safeguarding and prevent duties, we will:

1. Address legal requirements.
2. Take account of relevant guidance and good practice relating to further/higher education.
3. Provide for the protection of the children and adults at risk who interact with ABDO College.
4. Provide employees and students with guidance on procedures that must be adopted.
5. Set out expectations in the event an individual may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.

In implementing our Safeguarding and Prevent Policy, we will:

1. Value the needs, views and best interests of those considered to be at risk.
2. Devise safeguarding procedures and guidelines for students.
3. Recruit employees and students safely by ensuring completion of all appropriate checks.
4. Share information about safeguarding and prevent good practice with employees and students.
5. Provide effective management for employees and students through supervision, support and training.
6. Share personal information about concerns with internal and external individuals appropriately and within the information-sharing protocols.
7. Safeguard our students and employees online through the use of appropriate filtering and monitoring systems to block internet access to harmful sites and inappropriate content and to monitor particular language and phrases in line with DfE guidelines.
8. Embed the safeguarding and protection of our students and employees

In following this Policy, employees should consider other relevant College procedures relating to safeguarding and the Prevent duty, health and safety, data protection and equality, diversity and inclusion.

5. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Safeguarding and Prevent Responsibilities

ABDO College has safeguarding responsibilities under Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), known as the Prevent duty. We regard this as part of our safeguarding arrangements in meeting our responsibilities relating to individuals.

Any behaviour which suggests an individual might be at risk of being drawn into terrorism needs addressing in line with our Prevent arrangements to evaluate the matter and put appropriate support in place.

As with other types of safeguarding, the threshold for consideration is low. Prevent is concerned with early intervention to safeguard and divert people away from the risk they face.

This Safeguarding and Prevent Policy sets out how ABDO College addresses its statutory responsibility to pay due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. It is a response to the UK Government's strategy to reduce terrorism set out in the CTSA 2015. ABDO College believes individuals being drawn into terrorism is a form of harm. We accept our obligations arising from the Prevent legislation as an important element of our general duty of care to protect our stakeholders from all forms of harm.

As an organisation, ABDO College aims to balance the requirements of Prevent with our core belief that the cultural, religious and ethnic diversity of our employees and students should be celebrated and supported. We must also meet our legal obligations to allow and promote academic freedom and freedom of speech, which are the essential components of a thriving community of students and the employees who support them.

The duty applies to 'people', so the approach includes any concerns about employees and students.

All employees are responsible for reporting internally any concern about a person at risk of being drawn into terrorism. The Prevent duty forms part of ABDO College's Safeguarding arrangements and concerns should be reported to our Designated Safeguarding Lead. Our approach addresses any student at risk as a Safeguarding issue, handled under the care and concern procedures.

When there is a concern about a person at risk of being drawn into terrorism, there is a three-step process employees should follow:-

1. Notice - if someone displays changes in their behaviour.



2. Check - There could be many different drivers behind these types of changes in behaviour, not just radicalisation. It is important therefore to understand why these changes are happening before jumping to any conclusions.

3. Share - It is essential to share information to identify, assess, and manage risk effectively.

No employee should judge whether someone is at risk of being drawn into terrorism but follow the internal safeguarding reporting procedures set out below. Employees should not report any concerns externally but raise the matter with the relevant manager or Safeguarding Lead.

Key individuals (Safeguarding Lead, Principal and HR) carefully review a case before the Safeguarding Lead makes an external reference.

Our employees complete training in our Prevent policy. Safeguarding is a standing agenda item at senior management team meetings for group discussion and enables the Safeguarding Lead to brief on relevant developments. Safeguarding is a standing agenda item on College staff meetings.

Under Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, ABDO College recognises Prevent as a vital part of its safeguarding framework. We treat the risk of individuals being drawn into terrorism as a form of harm and respond with early intervention and proportionate support.

To meet our Prevent obligations, ABDO College will:

- Assess the risks associated with Prevent and draw up a plan to mitigate these
- Have effective welfare support systems, linking to DfE Prevent co-ordinators, local authorities, or the police if necessary, including internal and external information-sharing arrangements
- Monitor external speakers and events while upholding freedom of speech according to College Policies
- Provide ongoing Prevent training for relevant staff
- Ensure an IT usage policy aligned with Prevent requirements
- Engage students in understanding policies related to campus and online activities.

