

Safeguarding Policy 2026-2027

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1. City of Bristol College is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and supportive environment where all students can thrive, achieve their full potential, and feel respected, valued and protected from harm.
- 1.2. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. The College recognises its statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk and is committed to creating a culture of vigilance in which concerns are identified, reported and acted upon promptly and effectively. We believe that every learner has the right to learn in an environment that promotes their wellbeing, welfare, dignity, rights and safety.
- 1.3. The College is fully committed to meeting its responsibilities under relevant safeguarding legislation and guidance, including *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)*, *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, the *Children Acts 1989 and 2004*, the *Care Act 2014*, the *Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015*, the *Equality Act 2010*, and the *Prevent Duty*. We recognise that safeguarding encompasses a wide range of issues, including abuse, neglect, exploitation, domestic abuse, sexual violence and harassment, child-on-child abuse, online harms, criminal and sexual exploitation, radicalisation, mental health concerns, and risks to adults with care and support needs.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. This policy provides the framework through which the College fulfils its statutory safeguarding responsibilities and ensures that effective arrangements are in place to:
 - Protect students from abuse, neglect, exploitation, radicalisation and all other forms of harm.
 - Identify concerns at the earliest opportunity and take timely, appropriate and proportionate action to safeguard students.
 - Promote the physical, emotional, mental health and wellbeing of all students.
 - Create and maintain a culture where safeguarding is recognised as everyone's responsibility and concerns are taken seriously and acted upon without delay.
 - Ensure robust safer recruitment, selection and vetting arrangements are in place for all employees, volunteers and contractors working with students.
 - Equip colleagues with the knowledge, skills and confidence required to recognise, respond to and report safeguarding concerns effectively.
 - Promote effective partnership working and information sharing with parents, carers, employers, safeguarding partners and other relevant agencies.
 - Comply with relevant safeguarding legislation, statutory guidance and local safeguarding partnership arrangements.
 - Support students to develop the knowledge, awareness and resilience required to keep themselves safe both online and offline.

3. Scope of Policy

- 3.1. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students is everyone's responsibility. **Everyone** who comes into contact with students and their families and carers has a role to play.

- 3.2. This policy applies to all students, apprentices, prospective students, and adults at risk who engage with City of Bristol College. It applies to all members of the College community, including governors, employees, agency workers, contractors, volunteers, visitors, and employers involved in work placements or apprenticeship provision.
- 3.3. The policy covers all College activities, including:
- Teaching, learning and assessment activities.
 - Work placements, apprenticeships and industry placements.
 - Educational visits, trips and off-site activities.
 - Online learning and digital environments.
 - College premises and College-arranged activities taking place elsewhere.
- 3.4. All individuals working or volunteering on behalf of the College are required to comply with this policy and report any safeguarding concerns in accordance with College procedures.
- 3.5. The policy outlines the College's responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of:
- Children and young people under the age of 18.
 - Adults at risk, including students aged 18 and over with care and support needs who may be vulnerable to abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- 3.6. The policy addresses a broad range of safeguarding matters, this will be outlined within the document.

4. Definitions

4.1 **Children and young people** - those aged under 18 years. The terms child, children, young person and young people may be used interchangeably throughout this policy. The College recognises that learners aged 16 and 17 may be transitioning towards greater independence and involvement in decision-making. Safeguarding practice will be child-centred and will seek to involve young people fully in decisions affecting them wherever appropriate, while recognising that they remain children in law and are entitled to the protections afforded by safeguarding legislation.

4.2 **Adults at Risk** – anyone aged 18 years or over who:

- **Has** needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting those needs);
- Is experiencing, has previously experienced, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- As a result of those care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves from abuse, neglect or exploitation.

4.3 **Safeguarding** - The action taken to promote the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk and to protect them from harm.

4.4 **Contextual safeguarding** - Contextual safeguarding recognises that risks and harm may occur outside the family home, including within peer groups, education settings, communities, public spaces and online environments.

4.5 **Learner** – The term learner refers to all students, apprentices, applicants, prospective students and individuals participating in College provision, regardless of age.

4.6 **LSP** – local safeguarding partnership. The statutory multi-agency safeguarding arrangements responsible for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk within a local area. In Bristol it is called 'Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership' (KBSP).

