Northern Ireland Further Education Colleges Safeguarding, Care & Welfare Policy

Approved by **Date**

14 January 2026

Signature of Principal and Chief Executive

Tommy Martin

Name of Principal and Chief Executive

South Eastern Regional College

Name of College

APPROVAL DATES

Details	Date Approved
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SAFEGUARDING, CARE & WELFARE POLICY REVISION RECORD

Version	Document Title	Date Last Reviewed	Next review date	Responsibility of
1	Safeguarding, Care & Welfare Policy	November 2021	November 2022	Paul Walsh
2	Safeguarding, Care & Welfare Policy Addendum	November 2021	November 2022	Paul Walsh
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	Changes to titles within SERC made			
7	Safeguarding, Care & Welfare Policy (Sector revisions for 2024 / 25)	December 2024	September 2025	Paul Walsh
8	Safeguarding, Care & Welfare Policy (Sector revisions for 2025 / 26)	January 2026	September 2026	Paul Walsh

SAFEGUARDING, CARE & WELFARE POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Framework from which this Policy is derived has been developed by the Further Education (FE) Colleges Safeguarding Working Group established in April 2019. The framework contains the minimum standard of information for any Safeguarding Policy in a FE College in Northern Ireland.

The FE Colleges Safeguarding Working Group has agreed that the Framework may be added to by a College but content cannot be withdrawn otherwise the organisation may fail to meet its legal and moral duty, put learners / participants at risk and may be vulnerable to potential legal challenge and / or reputational damage.

The FE Colleges Safeguarding Working Group is committed, at the very least, to an annual review of the framework and revision if required at regional and College level dependent on current legislation and organisation structures.

Membership of the FE Colleges Safeguarding Working Group is listed in Appendix 4.

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SAFEGUARDING, CARE & WELFARE POLICY

1. PURPOSE

South Easten Regional College (hereafter referred to as the College) aims to ensure that all students, staff and stakeholders of the College experience an inclusive, enjoyable and safe environment, in which they feel respected and valued. We all share an objective to keep children, young people, adults at risk and adults in need of protection, safe from harm. This College Safeguarding, Care & Welfare Policy is built upon a foundation of *'zero tolerance'* of harm to all children, young people, adults at risk of harm and adults in need of protection and is aligned to the Northern Ireland Adult Safeguarding Partnership (NIASP) statement **"**Safeguarding is everyone's business".

The purpose of this Policy is to:

- Promote the welfare of children, young people, adults at risk of harm and adults in need of protection to protect them from harm;
- Encourage good practice in all aspects of promotion and protection of children, young people, adults at risk of harm and adults in need of protection;
- Raise awareness of the safeguarding, care and welfare issues that may or have the potential to impact upon children, young people and adults at risk of harm and adults in need of protection;
- Prevent and reduce the risk and potential risk of harm to children, young people, adults at risk of harm and adults in need of protection, whilst providing an inclusive non-stigmatised learning environment for all;
- Empower children, young people, adults at risk of harm and adults in need of protection to make informed decisions about their education, life experiences and wellbeing which will allow them to live life free from coercion and have freedom of expression;
- Provide and implement clear, accessible and consistent guidance in relation to the procedures for reporting concerns;
- Advocate for children, young people, adults at risk of harm and adults in need of protection in their right to fair justice as a result of abuse, exploitation or neglect;
- Encourage and promote continuous professional learning in the approach to safeguarding, care and welfare practices.
- Recognise responsibilities in relation to the development of the Northern Ireland Executive's Strategy to End Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG). The Executive Office is spearheading this comprehensive, government-wide and society-wide initiative. Violence, abuse, and harm against women and girls affect individuals across all generations, communities, and sectors of society.
- Recognise Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) as a serious form of child abuse and a criminal offence in Northern Ireland, and to immediately report any concerns, disclosures, or indicators of risk to the Police Service of

Northern Ireland (PSNI) and relevant safeguarding agencies in line with statutory guidance.

2. CONTEXT

The College will carry out its responsibilities under all relevant legislation, regulations and professional guidelines, which are listed in Appendices 1, 2 & 3.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff, students, the Governing Body, volunteers and third parties and should be read in conjunction with relevant standard operating procedures and any other relevant organisation procedures.

4. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The Policy is based on the following principles:

- The College seeks to provide and promote a safe learning environment for all users;
- The College is committed to the challenging and reporting of harmful behaviour and, recognising that anyone can be the subject of abuse, will seek to develop a culture of healthy and respectful relationships wherein all allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and treated in accordance with the College's procedures;
- The College will consistently apply a thorough and clearly defined method in its safe recruitment of staff and volunteers by undertaking the appropriate checks, in line with legislation and best practice;
- The College must follow risk assessment procedures, before enrolling any person who has a conviction for the abuse of a child, young person, an adult at risk of harm or an adult in need of protection;
- The College will comply with regional policies and procedures in full partnership with other local agencies including the Health and Social Care Trust Gateway Team and Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI);
  The College is committed to developing, implementing and updating existing safeguarding protections, policies / procedures and measures for children, young people, adults at risk of harm or adults in need of protection, to reflect involvement in Operation Encompass.
- The College staff will listen to, record and report all concerns, disclosures and allegations of abuse in accordance with current procedures in an empathetic, prompt and secure manner;
- The College will not investigate instances of abuse as this is the role of other statutory agencies e.g. social services, PSNI;
- The College is obligated to supporting, resourcing and training, in line with current legislation, those who work with, or come in contact with children, young people, adults at risk of harm and adults in need of protection and to provide appropriate supervision for them;
- The College is committed to developing knowledge and understanding of Trauma-Informed Practice and the impact of Adverse Childhood

Experiences (ACEs)[1] to help staff better understand those in their care. This commitment aims to enhance and work alongside existing safeguarding protections, policies and measures for children, young people, adults at risk of harm or adults in need of protection.

- The College will ensure there is an effective procedure in place for assessing and managing risks to learners and staff.
- The College will ensure any identified risks are managed by putting in place risk-reducing measures which are recorded and reviewed.

5. KEY DEFINITIONS

a) The definition of a 'child' is any person that is under the age of 18, as defined in the Children (NI) Order 1995, the principal statute governing care, upbringing and protection of children in Northern Ireland.

b) The definition of an 'adult at risk of harm' is a person aged 18 years and over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their personal characteristics and/or life circumstances;

- Personal characteristics may include but are not limited to age, disability, special educational needs, illness, mental or physical frailty or impairment of, or disturbance in, the functioning of the mind or brain;
- Life circumstances may include but are not limited to: isolation, socio-economic factors and environmental living conditions.

c) The definition of an 'adult in need of protection' is a person aged 18 years and over, who may be at a greater risk of exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:

a) personal characteristics and / or;
b) life circumstances; and
c) who is unable to protect their own well-being, rights, or other interests; and
d) where the action or inaction of another person or persons is causing, or is likely to cause him / her to be harmed.

