18- TREC - Safeguarding Policy

(adopted City of Doncaster Model LA Policy)
Includes Low Level Concern Appendix A

Date ratified: 1st September 2026

Date policy to be reviewed: September 2027

Committee responsible for policy: The Board

Geraldine Kelly (Director)— Chair of the Board

Geraldine Kelly

Melanie Atkin (Director)

Review No.	Date	Summary of Changes	Reviewer
1	18.08.26	Read in full	D.Whittington

City of Doncaster Council

SAFEGUARDING POLICY
SEPTEMBER 2026

Please give regard to TREC's policies. Statutory policies are available on TREC's website, if you would like a copy of any policy, please contact college.

It is the Local Authority's expectation that all educational establishments provide environments where children and young people feel safe, valued and experience a strong sense of belonging. An inclusive culture is central to effective safeguarding.

Inclusion – Belonging in School – a school-level resource for developing inclusive policies
https://youtu.be/AHY_S8fFC3E?si=6rD4-jdQRmiWMYlm

Rationale

This policy has been developed in accordance with:

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Education Act 2002
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (latest version)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (KCSIE) and
- Doncaster Children's Safeguarding Partnership (DSCP) local policy and procedures.

This policy will be updated to reflect any amendments made within the final statutory version of KCSIE 2026 and any subsequent updates issued by the Department for Education.

It also considers local lessons learned to ensure all children, young people and families in Doncaster are supported.

This policy reflects statutory safeguarding expectations and incorporates emerging risks, including:

- Artificial intelligence (AI), including deepfake imagery
- Financial exploitation and online scams
- Harmful online cultures, including misogyny
- Increasing complexity of safeguarding vulnerabilities

Aims

At TREC, we aim to ensure that:

- Safeguarding concerns are identified **early and acted on immediately**
- A **child/young person-centered approach** is embedded
- Staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities
- Strong partnerships exist with families and agencies

Contents

- Supporting documents
- Important Safeguarding Contacts
- Legislation & Statutory Guidance
- Definitions and Terminology
- Equality Statement
- Roles and Responsibilities
    - All staff
    - DSL/DDSL
    - Head of College
    - Governing Body
- Confidentiality
- Child protection procedures
- Safeguarding Issues (including local issues and guidance) – please note these are listed in alphabetical order.
- Appendix 1 – Types of Abuse

Supporting Documents

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies, procedures, guidance, and other related documents:

- Lost or Missing Children Policy (Absconding)
- Allergy policy
- Anti-Bullying
- Attendance
- Behaviour
- Children Missing Education
- Code of Conduct
- Complaints
- Equalities
- Health and Safety – fire/evacuation/invacuation
- Low-Level Concerns
- Managing Medicines
- Mental Health
- Mobile Phones
- Online Safety
- PHSE
- Safer recruitment

- SEND
- Supporting Medical Needs
- Physical Restraint Policy
- Provider Access Policy
- Whistleblowing

This policy comes into force on 1st September 2026 in line with KCSIE regulations. All staff will read Part 1 of KCSIE 2026 in full as detailed within the policy.
Published guidance can be found at the link below:

Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK

Important Safeguarding Contacts

	Name, email and contact no.
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Debra Whittington- debra@theridgecollege.co.uk 07730595904
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Melanie Atkin- mel@theridegcollege.co.uk 07950 389874 Sharon Brookes- sharon@theridgecollege.co.uk 07429 943136
Safeguarding governor/trustee	Dennis Atkin- dennis@theridgecollege.co.uk
Contact for Operation Encompass	Debra Whittington- debra@theridgecollege.co.uk 07730595904
Online Safety Lead – Including responsibility for filtering and monitoring	Debra Whittington- debra@theridgecollege.co.uk 07730595904
Mental Health Lead	Nicola Lowndes- ncola@theridgecollege.co.uk
Prevent Lead	Debra Whittington- debra@theridgecollege.co.uk 07730595904
Attendance Lead	Debra Whittington- debra@theridgecollege.co.uk 07730595904
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Allegations against adults working with children referral form (LADO) - City of Doncaster Council	Milovan Orlandich Tony Dobbs LADO@doncaster.gov.uk 01302 737332
Safeguarding Adviser – Local Authority	Jo Howe Jo.howe@doncaster.gov.uk 01302 736975/07816353019
Children's Social Care Safeguarding concern - child at risk report form - City of Doncaster Council	01302 737777 ChildAs@doncaster.gov.uk
Out of hours Children's Social Care ESST (Emergency Social Services Team)	01302 796000 01302 736000
Professionals line – Social Care	01302 737033
MASH Early Help Early Help Coordinators	01302 734110 EarlyHelpHub@doncaster.gov.uk 01302 736250

Early Help - What is it in Doncaster? - City of Doncaster Council	EarlyHCo@doncaster.gov.uk
Parent and Family Support Services (PAFSS)	Central - Sammy.Taylor-Brown@doncaster.gov.uk 01302 862680 North - Rebecca.Evertons@doncaster.gov.uk 01302 737994 East - Nicola.paterson@doncaster.gov.uk 01302 737686 South - Charlotte.Brookes@doncaster.gov.uk 01302 735906 Email sent to Lisa P to check
Your Place, Your Family Your Place Your Family Teams | Doncaster Safeguarding Children Partnership (dscp.org.uk)	Central – 01302 736409 North – 01302 736787 East – 01302 736336 South – 01302 736644 YourPlaceYourFamilyTeam@doncaster.gov.uk
Virtual School Virtual School Children in Care team - City of Doncaster Council	01302 737880
Child Missing in Education (CME) Children Missing Education - City of Doncaster Council	childrenmissingeducation@doncaster.gov.uk
Child Exploitation Team	01302 737200 ceteam@doncaster.gov.uk (Mon-Fri 9am-4.30pm)
Prevent	Emergency – 999 Non-emergency 101 PreventSouth@ctpne.police.uk Council contact: Rachael Long – Crime & Community Safety Theme Manager 07795800946 ACT - http://gov.uk/ACT or call 0800789321 Run Hide Tell https://www.protectuk.police.uk/advice-and-guidance/response/run-hide-tell
Local Police – PCSO link	
School Nursing Service	Single Point of Contact – 03000 218997 Website - Zone5-19.rdash.nhs.uk Rdash.doncasterchildrenscaregroup@nhs.net
Third Party Intelligence (South Yorkshire Police)	http://www.southyorkshire.police.uk/partners/partner-services/community-partner-intelligence/v2/share-community-partnership-intelligence/
Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) Telephone Advice Line	01302 734008 CYPFPsychology@doncaster.gov.uk – Indicate HSB query in the subject line.

Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance an Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) and Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children/young people.
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18.
- Statutory guidance on FGM, which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM.
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children/young people.
- Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children/young people.
- Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism.
- The Human Rights Act 1998, which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).
- The Equality Act 2010, which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting children/young people with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows TREC to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting children/young people (where we can show it's proportionate). This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled children/young people. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there is evidence that they are being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment.
- Public Sector Equality Duty: guidance for public authorities - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve learner outcomes. Some children/young people may be more at risk of harm from issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination.

Definitions and Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children/young people means:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children and young people as soon as problems emerge.
- Protecting children/young people from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.

- Preventing the impairment of children's/young people's mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring that children/young people grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- taking action to enable all children/young people to have the best outcomes.

TREC has adopted the ethos of 'Belongingness' and strives to ensure that each learner experiences inclusion during their time at college. This is in line with Doncaster's Inclusion Charter:

Doncaster's Inclusion Charter has adopted a definition of inclusion – Inclusion as belonging – "Belongingness" Text ©2023 The Belonging at School team. Natalia Zdorovtsova, Alyssa Alcorn and Duncan Astle assert their right to be identified as the authors of this resource.

1. Inclusion as personal experience: do learners feel included, and feel like they belong at school? Learners could be present and participating, but what is their subjective sense of whether or not they are part of their school community, and feel safe, and valued.

2. Inclusion-as-belonging emphasises the importance of school experiences and positions the people in the school community as choice-makers and change-make

Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children/young person suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child/young person and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent. ***See appendix 1: types of abuse.***

Child-to-parent abuse refers to abuse perpetrated by children against parents/carers as a safeguarding issue.

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

Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (also known as sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery) is where children/young people share nude or semi-nude images, videos, or live streams.

Child includes everyone under the age of 18.

Young person at TREC includes all learners up to the age of 25.

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role – stepparents, foster parents, carer, and adoptive parents.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the setting in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

Victim is a widely understood and recognised term, but we understand that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described that way. When managing an incident, we will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels most comfortable with, this may include terms such as person who has been harmed, person who has experienced harm, person subject to abuse or survivor.

Alleged perpetrator(s) and **perpetrator(s)** are widely used and recognised terms. However, we will think

carefully about what terminology we use (especially in front of children) as, in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the alleged perpetrator too. Doncaster Local Authority recommend settings to develop consistency in terminology which is Trauma-informed. For e.g. by referring only to an alleged allegation when discussing children. We will, however, decide what is appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis. Language such as "the person who has harmed" should be considered as a more trauma-informed and relational term to avoid stigmitisation.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) - the named person for safeguarding in education establishments.

LADO – Local Authority Designated Officer – deals with any allegation against any member of staff in a public setting.

DSCP - Doncaster Safeguarding Children Partnership

HSB – Harmful Sexual Behaviour is sexual behaviour displayed by a child or young person that is inappropriate for their age or stage of development, and which may cause harm, distress, or risk to themselves or others.

Equality statement

We recognise that some children/young adults are more vulnerable to abuse and barriers to reporting may exist. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and ensure all children/ young adults receive equal protection.

This includes children who:

- Have SEND or health conditions
- Are at risk of exploitation or abuse
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs.
- Experience discrimination
- Are questioning their identity
- Are looked after or previously looked after
- Are missing or absent from education
- Whose parent/carer has expressed an intention to remove them from college to be home educated.
- Are young carers.
- Have English as an additional language.
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence.
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation.
- Are asylum seekers.
- Pregnant learners.
- Young Parents.
- Children / young people displaying emerging harmful behaviour.
- Children / young people impacted by child-to-parent abuse.
- Children / young people affected by online exploitation networks.

We actively promote inclusion, belonging, and a safe environment for all.

Roles and responsibilities

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors in the college and is consistent with the procedures of the 3 safeguarding partners. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended college and off-site activities.

All staff

All staff will:

- Read and understand **Part 1 of KCSIE 2026 in full** Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK
- Sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have reviewed the guidance.
- Know the identity of the DSL/DDSL.
- Recognise signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and act without delay.
- Provide a safe space and reassure children/young adults that they are taken seriously.

All staff will be aware of:

- Our systems, which support safeguarding, including this child protection and safeguarding policy, the staff behaviour policy/code of conduct, the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy designated safeguarding lead (DDSL), the behaviour policy, the online safety policy, and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education.
- The development of Family Help arrangements under the Families First Partnership Programme and will work with local safeguarding partners to ensure children/young adults and families receive the right support at the right time.
- The process for making referrals to local authority children's/adult's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play.
- The recording system we use (CPOMS), how to appropriately record a safeguarding concern, expectations regarding timeliness (i.e. same day/within 24 hours) and how to form a chronology of events, including context, action taken and rationale. Staff also know to speak to the DSL/DDSL immediately if the child/young person is at risk of harm.
- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child/young person tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as female genital mutilation (FGM), and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals.
- The signs of different types of abuse, neglect and exploitation, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, radicalisation and serious violence (including that linked to county lines).
- The importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- The fact that children/young people can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at college and online.
- The fact that children/young people who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bi, or trans (LGBTQ+) can be targeted by other children/young people.
- What to look for to identify children/young people who need help or protection.