At ABDO College, safeguarding is a shared responsibility that extends to all members of our community—students, employees, and leadership alike. We are committed to creating a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment where children, and adults at risk and our overall student body are protected from harm, including the risk of being drawn into terrorism.

Whole-College Commitment

Safeguarding and Prevent responsibilities are embedded across all levels of the College. While designated leads are appointed, every individual who interacts with children or vulnerable adults has a duty to act promptly and responsibly when concerns arise. This includes identifying risks, sharing concerns, and contributing to a culture of vigilance and care. We see Safeguarding as everyone's responsibility. This includes our students as well as our employees.

Governance and Leadership

- **Board of Trustees:** Approves annual compliance with safeguarding standards and the Prevent duty. Ensures a link trustee is appointed as the Designated Safeguarding and Prevent link and ensure the College has appointed a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- **Senior Leadership Team:** Provides assurance to the Board on compliance and has approved the Safeguarding and Prevent Duty Policy
- **Principal:** Oversees all College's operations and manages concerns or allegations involving staff. Ensures the College has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and deputy DSLs and provides assurance to the Board on the support and training of this team.

Designated Leads

ABDO College has appointed a **Designated Safeguarding and Prevent Lead (DSL)** supported by two **Deputy Safeguarding Leads** trained to the same standard. These roles ensure robust implementation of safeguarding and Prevent responsibilities.

Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding and Prevent Lead

- Lead safeguarding and child protection efforts, including online safety and monitoring systems.
- Ensure safeguarding duties are clearly defined in job descriptions.
- Hold sufficient authority to carry out safeguarding responsibilities effectively.
- Receive appropriate time, training, resources, and support.
- Advise and support staff on safeguarding matters.
- Participate in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings.
- Oversee individual safeguarding cases and maintain confidentiality.
- Ensure compliance with legislation, regulation, and guidance.
- Liaise with local safeguarding and Prevent teams.
- Maintain a central record of safeguarding issues.
- Ensure all staff understand their safeguarding and Prevent responsibilities.
- Monitor completion of relevant training through line managers.
- Report matters related to Prevent compliance in line with monitoring guidance.



- Liaise with external agencies including DfE Prevent coordinators, local authorities, and police.
- Promote awareness of Prevent among staff and students.
- Ensure Prevent responsibilities are integrated into existing safeguarding procedures.

Our Values

ABDO College implements safeguarding and Prevent duties in a proportionate, risk-based manner that respects academic freedom, freedom of speech, and the rich cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity of our community. These principles are central to our mission of fostering a safe and thriving learning environment.

6. AGREEMENT TO FOLLOW THIS POLICY

The safeguarding and prevent policy is fully supported by the ABDO College Management and Board of Trustees and is reviewed annually to incorporate feedback from employee and student representatives. If duties change between a review period, the policy will be updated.

7. OUR TRAINING

Our Safeguarding and Prevent Lead will receive appropriate training to lead on this area, together with the provision of annual refresher training. We commit to an annual development session for our staff focused on safeguarding.

Our employees complete training in line with our Safeguarding policy. This includes mandatory safeguarding training as part of probation and mandatory refresher safeguarding training every year. Training is recorded in our HR system and line managers are responsible for monitoring completion. It is a standing agenda item for discussion at staff meetings to enable group discussion and the Safeguarding Lead to brief on relevant developments.

Our employees whose roles and responsibilities include regular contact with children and adults at risk will receive training and guidance most appropriate to their role:

- **All Lecturers or other employees qualified as registered optometrists, contact lens and dispensing opticians and management roles** will complete safeguarding training to Level 2 of the Intercollegiate Safeguarding Guidance for Adults (2018) and children (2019). This training is provided through the Association of British Dispensing Opticians as a part of continuous professional development, with a 3-year cycle for renewal. In addition, they will undertake annual Safeguarding training provided by the Education and Training Foundation.
- **All non General Optical Council (GOC) registered employees** will complete safeguarding training to Level 1 of the Intercollegiate Safeguarding

Guidance for Adults (2018) and children (2019). Studying this guidance and discussing any points that are unclear with a manager is sufficient to meet level 1 requirements. In addition, they will undertake annual Safeguarding training provided by the Education and Training Foundation.

