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Version | 0.6
Pages | 43
Publication Date | [Publication Date]
Last Review Date | 01/09/2024
Next Review Date | 01/09/2025



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

All young people will have the same protection regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation, or identity. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise the additional needs of students from minority ethnic groups and disabled students and the barriers they may face, especially around communication.

Richard Huish College actively works with Local Safeguarding Children's Board, the Police and other external agencies to promote all aspects of safeguarding. The Vice Principal for Student Support will evaluate the College's performance against its commitments set out in this policy and keep up to date with child protection legislation. Support will be given to all parties as appropriate to the allegations, the seriousness of the matter and the needs of the individual.

At Richard Huish College we believe safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who encounters children, and their families has a role to play. To fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

Whilst the cohort at Richard Huish are predominantly aged 16-19, the College does have older students apply. This can present a safeguarding challenge. As a result, Richard Huish College may complete a college DBS check and risk assesses any new student aged 19 or above wishing to enrol on to a 16-19 study programme. Richard Huish College reserves the right to refuse to enrol a new student aged 19 or above based on its safeguarding duty.

The College is part of the wider Huish Trust and is committed to the Trust wide safeguarding policy, however it is acknowledged that there can be distinct differences within a Sixth Form College environment. Working with students over the age of 16 can pose significantly different challenges compared to those of other educational establishments, it is therefore appropriate for the College to have an additional separate policy which recognises the specifics of a post-16 setting.

Other related policies

Equality and Diversity Policy
Health and Safety Policy
Acceptable Use Policy
Behaviour Policy
Whistle Blowing Policy
Staff Code of Conduct
Safer Recruitment & Selection Procedure

N.B. For the purposes of this policy 'child' and 'student' are used interchangeably.

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy of

Richard Huish College

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Richard Huish College Governing Body.

The policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Richard Huish College Governing Body.

on:

1st September 2024.

It is due for review in:

1st September 2025.

Signature

Date

Principal

Signature

Date

Chair of Governors

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Contents

1. Introduction	5
2. Mission Statement of our Education Provision.....	7
3. Implementation, Monitoring and Review of the Child Protection Policy	7
4. Statutory Framework	7
5. The Designated Safeguarding Lead	8
6. The Governing Body	10
7. Supporting Students.....	112
8. Dealing with a disclosure	144
9. Record Keeping	15
10. Confidentiality	15
11. Procedure	16
12. Communication with Parents	17
13. Allegations involving staff/volunteers.....	17
14. Safer Working Practice	19
15. Site Safety including online safety (15a. filtering and monitoring and 15b external site use).....	19
16. Safer Recruitment.....	21
Appendix A: Types of Abuse	21
Appendix B: Single Central Record (SCR).....	322
Appendix C: Early Help	333
Appendix D: Managing Allegations and Escalation	333
Appendix E: SSCB referral routes Somerset Safeguarding Students Board.....	344
Appendix F: Radicalisation and Extremism.....	366
Appendix G: County Lines and Dangerous Drugs	367
Appendix H: Student Attendance.....	388
Appendix I: Restraint	38
Appendix J: Changing for PE /Sport.....	411
Appendix K: The SSCB	41
Appendix L: Intimate Care	42
Appendix M: Professional Conduct and Safety	42
Appendix N: Mental Health	42
Appendix O: LGBTQ.....	42
Appendix P: Contextual Safeguarding.....	423

1. Introduction

This Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy applies to **all** staff, including senior managers and the board of governors, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of this organisation.

We believe that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all students and young people under the age of 18 years and keep them safe. We will also ensure any students on roll over the age of 18 will be signposted and supported to Adult Services.

Purpose:

- To inform staff, governors and volunteers their responsibilities for safeguarding children and to enable everyone to have a clear understanding of how these responsibilities will be carried out.
- To inform on the Somerset Safeguarding Students Board's Inter-agency Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures.
- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires local education authorities and the governors of maintained schools and further education (FE) colleges to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students. This policy will support this.

All education provisions have a responsibility to provide a safe and secure environment in which students can learn.

Education Providers and Volunteers are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour and failure to develop because they have daily contact with students.

All education staff, governors and volunteers will therefore receive appropriate safeguarding training (which is updated regularly), so that they are knowledgeable and aware of their role in the early recognition of the indicators of abuse or neglect and of the appropriate procedures to follow. In addition, all staff members will receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard students effectively. All provisions must inform those in the setting of local concerns that may impact on students.

Our temporary staff/volunteers will be made aware of the policies and procedures by the Designated Safeguarding Team - including Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Staff Code of Conduct.

Our Induction training will now include the College's Serious Breaches of Behaviour policy and the College's procedures for managing students who are unexplainably absent and/or have persistent absence, as well as the staff code of conduct.

Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 and Annex A will be read by all members of the staff; and for everyone working directly with students. There will be mechanisms in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role with regards to safeguarding and recorded/logged on 'My Concern'. Staff lists will then be checked to ensure compliance.

We recognise the Director of Children's Services, within the Local Authority has the overarching responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all students and young people in the area. This policy is to add detail to expectations of staff/volunteers to expect specific duties to happen in relation to students in need and students suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, regardless of where they are or who takes any further action.

This policy is written in line with the government guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.

1a. Terminology

Definitions

Safeguarding 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 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.
- And taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students refers to the process of protecting students from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of mental or physical health or development, ensuring that students grow up in circumstances consistent with the College of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all students to have the best outcomes.

Child Protection refers to the processes undertaken to protect students who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the College, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

Child includes everyone under the age of 18 Years old. Those over 18 but on a roll of an education setting will be referred to Adult services for support.

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

2. Mission Statement of our Education Provision

- Establish and maintain an environment where education staff and volunteers feel safe, are encouraged to talk and are listened to when they have concerns about the safety and well-being of a child.
- Ensure students know that there are adults in the setting whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Ensure that students, who have additional/unmet needs, are supported appropriately. This could include referral to Early Help services or specialist services if they are a child in need or have been / are at risk of being abused and neglected.
- Protect young people in our care from maltreatment and impairment.
- Consider how students may be taught about *safeguarding*, including online safety, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.

Those working with students are advised to maintain an attitude of '*it could happen here*' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child and develop a culture where *Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility*.

3. Implementation, Monitoring and Review of the Child Protection Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually by the governing body. It will be implemented through Richard Huish College's induction and training programme, and as part of day-to-day practice. Compliance with the policy will be monitored by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Principal and governing body through day-to-day practice.

4. Statutory Framework

To safeguard and promote the welfare of students, the setting will act in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Education Act 2002 (Section 175/157) which outlines that Local Authorities and School Governing Bodies have a responsibility to "ensure that their functions relating to the conduct of school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students who are its pupils"
- Somerset Safeguarding Children Board Inter-agency Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Procedures (Effective Support for Children and Families)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, September 2024)
- Special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice: 0- 25 years. HM government 2014
- Section 26, The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (PREVENT duty)
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (Section 74, Serious Crime Act 2015)

- Early Years Foundation Stage 2017
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges; DfE May 2018.
- The Prevent Duty 2015
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2023)

Richard Huish College has appropriate procedures in place for responding to situations in which: a child may have been abused or neglected or is at risk of abuse or neglect: a member of staff or volunteer has behaved in a way that has or may have harmed a child or that indicates they would pose a risk of harm. This is referred directly to the DSL, DDSL, Duty Manager or to an outside agency, such as the Local Authority Designated Officer or the police.