All staff must also recognise emerging risks including:

- AI-generated abuse (e.g. deepfakes)

- Online misogyny and harmful online cultures
- Financial exploitation and scams
- Serious violence and weapon-related risks.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Debra Whittington

The DSL:

- Is a member of the senior leadership team.
- Takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in the college, including online safety and understanding our filtering and monitoring processes on college devices and college networks to keep children/young people safe online.
- Ensures the recording system (CPOMS or other) is used appropriately by all staff, providing refresher training where necessary and ensuring that clear chronologies are maintained.
- Ensures that safeguarding records are transferred securely when a child/young person moves settings.
- Is supported by trained deputies (DDSL) (Melanie Atkin/Sharon Brookes)
- Is available during college hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

The DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child/young adult welfare and child/young adult protection matters.
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so.
- Contribute to the assessment of children/young people.
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly.
- Lead on Family Help and Multi-Agency working.
- Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour.
- Have a good understanding of the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place at our college.
- Promote a strong safeguarding culture

TREC (The Ridge Employability College) ensures:

- There are always **robust DSL cover arrangements**, including absence
- There is DSL cover arrangements during school holidays
- The full responsibilities of the DSL and DDSL are set out in their job description.

This list is not exhaustive, please see KCSIE 2026 for more details Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK

The Head of College

The head of college is responsible for the implementation of this policy and all linked policies, including:

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers:
    - Are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction.
    - Understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect.
- Communicating this policy to parents/carers when their child/young person joins the college and via the college website.
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training, and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent.

- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate.
- Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL on this.
- Ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable
- Overseeing the safe use of technology, mobile phones, and cameras in the setting
- Ensuring that Inclusion and Belongingness run through all whole college's policies and will aim to remove barriers to attendance and inclusion for all learners.
- Regular evaluation of the impact on inclusion of whole college policies and initiatives through an Assess, Plan, Do, Review Cycle, including this in the S175 safeguarding return, and openly sharing findings from the evaluation for peer review.

The Governing Board

The governing board will:

- Facilitate a whole-school/college approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront of, and underpin, all relevant aspects of process and policy development.
- Evaluate and approve this policy at each review, ensuring it complies with the law, and hold the head of college to account for its implementation. Safeguarding governor to conduct safeguarding audits.
- Be aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and our college's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- Appoint a Safeguarding Governor to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board. This is always a different person from the DSL.
- Ensure all staff, volunteers and governors undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, and that such training is regularly updated and is in line with advice from the safeguarding partners.
- Ensure that safeguarding is a standing agenda item.
- Request termly DSL/Head of College safeguarding assurance reports.
- Undertake safeguarding visits.
- Monitor implementation of actions arising from audits.
- Review safeguarding trends and outcomes.
- Ensure that the college has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and review their effectiveness. This includes:
    - Making sure that the leadership team and staff are aware of the provisions in place, and that they understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of safeguarding training.
    - Reviewing the DfE's filtering and monitoring standards and effectiveness annually and discussing with IT staff and service providers what needs to be done to support the college in meeting these standards.
- Make sure:
    - The DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources and support.
    - Online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the whole-college approach to safeguarding and related policies.
    - The DSL has lead authority for safeguarding, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place.

- The college has procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors).
- That this policy reflects that children/young people with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised.

- Where another body is providing services or activities (regardless of whether or not the children/young people who attend these services/activities are children/young people on the college roll):
  - Seek assurance that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place and inspect them if needed.
  - Make sure there are arrangements for the body to liaise with the college about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate.
  - Make sure that safeguarding requirements are a condition of using the college premises, and that any agreement to use the premises would be terminated if the other body fails to comply.

The chair of governors will act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the Head of College, where appropriate.

All governors will read Keeping Children Safe in Education in its entirety.

Confidentiality

TREC will ensure that:

- Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding.
- Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children/young people.
- The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children/young people safe.
- If staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; or if to gain consent would place a child/young person at risk.
- Staff should never promise a child/young person that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's/ young person's best interests.
- If a child/young person asks the college not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment:
  - There is no definitive answer, because even if a child/young person does not consent to sharing information, staff may still lawfully share it if there's another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies.
  - The DSL will have to balance the child/young person's wishes against their duty to protect them and other children/young people.
  - The DSL should consider that:

- Parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the child/young person at greater risk).
- The basic safeguarding principle is: if a child/young person is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children's/Adult's social care.
- Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. While the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the police remains.

- Regarding anonymity, all staff will:
  - Be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system.
  - Do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children/young people involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children/young people involved.
  - Consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities.
- The government's information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information.
- If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the DSL (or deputy).

Child protection procedures (including Early Help/Family Help Arrangements)

- If there are concerns that a child/young person has experienced or is at risk of suffering significant harm, the DSL/DDSL will consult with Doncaster Children's Social Care, making a telephone referral or in an emergency, reporting to the police. Safeguarding concern - Child at Risk - City of Doncaster Council
- Parents/Carers can contact Children's Social Care on 01302 737777.
- For advice relating specifically to concerns around the mental health of a child/young person, advice can be provided by ringing the Mental Health Specialist Advice Line 01302 796191.
- All staff are aware of MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub). The Early Help Enquiry through MASH has been established to improve communication, information sharing and to support more effective delivery of services where there is a need. All enquiries are triaged by a Social Worker, where threshold for Early Help is clear, contacts will be screened within the Early Help Hub, where threshold is unclear the MASH process will be used. Staff are aware of the threshold for Early Help which can be found here DES-1034-Early-Help-Strategy-v02.indd
- All staff are aware that Early Help is not a service, but a way of thinking and working. It is a collaborative approach between services and families that provides support as soon as a need is identified. When a child/young person or family is not achieving all outcomes within the Early Help Outcomes Framework, Early Help will be offered to support them to reach those outcomes. Early Help | Doncaster Safeguarding Children Partnership (dscp.org.uk)

- The college recognises the development of Family Help arrangements under the Families First Partnership Programme and will work with local safeguarding partners to ensure children and families receive the right support at the right time.