- In addition, **all employees who work directly with children** are required to read Part 1 of the Department for Education Statutory Guidance for Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 [link](#)
- All employees **who don't work directly** with children are required to read Annex A of the Department for Education Statutory Guidance for Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 [link](#)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will communicate updates via 'All Staff' emails and / or Staff training days, depending on which is the most appropriate.

All of our employees will be made aware of this Policy and guidance and will be required to confirm understanding on an annual basis as part of their performance appraisal. Training records will be maintained and monitored via Breathe HR.

All employees must know about the Prevent duty, and ABDO College's obligations, and are provided with the contact details for the Designated Safeguarding Lead during their training.

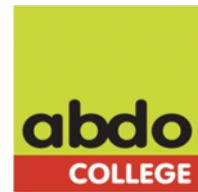
Relevant employees receive training to recognise those vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and potential signs of radicalisation. The training explains how to appropriately and sensitively manage any emerging concern.

For those responsible for assessing specific concerns, primarily staff in Operations and Designated Safeguarding Lead, there is specific training concerning differentiating the risk of radicalisation from other issues and annual refresher training. It includes assessing the opportunities and requirements to share information confidentially where needed.

All employees will undertake Prevent duty awareness and annual refresher training to learn how to support people susceptible to radicalisation. This training is provided via GOV.UK [link](#)

The Safeguarding Lead who will make Prevent referrals to the Police will also undertake Prevent referral training provided via GOV.UK [link](#)

Training records will be maintained and monitored via Breathe HR.



1. RISK ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLAN

ABDO College assesses the risk of individuals pertaining to safeguarding and Prevent. We use the Government recommended Internal Prevent and Safeguarding Risk Assessment for Further Education. The Board of Trustees assesses this risk assessment annually and internally the College reviews this quarterly.

The Board of Trustees considers what action might mitigate the impact/likelihood of that risk crystallising and include it in the Prevent Action Plan.

2. AGREEMENT TO FOLLOW THIS POLICY

The safeguarding and prevent policy is fully supported by the ABDO College Management and Board of Trustees and is regularly reviewed to incorporate feedback from employee and student representatives.

SAFEGUARDING AWARENESS

Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk

1. PREVENTION OF ABUSE

We share Safeguarding policies and procedures including Prevent with students during the onboarding process. During week one of their induction, student guidelines are provided and students are required to confirm that they have read and understood the policies and procedures in place. This includes the completion of a short multiple-choice quiz to check their understanding prior to commencing academic studies. Students are required to re-confirm their understanding at the commencement of each academic year as a refresher and to provide an update on current best practice.

Contact details for the ABDO College Safeguarding Lead are shared with all students at their induction, together with the process for raising concerns about themselves or others and the referral routes.

We provide students and employees with guidance to help them understand what constitutes abuse and to recognise some of the warning signs around abuse or neglect in themselves and others. These can be found in Annex 1. These are discussed in our annual staff training and as a part of the induction/refresher for students at the beginning of each academic year.

2. GAINING COMMITMENT

Our commitment to safeguarding is embedded within the core values of the College to protect our students and employees. This commitment is supported through our policies and procedures, recruitment and selection, sharing of safeguarding good practice, supervision, support and training.

To gain commitment from our students and employees, our training is completed at regular intervals and support mechanisms are regularly communicated via a number of different channels. Students and employees are required to undertake associated activities to demonstrate their understanding and commitment. The completion of these activities is monitored and follow up action put in place should a student or employee not be engaging.

3. GETTING SUPPORT

Safeguarding policies and procedures including Prevent are shared with students during the onboarding process. Details of how students should raise any concerns, together with contact details for Student Liaison, Welfare and the Designated Safeguarding Lead are available via the online learning environment and student handbook.

Weekly pastoral sessions are a part of the timetable when students are attending ABDO College on block. This provides a drop in for students to talk to lecturers or admin staff on any subject or raise any concerns they may have. All students also have a coach assigned who meets them regularly throughout the programme and provides pastoral support.

4. REPORTING SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT

Any employee who detects possible signs of neglect or abuse in a child or adult (including possible domestic or elder abuse) should take immediate action by following the procedure below.

Guidance on some of the warning signs around abuse or neglect can be found in Annex 1. A decision tree for referrals can be found in Annex 3. For any concerns, advice should be sought from the ABDO College Safeguarding and Prevent Lead.

