

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

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1. Context and Rationale

Myerscough College and University Centre is committed to safeguarding and promoting the physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing of all students. We recognise that effective safeguarding is fundamental to enabling children and young people to learn, develop and achieve their potential within a safe and supportive environment.

The College adopts a whole-College approach to safeguarding. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and all staff are expected to maintain a culture of vigilance, professional curiosity and respectful challenge, underpinned by the understanding that 'it could happen here'.

We recognise that safeguarding is most effective when it is child centred. The wishes, feelings, lived experiences and voices of children will be sought, heard, recorded and considered when determining any safeguarding response. All decisions made in relation to safeguarding will be taken in the best interests of our students.

We recognise the important role of parents, carers and families in promoting the welfare and safety of children. Wherever it is safe, appropriate and in the best interests of the child to do so, the College will work in partnership with parents and carers, building positive relationships and supporting them to understand and fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.

The College recognises that no single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. Effective safeguarding requires timely information sharing, effective multi-agency working and a commitment from all members of the College community to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all members of the College community including:

- students under the age of 18;
- vulnerable adults where safeguarding concerns arise;
- residential students residing within College accommodation;
- apprentices, work placement students and students engaged in off-site learning activities;
- governors, employees, parents, agency staff, contractors, consultants, volunteers and visitors.

The policy applies to all College activities, including teaching and learning, residential provision, educational visits, work experience, online activity, apprenticeships and activities taking place on College premises or under the direction of the College.

3. Definitions

The terms "children" and "child" refer to anyone under the age of 18.

The purpose of this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is to ensure every student at Myerscough College is safe and protected from harm. The Department for Education (DfE) 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2026) alongside 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2026), states safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined 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 the 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 by their families wherever possible and where this is in their best interests
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Where safeguarding concerns relate to adults at risk, the College will also act in accordance with Lancashire Safeguarding Adults procedures and relevant Care Act 2014 requirements

4. Law and Guidance

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation, statutory and non-statutory guidance including, but not limited to:

Legislation

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Education (Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)
- Education Act 2002
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by the Serious Crime Act 2015)
- Apprenticeships, Children and Learning Act 2009
- Equality Act 2010
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022
- Victims and Prisoners Act 2024
- Online Safety Act 2023
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026
- Crime and Policing Act 2026
- Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 (Martyn's Law)

Statutory Guidance

- HM Government (2020) 'Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance on Female Genital Mutilation'
- HM Government (2013) 'Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines: Handling Cases of Forced Marriage'
- HM Government (2021) 'Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting People Vulnerable to being Drawn into Terrorism'

- Home Office and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (2023) 'Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance for Dealing with Forced Marriage and Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines: Handling Cases of Forced Marriage'
- DfE (2026) 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'
- DfE (2026) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- Home Office (2022) 'Domestic Abuse Guidance'
- DfE (2023) 'The Prevent Duty Guidance'
- DfE (2018) 'Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006'
- DfE (2023) 'Academy Trust Handbook 2023'
- DfE (2024) 'Working Together to Improve Attendance'

Non-Statutory Guidance

- DfE (2015) 'What to Do if you're Worried a Child is being Abused'
- DfE (2024) 'Information Sharing'
- DfE (2024) 'Academy Trust Governance'
- DfE (2017) 'Child Sexual Exploitation'
- DfE (2024) 'Recruit Teachers from Overseas'
- DfE (2024) 'Behaviour in Colleges'
- DfE (2021) 'Teachers' Standards'
- DfE (2024) 'Meeting Digital and Technology Standards in Schools and Colleges'
- Department of Health and Social Care (2024) 'Virginity Testing and Hymenoplasty: Multi-Agency Guidance'
- DfE (2024) 'Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes: Advice for Education Settings Working with Children and Young People'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following College Policies:

- Student Attendance Policy and Procedure
- Student Behaviour, Engagement and Support Policy and Procedure
- Sexual Misconduct Policy
- Reporting, Recording and Responding Policy
- Anti-Bullying, Harassment and Domestic Abuse Policy and Procedure
- Staying Safe Online and Use of Mobile Technology Policy and Procedure
- Inclusive Learning Policy and Procedure
- Data Protection Policy and Procedure
- Safer Recruitment Policy and Procedure
- Public Interest Disclosures (Whistleblowing) Policy and Procedure
- Employee and Volunteer Code of Conduct
- Complaints and Compliments Policy and Procedure

5. Roles and Responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to:

- Contribute to, and maintain a high safeguarding ethos within the setting, with safeguarding students at the forefront of practice, at all times.

- Ensure ALL children have opportunities to communicate and know that they are listened to and understood.
- Contribute to providing a curriculum which will equip all children with the skills to keep themselves safe and develop an attitude which will enable them to enter adulthood successfully and reach their full potential.
- Establish effective, supportive, and positive professional relationships with parents, carers, students and other professionals.
- Staff will exercise professional curiosity and respectful challenge where there are concerns about a child's welfare, presentation, circumstances or safety.
- Be proactive to provide a safe and secure environment in which students can learn.
- Be prepared to identify students or families who may benefit from the Local Early Help/Family Help offer.
- Be aware of the College's individual procedures that support safeguarding, including all policies, internal reporting procedures, information and engage with training provided.
- Be aware of the role and identity of the DSL and Deputy DSLs and seek them for advice if required.
- Undertake Safeguarding training, including online safety training and Prevent duty training, during induction and subsequently on a regular basis
- Be aware of, and understand, the process for making referrals to Children's Social Care and/or Police understanding that anyone can make a referral if at any point there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child.
- Maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality when dealing with individual cases.
- Reassure victims that they are being taken seriously, that they will be supported, and that they will be kept safe.
- Be fully aware of the importance of mental health in relation to safeguarding and that all staff should also 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.
- Be aware that a student may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and/or may not recognise their experiences as harmful.
- Avoid victim-blaming attitudes and challenge it in a professional way if it occurs.
- Understand the process for reporting concerns over staff or adult conduct or behaviours.
- All staff will be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation and will understand that children can be at risk of harm both inside and outside of the College and home, and online. Staff will also be aware that students can be affected by seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects of abuse.
- Safeguard students' wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties, as outlined in the 'Teachers' Standards'.
- Report, by law, any disclosures of FGM to the Police.

Professional curiosity involves respectfully exploring and questioning information, behaviours, circumstances and assumptions to better understand a student's lived experience, identify emerging risks and ensure safeguarding concerns are not overlooked.

The Governing Board has a duty to:

- Take strategic leadership responsibility for the College's safeguarding arrangements.
- Ensure that College complies with its duties under the above Child Protection and Safeguarding legislation.

- Ensure that all Governors receive appropriate Safeguarding and Child Protection training. This should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place are effective. Their training should be regularly updated.
- Ensure that staff read, understand and follow part one of KCSIE September 2026.
- Ensure a named Governor takes leadership responsibility for Safeguarding arrangements and receives appropriate training in the management of Safeguarding.
- Attend Prevent training at least every two years.
- Appoint an appropriate member of staff from the Senior Leadership Team to the role of DSL and one or more deputy DSLs to provide support. Ensure that they are trained to the same standard as the DSL ensuring that the roles are explicit in their job description(s). Ensure the provision of appropriate support, funding, training, resources, and time to carry out their role effectively.
- Support and monitor a whole-College approach to Safeguarding; this includes ensuring that Safeguarding and Child Protection are at the forefront and ethos remains consistently high.
- Ensure systems are in place so that children can confidently report abuse, knowing that their concerns will be treated seriously, and they can safely express their views and give feedback; these systems will be well-promoted, easily understood, and easily accessible.
- Ensure effective and appropriate policies and procedures are in place.
- Make sure that students are taught about safeguarding, that safeguarding is embedded with the curriculum, including protection against dangers online (including when they are online at home), through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Adhere to statutory responsibilities by conducting pre-employment checks on staff who work with children, following safer recruitment protocol.
- Ensure the College has clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems in students, including clear routes to escalate concerns and clear referral and accountability systems.
- Ensure that at least one person on any recruitment panel has undertaken safer recruitment training.
- Ensure that all staff receive relevant Safeguarding and Child Protection training updates, including online safety and expectations and responsibilities.
- Confirm that there are transparent procedures in place to handle allegations against staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors, including when the College premises are let out to a third party.
- Confirm that there are procedures in place to make a referral to the DBS and the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA), where appropriate, if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns or would have been had they not resigned.
- Ensure that appropriate disciplinary procedures are in place, as well as policies pertaining to the behaviour of students and staff.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, including those in relation to child-on-child abuse.
- Appoint a designated person to promote the educational achievement of Care experienced students and ensure that this person has undergone appropriate training.
- Ensure that the appropriate level of recruitment checks are completed on Governors.
- Understand that online safeguarding is an interrelated and running theme through safeguarding practice. Ensure effective arrangements are in place to ensure that children are safe online. This should include appropriate online safety education and that effective filtering and monitoring systems are in place, regularly reviewing their effectiveness, understanding those children that are potentially at greater risk of harm, along with the proportionality of costs versus safeguarding risks.
- Put in place appropriate safeguarding responses for students where attendance is a significant concern, particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods, to help identify any risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation and prevent the risk of escalation in the future.