5. The Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Richard Huish College Governing Body will ensure that the College designates an appropriate senior member of staff to take lead responsibility for child protection. A written job specification will be provided for this role. This person should have the status and authority within the College (a member of senior management), to carry out the duties of the post including committing resources and where appropriate, supporting and directing other staff.

During term time the Designated Safeguarding Lead and or a deputy will always be available (during provision hours) for staff in the College or other professionals to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Individual arrangements for out of hours/out of term must be in place with a named person made available to ensure contact if needed.

We recognise that when a child has a social worker, it is an indication that the child is more at risk than other students.

This may mean that they are more vulnerable to further harm, as well as facing educational barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and poor mental health. These children will be closely monitored by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Learning Support Manager.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is tasked with promoting educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protections issues with teachers, support staff and the Senior Management team.

For those in residential care the House Manager will deal directly with Safeguarding concerns via the emergency telephone number and will contact the Vice Principal for Student Support or the DSL.

5a. Responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSL when supporting or stepping up in the Designated Lead absence

- The DSL/DDSL will refer all cases of suspected abuse or neglect to the Local Authority Children's Services (Safeguarding and Specialist Services) and/or Police

(cases where a crime may have been committed) or to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern.

- Liaise with the Principal to inform her of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations or Section 42 where Adults are concerned.
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
- Support staff members around requests for involvement to other agencies.
- Share information with appropriate staff in relation to a Child Looked After (CLA) legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an Interim Care Order or Care Order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.
- Ensure they have details of the CLA's social worker and where applicable the name of the virtual school Head Teacher in the authority that looks after the child.
- Have a good knowledge and attend meetings (or submit reports) to contribute to the planning for students who have Child in Need or Child Protection Plans.
- Utilise, implement, scrutinise and monitor the use of Early Help Assessments in the College.
- Work with relevant staff in the College to ensure the site is safe and secure.
- Ensure recording child safeguarding and child protection files are correctly drawn up with effective chronologies and regularly reviewed to scrutinise any patterns or drift/outstanding actions..
- Ensure the College's Single Central Record is correct and safe recruitment procedures are upheld in partnership with the Chief of People Officer.
- Ensure the College's site security and risk assessments are maintained and completed to support staff and students feel safe in partnership with the Estates Manager.
- Undertake the necessary training and ensure it is shared within the setting

5b. Training

The Designated Safeguarding Lead must undergo the Local Authority's formal training every two years. Their knowledge and skills should be refreshed by attending the Local Authority termly and annual updates (for example via e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments). Other requirements are:

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as Early Help Assessments. (EHA)
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the College's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff and this is recorded on 'MyConcern'.
- Be alert to the specific needs of students in need, those with special educational needs and young carers.

- Understand and support the College with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and can provide advice and support to staff on protecting students from the risk of radicalisation.
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals with actions and outcomes.
- Obtain/disseminate access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses.
- Encourage a culture of listening to students and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the College may put in place to protect them.

5c. Raising Awareness

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should ensure the College's policies are known, understood and used appropriately.

- Ensure the College's safeguarding and child protection policy is reviewed annually and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with the Richard Huish Trust regarding this.
- Ensure the safeguarding and child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the College in this.
- Link with the Somerset Safeguarding Children's Board (SSCB) to ensure full knowledge of training opportunities and the local policies on safeguarding.
- Where students leave the College, ensure the file for safeguarding and any child protection information is sent to any college as soon as possible but transferred separately from the main student file and/or 'MyConcern' software.
- Education providers should obtain proof that the new setting has received the safeguarding file for any child transferring and then destroy any information held on the child in line with data protection guidelines.
- If the child leaves and their whereabouts are unknown or to move to elective home education the last school known retains the file.

6. The Governing Body

The Richard Huish College Governing Body will ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation. They will also have regard to this guidance to ensure that the policies, procedures and training in the College are effective and comply with the law at all times.

The responsibilities placed on the Richard Huish College Governing Body include:

- Contributing to ensure the College is carrying out inter-agency working, which includes providing a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of students are identified.
- Ensuring that an effective child protection policy is in place, together with a staff behaviour code of conduct policy and behaviour policy.

- Ensuring staff are provided with *Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2024)* – and are aware of specific safeguarding issues.
- Ensuring that staff induction is in place with regards to child protection and safeguarding.
- Appointing an appropriate senior member of staff to act as the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Ensuring that all of the Designated Safeguarding Leads (including deputies) undergo formal child protection training every two years (in line with SCSB guidance) and receive regular (annual) safeguarding refreshers.
- Prioritising the welfare of students and young people and creating a culture where staff and volunteers are confident to challenge senior leaders over any safeguarding concerns.
- Ensure that mental and physical health are part of the colleges safeguarding remit and staff are trained appropriately to support students
- Ensuring that students are taught about safeguarding in an age appropriate way through the pastoral curriculum
- Ensuring appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place to safeguard students from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material
- Having a senior board level lead to take leadership responsibility for the organisation's safeguarding arrangements.
- Ensure scrutiny and effectiveness of the single central record and child protection recording is undertaken.
- Ensure safeguarding is regularly discussed and outcomes recorded at Governor meetings.
- Ensure the requirements of The Governor's Safeguarding Audit Section 175 are met and actions when needed completed in a timely way.
- Ensure Section 128 checks are completed on Governors (bar Associate Governors).

Members of the governing body will take part in mandatory training to ensure that they can 'assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in the college are effective. This training will be regularly updated.

Richard Huish College Safeguarding and Child Protection **PROCEDURE**

7. Supporting Students

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students is everyone's responsibility. To fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, always, what is in the best interests of the child. However it should be remembered that sometimes children will

not feel ready or know how to tell someone they're being abused, exploited, or neglected and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful.

It is important to remember that students can be at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse, domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation..

Education providers and staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for students. This system is based on the principle of providing help for families to stay together where it is safe for the students to do so, and looking at alternatives where it is not, whilst always acting in the best interests of the child.

Students who may require early help will be offered early intervention through Early Help support services for families.

A directory of early help services is available from the Early Help Advice Hub on 01823 355803. Somerset Choices and Professional Choices will also help practitioners and families find information and support to prevent escalation of needs and crisis.

All staff will be aware of the early help process, and understand their role in identifying emerging problems, including sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment of a child's needs. It is important for students to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. This also includes staff monitoring the situation and feeding back to the Designated Safeguarding Lead any ongoing/escalating concerns so that consideration can be given to a request for involvement to Children's Services if the child's situation does not appear to be improving.

Staff and volunteers working within Richard Huish College will also be alert to the potential need for early help for students also who are more vulnerable. For example:

- Students with a disability and/or specific additional needs
- Students with special educational needs
- Students who are acting as a young carer
- Students who are showing signs of engaging in anti-social or criminal behaviour especially if there is a concern that it is exploitative
- Students missing education
- Students whose family circumstances present challenges, such as substance abuse, adult mental health or learning disability, domestic abuse
- Students who are showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect
- Students with poor attendance or high medical absence
- Students suffering child on child abuse
- Is a privately fostered child

College staff members will be aware of the main categories of maltreatment: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. They will also be aware of the

indicators of maltreatment and specific safeguarding issues so that they are able to identify cases of students who may need help or protection.

