



SC08 Safeguarding Child & Adult Protection Policy

Version Date: ... January 2025

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1. Introduction

North East Scotland College is committed to providing a safe and supportive learning and working environment for all of its students and staff. The College has a duty of care to students to ensure that the rights of individuals not to be harmed, physically or psychologically whilst at College are upheld.

The Safeguarding Policy outlines the framework which exists to ensure the well-being of students (and connected minors where relevant) and how the College will respond to issues of Child or Adult Protection or radicalisation which come to staff attention. This is based on key legislation including The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) 2015, Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007, Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Act 2021 and The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

2. The Policy

2.1 The purpose of this Policy is to outline the responsibilities of North East Scotland College, Board of Management members, individual members of staff, including permanent and temporary teaching and support staff and contractors working within the College.

2.2 In identifying collective and individual responsibilities and duties, the College will pay due regard to relevant legislation and the responsibilities of other agencies.

2.3 Measures and approaches detailed in this policy are in place in addition to general welfare and support measures in place across College.

3. Responsibilities

3.1 Every member of staff has an individual responsibility to ensure the safety and protection of all students and visitors to the College including children and adults at risk of harm.

4. Child Protection

In order to meet its legal responsibilities and general duty of care to students under 18 years of age the College will:

4.1 Provide a mandatory Child Protection/Safeguarding and Prevent training courses to all staff and contractors regularly working in the College.

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4.2 Implement, maintain and regularly review its procedures relating to the protection of children and vulnerable adults and responses to concerns or disclosures of harm, abuse or radicalisation.

4.3 Designate a senior manager who will take the lead responsibility for co-ordinating the whole College safeguarding practice.

4.4 Identify named members of staff who will deal with operational issues relating to safeguarding. In the first instance the Head of Student Support and Engagement will act as the nominated safeguarding co-ordinator.

4.5 Ensure all staff are checked either through the Disclosure or Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme and that all contractors regularly providing services to the College are required as a condition of contract, to ensure a similar process.

4.6 Ensure effective operation of the Safeguarding Policy and related procedures.

4.7 Put in place reasonable procedures to ensure the safety and protection of students under 18 years of age.

4.8 Include in all contracts for services involving non-staff third parties working in the College, a section outlining the responsibilities of contractors in relation to safeguarding practices.

4.9 Establish and sustain local and national partnerships with local authorities, sector professionals, and Police Scotland to foster collaboration, share knowledge, and ensure the adoption of best practices in safeguarding.

5. Adults at Risk

In order to meet its legal responsibilities and general duty of care to adults at risk or harm the College will:

5.1 Communicate to all staff the existence of the Safeguarding Policy and associated procedures and detail individual staff responsibilities.

5.2 Work with appropriate agencies to ensure that adults at risk of harm are supported and safeguarded through the effective operation of the Policy and associated procedures.

5.3 Where appropriate ensure that staff undertaking Regulated Work with Protected Adults are members of the relevant PVG scheme.

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5.4 Put in place measures and procedures to ensure the safety and protection of students classified as adults are risk of harm.

5.5 Identify named members of staff who will deal with operational issues relating to adults in need of protection, usually the Head of Student Support and Engagement.

5.6 Provide additional support in accordance with specified College policies.

The College is not responsible for the provision of personal health care to adults with such a particular need or to any member of staff or students.

6. Domestic Violence and Forced Marriages

The College will take all reasonable steps to raise awareness of the impact to an individual's physical and psychological well-being resulting from domestic violence and forced marriages.

6.1 Named members of staff will deal with operational issues relating to situations of a domestic abuse or forced marriage nature. Usually this will be the Head of Student Support and Engagement.

6.2 The College will maintain partnerships with local agencies supporting clients affected by these issues and will offer support to such clients accessing College services.

6.3 The College will implement a procedure which ensures concerns about staff and student well-being in respect of domestic abuse or forced marriages are responded to promptly.

7. Rehabilitation of Offenders

In terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 the College cannot discriminate against learners whose convictions are spent. However, in situations where the College becomes aware that individuals who wish to study at North East Scotland College have unspent convictions certain steps may be taken to ensure that such individuals pose no risk to the safety of staff and students of the College. Such measures will be implemented on a case by case basis but will include liaison with other agencies and may include a multi-agency risk assessment process taking place.

Where a student discloses or is identified by other means as having been charged with or convicted off a serious offence during the academic year

measures may be taken under the terms of the Student Disciplinary Code or Fitness to Study Procedure. In certain circumstances such measures could include dismissal from the College.

8. Safe Internet Use and Online Safety

The College will take all reasonable steps to ensure staff and students are aware of the Acceptable Use Policy – Internet and Email. ICT exists within the College for the primary purpose of supporting the College's role in providing education and training. However, the College recognises that ICT will be used by staff and students for social and personal use.