- Partake and support the S175/175 audit tool on a two-yearly cycle (at least) as directed by the Local Authority.
- Be aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- Ensure there is an effective Early Help/Family Help procedure and ensure all staff understand the procedure and their role in it.
- Ensure that all practice and procedures operate with the best interests of the child.
- Ensure that the College contributes to multi-agency working in line with the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026'.
- The Governing Board will receive regular assurance regarding the effectiveness of filtering and monitoring systems and understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education

The Governing Board will receive regular safeguarding reports, enabling scrutiny of safeguarding themes, attendance concerns, online safety concerns, residential safeguarding concerns and emerging risks.

The DSL has a duty to:

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead should take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place, ensuring their effectiveness) whilst creating a culture of safeguarding throughout the setting, continually raising the profile of safeguarding.
- Provide advice, support and expertise to other staff on child welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters.
- Take part in strategy discussions, inter-agency meetings and Child Protection Conferences and/or support other staff to do so.
- Contribute to the assessment of children, and/or support other staff to do so.
- Ensure that all staff receive appropriate safeguarding training at induction, including online safety and expectations and responsibilities relating to filtering and monitoring. This is updated regularly, at least annually.
- Be available or arrange appropriate cover during College hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns with a DSL/DDSL.
- Arrange, alongside the College, adequate and appropriate cover for any activities outside of College hours or terms.
- Refer cases:
 - To CSC where abuse and neglect are suspected, and support staff who make referrals CSC
 - To the Channel programme where radicalisation concerns arise, and support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme
 - To the DBS where a person is dismissed or has left due to harm, or risk of harm, to a child
 - To the Police where a crime may have been committed, in line with the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) guidance
- Act as a point of contact with the multi-agency partners
- Ensure effective communication and information sharing (when appropriate) between Deputy DSL's/ College Leadership Team/Executive Leadership Team/Principal/Governing Board/wider staff team.
- Collaborate with other teams and relevant agencies when making a referral so that children's needs are considered holistically.

- Liaise with the Senior Mental Health Lead and, where available, Mental Health Support Agencies, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health.
- Promote supportive engagement with parents in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances.
- Work with relevant staff, for promoting educational outcomes for children, by understanding the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, knowing the safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on their attendance, engagement and achievement at College.

This includes:

- Ensuring that the College knows which students have a Social Worker
- Understanding the academic progress and attainment of these students
- Maintaining a culture of high aspirations for these students
- Supporting staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help these students reach their potential
- Ensure that Child Protection files are kept updated and secure, monitoring the quality and accuracy of logs.
- Ensure that a student's Child Protection file is transferred as soon as possible, and within five days, when transferring to a new College, and consider any additional information that should be shared to support a child's journey.
- Ensure all stakeholders understand the Child Protection Policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 statutory guidance and internal procedures to report any concerns are transparent and understood by all. Ensure this information is given at induction and at regular intervals via CPD.
- Work with the Governing Board to ensure the College's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is reviewed annually, and the procedures are updated and reviewed regularly.
- Undergo DSL initial training and update this training with refresher training at least every two years to remain compliant.
- Take a pro-active approach to CPD.
- Have due regard to the [PACE Code C 2023](#) in regards to the role of an appropriate adult.
- Encourage a culture of listening to children promoting the child's wishes, feelings, lived experience and voice are central to all safeguarding decision making
- Recognise the importance of information sharing, including within College, with other Colleges and with the safeguarding partners and other agencies by understanding relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR.
- Undertake Prevent Awareness training (at least) every two years.
- Be provided with appropriate support and supervision in order to carry out the role safely and effectively.
- Liaise with the Local Authority Personal Advisors for any Care Leavers.
- Have due regard of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026– 'The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead'.

Myerscough College and University Centre recognises that Deputy DSL's must be trained to same standard as the DSL and may act as the DSL in their absence.

The designated teacher has a responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of Care Experienced Students and previously Looked after Children (Post-LAC), and for children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales. At Myerscough College, this is Kellie Dunn, Safeguarding, Support and Welfare Manager.

6. Residential Students and Halls of Residence

The College recognises that students residing in College-managed accommodation may experience additional safeguarding vulnerabilities due to living away from home, reduced parental oversight and increased independence.

The residential provision will operate in accordance with the National Minimum Standards, ensuring students are safeguarded, protected from harm and supported to achieve positive welfare outcomes.

Residential Support staff will:

- receive safeguarding training appropriate to their role;
- understand reporting and escalation procedures;
- maintain effective information sharing with the Safeguarding Team;
- contribute to risk assessments, welfare planning and support arrangements;
- support students to access safeguarding, welfare and mental health services;
- promote students' wellbeing, safety, inclusion and independence.

Safeguarding concerns arising within residential accommodation will be reported without delay in accordance with College safeguarding procedures.

7. Training and Induction

Myerscough College and University Centre recognise the importance of ongoing staff training and development to keep staff aware of emerging issues and keeping the ethos of safeguarding high. Everybody has a role to play in safeguarding our children and we strive to ensure all staff are well informed and know what to do if they have any concerns. Staff members, governors and volunteers will undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction, which will be updated on a regular basis and/or whenever there is a change in legislation.

The induction training will cover:

- The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedure
- The Volunteer and Employee Code of Conduct
- 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE 2026) updates
- Appropriate Child Protection and Safeguarding training, including Online Safety training, filtering and monitoring, how to recognise signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- Information about the role and identity of the DSL and Deputy DSL(s)
- How to record and report concerns

Registers will be kept of all inductions.

Following induction, Myerscough College and University Centre recognises the need to ensure continual, effective training to staff and other stakeholders. We will ensure:

- ALL staff, Governors and volunteers will receive Safeguarding Training (at least) annually
- The DSL/s will provide ALL staff, volunteers and governors with regular safeguarding updates
- ALL staff, volunteers and governors will read and show an understanding of any safeguarding and policy updates that are provided

- Any staff member will discuss any specific training requirements or gaps in knowledge or understanding with the DSL/s
- Records will be held of staff safeguarding training.
- The Safeguarding and Residential Support Teams will undertake any additional specialised training on matters such as mental health, self-harm, drug use, as deemed necessary by the DSL and relevant to the needs of the setting.

8. Multi-Agency Working

The College contributes to multi-agency working as part of its statutory duty. The College is aware of and will follow the local safeguarding arrangements. Further details on [Lancashire Safeguarding Partnership - Safeguarding Children](#).

The College will be fully engaged, involved, and share information with local safeguarding arrangements. Once the College is named as a relevant agency by local safeguarding partners, it will follow its statutory duty to cooperate with the published arrangements in the same way as other relevant agencies.

Where a need for support is identified, the College will allow access for CSC to conduct (or consider whether to conduct) a section 17 or 47 assessment.

Information Sharing

The College recognises the importance of proactive and timely information sharing between professionals and local agencies in order to effectively meet students' needs and identify any need for Early Help or Family Help

Considering the above, staff will be aware that whilst the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 place a duty on Colleges to process personal information fairly and lawfully, they also allow for information to be stored and shared for safeguarding purposes – Data Protection regulations do not act as a barrier to sharing information where failure to do so would result in the student being placed at risk of harm.

Staff members will ensure that fear of sharing information does not stand in the way of their responsibility to promote the welfare and safety of students. If staff members are in doubt about sharing information, they will speak to the DSL or deputy DSL(s) and/or the Data Protection Officer.

Safeguarding concerns can be shared without consent where there is a lawful safeguarding basis.

9. Early Help /Family Help

Within the local authority offer in: This is any service that supports children and families as soon as problems emerge. It can be one-to-one or in groups, and may include parenting support, groups, emotional wellbeing help, and advice on specific issues

Family safeguarding is about working with families so they can remain together and children can stay safe at home. It is not just about protecting children from harm, but also about building strengths, addressing needs, and providing practical help so families can cope with challenges.

Staff at Myerscough College and University Centre recognise that any professional can provide help and any student or family may benefit from Early Help or Family Help, but staff will be alert to the potential need specifically for students who:

- Are disabled, have certain health conditions, or have specific additional needs
- Have SEND, regardless of whether they have a statutory EHC plan
- Have mental health needs
- Are Young Carers
- Show signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- Are frequently missing or going missing from care or from home
- Are at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, or sexual or criminal exploitation
- Are at risk of being radicalised
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol
- Have family members in custody, or are affected by parental offending
- Are in a family circumstance presenting challenges for them, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health problems, or domestic abuse
- Have returned home to their family from care
- Are at risk of Honour-Based abuse (HBA) including forced marriage, female genital mutilation and abuse linked to family or community expectations.
- Are privately fostered
- Are displaying harmful sexual behaviours which may pose a risk to other children and themselves
- Show any early signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation or other identified need requiring additional support or intervention
- Have experienced multiple suspensions and are at risk of, or have been, permanently excluded from College, alternative provision or a PRU
- Have experienced bereavement
- Viewing problematic or inappropriate online content or developing inappropriate relationships online.
- Are experiencing difficulties associated with online harms or exploitation.
- Are vulnerable to extra-familial harm, including exploitation, serious violence, harmful sexual behaviour or radicalisation.
- Are experiencing attendance concerns, disengagement from education or barriers to participation.
(See Children Absent from College)

The DSL and the Safeguarding Team will take the lead where Early Help or Family Help is appropriate and consent has been gained. This includes liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. The local Early Help/Family Help process will be followed as required to help provide the right, effective support at the right time.