(See Appendices for information on further descriptors of abuse and specific safeguarding issues)

7.1 Students with SEN and disabilities

There's a concern sometimes that, for students with SEN and disabilities, that their SEN or disability needs are seen first, and the potential for abuse second. If students are behaving in particular ways or they're looking distressed or their behaviour or demeanour is different from in the past, our staff should think about that being a sign of the potential for abuse, and not simply see it as part of their disability or their special educational needs.

Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. We ensure that our child protection policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children.

These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration.
- these children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children.
- the potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges

Students with SEND have a higher risk of being left out, of being isolated from their peers, and they are disproportionately affected by bullying. Schools/colleges are encouraged to make sure that students with SEN and disabilities have got a greater availability of mentoring and support, this guidance is very clear that should happen.

Students with EHCPs will be seen by the Learning Support Team on enrolment and strategies put into place accordingly.

7.2 Emergency Contacts for Students

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) says that provisions should have at least two emergency contacts for every child in the College in case of emergencies, and in case there are welfare concerns at the home. We will endeavour to maintain at least two contact numbers for every child on roll. This will be monitored via a report by CIS.

7.3 Mental, Physical and Emotional Health of Students

It is widely recognised that a child's emotional health and wellbeing influences their cognitive development and learning as well as their physical and social health and

their mental wellbeing in adulthood. Our setting will offer clear support and guidance for Students who have both mental and physical health needs.

7.4 Local Issues and Contextual safeguarding

Safeguarding incidents can be associated with factors outside the setting and between students outside of College. This is called *contextual safeguarding*. Our staff are aware of the definition of *contextual safeguarding* when reporting concerns and must ensure all information and background detail will be given to the DSL when discussing concerns. We are aware in Somerset there are many local issues that can impact on the safeguarding of students, we will endeavour to be aware of all local issues around the College and work with students to ensure they are safe. Where available we will attend ONE meetings, Team around the Schools (TAS) and EYS groups to share knowledge.

7.5 Home-stays (Exchange Visits)

If students are staying with parents from overseas as part of an exchange, the guidance is an enhanced DBS check needs to be carried out on the host family for all over 18s. If there are other people in the family aged over 16, then the College will decide whether they will do an enhanced DBS check for those 16 and 17-year olds who live in the house (if it is deemed appropriate).

8. Dealing with a disclosure

If a child discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff or volunteer should:

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief
- Accept what is being said
- Allow the child to talk freely
- Reassure the child, but not make promises which it might not be possible to keep
- Never promise a child that they will not tell anyone - as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child
- Reassure him or her that what has happened is not his or her fault
- Stress that it was the right thing to tell
- Listen, only asking questions when necessary to clarify
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told
- Make a written record (see Record Keeping)
- Pass the information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead **without delay**

Dealing with a disclosure from a child, and safeguarding issues can be stressful. The member of staff/volunteer should, therefore, consider seeking support for him/herself and discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If a Richard Huish College staff member receives a disclosure about potential harm caused by another staff member, they should see section – Allegation involving College staff/volunteers.

9. Record Keeping

All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing and placed on the 'My Concern' platform. The reasons for not referring will also be recorded on 'MyConcern'. If in doubt about recording requirements staff should discuss with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy.

When a child has made a disclosure, the member of staff/volunteer should:

- Record as soon as possible after conversation using the 'My Concern' software or by informing the DSL/Deputy DSL if 'My Concern' is unavailable
- Do not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by a court
- Record the date, time, witness, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child
- Indicate the position of any injuries
- Record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions
- Agree and record actions and outcomes

All records need to be given to the Designated Safeguarding Lead promptly. No copies should be retained by the member of staff or volunteer.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that all safeguarding records are managed in accordance with the Education (Student Information) (England) Regulations 2005.

If a student who is/or has been the subject of a child protection plan changes provision, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will inform the social worker responsible for the case and transfer the appropriate records to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the receiving provision via 'MyConcern or a secure email..

All child protection recordings should be scrutinised regularly to ensure the action and outcome has been carried and any drift avoided. All records are kept on 'MyConcern' secure online safeguarding software.

10. Confidentiality

Safeguarding and protecting students raises issues of confidentiality that must be clearly understood by all staff/volunteers in education.

All staff, both teaching and non-teaching staff, have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of students with other professionals, particularly the investigative agencies (Children's Services: Safeguarding and Specialist Services and the Police).

If a student confides in a member of staff/volunteer and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff/volunteer tell the child in a

manner appropriate to the child's age/stage of development that they cannot promise complete confidentiality – instead they must explain that they may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child or other students safe. This may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

Staff/volunteers who receive information about students and their families during their work should share that information only within appropriate professional contexts.

11. Procedure

When a member of staff is concerned about a child they will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will decide whether the concerns should be referred to Children's Services. If it is decided to make a request for involvement to Children's Services this will be discussed with the parents, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of harm.

While it is the DSL's role to make request for involvement, any staff member can make a referral to Children's Services. If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm (e.g. concern that a family might have plans to carry out Female Genital Mutilation), a referral should be made to Children's Services and/or the Police immediately. Where referrals are not made by the DSL, the DSL must be informed as soon as possible.

When a person is employed or engaged to carry out 'teaching' work in England, in the course of their work, discovers that an act of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 or there is a risk this might occur the teacher must report this to the police. This is a mandatory reporting duty.

The member of staff must record information regarding the concerns on the same day. The recording must be a clear, precise, factual account of the observations.

Attention must also be paid to the attendance and development of any child about whom the College has concerns, or who has been identified as being the subject of a child protection plan and a written record will be kept and attendance procedures followed.

If a student who is/or has been the subject of a child protection plan changes provision, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will inform the social worker responsible for the case and transfer the appropriate records to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the receiving provision, in a secure manner, and separate from the child's academic file, usually via 'My Concern' electronically.

Should the child's whereabouts be unknown, or they move to elective home education the Social Worker must be informed and the procedure for reporting unexplainably absent and/or have persistent absence from education and elective home education should be followed.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for making the senior leadership team aware of trends in behaviour or concerns that may affect student welfare. Gathering safeguarding data and impact will be embedded into the College's process

to measure effective safeguarding practice and resolve any weaknesses. This will be achieved by having Safeguarding as a standing item on all SLT meeting agendas.

12. Communication with Parents

We are fully committed to working in partnership with Parents. Richard Huish College will ensure the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is available publicly either via the College website or by other means.

Parents should be informed prior to referral, unless it is considered to do so might place the child or any siblings at increased risk of significant harm by:

- The behavioural response it prompts e.g. a child being subjected to abuse, maltreatment or threats / forced to remain silent if alleged abuser informed;
- Leading to an unreasonable delay;
- Leading to the risk of loss of evidential material.

Richard Huish College may also consider not informing parent(s) where this would place a member of staff at risk.

Richard Huish College will ensure that parents/carers understand the responsibilities placed on the College and staff for safeguarding students.

13. Allegations involving staff/volunteers

An allegation is any information which indicates that a member of staff/volunteer may have:

- Behaved in a way that has, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against/related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or students in a way which indicates s/he would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with students
- Behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (also includes behaviour outside the school).