4.7 **LADO** – Local Authority Designated Officer. Is responsible for managing and overseeing allegations made against adults who work with, care for, or volunteer with children. The LADO provides advice, guidance and oversight to ensure allegations are managed appropriately and consistently

4.8 **PIPoT**- Person In Positions Of Trust. Is an adult who works with, cares for, supervises, teaches or has responsibility for children and young people as part of their paid employment or voluntary role.

4.9 **KCSIE** (Keeping Children Safe in Education)- Statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Education, primarily under section 175 of the Education Act 2002, section 157 for independent schools, and related education legislation. Colleges and schools are required to have regard to it when carrying out their safeguarding duties.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Board of Governors

5.1.1 The Board holds responsibility for ensuring that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place and that the College complies with all relevant safeguarding legislation and guidance. The Board will provide strategic challenge and assurance regarding safeguarding policies and practices, and will ensure that safeguarding remains a key priority across the College.

5.1.2 The Safeguarding Link Governor will meet with the Designated Safeguarding Lead on a termly basis and provide assurance to the Governing Body that safeguarding arrangements are effective, compliant with statutory guidance and support the safety, welfare and wellbeing of all students.

5.2 The Principal & CEO

5.2.1 The Principal & CEO has overall accountability for safeguarding within the College and is responsible for ensuring that the College meets its statutory safeguarding duties.

5.3 Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL)

5.3.1 The DSLs are responsible for operational leadership duties for child protection and safeguarding issues within the setting, for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that students in need are experiencing or have experienced. This also includes identifying the impact that these issues might be having on students' attendance, engagement and achievement at College.

5.3.2 The DSLs have a key duty to take lead responsibility for raising awareness amongst employees of issues relating to the welfare of young people and adults at risk, and the promotion of a safe environment for students, colleagues and visitors associated with the College.

5.3.3 The DSLs in partnership with People Services will oversee referrals relating to allegations that an employee, volunteer or contractor may have or has caused harm to a learner, or behaved in a way that may deem them unsuited to work with children and vulnerable adults, in accordance with local safeguarding partnership procedures.

5.3.4 The College is committed to providing the DSLs with sufficient time, support, training, and resources to carry out their duties effectively.

5.3.5 The DSLs at City of Bristol College are:

- Catherine Howett – Deputy Principal
- Amy Woodrow – Director of Student Experience, Quality and Safeguarding
- Pardeep Digpal – Head of Safeguarding and DSL

5.4 Safeguarding Team Manager and Prevent Lead (Deputy DSL - DDSL)

5.4.1 The DDSL is trained to DSL level 3 and provides operational support to the DSL. While their role is to support the DSL, they have the authority to act independently and make safeguarding decisions when necessary to ensure students are protected from harm.

5.4.2 The Safeguarding Team Manager is responsible for the management and supervision of the Safeguarding Practitioners, ensuring that safeguarding concerns are managed effectively, consistently and in accordance with statutory guidance. Safeguarding Practitioners provide specialist frontline safeguarding support and intervention, working directly with students and partner agencies to promote safety, wellbeing and positive outcomes. Together, they play a critical role in ensuring that safeguarding remains at the heart of the College's learner support and welfare arrangements.

5.4.3 The Prevent Lead has responsibility for coordinating the College's response to the Prevent Duty and safeguarding concerns relating to radicalisation, extremism and vulnerability to terrorism. The Prevent Lead supports the DSL in fulfilling the College's safeguarding responsibilities and acts on behalf of the DSL when required.

5.5 Safeguarding Practitioners

5.5.1 Safeguarding Practitioners are trained to DSL level 3, they are based across all sites. They provide operational specialist frontline safeguarding support and intervention for students. They are responsible for assessing and responding to safeguarding concerns, undertaking direct work with students, coordinating support, working in partnership with external agencies and advocating for students to ensure their safety, wellbeing and welfare.

5.5.2 Safeguarding Practitioners work under the direction of the Safeguarding Team Manager and Head of Safeguarding, to ensure that safeguarding concerns are managed effectively, proportionately and in the best interests of the learner.

5.6 All Colleagues

5.6.1 It is mandatory for all colleagues to read mandatory aspects of KCSIE and complete the College's mandatory safeguarding training.