[Early Help Assessment - information for professionals - Lancashire County Council](#)

Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an Early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner. Any such cases will be kept under constant review assessing the impact of the support.

DSLs and/or the Safeguarding Team will follow the local safeguarding processes and refer to Working Well with Children and Families in Lancashire guidance using the Continuum of Need.

10. Mental Health and Wellbeing

The College recognises that mental health and wellbeing and safeguarding are closely linked.

All staff should be aware that mental health concerns may be an indicator that a child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect or exploitation.

All staff should be aware of indicators which may suggest a child requires additional support, and report concerns in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

These include:

- significant changes in behaviour
- withdrawal from social interaction
- changes in presentation or self-care
- persistent sleep difficulties
- signs of self-harm
- expressions of hopelessness
- suicidal ideation
- risk-taking behaviour
- emotional dysregulation

While only appropriately trained professionals should make mental health diagnoses, Staff must share concerns with the Safeguarding Team via the SA1 College referral process.

The College recognises that thoughts of suicide, self-harm and serious emotional crisis require a safeguarding response where there are concerns regarding a student's safety

Where a child is believed to be at immediate risk of serious harm, staff will take urgent protective action, including if needed contacting emergency services, and informing the DSL and Safeguarding Team as soon as possible.

11. Abuse and Neglect

Abuse is defined as a form of maltreatment of a child which involves inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing the ill treatment of others – this can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family, institutional or community setting by those known to them or by others, e.g. via the internet. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by one or multiple adults or other children.

Physical Abuse is defined as a form of abuse which may involve actions such as hitting, shaking, throwing, biting, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical abuse can also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. Staff are aware of Female Genital Mutilation, a form of Physical abuse.

Emotional Abuse is defined as the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. This may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child the opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children, such as interactions that are beyond their developmental capability, 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 the child to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, but it may also occur alone.

Sexual Abuse is defined as abuse that involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, and regardless of whether the child is aware of what is happening. This may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration, or non-penetrative acts, such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. It may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can be perpetrated by people of any gender and age. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.

Neglect is defined as the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of a child's health or development. This may involve a parent or carer failing to provide a child with adequate food, clothing or shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); failing to protect a child from physical or emotional harm or danger; failing to ensure adequate supervision (including through the use of inappropriate caregivers); or failing to 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 will be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect and be vigilant and always raise concerns with the DSL. All staff, especially the DSL and deputy DSL(s), will be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with contextual factors outside the College and/or can occur between children outside of these environments; this includes being aware that students can be at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families (extra-familial harms).
- All staff will be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues, including online abuse, cyberbullying, radicalisation and the sharing of indecent images
- ALL staff understand that children who perpetrate abuse or display harmful behaviour should be supported in the same way a victim of abuse would be supported – Safety and Support Plans will be undertaken where a child's behaviour poses a risk to others, themselves or the environment. These behaviours may be addressed through the Student Behaviour and Engagement Policy.
- ALL staff and volunteers understand that there are specific and emerging ways in which children can be abused and are aware of these specific issues, reporting any concerns, in the appropriate manner to the DSL and Safeguarding team.

12. Domestic Abuse

In line with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, domestic abuse is defined as abusive behaviour of a person towards another person where both are aged 16 or over and are personally connected. Abusive behaviour includes physical or sexual abuse, violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse, psychological or emotional abuse, or another form of abuse.

The College will recognise the serious, long lasting emotional impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse. All staff will be aware of the signs of domestic abuse and follow the appropriate safeguarding procedures where concerns arise.

Myerscough College and University Centre has a commitment to Operation Encompass, the information sharing agreement between Police and the College following Police involvement in an incident of domestic abuse, or other potential crimes, and informing all stakeholders of the initiative.

The lead person for Operation Encompass is Erika Parry.

www.operationencompass.org

Child-to-Parent or Caregiver Abuse is a form of domestic abuse and may include physical violence, threats, emotional abuse, coercive control, financial abuse, damage to property or other behaviours intended to intimidate, control or cause harm to a parent, carer or family member. Staff should be aware that this may be an indicator of unmet need, trauma, exploitation, mental ill health. Incidents where Child-to-parent or caregiver abuse is identified will be recognised as a safeguarding concern and responded to in accordance with usual College's safeguarding referral process (SA1).

13. Homelessness

The DSL and deputy DSL(s) are aware of the contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so that concerns and support over homelessness can be raised as early as possible. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include:

- Household debt
- Rent arrears
- Domestic abuse
- Anti-social behaviour
- Any mention of a family moving home because "they have to" or frequent moves.

Referrals to the Local Housing Authority do not replace referrals to CSC where a child is being harmed or at risk of harm. For 16- and 17-year-olds, homelessness may not be family-based and referrals to CSC will be made as necessary where concerns are raised.

14. Children Absent from College

The College recognises that poor attendance, persistent absence, severe absence and patterns of disengagement may be indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation, mental ill health, extra-familial harm or other safeguarding concerns

Our Curriculum teams will monitor attendance and we acknowledge that attendance information will be considered alongside wider safeguarding information to ensure emerging concerns are identified and responded to at the earliest opportunity. College staff will work with students to improve attendance where needed; and will liaise with the Safeguarding team where safeguarding concerns are suspected. The Safeguarding team will ensure attendance concerns are considered in all safeguarding assessments and in accordance with the Student Attendance Policy and Procedure.

Where reasonably possible, College will hold more than one emergency contact number for their students.

Myerscough College and University Centre will follow local guidance when children go missing from home:

<https://panlancashirescp.trixonline.co.uk/chapter/children-missing-from-care-home-and-education>

15. Children Absent from Residential Accommodation

Students residing in College accommodation who are unexpectedly absent, missing from residence or whose whereabouts are unknown will be responded to in accordance with College residential procedures, this includes under 18 students who are absent at curfew.

Repeated missing episodes, missing overnight, unexplained absences and patterns of missing behaviour may be considered safeguarding concerns and may indicate exploitation, abuse, mental health concerns or other vulnerabilities. These will be reviewed in line with the Student Behaviour and Engagement Policy, Fitness to Reside Policy and Living in Halls expectations.

16. Children Attending an Approved Educational Activity

Alternative Provision

Myerscough offers some 14-16 provision as part of our Schools Programme. Where a school places a pupil with Myerscough College, the school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil. The school will obtain written confirmation from the College that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment, i.e. those checks that the College would otherwise perform in respect of its own staff. This includes written confirmation that the College will inform the commissioning school of any arrangements that may put the child at risk (i.e. staff changes), so that the commissioning school can assure itself that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on new staff. These records will be appropriately stored and regularly reviewed.

An approved educational activity is where a student is taking part in off-site activity such as sports fixtures, trips, educational visits or work experience.

A student can only be recorded as attending a place for an approved educational activity if:

- the place is somewhere other than the College, another College where the student is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the student by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014:

- the activity is of an educational nature;
- the College has approved the student's attendance at the place for the activity; and
- the activity is supervised by a person considered by the College to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the student's attendance has been approved. Supervision means the student is physically supervised by someone who meets this definition.

All relevant College policies continue to apply throughout any approved educational activity.

Children and young people attending approved educational activities, including subcontracted provision, external training providers, apprenticeships, work placements and work experience, may be at increased risk of harm due to being educated or trained in settings outside the direct day-to-day oversight of the College. The College will work with partner organisations to ensure effective safeguarding arrangements, appropriate information sharing, clear reporting procedures, risk assessments, and robust oversight are in place to safeguard and promote learners' welfare

The College recognises that apprentices spend significant periods of time in the workplace and will work with employers to ensure safeguarding concerns are identified, reported and responded to appropriately, including concerns relating to exploitation, harassment, discrimination, mental health and online safety

Remote education is not considered an approved educational activity. As set out in the DfE's guidance on 'Providing Remote Education', students who are absent from College and receiving remote education will be recorded as absent using the most appropriate absence code. College will monitor and record a student's engagement with remote education, but this is not formally tracked in the attendance register.

17. Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Child criminal exploitation is defined as a form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal activity, for any of the following reasons:

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants
- For the financial advantage or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator
- Through violence or the threat of violence (this could be online or through technology)

Specific forms of CCE can include:

- Being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines
- Shoplifting or pickpocketing
- Committing vehicle crime
- Committing, or threatening to commit, serious violence to others

The College will recognise that students involved in CCE are victims themselves, regardless of whether they have committed crimes, and even if the criminal activity appears consensual. The College will also recognise that students of any gender are at risk of CCE.

College staff will be aware of the indicators that a student is the victim of CCE, including:

- Associating with other children involved in exploitation
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- Misusing drugs or alcohol
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late
- Regularly missing College or education
- Appearing with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions.

Criminal exploitation of children can include County Lines. This is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or criminal networks / gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money into one or more areas. A referral to the [National Referral Mechanism](#) should be considered in addition to normal safeguarding procedures.

