

## **POLICY**

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

- a The college recognises its obligation to protect young people under 18 and vulnerable adults from instances of physical, emotional, sexual or institutional abuse/radicalisation whilst attending college [definition of abuse at Annex I].
- b The college recognises the specific needs of young people with disabilities, minority ethnic and other groups in society that suffer discrimination and who might be especially vulnerable to abuse/radicalisation.
- c This policy adheres to the principles outlined in the Protection of Children [Scotland] Act 2003, part V of the Police Act [1997] and Section 26 of the Counter –Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- d The policy will, at all times, take due cognisance of current legislation and relevant guidelines as identified in Annex II.
- e It is the intention of the procedures associated with this policy to ensure that the appropriate action is taken immediately where a young person or vulnerable adult is suspected of being abused/radicalised.
- f The prime concern at all times must be the safety and interests of young people and vulnerable adults while attending the college.

### **2 POLICY STATEMENT**

- a The college is committed to providing all college users, including those under 18 and vulnerable adults, with a safe, supportive environment within which they can prosper and that protects them from harm, abuse and exploitation.
- b The college is equally committed to providing staff with an environment in which they can work together to encourage and develop an ethos which embraces difference and diversity and respects the rights of children, young people and adults.

### **3 SCOPE**

- a This policy deals with the protection of children and of vulnerable adults.
- b Children, as defined by current legislation, are those under 18 years of age.
- c Adults, as defined within this policy, are those over 18 and could incorporate staff members, volunteers, partner representatives and designated persons.

#### **4 KEY GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- a Ensure that all adults understand their legal obligations to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm, abuse, exploitation and radicalisation.
- b Take reasonable steps to ensure the care and protection of young people under 18, vulnerable adults and staff and to prevent foreseeable harm.
- c Ensure all adults with potentially unsupervised access to young people and vulnerable adults are deemed fit to work with them.
- d Be pro-active in promoting good lines of communication and ensuring where appropriate that children, parents and carers are familiar with the college's care and protection procedures.
- e Provide opportunities for all adults to develop their skills and knowledge particularly in relation to the care and protection of children and young people.
- f Work effectively with key partners and other agencies. A list of agencies can be found at Annex III.
- g Ensure that all adults understand their obligations to report care or protection concerns about a child or adult at risk to the organisation's designated person for child protection.
- h Implement a systematic means of recording, reporting and monitoring students known or thought to be at risk of harm.
- i To provide support for adults who are involved in a referral under this policy.
- j The college adopts a proactive approach to prevent inappropriate behaviour and strives to ensure that everyone who comes into contact with young people or vulnerable adults understands the boundaries of appropriate behaviour – Reference: Code of Conduct & Good Practice.

#### **5 GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT**

- a The college provides guidance to staff and young people related to:
  - Photography and digital images.
  - Drugs and alcohol.
  - Procedures for administering First Aid and responding to emergency medical needs.
  - Allegations of bullying and harassment such as racism and sexism.
  - Health and Safety procedures.
  - Guidance on the use of restraint in the Nursery.
  - Positive behaviour in and around the college through the Student Charter and Student Code of Conduct.

- b The college provides relevant and appropriate staff development opportunities related to care and protection of young people.
- c The college shares this Policy and Code of Conduct & Good Practice with appropriate service providers.
- d Staff know the procedures for reporting and recording allegations of inappropriate behaviour.

## **6 PHYSICAL INTERVENTION**

- a Physical intervention will be rarely used in South Lanarkshire College. However it is recognised that, on the rare occasion, College staff, having a duty of care to their students, may have to take reasonable steps to deal with individuals who demonstrate violent or severely challenging behaviours that require urgent action to prevent harm.
- b Physical intervention should only be undertaken as a last resort in an emergency where staff judge that they must intervene to protect a student, another person or themselves. At all times the personal safety of those involved in the situation must be the paramount consideration.
- c Physical intervention may take many forms. It may be both verbal and/or physical and may vary in degree from an instruction to seclusion. The purposes of physical intervention are:
  - to take immediate control of a dangerous situation;
  - to use the least restrictive method or exert the least practicable amount of force to take control for the shortest time;
  - to end or reduce significantly the danger to the individual, oneself or others without putting oneself at risk.
- d The most common reasons for physical intervention are:
  - physical assault;
  - dangerous threatening or destructive behaviour;
  - self-harm or risk of physical injury by accident.