This applies to any child the member of staff/volunteer has contact within their personal, professional or community life.

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the College or education setting's safeguarding arrangements.

Appropriate whistleblowing procedures, which are suitably reflected in staff training and staff behaviour policies, should be in place and easily accessed for such concerns to be raised with the Richard Huish College senior leadership team.

If staff members have concerns about another staff member then this should be referred to the Principal. Where there are concerns about the Principal, this should be referred to the Chair of Governors.

In the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Principal, where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, allegations should be reported directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) through the completion of an Allegation Report Form. Staff may consider discussing any concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead if appropriate make any referral via them.

The person to whom an allegation is first reported should take the matter seriously and keep an open mind. They should not investigate or ask leading questions if seeking clarification; it is important not to make assumptions. Confidentiality should not be promised, and the person should be advised that the concern will be shared on a 'need to know' basis only.

Actions to be taken include making an immediate written record of the allegation using the informant's words – including time, date and place where the alleged incident took place, brief details of what happened, what was said and who was present. This record should be signed, dated and immediately passed on to the DSL or Principal (as appropriate).

The recipient of an allegation must not unilaterally determine its validity, and failure to report it in accordance with procedures is a potential disciplinary matter.

The Principal/Chair of Governors will not **investigate** the allegation itself, or take written or detailed statements, but will assess whether it is necessary to refer the concern to the Local Authority Designated Officer:

If the allegation meets any of the four criteria set out at the start of this section, contact should always be made with the Local Authority Designated Officer without delay.

If it is decided that the allegation meets the threshold for safeguarding, this will take place in accordance Somerset Safeguarding Students Board Inter-agency Child Protection and Safeguarding Students Procedures.

If it is decided that the allegation does not meet the threshold for safeguarding, it will be handed back to the employer for consideration via the College's internal procedures.

The Principal should as soon as possible, (following briefing from the Local Authority Designated Officer) inform the subject of the allegation.

For further information see: SSCB's Allegations Management or contact Somerset Direct for a referral to the LADO **Somerset Direct 0300 123 2224**.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer/through the whistleblowing procedure or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them:

NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for those who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285,

line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

14. Safer Working Practice

To reduce the risk of allegations, all staff should be aware of safer working practice and should be familiar with the guidance contained in the staff HR page/staff code of conduct and Safer Recruitment Document Guidance for safer working practice for those working with students and young people in education settings (2015).

Richard Huish College will ensure supervision at break times, trips and when providing intimate care are assessed and policies written where needed.

15. Site Safety including internet use (Online)

Richard Huish College will make *reasonable* effort to provide a secure, healthy, hazard-free environment for everyone at and visiting our College. Consequently, all staff will:

- Maintain suitable/reasonable physical boundaries and barriers such as fencing, gates and locks on doors;
- Directly supervise students during lessons, and ensure they are never permitted to enter hazardous or insecure sections areas;
- Take all reasonable steps to monitor contractors, visitors and volunteers using the premises, requiring them to report to the College reception, read our Information and Guidance for Contractors and Visitors sign in to confirm that they have received, read and understood the guidance, and wear a visitor's lanyard.
- Alert contractors, visitors and volunteers to the settings Safeguarding expectations and protocols, as well as advising them of the name of the DSL and Deputy DSL.
- Update the single central record of staff/volunteers /casual/governors that are in regulated activity with students.
- Richard Huish College has procedures for fire drills, first aid and one focusing on 'Reducing the Risk and Impact of Terrorist and Extremist Incidents' including lockdown procedures.

15a. Filtering and Monitoring

Richard Huish College are compliant with the DfE Standards regarding filtering and Monitoring. Standards for Schools and Colleges.

The DSL and Principal are responsible for ensuring the standards are met. This will be monitored by the Safeguarding Lead Governor during the termly monitoring visits and reported to the Trust Board.

Day to day management of the filtering and monitoring systems requires specialist knowledge and will be carried out by the college IT team in conjunction with the DSL.

The IT team will:

- Maintain the filtering and monitoring systems.
- Provide filtering and monitoring reports and notifications to the Safeguarding team.
- Complete actions following concerns or checks to systems.
- Work with the Safeguarding Team to respond to evolving trends highlighted through filtering and monitoring.
- Update college devices with software to monitor students during online learning.
- Ensure that students and staff have clear guidance on any online learning resources that may be used and the code of conduct relating to interactions on certain platforms such as Microsoft Teams.

The Safeguarding Team will:

- Receive and act upon filtering and monitoring reports.
- Act upon safeguarding concerns raised and document on MyConcern any actions taken.
- Work with the IT Team to respond to evolving trends highlighted through filtering and monitoring data.
- Ensure there is an Online Safety Policy in place for students and staff.

Students at Richard Huish College are taught about how to keep themselves and others safe, including online. To be effective, we present this information in an age appropriate way. We are sensitive to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual students including those who are victims of abuse, and students with special educational needs.

The college approach to online safety is based on the '4C's' Content/Contact/Conduct /Commerce. The college has an Online Safety Policy which sets out the guidance for both students and staff around the use of social media online software.

At Richard Huish College we complete termly filtering and monitoring reports to review the effectiveness of our filtering and monitoring systems. This is completed by the DSL/DDSL

15b. External organisations using the college site.

The college will ensure that all providers that hire the college facilities out of hours meet the DfE guidance, Keeping Children Safe during community activities, after school clubs and tuition.

The college may receive an allegation relating to an incident that occurred whilst an individual or organisation were using the college premises for the purposes of running activities for children (for example community groups, sports associations, or service providers that run extra-curricular activities).

As with any safeguarding allegation, the colleges will follow their safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO.

The college will ensure they have contact names and numbers for DSL's of each organisation that hires the colleges premises. As part of their booking a copy of their safeguarding policy will be requested.

16. Safer Recruitment

We will ensure that there are appropriate staff and governors with safer recruitment training for interviews and that safer recruitment practices are followed always. We will maintain a **single central record** to ensure all statutory requirements. All references will be verified and recorded.

17. Keeping Children Safe in Education

The statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' is available online, via Smartlog.

All staff have access to this online document and read Part 1 and Annex A and B, which provides further information on:

- Children missing from education
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Child Criminal Exploitation
- County Lines
- Honour based abuse
- FGM
- Forced marriage
- Preventing radicalisation
- Sexual violence and harassment
- Child on child abuse
- Domestic Abuse

This is to assist staff and volunteers to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in this guidance.

Our staff members and regular visitors are asked to sign to say they have read these sections and should subsequently be re-directed to these online documents again should any changes occur. This document will also be made available for parents on our website.

Appendix A. Types of Abuse

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

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

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

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

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

Harm can also include treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. See KCSIE (2023).

Specific abuse and vulnerability concerns.

All staff at Richard Huish are 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.

Staff are not expected or trained to diagnose mental health conditions or issues but may notice behaviours that may be of concern.

Where a member of staff has a mental health concern about a student, this is classified as a safeguarding concern. This should be raised immediately by informing the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy through either 'MyConcern' or a direct conversation.

Domestic Abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person towards whom the behaviour is directed must be aged 16 or over and they must be "personally connected" (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act).