5. SAFEGUARDING ONLINE

To keep our students and employees safe online, we use appropriate filtering and monitoring systems to block internet access to harmful sites and inappropriate content and to monitor particular language and phrases in line with guidelines.

Safeguarding Reporting Procedure – See decision tree in Annex 3

1. Any factual signs and symptoms of potential or suspected abuse or neglect should be noted without alarming the child or adult at risk concerned or alerting a possible abuser.

If appropriate, a child or adult at risk should be listened to sympathetically, however, there should be no agreement made to not to tell anyone what has been said.

2. Any safeguarding concerns should be discussed immediately with the relevant manager, or Safeguarding Lead. If appropriate, advice should be sought from the local authority safeguarding team.

An employee may be the only person to have noticed anything unusual or whom the child or adult at risk has been confided in. Employees therefore have a professional duty to act as their advocate and ensure that the issue is raised with an appropriate person.

3. Prior to raising the issue with the safeguarding team or official, consider and agree with the relevant manager or Safeguarding Lead whether it is appropriate to seek the child's/parent's/adult at risk's agreement to reporting the information, for them to be informed of the report, or whether doing so would place them at increased risk. It might be appropriate to seek the agreement, for

example, when abuse or radicalisation by a third party, such as an estranged parent, sibling or other person is suspected.

Relevant personal information can be shared lawfully if it is to keep a child or adult at risk safe from neglect or physical, emotional or mental harm, or if it is protecting their physical, mental or emotional wellbeing. The Data Protection Act 2018 specifically includes 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a condition that allows employees to share information without consent. Information can be shared legally without consent, if an employee is unable to, or cannot be reasonably expected to, gain consent from the individual, or if seeking consent could place a child or adult at risk.

4. If appropriate, inform the safeguarding team local to the student and supply them with a copy of the recorded observations, using their specific referral forms available from the relevant local council website.

When reporting information, reports should be restricted to:-

- the nature of the injury, suspicious behaviour or concern
- facts which support the purpose

The employee and relevant manager or Safeguarding Lead must agree what the person/relatives/legal guardians/carers will be told, by whom and when, and the employee should keep a note of what has been agreed together with a copy of the referral form.

5. Telephone notifications to the local safeguarding team should be confirmed in writing by email or letter within 48 hours. If a non-secure method of communication is being used, the notification should be anonymised or password protected.

Confirmation of referral should be received from the local safeguarding team within one working day. If confirmation has not been received within three working days, further contact should be made with the local safeguarding team and continued (including considering using another route) until confirmation of receipt or other substantive communication or advice is received.

If the employee is not available to do this, agreement with an appropriately senior person in ABDO College should be made that this will happen and the agreement recorded as part of 6 below.

6. All observations made by the employee, advice sought and received from the relevant manager, Designated Safeguarding Lead and local safeguarding team and actions taken must be recorded and stored confidentially and separately from the student/apprentice's record i.e. an internal secured drive with access restricted to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and, as appropriate, the Principal.

Records should include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- details of how the concern was followed up and resulted
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

In the unlikely event that an individual is at immediate risk of harm, the police should be contacted.

7. Any employee who detects inappropriate behaviour by a colleague (See Annex 1) should take immediate action by following the reporting procedure outlined above.

Annex 1 also includes details of the following to raise awareness:

- what to look out for – common signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect
- what to look out for – inappropriate staff behaviour towards a student.

Annex 2 includes advice on signs that an adult or child may have been or is being drawn into terrorism. Employees will receive regular training to assist with spotting the signs of radicalising influences and will form a part of regular group discussions at staff meetings.

8. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be responsible for raising any inappropriate behaviour which may constitute misconduct and will be dealt with in accordance with the ABDO College disciplinary policy and procedure. ABDO College and Dispensing and Contact Lens students are registered with the General Optical Council (GOC) and are therefore obliged to abide by the GOC Code of Conduct or governmental regulation in law. Referral to GOC Fitness to Practise may also therefore be appropriate.

Prevent Reporting Procedure – See decision tree in Annex 4

The Prevent agenda requires organisations to work with the police to contribute to the prevention of terrorism. The definition of 'at risk' has been widened to include individuals who might be at risk of being radicalised. These individuals should be identified and referred to the regional Prevent team contacts for appropriate advice and support. Advice on signs that an adult or child may have been or is being drawn into terrorism are at Annex 2.