## **7 LINKED POLICIES**

- a This policy should be understood in conjunction with other college policies in Annex IV.

## **8 RESPONSIBILITIES**

- a The Board of Management has overall strategic responsibility for the Child Protection Policy and to ensure the college protects all children and young people involved in any way with the college.
- b The college will appoint a senior member of staff to take overall responsibility for the policy.
- c The college will appoint a nominated Child Protection Coordinator reporting to the senior member of staff with responsibility for the policy.

# **A N N E X I**

## **DEFINITION OF ABUSE<sup>[1]</sup>**

### **Guidance for Education Authorities, Independent Schools, School Staff and all others Working with Children in an Education context in Scotland**

#### **1 GENERAL DEFINITION OF ABUSE**

Children and young people may be in need of protection where their basic needs are not being met, in a manner appropriate to their stage of development, and they will be at risk from avoidable acts or omission on the part of their parent[s], sibling[s] or other relative[s], or a carer, ie the person[s] while not a parent who has actual custody of a child.

#### **2 CATEGORIES OF ABUSE**

For recording all cases the following are the standard categories of abuse:

##### **a Physical Injury**

Actual or attempted physical injury to a child, including the administration of toxic substances, where there is knowledge, or reasonable suspicion, that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

##### **b Sexual Abuse**

Any child may be deemed to have been sexually abused when any person[s], by design or neglect, exploits the child, directly or indirectly, in any activity intended to lead to the sexual arousal or other forms of gratification of that person or any other person[s] including organised networks. This definition holds whether or not there has been genital contact and whether or not the child is said to have initiated, or consented to, the behaviour.

##### **c Non-organic Failure to Thrive**

Children who significantly fail to reach normal growth and developmental milestones, ie physical growth, weight, motor, social and intellectual development, where physical and genetic reasons have been medically eliminated and a diagnosis of non-organic failure to thrive has been established.

##### **d Emotional Abuse**

Failure to provide for the child's basic emotional needs such as to have a severe effect on the behaviour and development of the child.

## **e Physical Neglect**

This occurs when a child's essential needs are not met and this is likely to cause impairment to physical health and development. Such needs include food, clothing, cleanliness, shelter and warmth. A lack of appropriate care, including deprivation of access to health care, may result in persistent or severe exposure, through negligence, to circumstances which endanger the child.

## **f Institutional Abuse**

When the structure of an existing organisation such as a school, learning community or sports club is used in the targeting of children and young people for abuse, this may be referred to as institutional abuse.

## **g Recognition of Abuse**

Staff, both teaching and ancillary, because of their day-to-day contact with individuals, is well placed to observe outward symptoms of abnormality or change in appearance, behaviour, learning pattern or development. Such symptoms may be due to a variety of other causes, including bereavement, domestic violence or other changes in family circumstances, or drug, alcohol or solvent misuse. Sometimes, however, they may be due to child abuse.

For example, the following may be noticeable:

- Bruises, particularly bruises of a regular shape which may indicate the use of an implement such as a strap, or the marks of a hand, lacerations, bite marks or burns.
- Possible indicators of physical neglect, such as inadequate clothing, poor growth, hunger, poor hygiene.
- Possible indicators of emotional abuse, such as excessive dependence, attention seeking, self-harming.
- Possible indicators of sexual abuse – physical signs such as bruises, scratches or bite marks, or behavioural such as precocity, withdrawal or inappropriate sexual behaviour.

Other possible signs are:

- Withdrawn behaviour.
- Agitated or anxious behaviour.
- Student being isolated by other students.
- Student isolating him/herself from fellow students.
- Inappropriate/improper dress.
- Unkempt, unwashed, smelly.
- Overly anxious to please.
- Bruising and minor injuries.
- Frequent absences for admission to hospital.
- Atypical incidence of absence from college.
- Sudden changes in behaviour, eg secretiveness.
- Atypical aggressive, acting-out behaviour.
- Precocious sexual behaviour.

Any of the above may be accompanied by marked deterioration in performance or increased absenteeism – both of which can in themselves be indicators of abuse.