The College's safeguarding, care and welfare service understand that in order for our students, as defined above, who are an 'adult in need of protection' either (a) or (b) must be present, in addition to both elements (c) and (d).

The consideration of mental capacity is crucial at all stages of safeguarding adult's procedures as it provides a framework for decision making to balance independence and protection.

Types of Child Abuse (NSPCC, 2020)

[1] ACES: Adverse Childhood Experiences. Ensuring a better deal for children in Wales. Professor Mark A. Bellis.

The College recognises that harm from abuse is not always straightforward to identify and a child may all too often experience more than one type of harm or significant harm. Harm can be caused by:

- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Physical abuse
- Neglect
- Exploitation
- Harmful Sexual Behavior
- Domestic Abuse
- Bullying & Cyber Bullying

General signs of abuse - Children experiencing abuse often experience more than one type of abuse over a period of time. Children who experience abuse may be afraid to tell anybody about the abuse. They may struggle with feelings of guilt, shame or confusion – particularly if the abuser is a parent, caregiver or other close family member or friend. Many of the signs that a child is being abused are the same regardless of the type of abuse.

For more information see link
https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/spotting-signs-child-abuse/

Physical abuse - when a child is deliberately hurt, causing physical harm. It can involve hitting, kicking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or suffocating. It's also physical abuse if a parent or carer makes up or causes the symptoms of illness in children. For example, they may give them medicine they don't need, making them unwell. This is known as fabricated or induced illness (FII).

Neglect - is not meeting a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs. This can result in serious damage to their health and development. Neglect may involve a parent or carer not:

- providing adequate food, clothing or shelter
- supervising a child or keeping them safe from harm or danger (including leaving them with unsuitable carers)
- making sure the child receives appropriate health and/or dental care
- making sure the child receives a suitable education
- meeting the child's basic emotional needs – this is known as emotional neglect.

Neglect is the most common type of child abuse. It often happens at the same time as other types of abuse.

Sexual abuse- is forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. It doesn't necessarily involve violence and the child may not be aware that what is happening is abuse. Child sexual abuse can involve contact abuse and non-contact abuse.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) - is a type of sexual abuse. Young people may be coerced or groomed into exploitative situations and relationships. They may be given things such as gifts, money, drugs, alcohol, status or affection in exchange for taking part in sexual activities.

Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) is developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour which is displayed by children and young people and which may be harmful or abusive. It may also be referred to as sexually harmful behaviour or sexualised behaviour.

Emotional abuse – this may involve:

- humiliating, putting down or regularly criticising a child
- shouting at, threatening a child, or calling them names
- mocking a child or making them perform degrading acts
- constantly blaming or scapegoating a child for things which are not their fault
- trying to control a child's life and not recognizing their individuality
- not allowing a child to have friends or develop socially
- pushing a child too hard or not recognising their limitations
- manipulating a child
- exposing a child to distressing events or interactions
- persistently ignoring a child
- being cold and emotionally unavailable during interactions with a child
- not being positive or encouraging to a child or praising their achievements and successes.

Domestic abuse - is any type of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between people who are, or who have been in a relationship, regardless of gender or sexuality. It can include physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse. Exposure to domestic abuse is child abuse.

Bullying and cyberbullying - is when individuals or groups seek to harm, intimidate or coerce someone who is perceived to be vulnerable.

Types of Adult Abuse (DHSSPS, 2015)

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological / emotional abuse
- Financial abuse
- Institutional abuse
- Neglect
- Exploitation

For more information see link
https://southerntrust.hscni.net/involving-you/community-development-and-user-involvement/community-sector-training/adult-safeguarding-information-and-resources/adult-safeguarding/signs-and-indicators-of-adult-abuse/

Physical abuse - This is the use of physical force or mistreatment of one person by another, which may or may not result in actual physical injury. This may include hitting, pushing, rough handling, exposure to heat or cold, force-feeding, improper administration of medication, denial of treatment, misuse or illegal use of restraint and deprivation of liberty.

Sexual abuse - This is any behaviour perceived to be of a sexual nature, which is unwanted or takes place without consent or understanding. Sexual violence and abuse can take many forms and may include non-contact sexual activities, such as indecent exposure, stalking, grooming, being made to look at or be involved in the production of sexually abusive material, or being made to watch sexual activities. It may involve physical contact, including but not limited to non-consensual penetrative sexual activities or non-penetrative sexual activities, such as intentional touching (known as groping).

Psychological / emotional abuse - This is behaviour that is psychologically harmful or inflicts mental distress by threat, humiliation or other verbal/non-verbal conduct. This may include threats, humiliation or ridicule, provoking fear of violence, shouting, yelling and swearing, blaming, controlling, intimidation and coercion.

Financial abuse - This is actual or attempted theft, fraud or burglary. It is the misappropriation or misuse of money, property, benefits, material goods or other asset transactions which the person did not or could not consent to, or which were invalidated by intimidation, coercion or deception. This may include exploitation, embezzlement, withholding pension or benefits or pressure exerted around wills, property or inheritance.

Institutional abuse - This is the mistreatment or neglect of an adult by a regime or individuals in settings, which adults who may be at risk, reside in or use. This can occur in any organisation, within and outside the HSC sector. Institutional abuse may occur when the routines, systems and regimes result in poor standards of care, poor practice and behaviours, inflexible regimes and rigid routines, which violate the dignity and human rights of the adults and place them at risk of harm. Institutional abuse may occur within a culture that denies, restricts or curtails privacy, dignity, choice and independence. It involves the collective failure of a service provider or an organisation to provide safe and appropriate services and includes a failure to ensure that the necessary preventative and/or protective measures are in place.

Neglect - Neglect occurs when a person deliberately withholds, or fails to provide, appropriate and adequate care and support which is required by another adult. It may be through a lack of knowledge or awareness, or through a failure to take reasonable action given the information and facts available to them at the time. It may include physical neglect to the extent that health or well-being is impaired, administering too much or too little medication, failure to provide access to appropriate health or social care, withholding the necessities of life, such as adequate nutrition, heating or clothing, or failure to intervene in situations that are dangerous to the person concerned or to others particularly when the person lacks the capacity to assess risk.