- All staff are clear of the expectation of 'professional curiosity' to enable them to identify safeguarding concerns. Staff will exercise 'professional curiosity', respectfully exploring inconsistencies and seeking further information where required to safeguard children and young people.

- All staff are alert to the potential need for Early Help for learners who have 'experienced multiple suspensions, are at risk of being permanently excluded from colleges and in Alternative Provisions or a Pupil Referral Unit'.

- All staff acknowledge that Early Help is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse.

- MASH is a multi-disciplinary team with two main functions:
    - Providing information, advice and guidance to professionals who have queries about children who may need a coordinated early help response or a social care response.
    - Screening all early help enquiries to ensure an appropriate level of response for the child/young person and family.

The team is available from 8.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday, and telephone messages will be responded to within one working day. Telephone: 01302 734110 for Early Help enquiries or for children's social care enquiries 01302 737777.

- The DSL/DDSL will act as Lead Professional where this is appropriate for the family.
- The college will ensure that an appropriate representative attends Child Protection Conferences, Core Groups and Child in Need meetings and where this is not possible, apologies given and a comprehensive report shared with the Chair or Social Worker using the appropriate format. Staff are aware of the expectations placed on them to contribute to the planning within child protection procedures.
- The college are aware of the process of escalation should there be differences of opinion regarding safeguarding concerns and will professionally challenge where appropriate. Professionals - Doncaster Safeguarding Children Partnership

Families First Partnership Programme (FFPP) & Doncaster Family Model

FFPP has been launched by the DfE, delivering the most significant reform in children's social care in the past 30 years. This will be a transformative year, and this policy will continue to be updated as and when changes are implemented.
This programme will take a family-focused approach involving family group decision-making and enhanced multi-agency collaboration. Families will be able to access the right help and support at the right time with early intervention being key to prevent problems from escalating.

To ensure all professionals working with children, young people and families in Doncaster are equipped to embrace and lead on this change, Doncaster is launching a clear practice framework – Doncaster Family Model.
At TREC we are committed to this way of working and will ensure that all staff are appropriately trained and equipped to work with all safeguarding partners.

Families First Partnership programme - GOV.UK



Safeguarding Issues – including local issues and guidance (in alphabetical order)

Allergy Policy

At TREC we are aware that from September 2026, we should develop a standalone Allergy Policy under Benedict's Law. We will comply with the following statutory requirements:

- Dedicated Allergy Policy
- Spare Adrenaline Pens
- Mandatory staff training
- Individual Healthcare Plans
- Appointed oversight

We have a designated allergy lead (Jeanette Woods) who will oversee college-wide allergy safety, incident reporting and compliance. Allergy safety is core safeguarding duty, not optional practice. DSL will audit compliance termly.

Useful links:
Allergy safety in schools - GOV.UK
Welcome to Allergy School, Teaching Children About Food Allergies
For Schools and Childcare Settings | Allergy UK | National Charity
Safer Schools Programme for Allergy Management | Anaphylaxis UK
Schools Allergy Code | The Allergy Team

Anti-Bullying including Child-on-Child abuse, Child-to-parent abuse, Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

At ***TREC*** we maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here', that abuse is abuse and will never be tolerated or passed off as banter. Staff in our setting recognise that children and young people are capable of abusing other children and young people (including online). All our staff are clear about the policy and procedures regarding anti-bullying, child on child abuse, sexual violence, and sexual harassment.

Staff are aware of and follow the statutory guidance in KCSIE on how settings should respond to all signs, reports and concerns of child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment, including those that have happened outside of the college premises, and/or online.

Staff will engage with all relevant agencies and professional assessments will be used to inform the approach to supporting and protecting children/young people.

The wishes of Children/young people affected by abuse will be considered and they will be given as much control as reasonably possible regarding how an investigation will be progressed and what support they are offered, balanced against the college's duty to protect others.

Where appropriate, explicit risk assessments of need will be developed and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The college recognises that some children/young adult's may cause harm to parents, carers or family members. This behaviour may indicate unmet safeguarding, mental health or contextual needs requiring assessment and intervention.

Useful links
Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK
What is sexual consent? | Rape Crisis England & Wales
Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
What is harmful sexual behaviour - Lucy Faithfull Foundation
Home - Shore
Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) or peer-on-peer sexual abuse | NSPCC Learning
HSB framework and audit | NSPCC Learning
Beyond Referrals | Contextual Safeguarding

Child Exploitation (CE)

At **TREC** we recognise that child exploitation is a form of abuse and often involves an imbalance of power. We understand that children/young people often trust their abuser and do not know that what is happening is wrong, or they feel they are unable to tell anyone due to fear, intimidation, coercion and violence. We recognise that we all have a role to play to spot the signs and help keep children/young people safe. All our staff are clear about the policy and procedures with regards to child exploitation and will report concerns to Doncaster Children's Social Care

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

This can include County Lines Activity, drug supply, thefts and other offending. It may include forced labour or children being used to facilitate fraud. This can happen both online and in local communities, or a combination of these.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

This can occur when children are sexually abused in exchange for something they need or want, or for the financial gain/status of another/others. Grooming of victims can take place online or in communities and may be perpetrated by individuals or groups.

Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) panel

Any child deemed to be at risk of/or currently subject to exploitation will be referred into the MACE process. A panel that consists of Specialist Exploitation staff, South Yorkshire Police, Social Care, Health, Probation. Education and other partners, sits weekly to share information regarding those deemed at risk and an action plan will be developed and reviewed to manage the concerns.