No list of symptoms can be exhaustive. Also alternative medial, psychological or social explanations may exist for the signs and symptoms described.

## **2.1 Radicalisation**

In respect of safeguarding individuals from radicalisation, the College works to the Prevent element of the Government's Counter Terrorism Strategy, and where deemed appropriate seeks external support for learners through referrals to the Channel Programme. This programme aims to work with the individual to address their specific vulnerabilities, prevent them becoming further radicalised and possibly entering the criminal justice system because of their actions. It is recognised that radicalisation can occur to an individual from any section of society and is not particular to any racial, ethnic or social group. It is further recognised that in many instances the process of radicalisation is essentially one of grooming by others.

Possible signs of radicalisation include:

- The individual's views become increasingly extreme regarding another section of society or government policy
- The individual becomes increasingly intolerant of more moderate views
- The individual expresses a desire/intent to take part in or support extremist activity
- They are observed downloading, viewing or sharing extremist propaganda from the web
- They become withdrawn and focused on one ideology
- The individual may change their appearance, their health may suffer (including mental health) and they may become more isolated from family, friends, peers or social groups.

[1] Taken from 'Protecting Children – A Shared Responsibility'

## **A N N E X I I**

### **RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND GUIDELINES**

This policy and associated procedures have been drawn up in accordance with current legislation and principles derived from the following:

- Additional Support for Learning [Scotland] Act 2004.
- Anti-social Behaviour Legislation.
- 'It's everyone's job to make sure I'm alright' – Scottish Executive, November 2002.
- Legislation outlined Annex C of 'Protecting Children and Young People: Framework for Standards – Scottish Executive, March 2004.
- Protecting Children: A Shared Responsibility: A Guidance on Inter-agency Cooperation – Scottish Office, 1998.
- Protecting Children and Young People: Framework for Standards – Scottish Executive, March 2004.
- Protecting Children and Young People: The Charter – Scottish Executive, March 2004.
- The Age of Legal Capacity [Scotland] Act, 1991.
- The Children [Scotland] Act, 1995.
- The Data Protection Act, 1998.
- The Police [Scotland] Act, 1997.
- United Nations Convention on the rights of the Child, ratified by the UK Government in 1991.
- Sexual Offences [Amendment] Act, 1998 [Section 3].
- Protection of Vulnerable Groups [Scotland] Act 2007.
- Children and Young People [Scotland] Act 2014.
- Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015



## **ANNEX III**

### **KEY AGENCIES AND PERSONNEL**

- College local partnerships and networks.
- Social Work.
- Health – Doctors, Nurses, Therapists.
- Schools.
- Housing Officers.
- Community Police Officers.
- Youth Leaders.
- Staff who work in mental health or drug and alcohol services.
- The Reporter to the Children’s Panel.
- Local Voluntary Agencies.
- Looked-after Children Coordinators.
- Channel Scheme

### **CHILD PROTECTION CO-ORDINATOR**

#### **Responsible for:**

- 1 The oversight of child protection issues within the College.
- 2 Instituting any investigation into allegations of child abuse.
- 3 Determining the means of making an appropriate College response to any allegations of child abuse which may include:
  - making a recommendation to the Principal / Depute Principal of suspension of a person against whom allegations have been made
  - referral of the allegation to an external agency (eg Social Services or Police)
- 4 Informing parents, guardians or carers of any allegations of abuse or, in those cases where the matter has been referred by an external agency, deciding in conjunction with that agency what information will be conveyed to the parents, guardians or carers and at what stage.
- 5 Keeping records relating to child protection issues, including allegations of child abuse.
- 6 Designating other full-time members of the College staff to cover for absences or to act on behalf of the Co-ordinator.
- 7 Staff development in College safeguarding procedures.

## **A N N E X I V**

### **LINKED POLICIES**

This policy should be understood in conjunction with other college policies including:

- Confidentiality Policy.
- Bullying and Harassment Policy.
- Data Protection – CCTV Policy.
- Disclosure of Criminal Convictions Policy.
- Freedom of Information Policy.
- Health and Safety Policy.
- ICT Email & Internet Policy.
- ICT Policy.
- Learner Support Policy.
- Recruitment and Selection Policy.
- Student Discipline Policy and Procedures.
- Student Interview Policy.
- Staff Disciplinary Policy.