In addition to the Acceptable Use Policy the College undertakes to implement procedures to ensure the safety of staff and students whilst using the Internet by:

8.1 Providing staff and students with guidance on safe internet use by a variety of means, including awareness raising sessions and availability of information in key locations around the College and via MyNESCot and COLin.

8.2 Restricting access to particular sites where guidance from external organisations, including CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) Centre indicate that they could pose a risk to students or increase the likelihood of cyber-bullying or radicalisation.

8.3 Implementing disciplinary procedures in situations where College ICT systems are identified as having been used as the means of bullying, intimidating, radicalisation or otherwise psychologically damaging any person.

8.4 Restricting the use of mobile communication devices (including mobile phones) in certain identified areas of the College.

8.5 Advising staff not to issue personal email addresses and personal mobile phone numbers to students for the purposes of communication.

9. Radicalisation/ PREVENT Duty

The PREVENT Strategy was published by the UK Government in 2011 as part of its overall counter-terrorism strategy. The College adheres to the principles outlined in Part V of the Police Act (1997) and Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and recognises its obligation to safeguard young people and vulnerable adults from radicalisation, to keep them safe and within the law. The PREVENT Duty is not about preventing young people

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and adults from having political and religious views and concerns but about supporting them to use those concerns or act on them in non-extremist ways.

9.1 A PREVENT Team has been established to oversee the implementation of actions required under the Duty. The PREVENT Team are: Assistant Principal Curriculum and Student Experience, Vice Principal (Finance & Resources) and Learning and Development Manager.

9.2 A Single Point of Contact (SPOC) has been identified. This is Assistant Principal Curriculum and Student Experience, who will be responsible for sharing any concerns with external partners.

9.3 Provide practical support and ensure staff are referred onto appropriate sources of advice and guidance.

9.4 Provide PREVENT staff development to ensure staff have the necessary training to be able to recognise in students a vulnerability to being drawn into terrorism and be aware of what action to take.

9.5 Identify and address issues where online materials are accessed on sensitive and extremism related research.

10. Student Sex Workers

Sex workers are often a victim of hate crime or gender based violence (GBV). The Scottish Government expects Colleges to take a gendered approach to the issue of sex work by adopting and adapting the Equally Safe in Higher Education (ESHE) Tool Kit. It is clear that GBV includes commercial sexual exploitation, including prostitution, lap dancing, stripping, pornography and trafficking.

10.1 For the purpose of safeguarding, any action relating to Student Sex work must be in the context of non-consensual interactions as detailed in the Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009.

11. Student Death

Death, unless it occurs within a controlled environment such as a hospital, must always be notified to the Police. Anyone finding what they believe to be a body on College premises should contact the Emergency Services immediately, as well as informing the Safeguarding Team as soon as possible. A member of the Safeguarding Team will act as the response coordinator for the College.

Nothing should be touched or moved (other than to secure the area) until the Police have arrived and their guidance has been sought.

Please refer to the [Student Death procedure](#)

12. Confidentiality and Data Protection

The College will respect a student's right to personal privacy and will maintain confidentiality as far as possible. However, for the purposes of protecting an individual from serious harm there may be times when information has to be shared without consent of the individual.

10.1 The degree of confidentiality will be governed by the need to protect the student or the child about whom concern has been made.

10.2 The safety, welfare and well-being of the student are of central importance when making decisions to share information lawfully with or about them.

10.3 In general, information will normally be shared with the consent of the student. However, in relation to issues of a Child Protection nature, where there are concerns that seeking consent from the child would increase the risk to the child or others, or prejudice any subsequent investigation, information may need to be shared without consent.

10.4 At all times, information shared will be relevant, necessary and proportionate to the circumstances, and limited to those who need to know.

10.5 The College will comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

10.6 The College will comply with the requirements of the Counter-Terrorism & Security Act 2015: Section 26.

The main point of contact for external agencies seeking information of a confidential nature relating to the welfare of children, adults at risk of harm and offenders will be the Head of Student Support and Engagement.

13. Reporting Procedures

All staff with concerns or knowledge that a child or adult at risk is being harmed, abused or neglected or with knowledge of a student at risk of being

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a victim of domestic abuse or forced marriage or radicalisation must report their concerns via the Report & Support Platform, and the Safeguarding Team will respond. The Safeguarding Team comprises of:

- The Assistant Principal Curriculum and Student Experience
- The Head of Student Support and Engagement
- The Student Support Managers

Where they are not immediately available: The Heads of Sector and advertised "back-up" Safeguarders can support.

11.1 The nominated safeguarding co-ordinator will report to the Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality on all child and adult protection issues.

11.2 The overall responsibility for Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult Protection will remain with the Principal of the College.

14. Definitions

Abuse

A broad definition of abuse is: all forms of physical and/or emotional ill treatment, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to health, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.