As well as the general indicators for CCE, College staff will be aware of the specific indicators that a student may be involved in county lines, including:

- Going missing and subsequently being found in areas away from their home.
- Having been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence, e.g. knife crime.
- Receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, collecting money
- Being found in accommodation they have no connection
- Owning a 'debt bond' to their exploiters
- Having their bank account used to facilitate drug dealing

18. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child Sexual Exploitation is defined as a form of sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity, for any of the following reasons:

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants
- For the financial advantage, increased status or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator
- Through violence or the threat of violence, this could be online or through technology.

The College will recognise that CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the student's immediate knowledge, e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. The College will recognise that CSE can affect any student who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities, even if the activity appears consensual; this includes students aged 16 and above who can legally consent to sexual activity. The College will also recognise that students may not realise they are being exploited and they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

College staff will be aware of the key indicators that a student is the victim of CSE, including:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions
- Associating with other children involved in exploitation
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- Misusing drugs or alcohol
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late
- Regularly missing College or education or not taking part
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends

- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections
- Displaying sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development
- Becoming pregnant

All staff will consider the language and terms used when raising concerns and providing ongoing support to students who have experienced abuse through exploitation to ensure victims are not unintentionally blamed or seen as active participants in their own abuse.

19. Concealed and Denied Pregnancy

A concealed pregnancy is when a woman knows she is pregnant but does not tell anyone; or when she tells a professional but conceals the fact that she is not accessing antenatal care; or when she tells another person or persons and together, they conceal the fact from all agencies. A denied pregnancy is when an expectant mother is unaware of or unable to accept the existence of her pregnancy.

Physical changes to the body may not be present or be misconstrued; they may be intellectually aware of the pregnancy but continue to think, feel and behave as though they were not pregnant. There may be a number of reasons why a pregnancy is concealed or denied, including, but not limited to; fear of stigma or shame, in cases of rape, sexual or domestic abuse, forced or sham marriage, fear of a child being removed or asylum seekers and illegal immigrants who may be reluctant to come to the attention of authorities. In some cases, the woman may be truly unaware that she is pregnant. In some cases, an expectant mother may be in denial of her pregnancy.

Where there is a suspicion of a concealed or denied pregnancy, the College will follow the procedures set out by our local Safeguarding Children Partnership arrangements.

[Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool and Lancashire Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership \(proceduresonline.com\)](http://proceduresonline.com)

20. Modern Slavery

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude, and forced or compulsory labour. This can include CCE, CSE, and other forms of exploitation.

All staff will be aware of and alert to the signs that a student may be the victim of modern slavery. Staff will also be aware of the support available to victims of modern slavery and how to refer them to the [National Referral Mechanism](#). (From The Modern Slavery Act 2015, Section 52) The public authority bears this obligation where it has 'reasonable grounds to believe that a person may be a victim of slavery or human trafficking'.

21. Honour-Based Abuse (HBA)

HBA refers to incidents or crimes involving violence, threats, intimidation, or various forms of abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional) committed to protect or defend the honour of an individual, family, or community. This type of abuse is often motivated by the belief that someone has brought shame or dishonour to their family or community.

22. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is included in the definition of honour-based' abuse (HBA).

FGM is defined as all procedures involving the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

All staff will be aware of the indicators that students may be at risk of FGM or already having suffered FGM. While some individual indicators they may not indicate risk, the presence of two or more indicators could signal a risk to the student. It is important to note that the student may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so staff will be sensitive when broaching the subject.

Indicators that a student may be at heightened risk of undergoing FGM include:

- The socio-economic position of the family and their level of integration into UK society
- The student coming from a community known to adopt FGM
- Any girl with a mother or sister who has been subjected to FGM
- Travel abroad or a long holiday with relatives to a country known to practise FGM.

If staff are worried about someone who is at risk of FGM or who has been a victim of FGM, they are required to share this information with CSC and/or the Police.

As outlined in Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015), teachers are legally required to report to the Police any discovery, whether through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence, of FGM on a student under the age of 18. Teachers failing to report such cases may face disciplinary action. Teachers will not examine students, and so it is rare that they will see any visual evidence, but they must personally report to the Police where an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should also consider and discuss any such case with the DSL and involve CSC as appropriate.

NB: This does not apply to any suspected or at-risk cases, nor if the individual is over the age of 18. In such cases, local safeguarding procedures will be followed.

23. Forced Marriage

Forced Marriage is included in the definition of honour-based' abuse (HBA).

Forced marriage is defined as a marriage that is entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties, and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into the marriage. Threats can be physical, emotional, or psychological.

A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent, e.g. due to some forms of SEND. Forced marriage is a crime in the UK and a form of HBA.

Staff who have any concerns regarding a student who may have undergone, is currently undergoing, or is at risk of forced marriage will speak to the DSL and local safeguarding procedures will be followed.

It will be made clear to staff members that they should not approach the student's family or those with influence in the community, without the express consent of the student, as this will alert them to the concerns and may place the student in further danger.

24. Extremism and Radicalisation

For the purposes of this policy, "extremism" is defined by the government as the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, that aims to:

1. negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or
2. undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or
3. intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results in (1) or (2)

For the purposes of this policy, "radicalisation" refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

For the purposes of this policy, "terrorism" refers to an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person or people, serious damage to property, or seriously interferes with or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat of these actions must be designed to influence the government or intimidate the public and be made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

Protecting students from the risk of radicalisation is part of the College's wider safeguarding duties. Staff will be alerted to changes in students' behaviour which could indicate that they may need help or protection. Staff will use their professional judgement to identify students who may be at risk of radicalisation and act appropriately, which may include contacting the DSL or making a Prevent referral. The College will work with local safeguarding arrangements as appropriate to ensure awareness of local & national incidents that may heighten the activity of extreme groups or cause increased curiosity of children.

The College will ensure that they engage with parents and families, as they are in a key position to spot signs of radicalisation. In doing so, the College will assist and advise family members who raise concerns and provide information for support mechanisms. Any concerns over radicalisation will be discussed with the student's parents, unless the College has reason to believe that the child would be placed at risk as a result.

The DSL and the Prevent Leads will undertake the Government Counter Terrorism Prevent in Education Training. All other staff should complete the online Home Office Prevent training and ACT training.

- The Staying Safe Online and Use of Mobile technology Policy and Procedure will support the safeguarding of children online by ensuring they cannot access terrorist and extremist material when using the internet and that suitable filtering and monitoring software and supervision is in place. Systems are regularly tested, recording the results and addressing as required.
- DSLs understand when it is appropriate to make a referral to the Channel Panel and are aware of how to do so.

The Prevent Duty

Under section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015, all Colleges are subject to a duty to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”, known as **the Prevent Duty**, forming part of the College’s wider safeguarding obligations.

Myerscough College and University Centre will ensure that ALL Staff, Governors and volunteers are informed and have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism', known as the 'Prevent Duty' and follow guidance from www.lancashirepreventpartnership.org.uk

Prevent Lead	Erika Parry
Prevent Governor Lead	Jane Booker
Prevent Curriculum Leads	Mark Moren Victoria Wilding

Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 (Martyn’s Law) and Protective Security

The College recognises its responsibilities under the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, commonly known as Martyn's Law.

The College will take proportionate and reasonable steps to reduce vulnerability to terrorist threats and improve preparedness for responding to incidents, including consideration of residential accommodation, public events, open days, visitor management, emergency planning and evacuation procedures.

This includes:

- undertaking appropriate risk assessments.
- maintaining emergency response and lockdown procedures.
- providing relevant staff awareness and training.
- working collaboratively with emergency services and relevant agencies.
- considering protective security measures as part of wider safeguarding, health and safety, business continuity and risk management arrangements.

Martyn's Law responsibilities operate alongside the College's safeguarding and Prevent duties.

25. Private Fostering

Private fostering occurs when a child under 16 years old (or under 18 if they have a disability or special educational needs) lives with someone who is not a close relative for 28 days or more. If a UK homestay lasts 28 days or longer, it may also be considered private fostering under the Children Act 1989.

When a College becomes aware that a student is being privately fostered, they must inform Children's Social Care (CSC) promptly so that the local authority can carry out the necessary checks and ensure the child’s welfare. <https://lancashiresafeguardingpartnership.org.uk/p/toolkits/private-fostering>

26. Students with Family Members in Prison

Students with a family member in prison will be offered pastoral support as necessary. They will be offered a copy of '[Are you a young person with a family member in prison?](#)' from Action for Prisoners' Families where appropriate and allowed the opportunity to discuss questions and concerns with the Safeguarding and Support Team.

27. Child-on-Child Abuse including Sexualised Abuse

Child-on-child abuse is defined as abuse between children under 18 years of age.

Myerscough College and University Centre has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, including child-on-child abuse.

All staff will be aware that child-on-child abuse can occur between students of any age and gender, both inside and outside of College, as well as online. All staff will be aware of the indicators of child-on-child abuse, how to identify it, and how to respond to reports. All staff will also recognise that even if no cases have been reported, this is not an indicator that child-on-child abuse is not occurring. All staff will speak to the DSL and/or the Safeguarding Team if they have any concerns about child-on-child abuse.