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. The government will issue statutory guidance to provide further information for those working with domestic abuse victims and perpetrators, including the impact on children.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of peer-on-peer abuse is sometimes referred to as 'teenage relationship abuse'. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of 'domestic abuse' (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support. The Act's provisions, including the new definition, will be commenced over the coming months.

Fabricated or Induced Illness by Carer (FII)

FII is a condition whereby a child suffers harm through the deliberate action of their carer and which is attributed by the adult to another cause.

FII can cause significant harm to students. FII involves a well child being presented by a carer as ill or disabled, or an ill or disabled child being presented with a more significant problem than he or she has in reality and suffering harm as a consequence.

There are three main ways of the parent/carer fabricating or inducing illness in a child:

- Fabrication of signs and symptoms, including fabrication of past medical history.
- Fabrication of signs and symptoms and falsification of hospital charts, records, letters and documents, and specimens of bodily fluids.
- Induction of illness by a variety of means.
- The possibility of fabricated and induced illness should be considered where there are discrepancies between professional and parental perceptions of the child's needs or of any illness or disability and where there is a possibility of significant harm to the child. Where there are suspicions of FII in a child, the College's DSL must make a referral to Children's Social Care and/or the Police. Parents should not be informed of suspicions at this stage.

Child Exploitation, Sexual (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation

There will be other circumstances which give cause for serious concern about the welfare of students; such as Child Exploitation (CE).

The exploitation of students and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive something (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affections, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities.

CSE can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example, being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones.

In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common; involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

The current definition updated March 2017 states:

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Child on child abuse including (Harmful Sexual Behaviour, Sexual violence, and Harassment)

Education settings are an important part of the inter-agency framework not only in terms of evaluating and referring concerns to children's services and the police, but also in the assessment and management of risk that the child or young person may pose to themselves and others in the education setting. It is important to be aware that children can abuse other children (child on child). It can happen both inside and outside of college and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of peer on peer abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

When considering whether behaviour is abusive, it is important to consider: Whether there is a large difference in power (for example age, size, ability, development) between the young people concerned; or whether the perpetrator has repeatedly tried to harm one or more other students; or where there are concerns about the intention of the alleged perpetrator.

Child on child abuse can manifest itself in many ways and different gender issues can be prevalent. Severe harm may be caused to students by abusive and bullying behaviour of other students, which may be physical, sexual or emotional and can include gender based violence/ sexual assaults, sharing nudes, teenage relationship abuse, peer-on-peer exploitation, serious youth violence, sexual bullying or harmful sexual behaviour. This may include upskirting under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019. This is defined as "a highly intrusive practice, which typically involves someone taking a picture under another person's clothing without their knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear)". See www.gov.uk for further details. Should this practice be discovered please report immediately to the DSL or DDSL.

All staff should understand, that even if there are no reports in their college it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have any concerns regarding child on child abuse, they should speak to the DSL.

Somerset County Council recommends that education settings use The Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool by the **Brook Advisory Service** to help professionals; assess and respond appropriately to sexualised behaviour. The traffic light tool can be found at www.brook.org.uk/our-work/the-sexual-behaviours-traffic-light-tool.

Guidance on responding to and managing the sharing of nude images can be found at: <https://ceop.police.uk>

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed below, that are abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

Child on child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);

- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers.
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes' images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- up skirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm; and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could 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).

To minimise the risk of child on child abuse the College will:

- Provide an appropriate tutorial programme which develops students understanding of acceptable behaviour and keeping themselves safe.
- Have systems in place for any student to raise concerns with staff, knowing that they will be listened to, believed and valued.
- Develop robust risk assessments (where appropriate). These will include any actions to make the location safer.
- Have relevant policies in place (e.g., behaviour policy).
- Identify any support required for siblings following incidents of sexual violence or sexual harassment.

All students will be made aware of the way to report any peer-on-peer abuse at college such as through a tutor or via the wellbeing email address.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-sexual-abuse-in-schools-and-colleges/review-of-sexual-abuse-in-schools-and-colleges>

Further information on Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024

Honour-Based Violence (HBV)

So-called 'honour based' violence (HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage and practices such as breast ironing.

All forms of so-called HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubt, staff should speak to the DSL. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBV, or already having suffered HBV.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons (World Health Organisation). It is also sometimes referred to as female genital cutting or female circumcision. The practice is illegal in the UK.

FGM is not an issue that can be decided on by personal preference – it is an illegal, extremely harmful practice, and a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls. Professionals in health, social care and teaching have a statutory duty to report all cases of FGM to the Police where disclosure or signs of FGM are noted, or where a person knows or suspects FGM has been – or will be – perpetrated. When someone reports FGM to the Police, they should ask for a crime reference number.

Whilst all staff should speak to the DSL with regard to any concerns about Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), there is a specific legal duty on teachers. If a teacher, in the course of their work, discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police.

Please follow the mandatory reporting guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information-accessible-version>

If there is an IMMEDIATE RISK, call the Police on 999 (emergency number).

If there is NOT an immediate risk, call the Police on 101 (non-emergency number).

Forced Marriage

The UK Government describes this as taking someone, usually overseas, to force them to marry (whether or not the FM takes place), or marrying someone who lacks the mental capacity to consent to the marriage (whether they're pressured to or not). Breaching a Forced Marriage Protection Order is also a criminal offence.

When a disclosure or signs of FM are noted, staff should always alert the Principal and DSL immediately. We should never attempt to intervene directly as a College or through a third party. In such situations, the DSL will always call either Somerset Direct/Police and/or the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151.

Breast Ironing/Binding

Breast ironing (also known as breast flattening) is the pounding and massaging of a pubescent girl's breasts, using hard or heated objects, to try to make them stop developing or to disappear.

When a disclosure or signs of breast ironing are noted, staff should always alert the DSL immediately.

Faith Abuse

Faith abuse is linked to a belief in witchcraft or possession by spirits and demons. In such instances, physical and/or psychological violence may be used in order to "get rid" of the possessing spirit.

Child abuse is never acceptable in any community, in any culture, in any religion, under any circumstances. This includes abuse that might arise through a belief in spirit possession or other spiritual or religious beliefs."

Faith abuse usually occurs in the household where the child lives. It may also occur in a place of worship where alleged "diagnosis" and "exorcism" may take place.

When a disclosure or signs of faith abuse are noted, staff should always alert the DSL immediately. In such situations, the DSL will always call Somerset Children's Social Care Emergency Duty Team on 0300 123 2224.

Extremism and Radicalisation

The UK Government defines extremism as: "The vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs" and/or "calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas." Radicalisation is defined by the UK Government within this context as: "The process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups."

We take the "Prevent" duty seriously and recognise that Safeguarding against extremism and radicalisation is no different from Safeguarding against any other vulnerability; it is about protecting students and young people from being groomed and exploited by others.

Historical Abuse

Historical abuse (also known as non-recent abuse) is an allegation of neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse made by or on behalf of someone who is now 18 years or over, relating to an incident which took place when the alleged victim was under 18 years old.

The Police should be informed about allegations of crime at the earliest opportunity. Any reports of historic abuse made to Avon and Somerset Police must be to the Safeguarding Co-ordination Unit 01823 349037.