We understand that the requirement to report child sexual abuse for anyone working in regulated activity

with children/young people has now received Royal Assent and forms part of the Crime and Policing Act 2026. More guidance and training is expected from the government, however, It introduces a new statutory duty for individuals undertaking key roles with responsibility for children and young people in England to report sexual abuse when they are made aware of it. It also includes a new criminal offence of attempting to prevent someone reporting child sexual abuse.

Staff will report any concerns around child sexual abuse immediately to the police and children's social care.
Mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse in England: update on the Crime and Policing Act | NSPCC Learning
Crime and Policing Act 2026: Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse recommendations factsheet - GOV.UK

Com Networks
At TREC staff are aware of 'Com Networks' which can be defined as:
Transnational Virtual Networks (TVN) of criminal actors which engage in a variety of illegal acts or coerce others to do so in furtherance of their own personal gain, development of their infamy, or in furtherance of their ideologies.

The networks can broadly be broken down into three identifiable subgroups:

- A group operating online primarily involved in extorting minors to commit digital and real-world sex crimes, criminal acts against the person, property & animals; and the promotion of self-harm and suicide: (Sextortion Com)
- A group acting online who hold extremist mind-set who promote a violent Nihilistic worldview encourages damage to property, harm to individuals & potentially acts of terrorism. (Offline Com)
- A group who has a common purpose to conduct criminal activities that maliciously use digital technologies that target commerce/ infrastructure by means of Network Intrusions/ Ransomware etc. (Cyber Com)

Com Networks should be assessed as potential child criminal exploitation, and it is likely that the online nature of these crimes will involve multiple perpetrators and victims across a geographical span.

Where staff have concerns, referrals will be made in line with local procedures including sharing intelligence with the police.

Useful links:
Exploitation | Doncaster Safeguarding Children Partnership (dscp.org.uk)
Child Sexual Exploitation & How to Keep Your Child Safe | NSPCC
Child sexual exploitation - City of Doncaster Council
Child exploitation disruption toolkit - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Encouraging Potential and Inspiring Change - supporting young people - City of Doncaster Council
Stop child exploitation - SYP (southyorks.police.uk)
Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation | The Children's Society
Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims - GOV.UK
The National Cyber Security Centre | National Cyber Security Centre

Third Party Intelligence
Any intelligence around actual or suspected criminal activity including child exploitation, concerning associations and notable changes can and should be shared with the police via Third Party Intelligence. This can often add a richer picture for the police and statutory partners, if sharing is appropriate in the

circumstances. These particular pieces of information are often equally as important when assessing CE, CSE and other exploitative crimes which involve children. Information should be shared with South Yorkshire Police using the Third-Party Intelligence online portal (link below). The source of the information is always protected and not disclosed, even to other police officers.

http://www.southyorkshire.police.uk/partners/partner-services/community-partner-intelligence/v2/share-community-partnership-intelligence/

Child Victims of Trafficking and/or Modern-Day Slavery

At TREC we recognise that 'Trafficking of persons' means the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.

'Modern slavery' is a form of organised crime in which individuals including children and young people are treated as commodities and exploited for criminal and financial gain. It encompasses human trafficking, slavery, servitude and forced labour.

Children and young people of all ages are affected and can be trafficked into, within ('internal trafficking'), and out of the UK for many reasons and all forms of exploitation.

Parents, carers, or family members may exploit children and young people. Often the child or young person will not realise that family members are involved in the exploitation.

Modern slavery and trafficking are abuse, and any potential victim of child trafficking or slavery, servitude, or forced or compulsory labour should immediately be referred to children's or adult's Social Care, as they may be suffering significant harm.

Useful links:
Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims - GOV.UK

Children/young people missing

At TREC our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child/young person is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child/young person goes missing, we will follow procedures set out in our Lost or Missing children policy (Absconding) taken from the LA model.

If there are significant concerns for a child's/young person's safety, we will call the police using 101 or in an emergency 999. Children's social care will also be informed.
A multi-agency meeting between SYP Missing/ SYP CE / MST/ CE and RHI teams takes place Monday-Friday each morning to discuss and share information around children currently Missing to assist in their Return.

All Doncaster children who go Missing are referred through to the Doncaster Return Home Interview service for them to be considered for a return Home Interview once they are returned. This is an independent, confidential interview that allows a child the opportunity to disclose factors that have led to their going missing, how things have been since their Return and what might help prevent further missing episodes. This is shared with the Lead Professional within Children's Services so that they can act on any issues or concerns raised by the child, to reduce the likelihood of further Missing episodes. Where triggers

have been met, a Strategy meeting will be convened.


2.02 SY Missing from Home and Care Proto

Children Missing Education (CME / children absent from education)

At TREC we recognise that all children/young people, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude, and any special educational needs they may have.

We also recognise that being absent as well as missing from education can be a safeguarding indicator, including sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or child criminal exploitation. Attendance is a key safeguarding priority. Persistent absence and severe absence will be treated as potential indicators of harm and responded to accordingly.

We will comply with our statutory duty to inform the Local Authority of any child/young person identified as CME or absent from education and this indicates safeguarding concerns. We will follow Working Together to safeguard Children, DSCP procedures and statutory guidance outlined in children missing education – statutory guidance for local authorities to improve college attendance. Please also see our Attendance Policy.

Useful links:
Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK
Children missing education - GOV.UK
CME Policy- revised January 2024.docx
Children Missing Education and Children in Education...

Children in Care (CIC)

At TREC, we recognise that children in care are likely to have experienced some form of abuse, neglect, or trauma prior to entering care and are likely to be living with those consequences.

At TREC we have a Designated person who is responsible for championing the needs of children in care in our college (Head of College- Melanie Atkin).