An Adult at Risk

An adult at risk of harm is any person aged 18 years or over who is:

- unable to safeguard his or her own well-being, property, rights or other interests;
- at risk of harm, and
- more vulnerable to being harmed than adults who are not so affected because he or she is affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or mental infirmity

Child

A child is any person under 18 years of age who is enrolled as a full or part-time student of the College. This includes 16 and 17 year olds who are enrolled at the College, school leavers enrolled at the College who may be under the age of 16 and school pupils enrolled at the College as part of Local Authority School College Links Programme or as Full Time Exceptional Entrants.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying using the internet or mobile phones.

Duty of Care

The College's responsibility is to protect and promote the best interests of its students and to ensure, as far as it reasonably can, that it exercises an appropriate level of care towards them.

Domestic Abuse

This includes any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality.

Female Genital Mutilation

Female genital mutilation (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.

Forced Marriage

A forced marriage takes place when the bride, groom or both do not want to get married but are forced to by others, usually their families. People who are forced into marriage may be tricked into going abroad, physically threatened and/or emotionally blackmailed to do so.

Harm

Harm is most broadly defined as being all harmful contact, but more specifically is conduct which causes physical or psychological injury; unlawful conduct which appropriates or adversely affects property, rights or interests; conduct which causes self-harm.

Sex Work

Buying or selling sex in Scotland is legal, however there are a range of related activities which are illegal:

- Running a brothel
- Publicly soliciting for the purposes of selling sex
- Publicly soliciting for the purpose or purchasing sex
- Loitering in a public place for the purposes of selling sex
- Loitering in a public place for the purposes or purchasing sex
- Procuring someone into becoming a prostitute to have sex with other people
- Trafficking persons for the purposes of sexual exploitation

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Radicalisation

Radical ideas being developed, shared or promoted which could become injurious to social order and social cohesion.

Gender Based Violence

The College will take a zero-tolerance approach to gender-based violence (GBV) and respond with sensitivity, respect, and confidentiality to any disclosures or concerns raised. Trained staff will offer appropriate support to those affected, ensuring access to specialist services and resources, such as wellbeing support and external advocacy organisations. The College will also work proactively to prevent GBV by raising awareness through education and training, promoting equality and respect, and fostering a culture where all forms of abuse are challenged. Any reports of GBV will be addressed to prioritise the safety and wellbeing of those affected, in alignment with national safeguarding and legal frameworks.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with policies and procedures listed below:

Safeguarding procedure
Students Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
Student Code of Conduct
Fitness to Study Procedure

Status:	Approved	Summary of Changes Update to formatting and job titles Inclusion of Gender-Based Violence and reference to both the Fitness to Study Procedure and the Hate Crime and Public Disorder (Scotland) Act 2021.
Approved by:	Executive Team	
Date of version:	January 2025	
Reviewed by DPO:	September 2021	
Responsibility for Policy:	Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality)	
Responsibility for Review:	Assistant Principal Curriculum and Student Experience	
Review date:	December 2024	
EIA date:	February 2022	

DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT (DPIA)

1. Does the activity that this policy or procedure relates to use personal data in any way? (Use may refer to collecting and gathering; storing electronically; storing by paper; sharing with other parties (internal or external to college); use of images as well as written information; retaining and archiving; or erasing, deleting and destroying)	Yes
2. Does the activity that this policy or procedure relates to use special category personal data in any way? (Special category data is data about: race; ethnic origin; politics; religion; trade union membership; genetics; biometrics (where used for ID purposes); health; sex life; or sexual orientation)	Yes
3. Does the activity that this policy or procedure relates to involve the use of social media or a third-party system?	Yes

If the answer is 'yes' to one or more of the above questions, the Data Protection Officer must be consulted.

Date of DPO consultation:	September 2021
Description of outcome and actions required (if any): A full DPIA is required for the process of managing safeguarding referrals, including use of Report+Support. This is now in progress and has been logged with the DPO.	
DPIA screening/full DPIA required:	Yes

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Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form

Part 1. Background Information. (Please enter relevant information as specified.)

Title of Policy or Procedure. Details of Relevant Practice:	Safeguarding Policy
Person(s) Responsible.	Head of Student Support and Engagement
Date of Assessment:	22 nd January 2025
What are the aims of the policy, procedure or practice being considered?	Aims of the Safeguarding Policy 1. Ensure a safe and inclusive environment for all students, staff, and visitors, with a focus on protecting individuals from harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation. 2. Provide a clear framework for identifying, reporting, and responding to safeguarding concerns, ensuring timely and appropriate action is taken. 3. Promote awareness of safeguarding responsibilities among all members of the College community through training, guidance, and accessible resources. 4. Support individuals affected by safeguarding issues, including those experiencing gender-based violence, through access to appropriate internal and external services. 5. Foster a culture of vigilance and accountability where safeguarding is embedded across all areas of the College's operations and activities. 6. Align with national legislation, guidance, and best practices to uphold the highest standards of safeguarding within further education in Scotland.
Who will this policy, procedure or practice impact upon?	The Safeguarding Policy will impact all individuals (staff, students, visitors and contractors) within the College community. It will prioritise the safety, wellbeing, and the college community, particularly those who may be vulnerable or at risk of harm. Staff will be guided on their safeguarding responsibilities,

