



Safeguarding Children Young People & Adults at Risk Policy

Version	7.1 Reviewed Annually
Effective Date	March 2022
Review Date	March 2023
Writer	Director of Student Services

Our Safeguarding policy

This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers, the board of governors, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of MidKent College.

The purpose of this policy:

- To protect children and young people who receive MidKent College's services.
- To provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection;

MidKent College believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the College and/or can occur between children outside of the College. All staff, but especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead, should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as **contextual safeguarding**, which simply means assessments of children and young people should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in the child or young person's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

Legal Framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

- Children Acts 1989 and 2006
- The Education Act 2011
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child Sept 1990
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused (March 2015)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory guidance for schools and college (September 2021)
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges (2021)
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Revised *Prevent* Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (Home Office April 2021)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children July 2018
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014

- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) code of practice: 0-25 years – Statutory Guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities; HM Government Jan 2015
- Police Act 1997 (Protection of Vulnerable Adults) Regulations 2013
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Mental Capacity Act 2019
- Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers; HM Government July 2018

This policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- Student Behaviour & Disciplinary
- Student Wellbeing, Mental Health & Fitness to Study
- Access, Visitors and Speakers
- Complaints
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Data Protection
- Whistleblowing
- Health and Safety
- Radicalisation & Prevent
- Admissions
- E-safety

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child and young people is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Acts 1989 and 2006
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Some children and young people are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

We will seek to keep children and adults at risk safe by:

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- Actively promoting an inclusive student culture where students feel safe to report concerns, have a clear awareness of safeguarding risks (including online safety and peer on peer abuse issues), and understand how to report concerns
- Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for children and young people, Designated Safeguarding staff and a Lead Governor for

safeguarding

- Adopting and publishing child protection and safeguarding practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Developing and implementing an effective e-safety policy and related procedures
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures
- Promoting Safer recruitment practices and recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks and due diligence are carried out prior to employment
- Recording and storing information professionally and securely, and sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, young people, their families, staff and volunteers via leaflets, posters, one-to-one discussions
- Using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately
- Using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help up deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance.
- Presenting and promoting the policy, practices and procedures to all stakeholders; including the employers of apprentices, students and employers supporting industry placements
- Ensuring that the policy is accessible to all, including public access via college website
- Promoting the policy, safeguarding processes and responsibilities as part of staff, contractor, volunteer and apprentice employer induction; including access to training and how to raise concerns
- Ensuring that Staff complete regular comprehensive mandatory training, including promoting and implementing the policy and procedures, and that they fully understand their responsibilities and those of stakeholders
- Ensuring that all students, apprentices and their employers remain engaged with the policy and safeguarding processes, including regular workplace reviews with apprentices and employers that include continued focus on wellbeing
- Maintaining accurate and detailed records of all safeguarding incidents and concerns
- Ensuring robust governance of the safeguarding policy, procedures and practices is in place and effectively monitored by the Safeguarding Committee

The College works closely with the three safeguarding partnerships – Health, Police and Social Services. The College undertakes to refer concerns that a child or adult might be at risk of significant harm to the appropriate agencies as agreed with the Safeguarding Children Multi-agency Partnership (SCMP).

The College will notify appropriate agencies if there is an unexplained absence of a child who is the subject of a Child Protection Plan. The College will also notify agencies if any young person under the age of 18 is missing from education. This also applies to adults if there is a significant concern for their safety and wellbeing.

The College will work collaboratively with relevant agencies in their enquiries regarding child protection matters, including attendance at case conferences and core groups.

Reporting and dealing with Allegations of Abuse against members of staff

The College accepts that there is a risk in all educational institutions that a member of staff may seek to cause harm to children or adults at risk within their institution. In accordance with updates to Keeping Children Safe in Education in Sept 2021, any allegation or concern regarding a member of staff (including low-level concerns) should be reported immediately to the Principal, or if the Principal is not available, to the Senior DSL who will then act to deal with any immediate risk and report the allegation or concern to the Principal at the earliest opportunity. The Principal and/or Senior DSL should make an initial assessment to decide whether the allegation warrants further investigation or disciplinary action. **Where the allegation is considered to be either a potential criminal act or indicates that the child has suffered, is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, the matter should be reported immediately to the LADO.**

Where further investigation is required, the Principal should appoint an investigating officer. Suspension of staff should not be automatic, but reasonable precaution should be taken to ensure the safety of all students as a priority. Any action against a member of staff (including suspension without prejudice pending investigation) should be undertaken in consultation with the Director of People directly.

Criminal Investigation

Whether involving students or staff, in instances where the concern is serious enough to warrant police involvement, either by liaison with the College or otherwise, the College will not undertake independent investigations of any allegations of criminal activity or form any judgements until after the conclusion of any police or criminal investigations, unless with the explicit agreement of the police.

Contact Details

- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Strategic Ashley Ritchie
ashley.ritchie2@midkent.ac.uk
- Student Welfare Manager Deputy DSL Kim Carter
kim.carter@midkent.ac.uk
- Student Support and Care-Experienced Coordinator Helen Hook
helen.hook@midkent.ac.uk
- Welfare Officer (Medway) Michelle McDonnell
michelle.mcdonnell@midkent.ac.uk
- Welfare Officer (Medway) Cherrie Bunch
cherrie.bunch@midkent.ac.uk
- Welfare Officer (Maidstone) Donna Thomas
donna.thomas@midkent.ac.uk
- Safeguarding Governor Marie Woolston
marie.woolston@midkent.ac.uk

Safeguarding Email safeguarding@midkent.ac.uk

Safeguarding Hotline: 01634 383567

External Agencies

Medway Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) 01634 334466

Kent County Council Safeguarding 03000 441111

Kent and Medway Social Care Out of Hours Service 03000 419191