Useful link:
Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - GOV.UK

Dangerous Dogs

At TREC we are aware of the Dangerous Dogs Practice Guidance and the definition of dangerous dogs as follows:

The Dangerous Dogs Act (1991) prohibits persons from having in their possession or custody dogs belonging to types bred for fighting, enables restrictions to be imposed in relation to other types of dogs which present a serious danger to the public and makes further provision for securing that dogs are kept under proper control.
More information can be found here –
https://dscp.org.uk/dscp_-_dangerous_dogs_practice_guidance_leaflet_-_pdf/

At TREC any member of staff who becomes aware of a dog that could be prohibited or considered dangerous will refer to the Police and/or the Children's/Adult's Social Care without delay.

Where there is a report of a child/young person having been injured by a dog (or exposed to the risk of injury/significant harm either directly due to the dog's behaviour or indirectly due to the dog's impact on hygiene in the home) a referral to Children's/Adult's Social Care will be considered. In deciding whether to make a referral, consideration will be given to:

- The nature of the injuries.
- The circumstances of the attack / incident.
- Whether the parents or dog owner sought medical advice.
- Whether the dog has previously shown any aggression; and
- What action the pet owner has taken to prevent a recurrence of any attack.

Useful links:

14865_proof_4LR_WEB.pdf (bluecross.org.uk)
Dog Help and Advice | Dogs Trust
Pet advice | Battersea Dogs & Cats Home
Safe and Sound Award Scheme | Dog training | The Kennel Club

Domestic Abuse

At TREC we recognise that prolonged or regular exposure to domestic abuse can have a serious impact on a child's/young person's development and emotional well-being, despite the best efforts of the non-abusing parent to protect the child. We recognise that witnessing ill treatment of others is harmful to children including where children can see, hear or experience its effects.

Domestic abuse impacts on children/young people in a number of ways. The impact of domestic abuse is likely to be exacerbated when combined with any form of substance misuse or mental ill health.

For children/young people living in situations of domestic abuse, the effects may also result in behavioural issues (including anti-social behaviour), absence from college, difficulties concentrating, lower college achievement, ill health, bullying, substance misuse, self-harm, running away, anti-social behaviour, depression and anxiety and physical injury.

At TREC if we become concerned that a child/young person is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm, we will make a referral to Children's/Adult's Social Care. We will ensure that children/young people in our setting receive the appropriate support and will use the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Toolkit for Education to identify abuse and teach about healthy relationships.

We are aware of the MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) process and work with the Local Authority to ensure relevant information is shared in respect of children in our college who are linked to those being discussed at the MARAC panel due to domestic abuse.

At TREC appropriate staff understand Operation Encompass, have accessed the appropriate training, and signed the agreement in order to receive notifications of domestic abuse.

"**The Domestic Abuse Navigator Service** (DANS) work with the whole family in response to high risk domestic abuse however families MUST have a social worker in order to access support. The service also

delivers both **The Getting On programme** which is a programme to support families experiencing Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse (APVA) which can be accessed via MASH and **One of a Kind** - a primary aged healthy relationship programme for families impacted by domestic abuse (a cohort of children are identified by the college to participate) and accessed via DAN's email inbox "DANS" DANS@doncaster.gov.uk

Useful links:
Domestic Abuse - City of Doncaster Council
Domestic Abuse Protocol - City of Doncaster Council
MARAC - Doncaster Council

Educational Neglect

At TREC staff recognise the indicators of educational neglect which can include:

- **Persistent Absence**: Missing college regularly or for long periods without a substantiated reason. Falling below 90% attendance is a recognised academic risk, while severe absence (below 50%) is heavily linked to neglect.
- **No Alternative Provision**: A child is not registered at a college and is not receiving any other suitable education.
- **Lack of parental Engagement**: Caregivers refuse to engage with the college, the local council, or relevant support agencies to improves their child's/young person's attendance.
- **Developmental Delay**: Falling significantly behind age-related educational expectations and failing to reach academic potential.

Persistent and severe absence will be treated as potential indicators of harm and responded to accordingly.

We recognise the risks and impacts as:

- Becoming Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) in later life.
- Extra-familial harms, including criminal or sexual exploitation.
- Being victims of wider abuse or neglect.

Where we have concerns of educational neglect, appropriate referrals will be made.

Elective Home Education (EHE)

The overall aim is for all children and young people in Doncaster to have the opportunity to fulfil their potential through access to a suitable education appropriate to their age, ability, and aptitude (section 7, The Education Act, 1996)

At TREC we respect that parents may decide to educate their children/young people at home. However, we recognise that home education can mean some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs.

If we become concerned that a child/young person is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm, we will make a referral to Children's/Adult's Social Care.

The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill was signed by the King on 29th April 2026, meaning that is it now an act of law. The Act will make important changes to protect children and improve education with work beginning from now to put these changes into place over the coming year, including:

- Local Authorities maintaining a 'Children Not in School' register.

- A new requirement for parents to obtain consent from the Local Authority to withdraw their child from school to home educate them if their child is:
  - Subject to an enquiry under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989.
  - On a Child Protection Plan
  - At a special school.

Useful links:
Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill 2024: policy summary - GOV.UK
Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026
Educating your child at home - City of Doncaster Council

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Breast Ironing (or flattening)

At TREC we recognise that FGM is illegal in the UK and section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 places a statutory duty upon teachers, along with social workers and healthcare professionals, to report to the police where they discover FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. We also recognise that this does not replace safeguarding children actions, therefore a referral will also be made to Children's Social Care.

At TREC all staff have received FGM awareness training as part of the whole college safeguarding training.

We also recognise that Breast Flattening is child abuse, illegal and as with female genital mutilation it is pre-pubescent girls that are most at risk.