Exploitation - This is the deliberate maltreatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over another person; to take advantage of another person or situation usually, but not always, for personal gain from using them as a commodity. It may manifest itself in many forms including slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour, domestic violence and abuse, sexual violence and abuse, or human trafficking.

Domestic violence and abuse- This is threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on one person by another where they are or have been intimate partners or family members, irrespective of gender or sexual orientation. Domestic violence and abuse is essentially a pattern of behaviour which is characterised by the exercise of control and the misuse of power by one person over another. It is usually frequent and persistent. It can include violence by a son, daughter, mother, father, husband, wife, life partner or any other person who has a close relationship with the victim. It occurs right across society, regardless of age, gender, race, ethnic or religious group, sexual orientation, wealth, disability or geography.

Human trafficking- This involves the acquisition and movement of people by improper means, such as force, threat or deception, for the purposes of exploiting them. It can take many forms, such as domestic servitude, forced criminality, forced labour, sexual exploitation and organ harvesting. Victims of human trafficking can come from all walks of life; they can be male or female, children or adults, and they may come from migrant or indigenous communities.

Hate crime is any incident which constitutes a criminal offence perceived by the victim or any other person as being motivated by prejudice, discrimination or hate towards a person’s actual or perceived race, religious belief, sexual orientation, disability, political opinion or gender identity.

Victims of domestic violence and abuse, sexual violence and abuse, human trafficking and hate crime are regarded as adults in need of protection. There are specific strategies and mechanisms in place designed to meet the particular care and protection needs of these adults and to promote access to justice through the criminal justice system. It is essential that there is an interface between these existing justice led mechanisms and the HSC Trust adult protection arrangements described in this policy.

6. OPERATION ENCOMPASS

Operation Encompass is a partnership between the Education Authority, Government Departments, the PSNI, the Safeguarding Board of Northern Ireland (SBNI) and education providers. It is aimed at supporting children and young people who experience domestic violence or abuse in the home. The programme has successfully launched in all schools throughout Northern Ireland in conjunction with the Education Authority and allows the PSNI to share information with schools, colleges and training providers in instances where children and young people have experienced domestic violence or abuse. Through cross departmental working and engagement with the PSNI, the scope of Operation Encompass will now include young people who are on pathways outside of the school system but fall into the remit of the associated legislation. This will include students aged 16–17 years old in Further Education Colleges including the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE), and those attending Non-Statutory Training Providers delivering DfE Training Programmes. It will allow the PSNI to pass on relevant information to the education provider so that the right support can be put in place for the young person.

Key Adult Training for Operation Encompass now forms part of the core training provided by the Child Protection Support Service. This training underpins the important role that staff in organisations, including FE colleges and Work-Based Learning providers, play in supporting young people and families where domestic abuse has taken place.

Operation Encompass Training;

Designated Persons / Deputy Designated Persons's and managers must:

- Watch the online information session;
- Complete the online Operation Encompass Training; and
- Advise parents/carers, staff and the Governing Body / Management committee members of Operation Encompass

Further information is available here: Operation Encompass | Education Authority Northern Ireland (eani.org.uk)

7. PROMOTING DIGITAL SAFETY

Digital Safety is becoming an increasingly significant issue to consider when it comes to safeguarding children, young people, adults at risk and adults in need of protection.

The College is committed to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for its students. The College will take measures to prevent online abuse by educating students and staff on digital safety practices, including guidance on appropriate and respectful online behaviour, and safe use of the internet and social media.

The College encourages all students to report instances of online abuse to a designated member of staff. Reports will be treated seriously, and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against the perpetrator in the event that they are also a student at the college.

All staff, students, the Governing Body, volunteers and third parties who wish to use the College's IT systems are required to agree to the College's Acceptable Use Policy and comply with any other relevant digital policies as directed.

We will continue to review and improve our policies and procedures to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our students. The relevant policies are available for all users to access on SERC website.

Staff, students, the Governing Body and volunteers are directed to this Safeguarding, Care and Welfare Policy and procedures during induction and via active promotion of "keeping safe" messages through other activities e.g. internet usage and social networking.

8. RESPONSIBILITY

a) Governance of safeguarding, care and welfare in the College is overseen by a member / members of the Governing Body. The Safeguarding Governor provides strategic oversight to ensure a comprehensive, whole-college approach to safeguarding and adherence to all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.

   The Chief Executive holds overall strategic responsibility for safeguarding, care and welfare within the college with the Deputy Principal Planning and Performance having responsibility for this.

   The designated Safeguarding Team is led by the Head of Learner Welfare who is the Senior Lead Designated Safeguarding Officer and Adult Safeguarding Champion. They with the assistance of the Lead Designated Safeguarding Officers oversee and co-ordinate operational College safeguarding matters.

   To further support safeguarding, care and welfare, the College also has a number of nominated Safeguarding Officers (known as Safeguarding and Welfare Campions) across College sites who support and advise staff to ensure a link with the Designated Safeguarding Officers who can then manage the child, young person, adult at risk of harm or adult in need of protection.

   Posters are displayed throughout the College to identify those whom staff, students, volunteers and any third party can engage with on safeguarding, care and welfare matters. Visitors (such as parents, suppliers of goods and services, to carry out maintenance etc.) do not routinely need to be vetted before being allowed onto school premises. However, such visitors should

be managed by staff and their access to areas should be restricted as needs require. Visitors should be:

- Met/directed by staff/representatives.
- Signed in and out by staff.
- Given restricted access to only specific areas, if appropriate.
- Escorted by a member of staff/representative, where appropriate.
- Clearly identified with visitor/contractor passes.
- Given access to students restricted to the purpose of their visit.
- Cordoned off from students for health and safety reasons if delivering goods or carrying out building/maintenance or repairs.

The names of the individuals employed by the College in safeguarding roles are listed in Appendix 6. However it is the responsibility of all staff working in the College to report abuse and incidents of concern in line with this Safeguarding, Care and Welfare Policy and the Safeguarding, Care and Welfare SOP. This responsibility extends to all staff, not just those specifically working with children, young people, adults at risk of harm and adults in need of protection.

Report of concern(s) should be made to a member of the Safeguarding Team in line with this Safeguarding, Care and Welfare Policy and procedures (Ref Section 10 and Appendix 6).