All staff will understand the importance of challenge inappropriate behaviour between peers and will not tolerate abuse as "banter" or "part of growing up".

Child-on-child abuse can be manifested in many different ways, including:

- Bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- Physical abuse – this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse
- Sexual violence – this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence
- Sexual harassment, including online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent
- The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos
- Upskirting
- Initiation and hazing-type violence and rituals, which can include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group, and may also include an online element

All staff are made aware of the heightened vulnerability of students with SEND, who evidence suggests, are more likely to be abused than their peers. Staff will not assume that possible indicators of abuse relate to the student's SEND and will always explore indicators further.

All staff will be made aware of the heightened vulnerability of LGBTQ+ students, who evidence suggests, are also more likely to be targeted by their peers. In some cases, students who are perceived to be LGBTQ+, regardless of whether they are LGBTQ+, can be just as vulnerable to abuse as LGBTQ+ students.

The College's response to sexual violence and sexual harassment between students of the same sex will be equally as robust as it is for incidents between children of the opposite sex.

Students are made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled. This includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. Students will also be reassured that they will be taken seriously, be supported, and kept safe.

Students are able to report their concerns to any member of staff who will be able to assist them in accessing the support from the Safeguarding Team, they can also approach the Safeguarding Team themselves either by visiting The Core (Student Support) or by emailing the safeguarding email box safeguarding@myerscough.ac.uk Students are able to alert the Safeguarding Team to anonymous Safeguarding concerns via the Safeguarding Tab on the Website. The effectiveness of such processes will be continually reviewed by the DSL / CLT.

The College's procedures for managing allegations of child-on-child abuse are outlined in the Procedure for reporting and responding to incidents of bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct and domestic abuse.

Following a report of sexual violence, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) will make an immediate risk and needs assessment, considering:

- the needs of the person who has been harmed and the person alleged to have harmed
- The safety of other students and staff
- Refer to Guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2026, Part 5
- These behaviours may be addressed under the Student Behaviour and Engagement Policy

Where relevant, Safety and Support Plans will be written, with the child's voice, consulted on with parents and shared on a need-to-know basis with relevant staff, and kept under review.

28. Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence

Child on child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence, will not be tolerated within Myerscough College and University Centre.

Myerscough College and University Centre will refer to the specific guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 Part five: Child on Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment and will also have regard to relevant Department for Education guidance and our own equality and inclusion policies when supporting children with individual vulnerabilities or protected characteristics.

The College recognises that sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between Students of any sex and may occur within intimate relationships.

Sexual Harassment For the purposes of this policy, "sexual harassment" refers to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that occurs online or offline, inside or outside of College. Sexual harassment is likely to violate a student's dignity, make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, and create a hostile, offensive, or sexualised environment.

If left unchallenged, sexual harassment can create an atmosphere that normalises inappropriate behaviour and may lead to sexual violence. Sexual harassment can include, but is not limited to:

- Sexual comments, such as sexual stories, lewd comments, sexual remarks about clothes and appearance, and sexualised name-calling.
- Sexual “jokes” and taunting.
- Physical behaviour, such as deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone’s clothes, and displaying images of a sexual nature.
- Online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. This includes:
 - The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.
 - Sharing unwanted explicit content.
 - Upskirting.
 - Sexualised online bullying.
 - Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including on social media.
 - Sexual exploitation, coercion, and threats.

Sexual Violence Consent is defined as having the freedom and capacity to choose to engage in sexual activity. Consent may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another and can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. A person only consents to a sexual activity if they agree by choice to that activity and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice. Children under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity. The age of consent is 16. Refer to KCSIE Part 5

Following a report of child-on-child sexual harassment, assault, violence or harmful sexual behaviour, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) will make an immediate risk and needs assessment, considering:

- the wishes of the child who has/may have been harmed
- the child who has/may have caused harm including their vulnerability and potential of being a victim themselves
- the nature and seriousness of the alleged incident
- the ages of the children involved
- the developmental stages of the children involved
- any power imbalance between the children
- whether the incident is a one-off occurrence or part of a sustained pattern of behaviour
- whether there are ongoing risks to the victim, other children, staff or the wider College community
- any contextual safeguarding concerns
- the support needs of all children involved
- whether the behaviour may be indicative of unmet needs, harmful sexual behaviour or other safeguarding concerns requiring further assessment and intervention.

Where concerns involve harmful sexual behaviour (HSB), advice and support may be sought from AIM-trained safeguarding professionals. At Myerscough College all of our DSL’s and Safeguarding Team are AIM trained and may use AIM resources and approaches within our setting to support assessment and decision-making. Where appropriate, AIM Checklists and Risk Assessment Management Plans (RAMPs) may be used to help understand the nature of the behaviour, assess risk and protective factors, inform safety planning and identify appropriate support and intervention, taking account of the age, developmental stage, understanding and circumstances of the child(ren) involved.

However, all cases that are assessed using the AIM Assessment and categorised as abusive/violent (including all reports of rape or penetration with an object), will be referred to the police and Children's Social Care.

The College will aim to work openly and collaboratively with our students, parents and carers wherever appropriate. We will always aim to be transparent and share information with families, however there may be circumstances where advice is sought on what information can be shared by the College. This may mean that families are not immediately informed where a concern has been reported or where doing so may place a child at increased risk or compromise an investigation.

Where required, risk assessments and safety plans will be completed, informed by the views and experiences of the children involved and developed in partnership with parents, carers and relevant agencies where appropriate. These will be shared with relevant staff on a need-to-know basis and reviewed regularly, to ensure they remain effective and reflect any changes in risk, need or circumstances.

The DSL(s) and Safeguarding Team will work closely with other agencies where needed and ensure ongoing multi-agency work to support all parties involved.

Advice can be sought from [Lucy Faithful Foundation](#) for concerns around any type of sexual abuse, including child on child abuse and [harmful sexual behaviour](#). [Shore Space](#) is a useful resource for children worried about sexual behaviour.

In line with the Crime and Policing Act 2026, this policy incorporates measures arising from the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), including the **new mandatory reporting duty** for child sexual abuse and the introduction of the Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) offence: [Crime and Policing Act 2026: overarching factsheet - GOV.UK](#)

29. Serious Violence

Through training, all staff will be made aware of the indicators which may signal a student is at risk from, or is involved with, serious violent crime. These indicators include, but are not limited to:

- Increased absence from College
- A change in friendships
- Relationships with older individuals or groups
- A significant decline in academic performance
- Signs of self-harm
- A significant change in wellbeing
- Signs of assault
- Unexplained injuries
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions

Staff will be made aware of some of the most significant risk factors that could increase a student's vulnerability to becoming involved in serious violence. These risk factors include, but are not limited to:

- Being male
- Having been frequently absent from College
- Having been permanently excluded from College

- Having experienced child maltreatment or trauma
- Having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery

Staff members who suspect a student may be vulnerable to, or involved in, serious violent crime will immediately report their concerns to the DSL.

30. Online Safety

Myerscough College and University Centre will adhere to the Staying Safe Online and Use of Mobile Technology Policy and Procedure at all times and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people online. The College recognises that online safety is an integral part of safeguarding and that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues.

- The College acknowledges that online risks can present through a variety of technologies and platforms and that online safety is a recurring safeguarding theme which will be considered when responding to all safeguarding concerns. Staff will remain alert to emerging technologies and associated safeguarding risks, including artificial intelligence (AI), generative AI platforms, deepfake content, deepnudes, manipulated imagery, online grooming, online exploitation, misinformation, disinformation, cybercrime and financially motivated sexual extortion. These forms of content may be created, shared, or used to exploit, harass, bully, groom, coerce, or abuse children and young people and will be addressed in line with the College's online safety, Student Behaviour and Engagement Policy and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- **AI-generated indecent imagery** refers to images created wholly or partly using artificial intelligence that depict a child or young person in a sexualised, nude, semi-nude, or otherwise indecent way. The image may not be a real photograph, but it can still cause significant harm and may constitute illegal child sexual abuse material depending on its nature and use.
- **AI-generated nudes or semi-nudes** are images created, altered, or manipulated using artificial intelligence to show a person nude or partially nude, whether or not they were originally photographed in that state. These images may be created without the individual's knowledge or consent and can be used for bullying, harassment, exploitation, coercion, or financially motivated sexual extortion.
- **Pseudo-images** are artificially created, computer-generated, or digitally manipulated images that appear to depict a child in an indecent or sexualised way but are not actual photographs of a real child. Under UK law, pseudo-images can include drawings, computer-generated images, AI-generated images, or other digitally produced content and may be treated in the same way as photographs for criminal justice purposes where they depict child sexual abuse material.

The College will consider online risks through the **4Cs framework**:

Content Risks

Students may be exposed to harmful, illegal, inappropriate or misleading content online, including pornography, violent material, extremist content, self-harm content, disinformation, misinformation, hate content, or manipulated and AI-generated imagery.

Contact Risks

Students may be vulnerable to harmful interactions online, including online grooming, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, radicalisation, coercion, harassment, stalking, fraud, or contact with individuals who seek to manipulate or abuse them.