FGM%20Pathway%20Doncaster.docx

Useful links:
Female Genital Mutilation
Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation: procedural information - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Female Genital Mutilation - Prevent & Protect | NSPCC
Breast Flattening – National FGM Centre

Forced Marriage

At TREC we recognise that, in a forced marriage, one or both spouses do not consent to the arrangement of the marriage, and some elements of duress are involved. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual, and emotional pressure. Forced Marriage is an abuse of human rights and, where a child is involved, an abuse of the rights of the child.

Where there are concerns about the welfare or safety of a child/young person, we will report this immediately to Children's/Adult's Social Care.

Useful links:
Forced Marriage
Forced marriage - GOV.UK

Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)

At TREC the DSL, DDSL and other relevant safeguarding staff have a knowledge and understanding of HSB and are aware of support that is available for children/young people displaying harmful sexual behaviours,

and know that the extent of these behaviours range between concerning internet usage and lower-level sexualised language all the way to allegations and convictions of rape or sexual assault.

Where there are concerns around HSB, staff will seek advice from the CYPF Psychology service via the HSB telephone advice line. The HSB Telephone Advice Line is a dedicated support service available to all professionals working with children, young people, and families across Doncaster. The line provides timely consultation, guidance, and signposting in relation to concerns about problematic/harmful sexual behaviours.

The advice line is open every Tuesday from 9:00am to 3:00pm, offering accessible expert support to professionals across sectors such as education, health, social care, youth services, and the voluntary sector. The phone number is 01302 734008. The service aims to support professionals in identifying and responding appropriately to inappropriate/problematic/harmful sexual behaviours or to be able to discuss the behaviours of concern and try to identify where these would sit on the continuum. The aim of the phone line is to promote early intervention and proportionate responses from those best placed to support the child or young person and to increase confidence and understanding in managing cases involving inappropriate/problematic/harmful sexual behaviours.

Callers to the advice line can expect:

- Specialist advice tailored to the specific situation or case.
- Guidance on risk assessment and management, including appropriate next steps.
- Support with decision-making, including thresholds for referral or escalation.
- Information on best practice, policies, and safeguarding procedures.
- Signposting/provision to/of relevant resources, tools, and local or national services.

Ideally consent should be sought from the parents/carers to discuss the case, however not obtaining consent would not rule out a call being made; however, it may limit the amount of information which can be shared.

The telephone advice line does not replace normal reporting procedures where there are safeguarding concerns, therefore the standard reporting procedures to Children's Social Care, Adult Social Care and the Police should always be followed.

Useful links:
Lucy Faithfull Foundation - Preventing child sexual abuse
Stop It Now - Preventing child sexual abuse
Home - Shore
Eliminating Child Sexual Abuse Online | Internet Watch Foundation IWF

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's/young person's welfare.

At TREC the DSL is aware of contact details and referral routes into the local housing authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity (where appropriate and in accordance with local procedures).

Where a child/young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm, the DSL will also make a referral to children's/adult's social care.

Useful links:
St.Leger Homes | St.Leger Homes | Home Options (stlegerhomes.co.uk)
Ending Homelessness Together - Riverside
Housing other vulnerable groups - City of Doncaster Council

Honour Based Abuse

At TREC we recognise that Honour based Abuse is a collection of practices, which are used to control behaviour within families or other social groups to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour. Such violence can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and / or community by breaking their honour code.

For young victims it is a form of child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights.

Any suspicion or disclosure of violence or abuse against a child in the name of honour will be referred to Children's Social Care.

Useful links:
Tackling violence against women and girls strategy - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
So Called 'Honour-Based' Abuse

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) – Managing allegations against staff, carers, and volunteers.

At TREC we understand that relevant procedures should be applied when there is an allegation that a person who works with children/young people has:

- Behaved in a way which has harmed a child/young adult or may have harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child/young adult.
- Behaved towards a child or young person in a way that indicates that they may pose a risk of harm to children/young adult.
- Behaved, or may have behaved, in a way towards a child or young adult that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children/young adult.

The issue could also be about the behaviour of an individual outside of their work environment, and which would raise concerns about their suitability to work with children/young adult. For example, where a domestic abuse incident has taken place or where there are concerns about the individual's own children.

We will follow DSCP procedures and where appropriate will make a referral to LADO within 24 hours/1 working day of the allegation being made. If the concerns are more urgent in regard to the safety of the child, a referral to the Police and/or Children's/adult's Social Care will be made.

Where there is uncertainty as to if LADO thresholds have been met, we will call the LADO for advice.

Appropriate staff in college will access Doncaster LADO training.

Useful links:

Allegations against adults working with children referral form (LADO) - City of Doncaster Council
Local Authority Designated Officer - City of Doncaster Council
Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK

LGBTQ+ support & Children/Young people who are gender questioning, requesting social transitioning

At TREC the DSL understands how to support children/young people and families to access LGBTQ+ support through family and Youth Hubs. Children/Young people requiring additional support may access CAMHS provision or School Nursing services. Please also see our Equalities Policy.

For details of the Youth Group, please email:
LGBTQenquiries@doncaster.gov.uk

TREC plays a vital role in supporting LGBTQ+ children/young people, those who are gender questioning or requesting social transitioning. We create an inclusive environment where all learners feel welcome and valued.

- The fact that a child or young person is lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, they can sometimes be targeted by other children or young people. In some cases, a child or young person who is perceived by other children or young people to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children and young people who are.
- However, the Cass review identified that caution is necessary for children and young people questioning their gender as there remain many unknowns about the impact of social transition and children and young people may well have wider vulnerabilities, including having complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases additional diagnoses of autism and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.
- Risks can be compounded where children and young people lack trusted adults with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and create a culture where they can speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.
- The Cass review is clear that outcomes for children and adolescents are best if they have a supportive relationship with their families. Involving a child's/young person's parents/carers will enable college to promote a child's/young person's wellbeing and protect them from harm.
- LGBTQ+ inclusion is part of the statutory Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education curriculum and our setting will access the range of support available to help counter homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and abuse.