5.6.2 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All colleagues have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk and must act in the best interests of students at all times.

5.6.3 All colleagues have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which students can learn, develop and thrive. Safeguarding is an integral part of everyone's role and should underpin all interactions, decisions and actions taken within the College.

5.6.4 All colleagues have a responsibility to recognise and respond to safeguarding concerns without delay. Any concern relating to the welfare or safety of a learner must be reported to the Safeguarding Team. Where a learner is believed to be at immediate risk of harm, colleagues must take appropriate action to secure their safety, including contacting the emergency services where necessary, and notify the Safeguarding Team at the earliest opportunity.

5.7. All Students

5.7.1 All students have the right to feel safe, respected and supported within the College environment and share a responsibility for helping to create and maintain a culture where safeguarding and wellbeing are everyone's concern.

5.7.2 Students play an important role in contributing to a safe, respectful and inclusive College environment and are encouraged to take an active role in promoting their own safety and wellbeing and that of others.

6. Legislation and Statutory Framework

6.1. Safeguarding Children

6.1.1 The Department for Education statutory guidance document Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 ([Keeping children safe in education 2026](#)) came into effect 1 September 2026 replacing the previous year's version of the guidance. KCSIE 2026 sets out the legal duties that schools and Colleges must follow to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and should be read alongside Working Together to Safeguard Children and other relevant safeguarding legislation.

6.1.2 The College fulfils its safeguarding responsibilities in accordance with the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, *Working Together to Safeguard Children* and other relevant legislation and statutory guidance.

6.1.3 Section 175 places a duty on governing bodies of schools and further education institutions to make arrangements for carrying out their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

6.2 Safeguarding adults at Risk

6.2.1 As a further education provider, City of Bristol College recognises its responsibilities under the Care Act 2014 to safeguard adults with care and support needs who may be at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation. The College is committed to protecting the rights, wellbeing and welfare of adult students and to working in partnership with statutory agencies to prevent harm and promote positive outcomes.

6.2.2 In delivering its responsibilities under the Care Act 2014, the College is committed to the principles of Making Safeguarding Personal, ensuring that adults at risk are supported to make informed choices, are involved in decisions affecting them, and that safeguarding responses are person-centred and outcome-focused.

6.2.3 Where safeguarding concerns involve adults who may lack capacity to make specific decisions, the College will act in accordance with the principles of the Mental Capacity Act 2005, supporting individuals to make their own decisions wherever possible and acting in their best interests where necessary and appropriate.

6.2.4 The College will work collaboratively with Adult Social Care, health services, the police and other relevant partner agencies to identify, assess and respond to concerns relating to abuse, neglect or exploitation, ensuring adults at risk receive appropriate protection, support and advocacy.

6.3 Prevent Duty

The College accepts the obligations arising from the Prevent legislation as an important element of its general duty of care to protect its employees, contractors, volunteers and students from all forms of harm and will implement Prevent procedures in line with Prevent National Guidance 2023 ([Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales \(accessible\) - GOV.UK](#)) The College recognises that radicalisation and extremism can put individuals at risk of being drawn into violence and criminal activity and has the potential to cause significant harm to them. Working to prevent individuals from being drawn into terrorism is an act of safeguarding. The College is committed both to protecting freedom of speech and academic freedom and to protecting and safeguarding its students from the risk of being drawn into terrorism. The Prevent Duty will be discharged in a way that continues to encourage the exploration of political, philosophical and religious ideas and beliefs.

6.4 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The College is committed to providing an environment that is safe, inclusive and free from discrimination. Safeguarding arrangements are underpinned by the Equality Act 2010 and are designed to ensure that all students are treated fairly, with dignity and respect, regardless of their protected characteristics.

6.5 Information Sharing

The College recognises that effective safeguarding relies on appropriate information sharing between professionals and agencies. Information will be shared lawfully and proportionately in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR. Data protection legislation is not a barrier to sharing information where there are genuine safeguarding concerns and where doing so is necessary to protect a child, young person or adult at risk. For further information, please see our Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices.

6.6 Multi-Agency Working

The College recognises that safeguarding is a shared responsibility and is committed to working collaboratively with safeguarding partners, and relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of students and achieve the best possible outcomes.