Conduct Risks

Students may engage in or be affected by inappropriate online behaviour, including cyberbullying, peer-on-peer abuse, sharing of indecent images, online harassment, abusive behaviour, misuse of social media, and unsafe online interactions.

Commerce Risks

Students may be at risk from online commercial activity, including scams, gambling-related harms, financial exploitation, fraudulent schemes, in-app purchasing pressures, data harvesting, and financially motivated sexual extortion.

As part of a broad and balanced curriculum, all students will be taught how to stay safe online and will receive age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate education regarding online risks, healthy relationships, digital resilience, critical thinking, privacy, consent, and responsible use of technology. The College will ensure that suitable filtering and monitoring systems are in place on all College-owned ICT equipment, networks, and mobile devices to reduce the likelihood of students accessing harmful or inappropriate material. These arrangements will be regularly monitored and reviewed for effectiveness, with any safeguarding concerns, inappropriate behaviours, or concerning searches being followed up appropriately by relevant staff and overseen by the Safeguarding Team.

The College recognises that filtering and monitoring systems are important safeguarding measures but do not replace the need for vigilant staff supervision and professional curiosity.

Where the College becomes aware of an online safety incident that has occurred outside of College, it will be managed in accordance with the Staying Safe Online and Use of Mobile Technology Policy and Procedure and the Student Behaviour, Engagement and Support Policy and Procedure. Referrals may also be made to external agencies where appropriate.

All staff will be aware of the filtering and monitoring arrangements in place and will understand their responsibilities for identifying, reporting and escalating concerns through the SA1 safeguarding referral process. Staff will receive online safety, filtering and monitoring training during induction and through regular safeguarding and CPD updates.

The Governing Board will receive appropriate safeguarding assurances regarding the effectiveness of filtering and monitoring arrangements. This will include oversight of online safeguarding risks, monitoring reports, online safety incidents, emerging technologies, AI-related risks, and the effectiveness of measures implemented to safeguard students from harm online.

Personal Electronic Devices

The use of personal electronic devices, including mobile phones, smartwatches and cameras, by staff and students is closely monitored by the College, in accordance with Staying Safe Online and Use of Mobile technology Policy and Procedure, Student Behaviour, Engagement and Support Policy and Procedure and the Volunteer and Employee Code of Conduct.

Staff will report any concerns about students' use of personal electronic devices to the Safeguarding Team following the appropriate procedures. Or if concerned about other staff members use of personal electronic devices to the DSL or People Team.

Myerscough College and University Centre is committed to keeping students safe by ensuring that electronic devices such as cameras, phones and tablets are used in an appropriate manner. College will therefore ensure that:

- informed parental consent is obtained to take and use photographs and/or videos of children, for use in College, to market the College or to share on social media / internet.
- staff, visitors, volunteers and students do not use their own mobile phones or devices to take or record any images of children.

Upskirting

Under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, it is an offence to operate equipment for the purpose of upskirting. "Operating equipment" includes enabling, or securing, activation by another person without that person's knowledge, e.g. a motion-activated camera.

Upskirting will not be tolerated by the College. Any incidents of upskirting will be reported to the DSL, who will then decide on the next steps to take, which may include Police involvement.

31. Sharing Nude and Semi-Nude Images

Nude and semi-nude Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos, colloquially known as "sexting" and "youth produced imagery", is defined as the sharing between students of sexually explicit content, including indecent imagery. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums.

Indecent imagery is defined as an image which meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Nude or semi-nude sexual posing
- A child touching themselves in a sexual way
- Any sexual activity involving a child
- Someone hurting a child sexually
- Sexual activity that involves animals

Safeguarding staff will receive appropriate training regarding child sexual development and will understand the difference between sexual behaviour that is considered normal and expected for the age of the student, and sexual behaviour that is inappropriate and harmful. Safeguarding staff will receive appropriate training around how to deal with such instances in the College community, including understanding motivations, assessing risks posed to students depicted in the images and how and when to report. (The Safeguarding Team have undertaken AIM training)

Staff will be aware that creating, possessing, and distributing indecent imagery of children is a criminal offence, regardless of whether the imagery is created, possessed, and distributed by the individual depicted.

Where a member of staff becomes aware of an incidence of sharing nudes/semi-nudes that involves indecent images of a student, they will refer this to the DSL/Safeguarding Team as soon as possible.

Where a student confides in a staff member about the circulation of indecent imagery, depicting them or someone else, the staff member will:

- Refrain from viewing, copy, printing, sharing, storing or saving the imagery
- Report a safeguarding concern immediately if they accidentally view an indecent image and seek support
- Explain to the student that the incident will need to be reported
- Respond positively to the student without blaming or shaming anyone involved, and reassuring them that they can receive support from the DSL/Safeguarding Team
- Report the incident to the DSL/Safeguarding team

The DSL/Safeguarding team will attempt to understand what the image contains without viewing it and the context surrounding its creation and distribution.

Where it is necessary to view the imagery, e.g. if this is the only way to make a decision about whether to inform other agencies, the DSL should:

- never copy, print, share, store or save them; this is illegal
- discuss the decision with the principal or a member of the Executive leadership team
- make sure viewing is undertaken by the DSL (or equivalent) or another member of the safeguarding team with delegated authority from the principal or a member of the Executive Leadership Team
- make sure viewing takes place with another member of staff present in the room, ideally the principal or a member of the Executive Leadership Team
- wherever possible, make sure viewing takes place on the premises of the education setting, ideally in the Principal, DSL or a member of the Executive Leadership Team's office
- make sure wherever possible that they are viewed by a staff member of the same sex as the child or young person in the images
- record how and why the decision was made to view the imagery in the safeguarding or child protection records, including who was present, why the nudes or semi-nudes were viewed and any subsequent actions
- if any devices need to be taken and passed onto the Police, the device(s) should be confiscated, and stored securely, and the Police should be called. (For students under 18 Parents will be made aware of the concern and the confiscated item)

The above summarised points are explained in further detail with important supporting guidance in the UKCIS guidance – Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes: Advice for Education Settings. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people>

The College will make students aware of the [Report Remove tool](#) and support them to use this.

The College will ensure that all staff are aware to treat the sharing of indecent images as a safeguarding concern.

Sextortion

There has been a large increase in reports of children and young people being forced into paying money or meeting another financial demand after an offender has threatened to release nudes or semi-nudes of them. This is financially motivated sexual extortion, a type of online blackmail often referred to as 'sextortion'. It is a form of child sexual abuse.

The DSL will ensure that staff are aware that this can happen and the College will follow guidance issued by the [National Crime Agency](#), and work with the Police.

32. Context of Safeguarding Incidents

Safeguarding incidents can occur outside of College and can be associated with outside factors. All staff, particularly the DSL and deputy DSL(s), will always consider the context of safeguarding incidents. Assessment of students' behaviour will consider whether there are wider environmental factors that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. The College will provide as much contextual information as possible when making referrals to CSC/CFW or external agencies.

Behaviour as an Indicator of Concern

Staff should be alerted to changes in a child's behaviour, presentation, attendance, engagement, emotional wellbeing, relationships or conduct, including any sudden deterioration. Behaviour should not be viewed in isolation, and staff should consider whether it may be linked to an underlying safeguarding concern.

College staff should recognise that changes in behaviour may indicate that a child has experienced, or is experiencing, abuse, neglect, exploitation, trauma, mental health difficulties, or other safeguarding concerns. Behavioural changes may be a sign that a child needs early help, support or protection.

All staff receive safeguarding training that includes understanding behaviour as a potential indicator of need, vulnerability or risk. When responding to behavioural incidents, staff will demonstrate professional curiosity, consider the wider context, and explore whether there may be underlying safeguarding concerns contributing to the child's behaviour.

Where concerns arise, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will consider the child's experiences and circumstances both within and beyond the College, including factors relating to their home life, peer relationships, community experiences and online activity, where appropriate. Information will be considered as part of a wider assessment of the child's needs and vulnerability.

Any action taken in response to behaviour will be proportionate, support the child's welfare and safety, and the welfare and safety of those around them, considering of any identified safeguarding needs. Behaviour management approaches, interventions and sanctions will be applied fairly and consistently.

33. Students Potentially at Greater Risk of Harm

Myerscough College and University Centre recognises that some groups of students can face additional safeguarding challenges and understands that further barriers may exist when recognising abuse, reporting concerns or accessing support in these groups of students. Staff will remain particularly vigilant to the needs of these students.

- **Students who have Social Workers**

Students may have Social Workers due to safeguarding or welfare needs. These needs can leave students vulnerable to further harm and educational disadvantage.

As a matter of routine, the DSL will hold and use information from their LA about whether a student has a Social Worker in order to make decisions in the best interests of the student's safety, welfare, and educational outcomes.

Where a student has a Social Worker, this will inform decisions about safeguarding, e.g. responding to unauthorised absence, and promoting welfare and educational outcomes, e.g. considering the provision of pastoral or academic support and support with behaviour.

- **Care Experienced Children and Young People**

(including children looked after, previously looked after children, care leavers and children in kinship care arrangements).