Prevent team contact information should be available on the local police or Council website but local arrangements can vary. In practice it is probably best to search the Internet for 'Contact my local Prevent team'.

Our local Prevent contact is Kent Police with their dedicated Prevent resource found here: <https://www.kent.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/t/prevent/prevent/>

As in other safeguarding situations, the procedure outlined below should be followed:

1. Any factual signs and symptoms of potential or suspected radicalisation should be noted without alarming the person concerned.
2. Any concerns should be discussed immediately with the relevant manager or Prevent Lead. If appropriate, advice should be sought from the local Prevent team.
3. If appropriate, inform the local Prevent team and supply them with a copy of the recorded observations using their specific referral forms, available from the local Prevent team website.

When reporting information, reports should be restricted to

- the nature of the suspicious behaviour or concern
- facts which support the purpose

4. Telephone notifications to the local Prevent team should be confirmed in writing by email or letter within 48 hours. If a non-secure method of communication is being used, the notification should be anonymised or password protected.

Confirmation of referral should be received from the local Prevent team within one working day. If confirmation has not been received within three working days, further contact should be made with the local Prevent team and continued (including considering using another route) until confirmation of receipt or other substantive communication or advice is received.

If the employee is not be available to do this, agreement with an appropriately person in ABDO College should be made that this will happen and record that agreement as part of Step 5 below.

5. All observations made by the employee, advice sought and received from the relevant manager, Prevent Lead and local Prevent team and actions taken must be recorded and stored confidentially and separately from the student/apprentice's record i.e. an internal secured drive with access restricted to the Prevent Lead and, as appropriate, the Principal.

ADVICE, SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

Local Safeguarding Services

It is important to ensure that the correct local safeguarding team to the student are contacted to ensure the most effective support is put in place. By way of an example, the contact details for Kent are provided below:



The local Safeguarding Adults contact for ABDO College is the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board: <https://www.kmsab.org.uk/p/professionals/report-abuse-1> all necessary forms and process advice is present on their site.

The local Safeguarding Children contact for ABDO College is Kent Safeguarding <https://www.kscmp.org.uk/> all necessary forms and process advice is present on their site.

Local Advice and Support for Safeguarding

All local authorities in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland have duties to make arrangements to promote co-operation and co-ordination between local agencies regarding local protection procedures, including NHS England Regional Teams and Local Health Boards (LHBs).

In England and Wales local authorities have duties under the Children Act 2004 to promote cooperation between themselves, NHS England Regional Teams and Local Health Boards to improve the wellbeing of children, to make arrangements when carrying out their normal functions to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

Across the UK specialist safeguarding experts are available to provide advice and support to local practices and practitioners about whether to make a referral of suspected abuse or neglect.

In the case of children in England, Wales and Northern Ireland designated safeguarding doctors or nurses and protection officers perform these functions.

In England, every Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is required to have a designated safeguarding doctor and designated safeguarding nurse.

Public Health Wales has a structure of designated and named safeguarding professionals in each of the seven health boards.

In Northern Ireland, each Health and Social Services Trust has designated professionals for child protection.

In Scotland child protection advisors and nurse consultants fulfil this role. Some health boards in Scotland also have Child Protection Nurse Advisors.

PARTICIPATION IN SAFEGUARDING ASSESSMENTS/PLANS

People who have been victims, or who are at risk, of abuse or neglect have the same needs and rights as other members of society.

Social services may ask Colleges to provide information about students, or to take part in safeguarding assessments.

Should colleagues receive these requests, should be passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead for action as appropriate.

MENTAL CAPACITY AND DEPRIVATION OF LIBERTY SAFEGUARDS

People who lack the mental capacity to make certain decisions for themselves, for example with regard to their medical care or entering into sales contracts, are considered particularly at risk. Lack of capacity is usually the result of a disability, mental or physical condition or trauma that affects the way the mind or brain works. This can be a temporary or permanent condition and can affect a broad range of decisions or only decisions on a certain issue.

Mental Capacity and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards were introduced as part of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 to give protection to people who lack mental capacity.