All employees and volunteers of the College are required to abide by the staff Code of Conduct which articulates the College values and sets clear expectations of behaviour for all staff.

b) The Role of the Senior Lead Designated Safeguarding Officer / Lead Designated Safeguarding Officer is to:
   - Liaise with relevant College management and staff regarding this Safeguarding, Care and Welfare Policy, procedures and any reported incidents of concern and report to College management and Governing Body as required;
   - Liaise with the local Gateway Team regarding safeguarding, care and welfare procedures and any reported incidents of concern;
   - Liaise with and understand the roles and responsibilities of all the appropriate investigating agencies;
   - Assist with the review of this Policy and related procedures annually;
   - Maintain routine record keeping required (which will also identify patterns and enable early intervention) and the security thereof in relation to safeguarding, care and welfare matters;
   - Ensure that the Safeguarding, Care and Welfare Policy and procedures are implemented at all College events that may involve children, young people, adults at risk of harm or adults in need of protection;
   - Support children and young people from care backgrounds and who are on the Child Protection Register by attending case conferences,

Looked-after children (LAC) reviews and working in partnership with social services;
- Support all Designated Safeguarding Officers; and
- Ensure all students are aware of the Safeguarding, Care and Welfare Policy during induction.
- Ensure that all safeguarding training is undertaken within best practice guidelines.

c) The Role of the Adult Safeguarding Champion (ASC) is to:

- Provide strategic and operational leadership and oversight in relation to Adult Safeguarding;
- Manage the Designated Safeguarding Officers:
- Ensure full implementation of the College Safeguarding, Care and Welfare Policy and procedures;
- Oversee the security of record keeping in relation to safeguarding, care and welfare matters;
- Compile and analyse records of reported concerns to determine whether a number of low-level concerns are accumulating to become significant, and make records available for inspection;
- Review the Safeguarding, Care and Welfare Policy and related procedures annually;
- Provide information and support for staff on adult safeguarding within the organisation;
- Advise within the organisation regarding adult safeguarding training needs in line with current legislation;
- Provide advice to staff or volunteers who have concerns about the signs of harm, and ensure a report is made to Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts where there is a safeguarding concern;
- Support staff to ensure that any actions take account of what the adult wishes to achieve – this should not prevent information about any risk of serious harm being passed to the relevant HSC Trust Adult Protection Gateway Service for assessment and decision making; and
- Establish contact with the HSC Trust Designated Adult Protection Officer (DAPO), PSNI and other agencies as appropriate.

The ASC should ensure that, at a minimum, the organisation safeguards adults at risk by:

- Recognising that adult harm is wrong and that it should not be tolerated;
- Being aware of the signs of harm from abuse, exploitation and neglect;
- Reducing opportunities for harm from abuse, exploitation and neglect to occur; and
- Knowing how and when to report safeguarding concerns to HSC Trusts or the PSNI.

d) The role of the Head of Human Resources Department, overseen by the Deputy Chief Executive is to:

- Ensure the safe recruitment and induction of all staff and volunteers ensuring all are appropriately vetted in compliance with relevant DfE Circulars, Operational Requirements and Guidelines in accordance with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order (2007);
- Ensure implementation of staff disciplinary investigations if any concerns, disclosures or allegations of abuse by a staff member are made;
- Plan, deliver and monitor in partnership with other College departments the appropriate level of training required by all staff, in line with current legislation; and
- Annually review and update Human Resources policies and procedures to reflect safeguarding, care and welfare arrangements in the College.

9. CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality and trust should be maintained as far as possible, but staff must act on the basis that the safety and welfare of the person is the overriding concern. The degree of confidentiality will be governed by the need to protect the individual and therefore complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. It is therefore *crucial* that staff understand and implement the guidelines for Data Protection and information sharing.

10. WORK PLACEMENTS OR EXCHANGE VISITS

Staff organising any work placements or exchange visits should take the safeguarding, care and welfare of children, young people, adults at risk and adults in need of protection into account when assessing the suitability of the work placement or exchange visit arrangements. Students are more vulnerable to harm or abuse when in long-term placement in the workplace or when outside their normal environment. The College has a duty to put in place additional safeguards as required.

All students on work placement or exchange visits should have a regular point of contact with a member of College staff and be advised that they can discuss with that person any concerns about their work placement or exchange visit. Any concerns raised or any suspicions of abuse must be reported to one of the Lead Designated Safeguarding Officers, ideally using the Cause for Concern App by staff immediately in line with safeguarding, care and welfare procedures as outlined in this document.

All Institutions participating in any overseas visits should ensure they follow the Safeguarding protocols as outlined in the relevant funders policy guidance documents. Also, the college will follow internal processes for recruiting and selecting staff and participants, as well as carrying out the relevant risk assessments.

11. RESPONDING TO A DISCLOSURE

The College is committed to dealing with any concern(s) that a child, young person, adult at risk of harm or an adult in need of protection in line with Safeguarding, Care and Welfare Policy and procedures.

Anyone with knowledge of or a suspicion that, a child, young person, adult at risk of harm or an adult in need of protection has been suffering abuse must refer their concern to a member of the Safeguarding Team as soon as possible.

All allegations or suspicions must be taken seriously. The child, young person, adult at risk of harm or adult in need of protection must be advised that this information cannot be kept confidential and will be passed on to the designated member of staff in College in the first instance. No promise of confidentiality can or should ever be made to a student or anyone else giving information about possible abuse.

The person disclosing the information should be advised as soon as possible by one of the Lead Designated Safeguarding Officers what action will be taken as a result of the disclosure. They should also be made aware of the counselling service available to the College.

A summary of the College procedure for reporting and dealing with concerns can be found in the Safeguarding, Care and Welfare Procedure. This should be used in conjunction with the Cause for Concern App, which is available to all staff. (Appendix 6)

All written records must be passed to one of the Lead Designated Safeguarding Officers Records will be uploaded to the secure safeguarding database managed by the Lead Designated Safeguarding Officers and maintained by the Chief Technology Officer for a period in line with the FE Data Retention and Disposal Schedule (Dec 2020) version. Records are strictly confidential. They may be accessed by the subject of the record but not by any third party other than the aforementioned or on request by Principal and Chief Executive (or person nominated by them).

If a disclosure is made concerning the activities of a member of staff towards a student, the matter must be referred directly to the Head of HR.

If any staff member feels unsure about what to do if they have concerns about a child, young person, an adult at risk of harm or an adult in need of protection or if they are unsure about being able to recognise the signs or symptoms of possible abuse, they should speak directly to a member of the Safeguarding Team.

12. DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS

The Deputy Principal Planning and Performance is responsible for dealing with all complaints and compliments for the College. The College Complaints Policy is referenced in Appendix 7.

13. EQUALITY

Screening is one of the key tools to enable the College to fulfil its statutory obligations and mainstream the Section 75 equality and good relations duties into policy development. Screening will help to identify policies that are likely to have an impact on equality of opportunity and help to draw considerations of equality of opportunity into the policy making process. SERC commits to screening this Safeguarding, Care and Welfare Policy in line with these statutory obligations.

