

Safeguarding Policy

| Version No | Purpose/Change | Lead | Date |
|--------------------------------|---|------|----------|
| Earlier versions are available | | | |
| 10.0 | Reviewed and updated - Approved by Corporation Dec 22 | BW | Sep 2022 |
| 11.0 | Reviewed and updated - Approved by Corporation Jul 23 | BW | Jul 2023 |
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The College subscribes to the holistic definition of safeguarding as given by the HM Government guidance document *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2023):

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children’s Social Care National Framework (See the College Child Protection Policy for more details).

Child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and is defined as activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online. Effective safeguarding means staff should understand and be sensitive to factors, including economic and social circumstances and ethnicity, which can impact children and families’ lives.

The College takes the safeguarding of students as a priority, evidenced by its Core Values:

- We conduct ourselves with integrity and respect for all.
- We make students’ experience central.
- We value individuals and promote self-esteem.
- We work as a team.
- We encourage innovation, creativity and enjoyment.
- We aim for excellence in everything we do.

The College recognises that protecting and safeguarding young people is a shared responsibility and depends upon effective joint working between agencies and professionals that have different roles and expertise. We adhere to the procedural guidelines and definitions set out by the Hull and East Riding Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships.

Child Protection Procedures

The College adheres to the procedural guidelines set out by the Hull and East Riding Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships. The College *Child Protection Policy* makes clear these procedures and the shared responsibility of all staff in safeguarding young people. The policy is reviewed regularly and updated by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DLS), to keep abreast with national and local policy developments. All College staff regularly receive updates and relevant training (as a minimum - annually) on child protection procedures, with refreshers given at no more than the statutory three-yearly intervals.

Child Protection Officers complete appropriate training at least once every two years and receive regular updates. All new staff receive instructions and guidance following their appointment.

The College Corporation have a link Governor (Trevor Wray) for safeguarding who works closely with the College's DSL and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) to ensure appropriate annual audits are complete and that the College is compliant with its statutory duties under safeguarding.

Student Voice

The College recognises the importance and value of listening to the student body. We use Student Voice activities to shape our protocols and actions and actively seek input from students in to how the college operates. Safeguarding student voice activities are conducted throughout the academic year, with comments from this used when reasonable to inform the safeguarding action plan and policy updates.

Prevent Duty

The college recognises its statutory requirements to risk assess children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation and being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of the terrorist ideology, and also assess the risks affecting children and young people in the local area, knowing how to identify those who are vulnerable, ensuring appropriate support is given. We work in partnership with key external organisations, and ensure all staff receive annual training and ensure our IT Policies, Protocols and Processes reduce the risk of students becoming radicalised including our statutory duty to have sufficient web filtering and monitoring systems.

The college adheres to the guidance as set out in the Prevent Duty Guidance in England and Wales (2015). The college Prevent Policy indicates the commitment made by all staff to reduce the risk of radicalisation. All staff receive annual training, which includes understanding when referrals should be made to external agencies, and students are informed of the Policy and the concerns surrounding radicalisation via the tutorial programme. We ensure that the DSL and DDSL and other relevant staff undertake Prevent awareness training and are able to advise and support staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation. The Prevent Policy is used in conjunction with wider policies to help prevent radicalisation, including the Child Protection Policy, eSafety Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and Student Conduct Policy and Behaviour for Learning Policy.

Wilberforce Sixth Form College approaches the promotion of fundamental British Values in line with the Government's PREVENT agenda. These British Values are:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Tolerance of those with different faiths and belief
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect

It is everyone's duty to ensure they do not undermine these fundamental British Values.

Multi-Agency Working

The College maintains strong multi-agency working relationships and endeavours to ensure that appropriate staff attend all relevant meetings, case conferences, core groups and strategy meetings. The coordinating body for managing support to our most vulnerable students are the specific Student Support Teams.

Record Keeping

We hold data in accordance with GDPR regulations.

We recognise the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies. We ensure arrangements are in place that set out clearly the processes and principles for sharing information within college and with safeguarding partners, other organisations, agencies, and practitioners as required.

We understand that the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

Recruitment and Allegations against Members of Staff

The College follows national vetting procedures when recruiting new staff (refer to the *Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure* and *Child Protection Policy*). The College recognises however that it is possible for staff and volunteers to behave in a manner that causes harm to young people and takes any allegations made against members of staff or volunteers seriously. Procedures are followed for handling allegations, and these are made clear to students through the tutorial programme as to who they can report any concerns to, and within relevant policies on the College website. Staff, including new staff, receive training regarding raising concerns about other staff members, including 'low level' concerns and are signposted to the whistleblowing policy. All staff have read and have access to the Staff Code of Conduct Policy, which outlines standards and expectations of conduct and behaviour.

Tutorial Provision

In the context of post-16 education, the College recognises the need to help students take personal responsibility for their own welfare. The delivery of social, emotional and relationship education is achieved through the tutorial programme, thematic Health & Citizenship Education, and Equality and Diversity activities and 1:1 ProgressMentoring sessions. These equip students with the necessary personal and interpersonal skills to keep safe and ensure they progress in their education. This programme has the flexibility to respond to local, national, international and seasonal safeguarding issues when they arise.