The Mental Capacity Act sets out five statutory principles to protect people who lack capacity to make particular decisions, but also to maximise their ability to make decisions, or to participate in decision-making, as far as they are able. Professionals working with people who may lack capacity should be guided by these principles and the supporting examples set out in the Act.

The five statutory principles are:

1. A person must be assumed to have capacity unless it is established that they lack capacity.
2. A person is not to be treated as unable to make a decision unless all practicable steps to help them to do so have been taken without success.
3. A person is not to be treated as unable to make a decision merely because they make an unwise decision.
4. An act done, or decision made, on behalf of a person who lacks capacity must be done, or made, in their best interests.
5. Before the act is done, or the decision is made, consider whether the outcome can be achieved as effectively in a way that is less restrictive of the person's rights and freedom of action.

Associated Documents

Freedom of Speech and Expression Policy
College Guest Speaker Policy
College Safer Recruitment Policy

Annex 1

What to look out for – common signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect:

[Keeping children safe in education 2024: part one](#) provides further guidance on the following:

- Child abduction and community safety incidents
- Child Criminal exploitation (CCE) and Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Children and the court system
- Children missing from education
- Children with family members in prison
- County Lines
- Cybercrime
- Domestic abuse
- Homelessness
- Mental health
- Modern slavery and the National referral Mechanism
- Preventing radicalisation
- The Prevent duty
- Channel
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges
- Serious violence
- So-called 'honour' based abuse (including female genital mutilation and forced marriage)
- FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers
- Forced marriage

CHILDREN

Physical abuse

Eye injuries, unexplained retinal haemorrhage, fractures, hypothermia, lacerations, subdural haemorrhage, teeth marks, scalds, scars, petechiae (small haemorrhages on the skin), abrasions, bites, bruises, burns, cold injuries (e.g. swollen, red hands or feet), cuts, bites, wearing inappropriate clothes e.g. long sleeves even in hot weather, fear of physical contact, shrinking back if touched, bald patches, aggression.

Neglect

Bites, dirty clothing, dirty child, head lice, persistent infestations, scabies, sunburn, tooth decay, not complying with treatment/advice.

Emotional/behavioural abuse

Age-inappropriate behaviour, aggression, body-rocking, changes in emotional or behavioural state, fearfulness, runaway behaviour, continual self-deprecation (I'm

stupid, ugly, worthless, etc), overreaction to mistakes, extreme fear in new situations, neurotic behaviour (rocking, hair-twisting), extremes of passivity or aggression.

Sexual abuse

Sexualised behaviour, age-inappropriate behaviour, regressive behaviour, being overly affectionate, being isolated and withdrawn, inability to concentrate, lack of trust or fear of someone they know well.

Other

Abuse might manifest in other ways, for example mental ill-health, alcohol or drug misuse.

You should also be generally aware of the potential for the internet or social media to be used to perpetrate abuse.

Trafficking and female genital mutilation (FGM)

Child trafficking and female genital mutilation (FGM) are forms of abuse and should be addressed in exactly the same way as any other form of abuse.

Looked After Children

This term is used to describe any child who is in the care of the local authority or who is provided with accommodation by the local authority social services department for a continuous period of more than 24 hours. This covers children in respect of whom a compulsory care order or other court order has been made. It also refers to children accommodated voluntarily, including under an agreed series of short-term placements which may be called short breaks, family link placements or respite care.

Abuse, neglect and exploitation

All staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation understanding that children and adults can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the college, inside and outside of home, and online.

Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children or adults who may be in need of help or protection.

All college staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children and adults are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra familial harms take a variety of different forms and children or adults can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own

intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation.

All staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children and adults are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline. Children and adults can also abuse others online, this can take the form of abusive, harrasing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography to those who do not want to receive such content.

In all cases, if staff are unsure, they should always speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

Indicators of abuse and neglect

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child or adult. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or adult by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children or adults of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. Children and adults may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children or adults may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

Physical abuse: a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or adult. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child or vulnerable adult.

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child or adult such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the persons emotional development. It may involve conveying to a person that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the person opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing a person frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or

corruption of someone. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child or vulnerable adult, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or adult at risk to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the person is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving someone in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging someone to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child or vulnerable adult in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their college's policy and procedures for dealing with it.

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a vulnerable adult or child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children or adults at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and/or alcohol misuse, unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education, serious violence (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos can be signs that someone is at risk.