Children and young people who are care experienced, including those who are looked after, previously looked after, care leavers, and those living in kinship care arrangements, may be more vulnerable to safeguarding risks due to their experiences of abuse, neglect, trauma, loss, separation, instability, and disrupted relationships. As a result, they may face additional barriers to education, wellbeing, and accessing support, and may require enhanced safeguarding and pastoral support.

The College will ensure that appropriate staff have access to the information they need to safeguard and promote the welfare of care experienced learners, including:

- The learner's legal status, including whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements, subject to an interim or full care order, previously looked after, or living within a kinship care arrangement. [gov.uk]
- The identity and contact details of those with parental responsibility, carers, kinship carers, social workers, personal advisers, or other professionals involved in supporting the learner. [gov.uk]
- Contact arrangements with parents, family members, and other significant adults where appropriate. [gov.uk]
- Care, living, and support arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to carers by the local authority or other responsible agencies. [gov.uk]
- Any safeguarding, welfare, educational, emotional wellbeing, or mental health needs that may require additional support, monitoring, or intervention.

- **Students with SEND**

When managing safeguarding in relation to students with SEND, staff within the College will be aware of the following:

- Certain indicators of abuse, such as behaviour, mood and injury, may relate to the student's disability without further exploration; however, it should never be assumed that a student's indicators relate only to their disability.
- Students with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by issues such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.
- Communication barriers may exist, as well as difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

When reporting concerns or making referrals for students with SEND, the above factors will always be taken into consideration. When managing a safeguarding issue relating to a student with SEND, the Safeguarding Team will liaise with the Inclusive Learning Team, as well as the student's parents where appropriate, to ensure that the student's needs are met effectively.

- **LGBTQ+ Students**

The College recognises that some students may be vulnerable to bullying, prejudice, harassment, abuse or social isolation linked to their actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

The fact that a student is LGBT+ or questioning their gender identity is not itself a safeguarding concern. However, staff should remain alert to risks arising from discrimination, victimisation, online harms, family rejection, coercion or exploitation.

The College will provide a safe, inclusive and respectful environment in which students can seek support and discuss concerns.

- **Adverse Childhood Experiences and Trauma**

We acknowledge that children who have experienced adverse childhood experiences and trauma may be at increased risk of developing health and social difficulties.

All staff will be made aware of the long-lasting impact of experiencing adversity and the lasting effect trauma can have on a child's development.

Where a student is known to have experienced trauma, appropriate arrangements will be made to provide support based on the needs of the student and in line with all relevant guidance and policies. This may include close multi-agency working with external services.

- **Students who are Young Carers** - may be at greater risk of harm due to caring responsibilities that can impact their education, wellbeing, attendance, emotional health, and ability to access support when needed.
- **Students that are vulnerable to exploitation** - may be at increased risk of criminal, sexual, financial, or online exploitation by individuals or groups who seek to manipulate, coerce, or groom them for their own gain.
- **Students that are experiencing mental health difficulties** - may be more vulnerable to harm due to challenges that affect their judgement, resilience, relationships, self-esteem, or ability to recognise and report abuse or neglect.
- **Students affected by domestic abuse** - may experience significant emotional, physical, or psychological harm and can be at increased risk of trauma, coercive control, neglect, or further abuse within their home environment
- **Students experiencing poverty, homelessness or housing instability** - may be at greater risk of neglect, exploitation, poor physical and mental health, social isolation, disrupted education, and barriers to accessing support and essential services.

- **Children from Black, Asian, Minoritised Ethnic and Diverse Communities** (including Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities) - children and families may experience additional barriers to accessing support or may be disproportionately affected by discrimination, prejudice, stereotyping, bias and inequalities. These experiences can impact how children are perceived, identified and supported by services.
- **International students and students studying away from their home country** - may face additional vulnerabilities including social isolation, cultural barriers, language difficulties, unfamiliarity with UK safeguarding systems, immigration concerns, exploitation, discrimination, mental health difficulties, and reduced access to family support networks. The College will ensure these students know how to access safeguarding, welfare and wellbeing support and receive appropriate assistance where concerns arise.
- **Contextual Safeguarding**

Staff will be aware that safeguarding incidents and behaviours can be associated with factors outside the College environment and can be influenced by a child's individual circumstances, lived experiences, culture, ethnicity, religion, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or socio-economic circumstances.

The College is committed to providing an inclusive and anti-discriminatory environment where all children are valued, respected and safeguarded. There is no place for racism, discrimination, prejudice or harassment of any kind.

Staff will receive appropriate training and support to recognise and challenge discrimination, stereotypes, prejudice and bias, including unconscious bias and adultification. Staff will remain professionally curious and will consider the individual needs, experiences and identity of each child to ensure that children receive support, protection and intervention appropriate to their needs.

Safeguarding Adults at Risk

The College recognises that staff may have contact with adults at risk (previously referenced as vulnerable adults), including students aged 18 and over, parents/carers, volunteers and other adults within the College community. Where concerns arise regarding the safety, wellbeing, abuse, neglect, exploitation or self-neglect of an adult at risk, staff should report these concerns to the Safeguarding Team via the SA1 safeguarding referral process. Appropriate advice will be sought and referrals made to Adult Social Care, the Police or other relevant agencies where necessary.

Adults at Risk with SEND or Additional Needs

The College also recognises that some adults with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), learning difficulties, communication needs or other vulnerabilities may require additional safeguarding consideration. Staff should be mindful that an individual's developmental understanding, communication abilities, capacity, awareness of risk, or ability to seek help may differ from their chronological age. These factors may increase vulnerability to abuse, neglect, exploitation, coercion or undue influence.

When considering concerns relating to adults at risk with SEND or additional needs, staff should take a person-centred approach, consider individual communication and support needs, and ensure concerns are reported and responded to appropriately in line with local safeguarding adults' procedures.

Further guidance is available within the Care Act 2014, Care and Support Statutory Guidance, Mental Capacity Act 2005, Lancashire Safeguarding Adults Board procedures and other local multi-agency safeguarding adults' guidance.

- Care Act 2014
- Care and Support Statutory Guidance
- Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Code of Practice
- Equality Act 2010
- Local Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults Procedures
- Lancashire Safeguarding Adults Board Policies and Procedures (or the relevant Safeguarding Adults Board where the adult ordinarily resides)
- Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) Adult Safeguarding Resources

Where concerns relate to an adult at risk who ordinarily resides within another Local Authority area, is a residential student, an international student, or attends the setting whilst living away from home, the College will work with the relevant safeguarding adults' services, local authority, health services, police and other agencies as appropriate. Referrals and information sharing will be undertaken in accordance with the safeguarding arrangements applicable to the area in which the adult ordinarily resides or where the concern has arisen.

[Safeguarding Adults at Risk Definitions & Terminology - ACT](#)

34. Use of College Premises by External Organisations

Where the College hires or rents out College facilities or premises to organisations or individuals, e.g. for providers to run community or extracurricular activities. The College will seek assurance that any organisation using College premises has appropriate safeguarding arrangements, including safer recruitment practices, staff training, reporting procedures and child protection policies where relevant. The College will refer to the DfE's guidance on [keeping children safe in out-of-college settings](#) in these circumstances.

The College will also ensure that there are arrangements in place to liaise on these matters where appropriate. The College will ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement, i.e. a lease or hire agreement, as a condition of use and occupation of the premises. The College reserves the right to withdraw permission to use College facilities where safeguarding arrangements are deemed inadequate.

35. Making Referrals

All staff members, in particular the DSL, will be aware of the LA's arrangements in place for managing referrals. The DSL will provide staff members with clarity and support where needed. When making a referral to CSC or other external agencies, information will be shared in line with confidentiality requirements and will only be shared where necessary to do so.

The DSL will work alongside external agencies, maintaining continuous liaison, including multi-agency liaison where appropriate, in order to ensure the wellbeing of the students involved.

The DSL will work closely with the Police to ensure the College does not jeopardise any criminal proceedings, and to obtain help and support as necessary.

Where a student has been harmed or is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, and a referral is made to statutory services, the referrer will be notified of the action that will be taken within one working day of a referral being made. Where this information is not forthcoming, the referrer will contact the assigned Social Worker for more information.

The College will not wait for the start or outcome of an investigation before protecting the victim and other students: this applies to criminal investigations as well as those made by CSC. Where CSC decide that a statutory investigation is not appropriate, the College will consider referring the incident again if it is believed that the student is at risk of harm. Where CSC decide that a statutory investigation is not appropriate and the College agrees with this decision, the College will consider the use of other support mechanisms, such as Early Help, Family Help and pastoral support.

At all stages of the reporting and referral process, the student will be informed of the decisions made, actions taken and reasons for doing so. Discussions of concerns with parents will only take place where this would not put the student or others at potential risk of harm. The College will work closely with parents to ensure that the student, as well as their family, understands the arrangements in place, such as in-College interventions. They are effectively supported and know where they can access additional support.

If the College is dissatisfied, local escalation procedures will be followed. [Conflict Resolution Policy](#).

36. Concerns about Staff and Safeguarding Practices

If a staff member has concerns about another member of staff (including agency staff, volunteers and persons who use/hire the College premises), it will be raised with the People Team or the DSL immediately. If the concern is with regards to the Principal, it must be referred to the Chair of Governors, Jane Booker, jbooker@myerscough.ac.uk.