14. MONITORING

This Safeguarding, Care and Welfare Policy will be refreshed as required in line with organisational changes in the College and will be reviewed, at the very least annually, in line with the overarching framework, reflective of current legislation, as agreed by the FE Colleges Safeguarding Working Group.

APPENDIX 1 - SAFEGUARDING TEAM MEMBERS

THE INDIVIDUALS WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR SAFEGUARDING, CARE AND WELFARE AT SERC ARE:

Role	Name of Individual	Campus if applicable	Contact Details
Governing Body Safeguarding Lead	Derek Wilson Nuala Reid	All Campuses	Contact via Governing Body Secretary cwilliamson@serc.ac.uk
Strategic Safeguarding Lead	Heather McKee	All Campuses	hmckee@serc.ac.uk 07825146992
Adult Safeguarding Champions	Paul Walsh Roger Duncan	All campuses	pwalsh@serc.ac.uk 07825021832 rduncan@serc.ac.uk 07825021835
Senior Lead Designated Safeguarding Officer	Paul Walsh		
Lead Designated Safeguarding Officers	Roger Duncan Barbara McNeill	All campuses	pwalsh@serc.ac.uk 07825021832 rduncan@serc.ac.uk 07825021835
Designated Safeguarding Officers	Kieran McKenna Gillian Auld	Bangor	kmckenna@serc.ac.uk gauld@serc.ac.uk
Designated Safeguarding Officers	Don Walsh Caylan Ellesmere Mary Enright Gillies Philip Martin Sineadh McKenna	Downpatrick	dwalsh@serc.ac.uk jcellesmere@serc.ac.uk menright@serc.ac.uk pmartin@serc.ac.uk smckenna@serc.ac.uk
Designated Safeguarding Officers	Barbara McNeill Alison Ferguson Eleanor McDowell Tom Trainor Sam Lyttle	Newtownards	bmcneill@serc.ac.uk aferguson@serc.ac.uk emcdowell@serc.ac.uk ttrainor@serc.ac.uk slyttle@serc.ac.uk
Designated Safeguarding Officers	Lynn Rainey Karyn Eldon Stefan Jones Lisa McCormick-Baxter	Lisburn	lrainey@serc.ac.uk keldon@serc.ac.uk sjones@serc.ac.uk lmccormickbaxter@serc.ac.uk
Designated Safeguarding Officers	Gerda Wilson	Newcastle	gwilson@serc.ac.uk

APPENDIX 2 - LEGISLATION

- Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016
- Children (Leaving Care) Act (NI) 2002
- Children (Public Performances) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1996
- Children and Young Persons Act (Northern Ireland) 1968
- Children's Services Co-operation Act (NI) 2015
- Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015 section 33
- Criminal Law Act (NI) 1967
- Education (NI) Order 1998
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
- Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007
- Health & Personal Social Services (NI) Order
- Health & Personal Social Services Act (NI) 2001
- Health & Social Care (Reform) Act (NI) 2009
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Prohibition from Teaching and Working with Children Regulations (NI) 2006
- Protection of Children (NI) Order 1978
- Protection of Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 article 3
- Safeguarding Board Act (NI) 2011
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- The Children (NI) Order 1995
- The Criminal Evidence (NI) Order 1999
- The Criminal Justice Act 1988 (Reviews of Sentencing) Order (NI) 2019
- The Data Protection Act (1998)
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003; Articles 17 and 18
- The Family Homes & Domestic Violence (NI) Order 1998
- Mental Capacity Act (Northern Ireland) 2016
- The Mental Health (NI) Order 1986
- The Northern Ireland Act 1998, Section 75
- The Police & Criminal Evidence (NI) Order 1989
- The Public Interest Disclosure (NI) Order 1998
- The Race Relations (NI) Order 1997
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 (amended 2012)
- The Sexual offences (NI) Order 2008
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Order (NI) 2005 (SENDO)

APPENDIX 3 - REFERENCES & RESOURCES

While issued mainly for schools note that the Department of Education (DE) and Education Authority (EA) publications and circulars referenced below contain guidance which is regarded as good practice for other organisations, where appropriate. Please refer to these and apply only as appropriate to the context of an FE College.
The Department of Education's publications and guidance on child protection issues for schools are available at: https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/publications-and-guidance-child-protection-issues-schools

Further detailed information is available at:
http://www.eani.org.uk/schools/safeguarding-and-child-protection/

1. Health and Social Care Adult Safeguarding Operational Procedures
   https://online.hscni.net/wpfd_file/adult-safeguarding-operational-procedures/

2. Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership
   https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/adult-safeguarding-prevention-and-protection-partnership

3. Adversity and Trauma-Informed Practice –Young Minds 2019
   https://youngminds.org.uk/media/3091/adversity-and-trauma-informed-practice-guide-for-professionals.pdf

4. Adverse Childhood Experiences. Ensuring a better deal for children in Wales. Professor Mark A. Bellis
   https://healthandcareresearchwales.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/Prof_Mark_Bellis_ACEs_Adverse_Childhood_Experiences%E2%80%93Ensuring_better_deal_for_children_in_Wales.pdf

5. Adverse Childhood Experiences Factsheet
   Adverse Childhood Experiences Factsheet - Volunteer Now

6. Apprentice NI Guidelines
   Apprenticeship guidelines and operational requirements | Department for the Economy (economy-ni.gov.uk)

7. Attendance
   https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/A%20Strategy%20for%20Improving%20Pupil%20Attendance.pdf

   https://www.etini.gov.uk/news/attendance-schools-eti-good-practice-report-and-case-studies

8. Code of Good Governance
   https://www.volunteernow.co.uk/publications/code-of-good-governance-healthcheck/

9. Co-operating to Safeguard Children & Young People in NI (2017) DoH
https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/co-operating-safeguard-children-and-young-people-northern-ireland

10. Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) Adult Safeguarding (2015) Prevention and Protection in Partnership
https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/dhssps/adult-safeguarding-policy.pdf

11. First-aid and administration of medicines
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/supporting-pupils-with-medical-needs.pdf

12. Health and Safety
https://www.hseni.gov.uk/articles/education

13. Managing Critical Incidents Guidance
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/guide-to-managing-critical-incidents-in-schools.pdf

14. Mental Capacity Factsheet
https://www.volunteernow.co.uk/?s=mental+capacity+factsheet

15. National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) (2017) Child Abuse and Neglect
https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/

16. Publications and guidance on child protection issues for schools
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/publications-and-guidance-child-protection-issues-schools

17. Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk, Policy Standards
https://www.volunteernow.co.uk/publications/safeguarding-children-adults-at-risk-policy-standards/

18. Safeguarding and Child Protection - Information and resources for school Governors, Principals, Designated Teachers/Deputy Designated Teachers and for all EA staff
https://www.eani.org.uk/school-management/safeguarding-and-child-protection

19. Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) Procedures Manual (May 2018)
https://www.proceduresonline.com/sbni/

20. Safeguarding Board NI Strategic Plan 2018-2026
Strategic plan 2022 - 2026

21. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/

22. Skills for Life and Work
Skills for Life and Work | nidirect

23. Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/759007/6_2939_SP_NCA_Sexting_In_Schools_FINAL_Update_Jan17.pdf

24. FE Sector Data Retention and Disposal Schedule (Dec 2020 version)
FE_Sector_Retention_and_Disposal_Schedule_-_December_2020-1.pdf

APPENDIX 4 - MEMBERSHIP OF THE FE COLLEGES SAFEGUARDING WORKING GROUP

College / Organisation	Name of Nominee	Changes to nominee	Changes to nominee	Changes to nominee
BMC	~~Gertie Burke (Sept 2019)~~	~~Dee McDowell (Feb 2020)~~	~~Nuala Boyle (Nov 2020)~~	Dee McDowell (Nov 2024)
NRC	~~Laura Monteith~~	Stephen McCartney (June 2022)		
NWRC	Gillian Moss			
SERC	Paul Walsh			
SRC	Lorraine McKeown			
SWC	~~Sharon Pritchard~~	~~Deborah Brown (temp for SP Nov 2019)~~	Sharon Pritchard (Jan 2020)	
DfE rep	~~Susanne Workman~~	Carolyn Davison (Dec 2024)		
DfE rep (Policy Lead)	~~Shauna Mullan~~	~~David Broadhurst (Nov 2019)~~	~~Chris Toal (Jan 2022)~~	Kelly McKenzie (Mar 2025)
DfE Policy Team rep	~~Mark McGrath~~	Ryan Harper (Nov 2025)		

APPENDIX 5 - DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION CIRCULARS

Note that DE Circulars apply directly to schools, but provide advice on good practice relevant to all organisations.

1. FE Circular 11/13 Disclosure and Barring Arrangements: Vetting Requirements for (i) The Recruitment of Staff to Further Education Colleges (ii) Existing Staff and (iii) Students
   https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/del/FE11-13%20Disclosure%20and%20Barring%20Arrangements-Vetting%20requirements%20for%20the%20recruitment%20of%20staff%20to%20FE%20Colleges.pdf

2. Circular 2007/01 Acceptable Use of the Internet and Digital Technologies in Schools
   https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/2007.01%20-%20Amended%282%29.pdf

3. Circular 2019/14 Attendance Guidance and Absence Recording By Schools (2019/14 supersedes 2018/12)
   https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/DE%20Circular%202019%2014%20-%20Attendance%20Guidance%20and%20Absence%20Recording%20-%20updated%20-%20Feb%202020.pdf

4. Circular 2006/09 Child Protection: Criminal Background Checking of Staff in Schools – Programme to Extend Coverage
   https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/Criminal-background-checking-of-staff-in-schools-programme-to-extend-coverage.pdf

5. Circular 2006/09 Child Protection: Criminal Background Checking of Staff in Schools – Appendix A
   https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/circular-2006-09-appendix-a.pdf

6. Circular 2006/07 Child Protection: Employment of Substitute Teachers
   https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/circular-2006-07.pdf

7. Circular 2008/03 Child Protection: Pre-employment Checking of Persons To Work in Schools – New Arrangements
   https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/Circular-2008-03-pre-employment-checks-new-arrangements.pdf

8. Circular 2020/07 Child Protection: Record Keeping in Schools (2020/07 supersedes 2016/03)

https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/Circular%20202007%20Child%20Protection%20Record%20Keeping%20in%20Schools.PDF

9. Circular 2006/06 Child Protection: Recruitment of People to Work With Children and Young People in Educational Settings
   https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/Circular-2006-06.pdf

10. Circular 2006/06 Child Protection: Recruitment of People to Work With Children and Young People in Educational Settings – Appendix A
    https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/circular-2006-06-appendix-a-checks-on-applicants-from-abroad.pdf

11. Circular 2006/06 Child Protection: Recruitment of People to Work With Children and Young People in Educational Settings – Form DOR O2
    https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/circular-2006-06-form-dor-02.pdf

12. Circular 2006/08 Child Protection: Training Requirement for School Governors on Staff Recruitment and Selection Panels
    https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/circular-2006-08-child-protection-staff-recruitment.pdf

13. Circular 2006/25 Child Protection: Vetting of School Governors
    https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/vetting-of-school-governors.pdf

14. Circular 2022/02 Children Who Display Harmful Sexualised Behaviour
    https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/circular-202202-children-who-display-harmful-sexual-behaviour

15. Circular 2016/11 Class Sizes In Post-Primary Schools – Practical Subjects (as well as other subjects that include a practical activity)
    https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/Class%20Sizes%20in%20Post-Primary%20Schools%20-%20Practical%20Subjects%20-%20Circular%202016....pdf

16. Circular 2015/13 Dealing With Allegations of Abuse Against A Member of Staff
    https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/2015-13-dealing-with-allegations-of-abuse-against-a-member-of-staff.pdf

17. Circular 2012/19 Disclosure and Barring Arrangements: Changes To Pre-employment Vetting Checks For Volunteers Working In Schools From 10/09/12 –

Guidance For Schools and Employing Authorities On Changes To Pre-employment Checking and Safer Recruitment Practices
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/Disclosure-and-barring-arrangements-guidance-for-schools-and-employing-authorities-volunteers.pdf

18. Circular 2013/01 Disclosure and Barring Arrangements: Vetting Requirements for Paid Staff Working In Or Providing A Service For Schools – Guidance For Schools and Employing Authorities On Pre-employment Vetting Checking and Safer Recruitment Practices
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/circular-2013-01-updated-september-2015.pdf

19. Circular 2015/23 Drugs Guidance
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/circular-2015-23.pdf

20. Circular 2014/24 Education Otherwise Than At School (EOTAS) Guidance
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/2014-24-eotas-guidance.pdf

21. Circular 2016/26 Effective Educational Uses of Mobile Digital Devices
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/DE%20circular%202016.26%20Effective%20Educational%20Uses%20of%20Mobile%20Digital%20Devices.pdf