7. Safeguarding Arrangements

7.1 City of Bristol College recognises that abuse, neglect, exploitation and other safeguarding concerns can affect any learner, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, religion or personal circumstances. Safeguarding concerns may arise within families, peer groups, intimate relationships, communities, workplaces or online environments.

7.2 All colleagues should maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" and be alert to signs that a learner may be experiencing harm, abuse, neglect, exploitation, radicalisation, mental health difficulties or other safeguarding concerns. Colleagues should be aware that safeguarding issues can present in a variety of ways and that a learner may not always disclose their experiences directly.

7.3 KCSIE Part One outlines a range of safeguarding issues that employees should be aware of, including: **physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, child-on-child abuse, exploitation, domestic abuse, online safety concerns and radicalisation**. Colleagues must familiarise themselves with current version of statutory guidance of KCSIE to understand the signs, indicators and appropriate responses to safeguarding concerns.

7.4 Safeguarding concerns must be reported promptly to the Safeguarding Team. Colleagues should record and submit concerns through the College's 'MyConcern' system

7.5 Students, parents, carers and external professionals should report concerns via the appropriate safeguarding email: safeguardingteam@cityofbristol.ac.uk or on 0117 312 5733

7.6  The College Safeguarding Team operate during term time only with limited resource during the holidays, Monday-Friday, 9-5. When our service is closed and you have an urgent concern that cannot wait until the next working day, call the Emergency Duty Team on 01454 615 165. Please note that this is NOT a College service.

7.7 Further information relating to specific concerns can be found in our Safeguarding Procedures.

8. Specific Safeguarding Vulnerabilities and Risks

8.1 Mental Health and Well-being

The College will ensure that employees receive appropriate training and guidance to identify, understand and respond to mental health and wellbeing concerns and will work collaboratively with students, families, carers and external agencies to provide timely and appropriate support. Where specialist intervention is required, the College will work in partnership with relevant health and support services to help ensure students receive the assistance they need.

8.2 Young Carers

City of Bristol College is committed to supporting the wellbeing, attendance, achievement and progression of young carers. The College will work to identify young carers, provide appropriate support and reasonable adjustments, raise awareness of the challenges they may face, and work collaboratively with external agencies to help ensure they achieve their full potential. A dedicated Young Carers Lead oversees support and promotes positive outcomes for young carers across the College.

8.3 Care Experienced Students (children who have been looked after or adult care leavers)

8.3.1 The College is committed to promoting the wellbeing, achievement and progression of care experienced students including children who are looked after and care leavers.

8.3.2 The College will work to identify and support care experienced students, provide effective transition arrangements, raise awareness of their needs, and work collaboratively with partner agencies and virtual schools to help students achieve positive outcomes.

8.3.3 The College will appoint a Designated Teacher with responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of looked after children and previously looked after children.

8.4 Gender Questioning and Transgender Students

8.4.1 The College is committed to providing a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for all students. We recognise that gender questioning and transgender students may experience additional vulnerabilities, including bullying, discrimination, harassment, social isolation and mental health challenges. The College will take reasonable and proportionate steps to safeguard their wellbeing and ensure they are treated with dignity and respect.

8.4.2 Bullying, harassment, victimisation or hate incidents related to gender identity will not be tolerated and will be addressed in accordance with the College's Attendance, Behaviour & Commitment to Study (ABC) Policy and safeguarding procedures.

8.4.3 The College will consider the individual needs, welfare, safety and rights of all students when responding to requests relating to gender identity and will do so in line with relevant legislation, statutory guidance and College procedures. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis, taking account of safeguarding considerations, parent/carers involvement where appropriate, and the best interests of the learner.

8.4.4 Further information regarding records, names, pronouns, facilities, residential visits and other operational arrangements is contained within the College's Safeguarding Procedures.

8.4.5 The College recognises that guidance and legislation in this area may evolve and will keep its arrangements under regular review to ensure they remain lawful, proportionate and safeguarding-focused.

9. Online Safety and AI

9.1 The College is committed to ensuring that students are safe online. The College will:

- Provide students and colleagues with education and guidance on online safety (including guidance on misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories.)
- Implement appropriate filtering and monitoring systems to protect students from online risks (in line with filtering and monitoring standards set out by the DfE in KCISE 2026.)
- Respond effectively to any incidents of online abuse or harm
- Ensure AI is used safely within the College environment in line with the DfE [Generative AI: product safety expectations - GOV.UK](#)
- Ensure employees and students are aware of the safeguarding risks linked to the use of AI.
- Continuously review IT policies and procedures in light of an ever-changing AI landscape (in line with KCSIE 2026.)