County Lines, Cross Borders, Gangs, Trafficking and Cuckooing

These are police terms for urban gangs supplying drugs to suburban areas and market/or coastal towns using dedicated mobile or 'deal lines'. Gangs use students and vulnerable people to move drugs and money. Often they take over the homes of vulnerable adults and students by force or coercion in a practice referred to as cuckooing. Getting involved in gang culture can have serious and potentially devastating consequences, with dealers/offenders/members not afraid to use violence. There are people themselves vulnerable and at risk of exploitation by gang members from outside the county. Any activity that seems to be suspicious, or involve drug dealing/crime/exploitation should be passed to the police on 101. Should young people thought to be involved the early help assessment is a useful tool. A request for involvement to CSC/police is needed if the child is at immediate risk of harm.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-students-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines>

Private Fostering

Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (18 if they are disabled) lives with someone who is not a close relative, guardian or person with parental responsibility for 28 days or more. Private fostering is not the same as fostering arranged by the local authority.

Students and young people become privately fostered for a variety of reasons:

- Their parents live overseas and they come to this country to attend school/college
- Their parents are ill and cannot look after them
- Their parents work away from home, possibly abroad
- Their parents have come to the UK to study or work and require someone to look after their students
- They are teenagers who are estranged from their families

The law says that the Local Authority must be told about all private fostering arrangements. The child's parents or carers should notify us of the arrangement, although anyone else involved in making the arrangement or who is aware of it also has a responsibility to inform us.

The Children Act 1989, and section 44 of the Students Act 2004, outlines the legal duty of the local authority to make sure that the welfare of all privately fostered students is safeguarded and promoted.

A social worker will need to check the placement is suitable and that all the needs of the child or students are being met. They will also speak to the child or students to make sure that a thorough assessment of the placement is carried out.

When we are made aware that a child may be privately fostered a request for involvement will be made to Somerset Direct.

Hate Crime

A Hate Incident is any incident which the victim, or anyone else, thinks is based on someone's prejudice towards them because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or because they are transgender. If you, or anyone you know, has been called names, been bullied or had anything happen to them that you think may be because of one of these factors, then you should report this as a hate incident. Not all hate incidents will amount to criminal offences, but those that do become hate crimes.

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes

Sharing nudes and semi nudes is sending, receiving, or forwarding sexually explicit messages, photographs or images, primarily between mobile phones. It may also include the use of a computer or any digital device. The College will follow local procedures with police and Somerset Safeguarding Children Board.

In cases where nudes or semi-nudes have been shared, we follow guidance given to colleges by the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS): Sharing nudes and semi-nudes (March 2024)

Online Abuse

This type of abuse happens on the web, through social networks, playing online games or using a mobile phone. Students and young people may experience cyberbullying, grooming, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or emotional abuse. Students can be at risk of online abuse from people they know, as well as from strangers. Online abuse may be part of abuse that is taking place in the real world (for example bullying or grooming). Or it may be that the abuse only happens online (for example persuading students to take part in sexual activity online). Students can feel like there is no escape from online abuse – abusers can contact them at any time of the day or night, the abuse can come into safe places like their bedrooms, and images and videos can be stored and shared with other people.

Managing risk at Richard Huish College:

When students use the College network to access the internet, they are protected from inappropriate content by our filtering and monitoring systems. This includes the integration of our Smoothwall software that is monitored, and safeguarding concerns reported to the DSL. However, many students can access the internet using their own data plan. To minimise inappropriate use, as a college we educate them on the possible dangers of being online through our pastoral tutoring system. We share updates on how students can protect themselves through their personal settings on social media platforms. We focus on the 4C's content, contact, conduct and commerce, this provides the basis of the way in which we educate students of the dangers online.

Grooming

Is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or trafficking. Students and young people can be groomed online or face-to-face, by a stranger or by someone they know - for example a family member, friend or professional. Groomers may be male or female. They could be any age. Many students and young people don't understand that they have been groomed or that what has happened is abuse.

Children who are absent from education

Anyone under the age of 18 years is to be considered "absent from education" if he/she is absent from his/her place of residence without authority to a degree or in circumstances where the absence causes concern for safety of the child or a danger to the public" This includes students and young people who have been forced to leave home and those whose whereabouts are unknown and those who feel they have had to leave home (rather than making a positive choice to do so). It also includes children who are unexplainably absent and/or have persistent absence.

High risks concerns include where:

- The responsible adult has no indication when the child is likely to return
- The child develops a pattern of going missing repeatedly
- The child's location is unknown, or reason for absence is unknown there is cause for concern for the child because of their vulnerability
- The child is at high risk of CSE/gangs
- The child is pregnant or has a young child
- The child has a history of suicidal thoughts or behaviours
- The child is at risk of radicalisation

Students on roll

Where there are Students on roll but is absent education through complex, refusal or medical need (including those cases open to education welfare service, health or SEN) remain the **settings** responsibility for safeguarding and procedures will be put in place to monitor their wellbeing

Appendix B: Single Central Record (SCR)

Keeping an accurate Single Central Record is a statutory requirement and an essential part of keeping children safe in education and forms part of the statutory guidance applies to all maintained schools and academies. The SCR is covered by the statutory guidance included within KCSIE and is a requirement of the School Staffing Regulations (and Independent School Regulations for academies).

Single Central Record Checklist

	Yes	No	Action Required?
Is a single central record (SCR) in place for all staff (including supply staff and additional music/games staff)?	X		
Does the SCR include all others who work regularly or intensively with students, including volunteers?	X		
Does the SCR indicate that identity checks have been carried out and by whom?	X		
Is there evidence on the SCR that all staff have been checked against the Barred List (previously List 99)?	X		
Does the SCR record the date when the DBS and/or Barred List checks was carried out and who carried out the check?	X		
Does the SCR record that further overseas criminal checks have been undertaken as appropriate?	X		
Does the SCR record professional qualifications – where the qualification is a requirement of the job?	X		
Does the SCR record evidence that a Prohibition from Teaching check has been carried out on all teaching staff employed since September 2013?	X		
Does the SCR record evidence a check of “Right to Work” in the United Kingdom and suitability checks as appropriate?	X		
Have all <i>relevant (domestic settings only)</i> staff been asked been asked to complete a declaration confirming that they are not disqualified in line with the Childcare Act 2006 and the (Disqualification) Regulations 2009? Is evidence of these checks included on the SCR?	X		
Have copies of documents used to verify identity, qualifications and Right to Work in the UK been retained in individual personnel files?	X		
Does the SCR evidence that checks in respect of Section 128 directions have been undertaken for persons taking part in the management of all settings?	X		

NB: You are not required to keep copies of DBS certificates and in line with the Data Protection Act, copies of DBS certificates should not be retained for longer than 6 months.

Appendix C: Early Help

"Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years, through to the teenage years". Working together to Safeguard Children, March 2023.

It's about working with students, young people and their families to identify and address problems before they escalate. Early help includes services that are available to all families as well as services for more vulnerable families who need a greater level of support. Effective early help means that:

- Parents and or care-givers feel supported to provide stable, consistent and appropriate care for their families
- Students and young people achieve their education and development goals
- Young people are equipped with the skills and attitudes to join the workforce and overcome barriers to employability
- Students and young people achieve the best possible physical and mental health
- Students and young people are safe and feel safe

We want to have a consistent and collaborative early help offer for students, young people and families delivered jointly by all partners. Giving the ability to offer the right help at the right time as soon as a problem emerges. Early Help is everyone's responsibility; we want students, families, communities and agencies to work together so that families are assisted to help themselves and are supported as soon as a need arises, thereby improving the overall wellbeing and quality of life of all Somerset children, young people and their families.