22. Circular 2008/10 Employment of Substitute Teachers – NI Substitute Teachers Register (NISTR)
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/circular-number-2008-10-employment-of-substitute-teachers.pdf

23. Circular 2010/18 Every School A Good School – The Governors' role
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/circular-2010-18-governors-guide.pdf

24. Circular 2013/25 e-Safety Guidance
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/2013%2025%20-%20Amended.pdf

25. Circular 2010/01 Guidance on Relationships and Sexuality Education
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/2010%2001%20-%20Amended.pdf

26. Circular 2020/05 Guidance for Schools on Supporting Remote Learning to Provide Educational Continuity

Circular 2020/05 Guidance for schools on supporting remote learning to provide educational continuity

27. Circular 2011/22 Internet Safety
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/2011%2022%20-%20Amended.pdf

28. Circular 2014/27 Managing Information On Persons Who Pose A Risk To Pupils
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/Circular%202014-27%20Managing%20information%20on%20persons%20who%20pose%20a%20risk%20to%20pupils%20-%20November%202014.pdf

29. Circular 2016/27 Online Safety
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/DE%20Circular%202016.27%20Online%20Safety.pdf

30. Circular 2014/14 Pupil Participation
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/2014-14-pupil-participation.pdf

31. Circular 2015/22 Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) Guidance
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/2015%2022%20-%20Amended.pdf

32. Circular 2013/16 Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy In Schools
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/2013%2016%20-%20Amended.pdf

33. Safeguarding and Child Protection – A Guide for Schools – Update September 2024
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/Safeguarding%20%26%20Child%20Protection%20in%20Schools%20%28September%202024%29.pdf

34. Circular 2018/07 Self-Assessment Audit Tools for Schools
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/DE%20Circular%20201807%20Self-Assessment%20Audit%20Tool%20for%20Schools_1.PDF

35. Circular 2010/22 - School development planning - Regulations and guidance
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/sdp-circular-2010-22-sdp-regulations-and-guidance-english-version%20%281%29.pdf

36. DE Guidance - School Development Planning 2020/21 – COVID 19
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/Guidance%20on%20School%20Development%20Planning%20for%20202021.pdf

37. Circular 2020/08 Amended draft Attendance Guidance and Absence Recording by schools
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/ED1%2020%20331281%20%20AMENDED%20Draft%20Circular%20-%20Attendance%20Guidance%20and%20absence%20recording%20from%20January%202021%282%29.pdf

38. Circular 2021/12 Addressing Bullying In Schools Act (NI) 2016 - Statutory Guidance for Schools and Boards of Governors
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/Addressing%20Bullying%20in%20Schools%20Act%20%28NI%29%202016.pdf

39. Circular 2021/13 Interim Guidance on the use of Restraint and Seclusion in Educational Settings
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/DE%20Circular%2013%20of%202021%20-%20Restraint%20and%20Seclusion.pdf

40. DE Circular 2021/04 - Suspensions and Expulsions Arrangements for pupils in grant-aided schools in Northern Ireland
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/de-circular-202104-suspensions-and-expulsions-arrangements-pupils-grant-aided-schools-northern

41. Circular 2003/13 Welfare and Protection of Pupils Education and Libraries NI Order 2003
https://www.eani.org.uk/publications/safeguarding-and-child-protection/circular-200313-guidance-for-schools-on-the-welfare

42. Circular 2023/02 – Parental Responsibility: Updated Guidance for Schools
Circular 2023/02 - Parental Responsibility: Updated Guidance for Schools. | Department of Education (education-ni.gov.uk)

43. Child Protection Policy & Adults at Risk of Harm Policy Guidance (EA)
https://eanifunding.org.uk/child-protection-policy-guidance/

44. DE Circular 2023/07 - Engagement of Unqualified Teachers in Grant-aided Schools

https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/de-circular-202307-engagement-unqualified-teachers-grant-aided-schools

45. DE Circular 2023/06 - Reconstitution of School Boards of Governors for Controlled and Maintained Schools - Term of Office
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/de-circular-202306-reconstitution-school-boards-governors-controlled-and-maintained-schools-term

46. Circular 2023/03 - Revised Personal Education Plan Guidance for Children Looked After (primary schools)
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/circular-202303-revised-personal-education-plan-guidance-children-looked-after

47. Circular 2024/15 - Concussion
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/circular-202415-concussion

48. Circular 2015/19 - Notification of pupil suspension to the Education Authority
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/circular-201519-notification-pupil-suspension-education-authority

49. Circular 2024/13 - Attendance Guidance & Absence Recording By Schools
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/circular-202413-attendance-guidance-absence-recording-by-schools

50. Circular 2024/01 - Guidance on Amendments to the Relationship and Sexuality Education
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/circular-202401-guidance-amendments-relationship-and-sexuality-education

51. DE Circular 2024/10 Pre-Employment/Access NI Check Requirements and Safer Recruitment Practices for Staff and Volunteers Working in or Providing a Service for Schools/Educational Settings
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/Circular%202024%2010%20-%20Pre-Employment%20%20AccessNI%20Check%20Requirements%20and%20Safer%20Recruitment%20Practices%20for%20Staff%20and%20Volunteers%20Working%20in%20or%20Providing%20a%20Service%20for%20SchoolsEducation%20Setting_1.pdf

52. DE Circular 2024/14 Guidance for Schools on Pupil's Personal use of Mobile Phones and other Similar Devices
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/Circular%202024-14%20-%20Use%20of%20Personal%20Mobile%20Phones.pdf