Safeguarding Cyberspace

The College recognises the potential safeguarding risks when operating in Cyberspace. We have appropriate monitoring and filtering systems in place for the College's internal ICT use, as well as that for the use of the College WiFi.

All members of the College community adhere to an ICT code of conduct and associated guidelines (Enrolment Commitment Agreement and Staff Code of Conduct Policy). The college further safeguards our students through the promotion and application of the eSafety Policy and eSafety guidance, which is accessible to all key stakeholders and used as part of staff training and student induction and education process via the tutorial system. eSafety is a running theme throughout a number of key policies, these can be accessed via the college website. We also make reference to key external support agencies, which is evidenced within the eSafety guidance, policies and also highlighted on the college website.

Student Conduct

Everyone is responsible for ensuring a safe learning environment which is conducive to learning. The *Student Conduct and Behaviour for Learning Policy* emphasises clear procedures and guidelines that should be followed in the case of student misconduct. (See on the College website: *Student Conduct and Behaviour for Learning Policy*.)

Bullying

Any form of bullying targeted towards students, staff or the wider community, by students, parents or colleagues (including low-level disruption and the use of offensive language) is totally unacceptable at Wilberforce Sixth Form College. This behaviour runs counter to the ethos of the College, underpinned by our Core Values, which include: 'We value individuals and promote self-esteem' and 'We conduct ourselves with integrity and respect for all'. Bullying also seriously undermines our commitment to equality and diversity and the promotion of Fundamental British Values.

We have a safeguarding duty to ensure that all our students can learn and reach their potential in a safe environment. Bullying has a significant detrimental effect on the well-being of young people and can be a serious obstacle to student achievement.

The College's *Anti Bullying Policy* clearly outlines the responsibility and role of all staff in responding to and preventing bullying from occurring. We recognise that bullying can form part of child-on-child abuse, which is covered in more detail within the college's Child Protection Policy available on the college website.

The Education Act 2011 and DfE guidance (searching, Screening and Confiscating, 2018) allows a member of staff, authorised by the Principal, the power to seize an electronic device (such as a mobile phone), to examine data or files and, where appropriate, delete these. This power applies to all students and parental consent is not required.

NB: If the suspected material is of a sexual nature, staff must not view the images and report the matter immediately to the DSL or DDSL, who will notify the police.

If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, they can decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of the college discipline policies.

The Powers to Search

Any member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) has the statutory power to search a student or his/her possessions without consent if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the student is in possession of a weapon, illegal drugs, legal highs, alcohol or stolen property.

Should a member of staff suspect that a student is in possession of such an item, he or she should contact a member of SLT as soon as possible. The member of staff can ask the student to present the object but must not conduct a search.

Equality and Diversity

Wilberforce Sixth Form College is opposed to any form of discrimination. The *Single Equality Scheme* commits all staff, students and stakeholders to creating an open and inclusive environment where everyone is treated fairly. Diversity is celebrated. Creating an environment that is physically and emotionally safe for all is key to our equality and diversity strategy and every member of the College is responsible for preventing discrimination against others.

Health and Safety Procedures in Workplaces

The College believes in the benefits derived from work placements and work-based learning and accepts that its duty of care to both students and apprentices extends to this training.

Procedures and guidance are available to students prior to commencing a work placement and the college ensures risk assessments are carried out before work placements arranged by the college are commenced.

External partners who support student work placements are provided with information regarding key safeguarding contacts and protocols if they do have any safeguarding or child protection issues.

Visitors, Contractors and Guest Speakers

The College operates procedures to safeguard the health and safety of visitors and to ensure that no risk is presented to students from visitors or contractors working on site. These procedures are listed on the *'visitors' information document*, with visitor protocol communicated to all staff, which includes risk assessing procedures for guest speakers and the wearing of visible lanyards which identify visitors whilst on the college site.

The College facilities are available for community use, as such the college ensures that any group using the college facilities adheres to the *Wilberforce College Community Use Policy & Agreement*, which covers health and safety, safeguarding and child protection expectations in line with relevant national guidance.

External Threat

The College recognises the potential of external threats, such as lone wolf attacks, intruders on site and bomb threats. As such, the College has in place a Bomb Threat Policy and a Dynamic Lockdown Procedure, both of which are communicated to all staff and students.

The threat from cyber-attacks is also recognised by the College with the College taking steps to ensure such threats are addressed.

Cross Reference to Other College Policies

Wilberforce Sixth Form College recognises that a number of other policies and procedures developed and operated by the College form part of the wider agenda for safeguarding and promoting students' welfare and this policy should be read in conjunction with the policies and procedures as identified on the college website.

Please note: that whilst every effort will be made to follow this policy, circumstances may not always allow this or may render certain parts of the policy inappropriate. Individuals will be treated fairly and in line with legislation in all instances.