Below are some safeguarding issues all staff should be aware of.

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) and child sexual exploitation (CSE)

Both CCE and CSE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal or sexual activity. It may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CCE and CSE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

Child criminal exploitation (CCE)

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation, as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge for example through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.

CSE can affect any child who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex.

Some children do not realise they are being exploited and may believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

Whilst all staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific legal duty on teachers. If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police.

Mental health

All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, are well placed to observe children and adults at risk day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Schools and colleges can access a range of advice to help them identify those in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child or adult at risk that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken to follow their school or college's child protection policy and by speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

All staff should be aware of the indicators, which may signal children or adults at risk are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school or college, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in educational performance, signs of self harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

Physical abuse

Unexplained falls or major injuries, injuries/bruises at different stages of healing, bruising in unusual sites e.g. inner arms, abrasions, teeth indentations, injuries to head or face, very passive.

Elder abuse

As above, plus hand-slap marks, pinches or grip marks, physical pain, burns, blisters, unexplained or sudden weight loss, recoiling from physical contact, stress or anxiety in presence of certain individuals, perpetrator describing person as uncooperative/ungrateful/unwilling to care for self, restraint, unreasonable confinement e.g. locking in or tying up.

Psychological abuse

Withdrawal, depression, cowering, fearfulness, agitation, confusion, changes in behaviour, obsequious willingness to please, no self-esteem, fear, anger.

Domestic abuse

Bruises, black eyes, painful limbs, make-up covering bruises, damaged clothes or accessories, individual "walking on eggshells" if partner around, partner belittling or putting down individual, partner acting excessively jealously or possessively, partner insisting on accompanying individual at all times, partner nervous if individual is out of their sight, individual having limited access to money, phone, car etc.

Other

Abuse might also manifest as mental ill-health, alcohol or drug misuse.

Non Verbal Communication / Indirect Signalling

Be alert for indirect forms of signalling or silent cries for help. For instance some abused children or adults at risk may be unable to articulate or speak about what may be happening to them but may try to communicate in other ways e.g. rolled-up sleeves, low necks or shorts which reveal bruises or injury sites.

COLLEAGUES AND EMPLOYEE WARNING SIGNS

Colleagues or employees paying particular attention to a student or a group of students appearing overfriendly with particular individuals, families or groups, going out of their way to see the same individual without obvious reason, seeming overly familiar with an individual, always seeking out a particular individual.

Annex 2

PREVENT: SIGNS THAT A PERSON IS BEING RADICALISED

A member of the College team may have concerns relating to an individual's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be being drawn into terrorist activity. This might include other members of the College team.

Radicalisation can be difficult to spot. Signs or indicators that someone is being drawn into terrorist activity may include:

- Graffiti symbols, writing or artwork promoting extremist messages or images
- Employees/students accessing terrorist related material online, including through social network sites
- Parental/family reports of changes in behaviour, friendships or actions, coupled with requests for assistance
- Partner organisations', local authority services' and police reports of issues affecting individuals in other organisations
- Students voicing opinions drawn from terrorist related ideologies and narratives
- Use of extremist or hate terms to exclude others or incite. Signs that may indicate a person is being radicalised include:
 - isolating themselves from family and friends
 - talking as if from a scripted speech
 - unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
 - a sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
 - increased levels of anger
 - increased secretiveness, especially around Internet

Individuals who are at risk of radicalisation may have low self-esteem, or be victims of bullying or discrimination. Extremists may target them and tell them they can be part of something special, later brainwashing them into cutting themselves off from their friends and family.

In the case of children, these signs do not necessarily mean a child is being radicalised – it may be normal teenage behaviour or a sign that something else is wrong.

Nevertheless, if you notice any of these signs or indicators, you should follow the reporting procedure set out in this policy.

In the case of children, the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) helpline on 0808 800 5000 can also offer advice.

Annex 3 – Safeguarding Flowchart

DO:

- Remain calm
- Put your safety first
- Ask for advice or escalate concerns where necessary
- Familiarise yourself with the Safeguarding Policy at <https://abdocollege.org.uk/about/policies/>

DON'T:

- Promise confidentiality – you may have to alert others in order to keep the student safe
- Assume that the signs below always point to a safeguarding concern: take the whole situation into account