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equipping them to identify and respond effectively to concerns. Visitors and contractors will be expected to adhere to safeguarding expectations, ensuring a safe environment for everyone on College premises. Parents and guardians will be reassured that the College places the safety and wellbeing of students at the forefront of its priorities. The policy will also foster a culture of safeguarding across all aspects of College life, promoting inclusivity, respect, and protection. Additionally, it will ensure compliance with legal and regulatory bodies while encouraging collaboration with external agencies such as local authorities, Police Scotland, and mental health organisations.

Part 2. Public Sector Equality Duty comparison (Consider the proposed action against each element of the PSED and describe potential impact, which may be positive, neutral or negative. Provide details of evidence.)

Need	Evidence
Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.	This will be evidenced by: • Safeguarding disclosure data from the Report + Support platform. • Platform awareness data • Number of complaints relating to Safeguarding processes. • Safeguarding, PREVENT and other associated training records • Virtual Learning Environment (Brightspace) Safeguarding "Module" statistics for students • Student Satisfaction Survey
Impact: The provision of a clear framework to prevent, identify, and address harmful behaviours. The policy ensures that individuals are protected from abuse and harm while promoting accountability and compliance with equality legislation, including the Equality Act 2010.	
Need	Evidence

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Advancing Equality of Opportunity	• Safeguarding disclosure data from the Report + Support platform. • Platform awareness data • Number of complaints relating to Safeguarding processes. • Safeguarding, PREVENT and other associated training records • Virtual Learning Environment (Brightspace) Safeguarding “Module” statistics for students • Student Satisfaction Survey
Impact: The Safeguarding Policy ensures the policy promotes equitable access to protection and support for all students and staff, particularly those from vulnerable or marginalised groups. By addressing barriers faced by individuals with protected characteristics, this reduces disparities, fosters inclusivity, and promotes a culture of fairness and respect. It ensures legal compliance with the Equality Act 2010, enhances confidence in reporting concerns, and improves outcomes for marginalised groups. Ultimately, it helps create a safer, more supportive, and inclusive college environment for everyone.	
Need	Evidence
Promoting Good relations	• Safeguarding disclosure data from the Report + Support platform. • Platform awareness data • Safeguarding, PREVENT and other associated training records • Network Meeting Minutes • Safeguarding Policy wording • Virtual Learning Environment (Brightspace) Safeguarding “Module” statistics for students • Student Satisfaction Survey
Impact: NESCol's Safeguarding Policy actively promotes good relations by fostering a cohesive and respectful community. It uses inclusive, non-discriminatory language that respects all individuals and incorporates safeguarding training with diversity, equality, and cultural awareness components to address the college's diverse needs. The policy ensures swift action against bullying, harassment, or discrimination, promoting safety and harmony. Through the Report + Support platform, the Safeguarding Team monitors case outcomes and the effectiveness of interventions. Additionally, collaboration with local and national organisations and networks ensures adherence to best practices and the latest legislation in safeguarding procedures.	

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Part 3. Identifying Impact on Protected Characteristics

Protected Characteristic	Age	Disability	Gender Reassignment	Marriage/Civil Partnership	Pregnancy and maternity	Race	Religion or belief	Sex	Sexual Orientation
Impact Identified: - Positive (P) - Negative (N) - Neutral Impact (N/I)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P

Part 4. Action & Outcome (Following initial assessment, describe any action that will be taken to address impact detected)

Following the initial assessment, NESCol will take several actions to ensure the Safeguarding Policy promotes equality and supports all individuals. The policy will be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect current legislation and best practices, with a focus on inclusivity and addressing the needs of vulnerable groups. Training will be enhanced for all staff to include delivery of Gender Based Violence (L.I.S.T.E.N.) and Trauma Informed Practice trainings, ensuring staff are equipped to respond effectively. Data from the Report + Support platform will be analysed to identify trends and ensure safeguarding interventions are effective for all. NESCol will also strengthen collaboration with external organisations, such as local authorities and Police Scotland, to ensure alignment with best practices and access to expert advice. These actions aim to foster a safe, inclusive, and equitable environment for all members of the college community.

Sign-off, authorisation and publishing *	
Name:	Gwen Watt
Position:	Head of Student Support and Engagement
Date of original EIA	March 2013
Date EIA last reviewed	January 2025

**Please note that an electronic sign-off is suffice*