Providing the right information and advice to enable choice for families so they can be empowered to make positive changes themselves with tailored support where needed. Helping families build protective factors and family resilience so that they have the skills, knowledge and ability to meet the student's needs and to prevent situations escalating.

The early help assessment is used to help practitioners gather and understand information about the strengths and needs, based on discussions with the family. The holistic assessment identifies the most appropriate way to meet those needs.

Practitioners in universal or targeted early help services can complete an early help assessment on their own or with the support of the Early Help Co-ordination Hub.

Appendix D: Managing Allegations and Escalation

The statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)' requires the Richard Huish Trust to appoint a member of staff of the college's leadership team to the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead. All staff should be instructed that any allegation should be reported immediately to the designated senior manager. Written safeguarding procedures should reflect this guidance.

On being advised of an allegation which meets the criteria, the designated senior manager should contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within 1 working day.

Phone Somerset Direct on **0300 123 2224** for a referral.

The LADO's role is to provide advice and guidance to organisations dealing with allegations, to liaise with the police and other agencies, and to monitor the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process.

All referrals should be made in the first instance by phone to Somerset Direct indicating that you wish to refer an allegation against an adult who works with students. Please follow up all referrals using the LADO Reporting Form available on the Somerset Students Safeguarding Board site.

All allegations against staff are dealt with in accordance with 'Working Together to safeguard children 2023'. In addition, schools should have regard to Part 4 of the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2024). Should the allegation be about the designated lead or senior lead, allegations should be passed to a higher level such as a chair of governors or director.

Escalation

When working with professionals from other agencies there will at times be differences of opinion with regards to how to respond to an identified concern about a child, young person or family. Disagreements can be a sign of developing thinking, and the value of exchanging ideas from different perspectives should not be under-estimated and is one of many benefits of partnership working.

Transparency, openness and a willingness to understand and respect individual and agency views are core aspects of a safe multi-agency / inter-agency working. Good preparation, open lines of communication and planning by professionals who take responsibility for decision-making will ensure differences of view are kept to minimum. However, disagreements may disadvantage the child or family involved if they are not resolved constructively and in a timely manner.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students is a responsibility shared by all agencies. If you feel that a professional or an agency is not acting in the best interests of the child, young person or family, you have a **responsibility** to respectfully challenge the professional or agency. The Somerset Students Safeguarding Board or the SSE Education Safeguarding Adviser can provide further advice on this matter.

Appendix E: SSCB referral routes Somerset Safeguarding Students Board

The SSCB has a statutory duty to co-ordinate how agencies work together to safeguard and promote the well-being of students and young people in Somerset and to ensure the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements.

Report a child at risk

If you are worried about a child or young person who could be in danger please contact

- Children's Social Care on 0300 123 2224
- by email at studentss@somerset.gov.uk
- or the police

You can contact the police directly by dialling 101 and they will discuss with Children's Social Care what action should be taken. **In an emergency always contact the police by dialling 999 or 112.**

If you would like to speak to a social worker outside of office hours please phone the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on 0300 123 23 27.

If you suspect child abuse:

Do listen to the child

Do take what the child says seriously

Do act quickly

Do share your worries with Children's Social Care, the police or the NSPCC - they are there to help you

Do continue to offer support to the child

Don't delay

Don't probe or push the child for explanations

Don't assume that someone else knows and will help the child. You must act

Don't be afraid to voice your concerns, the child may need urgent protection and help

Safeguarding is everybody's business.

Appendix F: Radicalisation and Extremism

Radicalisation and Extremism is defined as the process by which people come to support terrorism and extremism and, in some cases, to then participate in terrorist groups.

“Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas” (HM Government Prevent Strategy 2011). Prevent is one part of the United Kingdom’s counter-terrorism strategy (CONTEST) and aims to stop people from being exposed to extreme ideologies and becoming radicalised. The CONTEST strategy is divided up into four priority objectives:

- Pursue – stop terrorist attacks
- Prepare – where we cannot stop an attack, mitigate its impact
- Protect – strengthen overall protection against terrorist attacks
- Prevent – stop people becoming terrorists and supporting violent extremism

It is an approach that involves many agencies and communities, to safeguard people who may be at risk of radicalisation. Since the publication of the Prevent Strategy, there has been an awareness of the specific need to safeguard students, young people and families from violent extremism. There have been attempts to radicalise vulnerable students and young people to develop extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.

Keeping students safe from these risks is a safeguarding matter and should be approached in the same way as safeguarding students from other risks. Students should be protected from messages of all violent extremism.

To report concerns, contact the Regional Police Prevent Team:

Phone: 01179 455 536

Email: channelsw@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk

A record of all referrals will be kept and maintained on ‘My Concern’ on the relevant student’s profile.

Appendix G: County Lines and Dangerous Drugs

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”.

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools, further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children’s homes and care homes. Children are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques such as ‘plugging’, where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

One of the ways of identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes (both from home and school), when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism¹⁰³ should be considered. If a child is suspected to be at risk of or involved in county lines, a safeguarding referral should be considered alongside consideration of availability of local services/third sector providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation.

Further information on the signs of a child’s involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office.

As part of the statutory duty on education providers to promote students’ wellbeing, Richard Huish College has a clear role to play in preventing drug misuse as part of their pastoral responsibilities. To support this, the Government’s Drug Strategy 2010 ensures that education staff have the information, advice and power to:

- Provide accurate information on drugs and alcohol through education and targeted information, including via the FRANK service;
- Tackle problem behaviour in schools/colleges, with wider powers of search and confiscation;
- Work with local voluntary organisations, health partners, the police and others to prevent drug or alcohol misuse.
- Have a designated, senior member of staff with responsibility for the drug policy and all drug issues within the setting.
- Establish relationships with local students and young people’s services, health services and voluntary sector organisations to ensure support is available to students affected by drug misuse (including parental drug or alcohol problems).

Searching and Confiscation Advice on searching and confiscations can be found in Screening, searching and confiscation; advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies.

A record of all referrals will be kept on 'My Concern' on the relevant student's profile.

Appendix H: Student Attendance

Students at College with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including College trips and physical education.

- Governing bodies must ensure that arrangements are in place in college to support students with medical conditions.
- Governing bodies should ensure that College leaders consult health and social care professionals, students and parents to ensure that the needs of students with medical conditions are properly understood and effectively supported.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/638267/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions.pdf

Appendix I: Restraint

What is reasonable force?

The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most teachers at some point in their career that involve a degree of physical contact with students.

1. Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a student to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.
2. 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.
3. As mentioned above, colleges generally use force to control students and to restrain them. Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between students or blocking a student's path, or active physical contact such as leading a student by the arm out of a classroom.
4. Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a student under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two students are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention.
5. College staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the student.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444051/Use_of_reasonable_force_advice_Reviewed_July_2015.pdf

The use of force to control or restrain students

House Parents, teachers and other persons who are authorised by the Principal to have control or charge of students are allowed under Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and DfE Guidance issued in July 2013 to use such force as is reasonable in all circumstances to prevent a student from doing or continuing to do, any of the following:

- Committing a criminal offence
- Injuring/endangering themselves or others
- Causing damage to property (including the student's own property)
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline.