Any concerns regarding the safeguarding practices at the College will be raised with the Executive Leadership Team, and the necessary whistleblowing procedures may be followed, as outlined in the Whistleblowing Policy. If a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with the ELT, they should access other whistleblowing channels such as the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline (0800 028 0285).

37. Allegations of Abuse against Staff and Low-Level Concerns

There are clear policies in line with those from the CSAP (Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership) for dealing with allegations against people who work with children.

All allegations against staff, agency staff, volunteers, contractors and any person who may use or hire the College premises, will be managed in line with the College's Public Interest Disclosures (Whistleblowing) Policy and the Employee and Volunteer Code of Conduct.

The College will ensure all allegations against staff, including those who are not employees of the College, are dealt with appropriately and that the College liaises with the relevant parties.

When managing allegations against staff, the College will recognise the distinction between allegations that meet the harms threshold and allegations that do not, also known as “low-level concerns”. Allegations that meet the harm threshold include instances where staff have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child.
- Committed or possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.
- Behaved, or may have behaved, in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

All staff at Myerscough College and University Centre are aware of these procedures and aware of the following expectations and protocol:

- ALL staff and volunteers remember that the welfare of the child is paramount and that they have a duty to inform The People Team or DSL if any adult's conduct gives cause for concern
- ALL staff and volunteers are aware of the requirement to, and process of referring allegations or concerns around the Principal to the nominated Governor Jane Booker and how to contact them, jbooker@myerscough.ac.uk
- The People Team, DSL and/or Chair of Governors will make a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) when they feel the threshold of harm has been met
- CSAP procedures for dealing with allegations against staff will be followed [Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers](#)
- All staff recognise the importance of sharing and reporting low-level concerns (see below guidance on low-level concerns) surrounding staff or any adult in a position of trust to the People Team or DSL.
- ALL staff are aware of the College’s Whistle Blowing Policy which enables staff to raise concerns or allegations in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place
- Staff are fully aware of Guidance for Safer Working Practice 2022 and the Volunteer and Employee Code of Conduct and are aware of professional expectations of their own behaviour and conduct.
- Further information, LADO referral information and flowchart of how allegations are managed: [Local Authority Designated Officer \(LADO\) - Lancashire County Council](#) includes the threshold matrix.
- Referrals will be made using the required format below when necessary.
https://my.apps.lancashire.gov.uk/w/webpage/request?form=management_of_allegations_notification

Myerscough College and University Centre recognises that children may make disclosures against someone who is in a position of trust / is working or volunteering with children, not in the College setting. This may be an adult in a place of worship, a sports coach or a club leader. After ensuring that the child is safe, we recognise that we must refer to the LADO and/or PIPOT and share information.

- **Low Level Concerns**

The term ‘low-level’ concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’ - that an adult working in or on behalf of the College may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the Volunteer and Employee code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- humiliating students

Myerscough College and University Centre will strive to embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which the College's values and expected behaviour set out in the Volunteer and Employee code of conduct are lived, monitored and reinforced constantly by all staff.

Myerscough College and University Centre will ensure that staff are encouraged and feel confident to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

If in doubt whether the concern is a low-level concern, The People Team or DSL will consult with LADO for guidance.

38. Safer Recruitment

Myerscough College and University Centre is committed to keeping students safe by ensuring that adults who work or volunteer in College are safe to do so. We therefore ensure that:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2026, Safer Recruitment guidance is adhered to, to ensure that there is a strong reference and commitment to safeguarding during advertisement, selection and recruitment of new staff.

An enhanced DBS check with barred list information will be undertaken for all staff members engaged in regulated activity. A person will be considered to be in 'regulated activity' if, as a result of their work, they:

- Are responsible on a daily basis for teaching, training, instructing or the care or supervision of children.
- Regularly work in the College at times when children are on the premises.
- Regularly come into contact with children under 18 years of age.

Regular is defined as at least 3 times in a 30-day period.

The People Team will conduct the appropriate pre-employment checks for all prospective employees.

College will ensure that:

- The appropriate DBS and suitability checks will be carried out for all staff, governors, volunteers, and contractors. The DfE's DBS Workforce Guides will be consulted when determining whether a position fits the child workforce criteria.

- Enhanced recruitment and vetting arrangements will apply to residential staff whose duties place them in positions of trust with residential students.
- The College has undertaken additional procedures to determine the level of supervision and vetting required for contractors who regularly attend the campus and may have contact with children.
- The College will satisfy itself that all required safer recruitment checks have been completed before an individual commences regulated activity. Evidence of checks undertaken will be recorded on the Single Central Record.
- The College will ensure that those involved in recruitment have received appropriate safer recruitment training and that such training is refreshed in accordance with College requirements and statutory guidance.
- The College will obtain written confirmation from employment businesses supplying agency staff that all required safer recruitment checks have been completed in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. The College will additionally verify the identity of all agency workers on arrival.
- Conduct an online search of shortlisted candidates in line with KCSIE 2026 requirements. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened and are publicly available online and will inform shortlisted candidates of this procedure.
- A transfer of control agreement will be used where other agencies/organisations use College premises and are not operating under the College's Safeguarding Policies and Procedures.
- When an issue is declared, advice will be sought from Ofsted about the need to apply for a waiver. If a waiver is necessary, a risk assessment will be carried out and proportionate measures put in place until a waiver has been issued or matters resolved. If it is not resolved, this must be reported:- disqualification@ofsted.gov.uk.
- Advice will be sought from The People Team or Local Authority Designated Officers if any staff are unclear about any aspects of Safer Recruitment.
- Where an employee subscribes to the DBS Update Service, status checks may be undertaken in accordance with DBS guidance. The College will determine whether a new DBS application is required based upon the nature of the role, any change in circumstances and safeguarding risk.

Referral to the DBS

There is a legal requirement for Colleges to make a referral to the DBS where they remove an individual from regulated activity (or would have removed an individual had they not left), and they believe the individual has:

- engaged in relevant conduct in relation to children and/or adults, and/or
- satisfied the harm test in relation to children and/or vulnerable adults, and/or
- been cautioned or convicted of a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence.

Single Central Record (SCR)

The College keeps an SCR which records all staff, including agency, third-party agency staff and teacher trainees on salaried routes, who work at the College, even if they work for one day.

All members of the proprietor body are also recorded on the SCR.

The following information is recorded on the SCR:

- An identity check
- A barred list check
- An enhanced DBS check
- A prohibition from teaching check
- A check of professional qualifications, where required
- A check to determine the individual's right to work in the UK
- Additional checks for those who have lived or worked outside of the UK
- Whether the employee's position involves relevant activity, i.e. regularly caring for, training, supervising or being solely in charge of persons aged under 18
- A section 128 check for those in management positions
- Any other information deemed relevant.

Checks conducted for volunteers or Governors, are also recorded on the SCR.

The details of an individual will be removed from the SCR once they no longer work or volunteer at the College.

39. Review

This Policy is subject to ongoing review; however, will be reviewed no later than 30 September 2027. All staff have access to a copy of this policy of the staff intranet.

40. Key Contacts, Roles and Training

Designated Safeguarding Lead	Erika Parry	DSL Training: 16.01.2025 Date of renewal: 16.01.2027 Booked for: 20.10.2026
Deputy DSL(s)	Kellie Dunn	DSL Training: 20.11.2025 Date of renewal: 20.11.2027
	Sue Coventry	DSL Training: 27.02.2025 Date of renewal: 27.02.2027 Booked for: 20.10.2026
	Rob Kay	DSL Training: 20.11.2025 Date for Renewal: 20.11.2027
	Nikki Lamb	DSL training: 23.09.2025 Date for Renewal: 23.09.2027
	Emma Lamb	DSL training: 23.09.2025 Date for Renewal: 23.09.2027
Principal	Wes Johnson	Annual Safeguarding and KCSIE update 27.08.2026 Date for Renewal: September 2027
Chair of the Board of Governors (Safeguarding Governor)	Jane Booker	Annual Safeguarding and KCSIE update 27.08.2026 Governor Update 15.10.2026 Date for Renewal: September 2027

Prevent Lead	Erika Parry	Prevent Duty update for Education 06.10.26 Date for renewal September 2027
Prevent Deputy	Kellie Dunn	Prevent Duty update for Education 06.10.26 Date for renewal September 2027
Safeguarding Curriculum Leads (inc Prevent)	Mark Moren – Director of Curriculum Victoria Wilding – Careers and Personal Development Manager	
LCC College Safeguarding Officers: Victoria Wallace, Mechelle Lewis, Sarah Holyhead, Natalie Barton, Leonie Watson	Safeguarding in Education Advice Line - 01772 531196	
LCC MASH Education Officers Matt Chipchase, Adrienne Fox and Martine Blokland (On secondment till April 2027)	0300 123 6720 mash.education@lancashire.gov.uk	
LADO – Local Authority Designated Officers	01772 536694 LADO.admin@lancashire.gov.uk	
MASH – Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub	0300 123 6720 0300 123 6722 between 5.00pm - 8.00am	
Lancashire and Cumbria Team	01772413398 CTPNW.lancashire@lancashire.police.uk	
NW Education Coordinator	Rebecca.orchard@education.gov.uk	