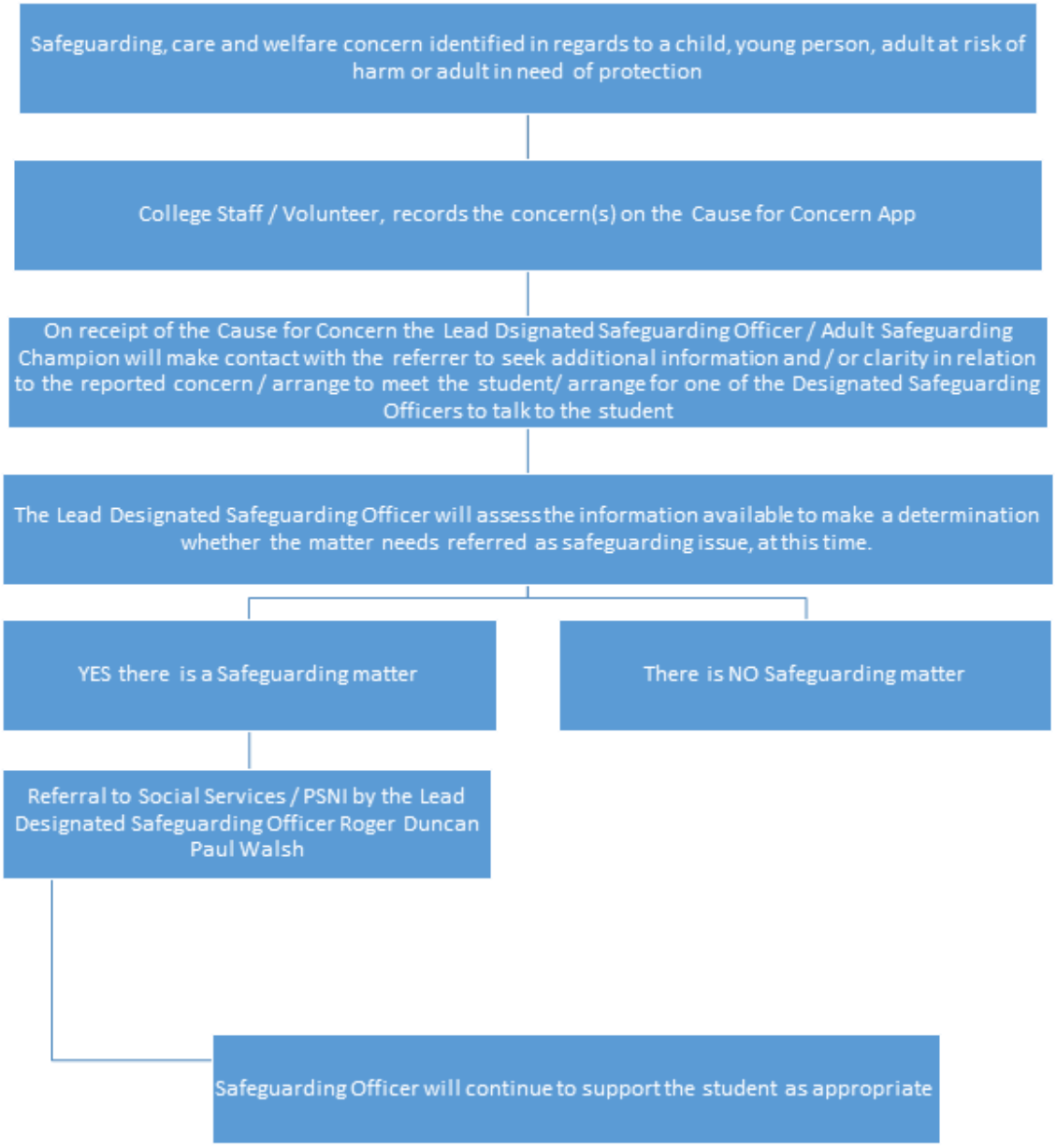
53. Circular 2017/04 – Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools – A guide for schools
Circular 2017/04 - Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools - A Guide for Schools | Department of Education

54. Circular 2023/11 Attendance Guidance & Absence Recording By Schools
Attendance Guidance & Absence Recording By Schools – Circular 2023/11 | Department of Education

55. Circular 2025/06 - Pre-Employment / Access NI check requirements and safer recruitment practices for staff and volunteers working in or providing a service for schools/education settings | Department of Education
Circular 2025/06 - Pre-Employment / AccessNI check requirements and safer recruitment practices for staff and volunteers working in or providing a service for schools/education settings | Department of Education

APPENDIX 6 - SAFEGUARDING, CARE & WELFARE REPORTING OF CONCERN
REPORTING PROCEDURE FLOWCHART (FOR CONCERNS RELATING TO CHILD, YOUNG PERSON, ADULT AT RISK OF HARM OR ADULT IN NEED OF PROTECTION)

The reporting procedure, when a **concern** is **identified in regard to a child, young person, adult at risk of harm or adult in need of protection**, for SERC is as follows:
Please note that in instances where the reporting procedure cannot be followed and where there is a significant and immediate risk of harm, it is imperative to call emergency services without delay. The safety and well-being of our staff and students is our top priority.



REPORTING PROCEDURE RECORD FORM (FOR CONCERNS RELATING TO CHILD, YOUNG PERSON, ADULT AT RISK OF HARM OR ADULT IN NEED OF PROTECTION)

All safeguarding concerns relating to students at SERC are to be referred to the Lead Designated Safeguarding Officers using the Cause for Concern App, which is accessible to all staff on the College App centre.

REPORTING PROCEDURE FLOWCHART (FOR CONCERNS RELATING TO ACTIVITIES OF A STAFF MEMBER)

The reporting procedure, when a disclosure is made concerning the activities of a member of SERC requires that a Cause for Concern is completed (using the App, which is accessible to all staff on the College App centre) and on receipt of the referral the Senior or Lead Designated Safeguarding Officer will liaise with the Head of HR / Deputy Principal Planning, Performance and Engagement to ensure that appropriate actions are taken.

APPENDIX 7 - COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS POLICY

SERC's Complaints and Compliments Policy (Policy Number 043-2016) can be found on the SERC website.

APPENDIX 8 - DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version No. under review (Please see the front page)	Date of review (Date)	Who was involved in reviewing the document? (Name/s)	Were changes made to the document after reviewing? (Yes / No)	If changes have been made, please provide brief details:	New Version No.	If Yes, did the document need to go through consultation again? (Yes*/ No)	If Yes, did the document need to be Equality Screened again? (Yes*/ No)	If Yes, date those affected by document will be alerted of updated document (Date)
	11/03/2021	P Walsh	No	References updated in Appendix 2		no	no	11/03/21
	5/11/2021	P Walsh	Yes	Minor changes relating to references and some wording as agreed by the SWG		no	no	30/11/2021
	13/09/22	P Walsh	Yes	Minor changes relating to references and some wording as agreed by the SWG		no	no	17 Oct 2022
	17/11/2023	P Walsh	Yes	Minor amendments made to Appendix 6 to reflect changes to the Safeguarding Team		no	no	21 Nov 2023

	4/12/2023	P Walsh	Yes	Changes resulting from SWG review incorporated.		no	no	
	14/10/2024	P Walsh	Yes	Document revised to reflect staff and staff role changes		no	No	
	18/12/2024	P Walsh	Yes	Document revised to reflect the outcomes of the Sector Safeguarding Working Group 2024/25 review meeting		No	No	
	12/01/2026	P Walsh	Yes	Document revised to reflect the outcomes of the Sector Safeguarding Working Group 2025/26 review meeting		No	No	

***** If you answered 'Yes' in columns G or H, you must forward details of additional consultation and/or screening to the Equality Officer.