Guidelines

Staff are advised to avoid physical contact with students but it is recognised that there may be circumstances where contact may be necessary. The use of reasonable force to control or restrain students should only ever be considered as a last resort in very special circumstances. Under no circumstances is physical force to be accepted between students.

Staff are deemed to be authorised if they have been authorised by the Principal to have control or charge of students, even if only for a short time such as a college trip.

Types of Incidents

There is a wide variety of situations where reasonable force might be appropriate or necessary:

1. Where action is necessary in self-defence or if there is an imminent risk of injury.
2. Where there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property.
3. Where a student is behaving in a way that is compromising good order and discipline.

Examples of situations could be:

- A student attacks another student or a member of staff.
- Students are fighting.
- A student is committing deliberate damage or vandalism to property.
- A student is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident or misuse of dangerous material or objects.

Practical Considerations

1. Before intervening physically, the member of staff should ask the student who is misbehaving to stop.

2. The member of staff should continue to communicate with the student throughout the incident and make it clear that the restraining will cease as soon as it becomes unnecessary.
3. In some situations it is inappropriate for a member of staff to intervene without help, unless in an emergency, for example with a physically large student or if a member of staff believes he or she may be at risk of injury.
4. In these circumstances, the member of staff should remove other students who may be at risk, and summon assistance from a colleague or colleagues, or when necessary telephone the police.
5. The member of staff should inform the student that he or she has sent for help and continue to try and de-escalate the situation until help arrives.

Application for Force

Physical force can take several forms. It might involve staff:

- Physically interposing between students
- Blocking a student's path
- Holding
- Pushing or pulling
- Leading a student by the hand or arm
- Shepherding a student away by placing a hand in the centre of the back

Staff should **NOT ACT** in a way that might cause injury, for example by:

- Holding a student around the neck, or by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict the student's ability to breathe
- Slapping, punching or kicking a student
- Twisting or forcing limbs against a joint
- Tripping up a student
- Holding or pulling a student by the hair or ear
- Holding a student face down on the ground
- Staff should always avoid touching or holding a student in a way that might be considered indecent.

Reasonable Adjustments

The college will ensure reasonable adjustments are made for students with SEN needs or disabled students, who are on the ALS register. These adjustments will be disseminated to the appropriate staff that support these students.

Recording incidents

Incidents requiring the use of force will be fully documented in the same way as all other serious incidents indicating the nature of the problem and the names of all staff and students concerned. The college must inform the parents of any such serious incident.

Complaints

If a student complains about the force used, then the matter will be investigated using the College Complaints Procedure.

Appendix J: Changing for PE /Sport

Clear guidelines are recommended because:

- getting changed can make some students feel vulnerable
- getting changed can cause anxiety for some students
- staff can feel unsure about PE changing supervision and how to ensure that both students and adults are safe.

Changing areas

We need to consider the following things when organising changing facilities for students:

Where possible, use designated single-gender changing rooms or areas.

Richard Huish College will make adequate and sensitive arrangements for changing which consider the needs of students with disabilities and students from different religions, beliefs and cultural backgrounds or gender identity.

Changing rooms located on the ground floor of Sycamore Building can be used for the above purposes as can the adjacent medical room.

Appendix K: The SSCB

The Somerset Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) is the statutory, multi-agency partnership with responsibility for coordinating, monitoring and challenging all activity relating to safeguarding children and young people living in Somerset. Safeguarding Children Boards were set up as a result of the 2004 Students Act and are regulated by that law.

The work of the SSCB is broad and varied but includes:

- Developing multi-agency policies and procedures for safeguarding
- Participating in the strategic planning of children's services
- Communicating the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children to professionals and the public
- Conducting Serious Case Reviews when a child dies or is seriously harmed and abuse or neglect is suspected
- Ensuring procedures to ensure a coordinated response to unexpected child deaths
- Collecting and analysing information about all child deaths that occur in the area to identify issues of concern

- Providing multi-agency training and development to staff on safeguarding children

The SSCB have developed a range of learning opportunities that have been informed by the Board's priorities, quality assurance activities and learning reviews, which aim to equip you in your tasks and enable you to work confidently alone and alongside others to keep students safe and promote their wellbeing.

Appendix L: Intimate Care

Not applicable to Richard Huish College as such provision would not be reasonably possible to provide here, as stated by our policy of providing reasonable adjustments and in accordance with our student Fitness to Study Protocol.

Appendix M: Professional Conduct and Safety

Our staff, volunteers and visitors are provided with clear guidance on professional behaviour and standards in the Staff Code of Conduct.

Use of personal mobile phones, smart technology, private email address etc. should not be used to communicate with parents or students about setting issues. Social networks should be used professionally

Appendix N: Mental Health

All staff at Richard Huish College aware that mental health problems, in some cases, be an indicator that a student has suffered what is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. If staff have a mental health concern about a student it is also a safeguarding concern, the media action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or DDSL. This can be via contact them directly or raising concern through MyConcern. Staff can also contact the college Mental Health Lead.

Appendix O: LGBTQ

The fact that a student maybe LGBTQ is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, students who are LGBTQ can be targeted by other students. Risks can be compounded where students who are LGBTQ lack a trusted adult whom they can be open. At Richard Huish we endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced by providing a safe space for LGBTQ students. This is a student led group that is facilitated by college staff and provides an open and inclusive environment for students to discuss any harm or abuse to wish they may have been subjected.

Appendix P: Contextual Safeguarding

There is a need to widen our assessment of student's lives beyond the boundary of families to include potential risks posed within the wider community .The value of us including environmental factors and the social relationships of students and young people within assessments, both early help and statutory intervention, should lead to

safeguarding better reflecting the “areas in which children and young people exist... on street, on line and child to child.”

Useful Contacts

Consultation Line for Children’s Safeguarding Leads, 0300 123 3078

Somerset Direct (Children’s and Adult’s) 0300 123 2224

- CAMHS Telephone Advice Line (12.00pm to 2.00pm Monday to Friday)
- Mendip 01749 836561
- South Somerset 01935 384140
- West 01823 368368

GP’s and Lead Professionals (9.00am to 4.00pm Monday to Friday)

- Early Help Advice Hub 01823 355803
- Emergency Duty Team (EDT) 0300 123 2327
- The National Domestic Abuse Helpline 0808 2000 247
- getset Mendip 01458 833017
- getset Sedgemoor 01278 446771
- getset South Somerset 01935 848942
- getset Taunton and West Somerset 01823 322508 / 01643 700030
- Prevent – Regional Police Prevent Team 01179 455536/539
- channelsw@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk

LGBT - [stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk)

- Somerset Drug and Alcohol Service (SDAS) 0300 303 8788
- Somerset Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (SIDAS) 0800 694 9999
- Somerset Partnership Integrated Therapy Service 0303 033 3002
(9.00am to 12.00pm, Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri)

Somerset Support for Education (SSE)

<http://www.supportservicesforeducation.co.uk/>

Somerset Direct:

<http://www.somerset.gov.uk/studentss-services/safeguarding-students/report-a-child-at-risk/>

2BU Somerset <https://www.2bu-somerset.co.uk/>