10. Safer Recruitment

10.1 City of Bristol College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk. In accordance with KCSIE, the College implements robust safer recruitment and selection procedures for all employees, governors, volunteers and contractors.

10.2 This includes verifying identity, qualifications and employment history, obtaining references, undertaking appropriate pre-employment checks, including DBS checks where required, and assessing suitability to work with students.

10.3 The College promotes a culture of vigilance and accountability to help ensure a safe learning environment for all. Please refer to the Safer Recruitment Policy for full details.

11. Allegations Against Colleagues (inc, Volunteers, Contractors, Governors etc)

11.1 City of Bristol College is committed to providing a safe environment for all students and recognises its responsibility to respond promptly, fairly and appropriately to any concern, allegation or information which suggests that a member of College workforce, volunteer, contractor or any other adult working on behalf of the College may have caused harm to a learner or may pose a risk to children, young people or adults at risk.

11.2 The College will ensure that all allegations and concerns are managed in accordance with statutory guidance, including (KCSIE), local safeguarding partnership procedures and relevant employment legislation.

11.3 The College recognises the importance of safeguarding students whilst also ensuring that adults who are subject to allegations are treated fairly, consistently and with appropriate support throughout the process.

11.4 The College will maintain a culture of openness and transparency in which all feel confident to raise concerns about the conduct of colleagues through safeguarding, whistleblowing or reporting procedures. Any concerns will be taken seriously and managed appropriately.

12. Training and Development

12.1 City of Bristol College is committed to ensuring that all employees, governors, volunteers and contractors receive appropriate safeguarding training and development to enable them to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities effectively.

12.2 The College will ensure that safeguarding, child protection, Prevent and online safety training is provided at induction and updated regularly in line with statutory guidance and emerging safeguarding risks. Colleagues will receive regular safeguarding updates to maintain awareness of current safeguarding issues, local risks and changes to legislation and guidance.

12.3 DSL's, DDSL's and Safeguarding Practitioners and all relevant professionals will receive specialist training appropriate to their roles and responsibilities.

12.4 Through training, development and continuous professional learning, the College aims to maintain a confident and knowledgeable workforce that is equipped to recognise, respond to, record and report safeguarding concerns, ensuring the safety, wellbeing and welfare of all students.

13.Procedures

13.1 To underpin this policy, the College has a number of related procedures and processes. These include:

- Safeguarding Procedures
- People Services procedures including grievance and discipline policies and procedures
- Data Protection procedures
- Visiting Speakers, Events and Offsite Activities procedures

14.Monitoring and Review

14.1 The DSL/Head of Safeguarding will monitor and review this policy annually.

14.2 The DSL/Head of Safeguarding will prepare termly reports and an annual report for the Governing Body, which reviews how the duties have been discharged.

14.3 Any significant deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to safeguarding and child protection arrangements will be remedied without delay and will be brought to the attention of the College's Senior Leadership Team and the Board of Governors where appropriate and proportionate.

14.4 This policy should not be read in isolation and should be cross-referenced with all relevant College employment and student policies and procedures.

15.Linked Policies and Procedures

- Safeguarding Procedures
- Young Carers Policy
- Trauma-informed strategy
- Death of a student procedure
- Positive Handling Policy
- SEND Policy
- Administration of Medication Policy
- Offsite Activities and Educational Visits
- Visiting Speaker Procedure
- Business Continuity Plan/Critical Incident Response Plan
- Whistleblowing Policy
- People Services policies and procedures including Code of Conduct, Grievance and Discipline
- ABC - Positive Attendance, Behaviour and Commitment to Study Policy
- Fitness to Study Policy

- Data Protection Policy
- Equality, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement
- Health and Safety Policy
- Admissions Policy
- IT Policy & Procedures
- Safer Recruitment & Selection Policy

Version	
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Lead Officer:	Head of Safeguarding
Senior Manager responsible:	Director of Student Experience, Quality and Safeguarding