The college are aware that revised guidance has been released and is detailed in KCSIE 2026. Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education will become part of the college's curriculum from 1st September 2026. All staff will read the guidance and will continue to work in partnership with families and agencies to ensure all children and young people feel supported and our LGBTQ+ community feel safe. Staff will offer support within a clear decision-making framework which includes:

- Individual risk assessments
- Parental involvement presumption unless safeguarding risk exists
- DSL involvement in significant decisions affecting safeguarding
- Recording requirements

Useful links:
Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK
Schools & colleges | Stonewall
Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Low Level Concerns (concerns that do not meet the LADO harm threshold)

At TREC we recognise the importance of creating a culture of openness, trust and transparency to encourage all staff to confidentially share low-level concerns so that they can be addressed appropriately.

The term 'low-level' concern is any concern – no matter how small – that an adult working in or on behalf of the college may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, **and**
- Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- Being overly friendly with children/young people
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children/young people on their mobile phone
- Engaging with a child/young person on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- Humiliating children/young people

We recognise the importance of responding to and dealing with any concerns in a timely manner to safeguard the welfare of children/young people.

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing. In addition to details of the concern raised, records will include the context in which the concern arose, any action taken and the rationale for decisions and actions taken.

See Appendix 1A – for Low Level Concerns (taken from City of Doncaster LA policy)

Useful links:
Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK
Developing and implementing a low-level concerns policy: a guide for organisations which work with children (farrer.co.uk)
Responding to low-level concerns in education | NSPCC Learning

Mandatory Reporting

The requirement to report any known or suspected child/ young person sexual abuse for anyone working in regulated activity with children/young people has now received Royal Assent and forms part of the Crime and Policing Act 2026. More guidance and training is expected from the government, however, It introduces a new statutory duty for individuals undertaking key roles with responsibility for children and young people in England to report sexual abuse when they are made aware of it and failure to do this may constitute a criminal offence. It also includes a new criminal offence of attempting to prevent someone reporting child sexual abuse.

The DSL will report any concerns around child sexual abuse immediately to the police and children's social care. Staff will not delay reporting for further evidence gathering.

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 places a statutory duty upon teachers, along with social workers and healthcare professionals, to report to the police where they discover FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. We also recognise that this does not replace safeguarding

children actions, therefore a referral will also be made to Children's Social Care.

Online Safety (including filtering & Monitoring, AI, and use of social media)

Online safety is a key safeguarding priority.

Risks include:

- **Content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, extreme sexual or physical violence, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.
- **Contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users or generative AI applications that simulate this; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
- **Conduct:** online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of self-generated intimate images and/or videos including those generated using AI e.g. deepfakes, sharing other explicit images and online bullying, and
- **Commerce:** risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. Report to https://apwg.org/

At TREC we will ensure that in accordance with KCSIE, appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place and reviewed by Debra Whittington/CUC Solutions Ltd. at least once every academic year to protect children/young people when they are online in college. We will follow the guidance in KCSIE and ensure that all staff will receive training on the expectations, applicable roles, and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring on college devices and networks. With support from the Governors/Trustees and Senior Leadership Team, the DSL will take responsibility for understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place. We will adhere to the DfE guidance on 'Generative AI: Product Safety Expectations' to ensure that capabilities and features of generative AI products and systems are considered safe for users in colleges. There will be governor oversight on this and they will seek evidence of the review cycle and assurances.
Generative AI: product safety expectations - GOV.UK
Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK
Generative artificial intelligence (AI) in education - GOV.UK

At TREC we will adhere to the filtering and monitoring standards set by The Department for Education.
Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges - Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges - Guidance - GOV.UK

- identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems.
- review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually.
- block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning.
- have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet their safeguarding needs.
- Colleges can use the DfE https://www.gov.uk/guidance/plan-technology-for-your-school to self-assess against the filtering and monitoring standards and receive personalised recommendations on how to meet them.

If there are any immediate safeguarding concerns in respect of online usage, the DSL will follow the appropriate safeguarding procedures.

Risk assessments relating to online safety will include consideration of AI-enabled harms, including nudification apps, deepfakes, AI-generated intimate imagery, impersonation and AI-assisted grooming.

The DfE have issued guidance relating to the use of mobile phones in schools and how schools should implement a policy that prohibits the use of mobile phones throughout the school day, including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime.

At TREC, we have adopted this guidance and we have a mobile phone policy which all learners, parents and staff are aware of and will implement.

Please see TREC's Online Safety Policy, Mobile Phone/Smart Technology Policy and AI policy

Useful links:
Using AI in education settings: support materials - GOV.UK
Appropriate Filtering and Monitoring - UK Safer Internet Centre
https://www.nen.gov.uk/
Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges - Cyber security standards for schools and colleges - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Cyber security training for school staff - NCSC.GOV.UK
Keeping children safe online | NSPCC
Mobile phones in schools - GOV.UK

At TREC, staff are aware of the risks to children/young people when online and using social media. Education around this is included in our curriculum and information, guidance and advice shared with parents/carers.

Where incidents involving the misuse of social media are identified, whether at home or at college, these are taken seriously and appropriate actions are taken including referrals to external agencies where required.

At TREC, if staff are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos (also known as 'sexting' or 'youth produced sexual imagery,' they will report it to the DSL immediately.

Staff will **not**:

- View, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery, or ask a child/young person to share or download it (if staff have already viewed the imagery by accident, they must report this to the DSL).
- Delete the imagery or ask the child/young person to delete it.
- Ask the child/young person(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL's responsibility).
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the child/young person(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers.
- Say or do anything to blame or shame any children/young people involved.

Staff will explain that they need to report the incident and reassure the child/young person(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

Useful links:
Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

CEOP Safety Centre
Childnet — Online safety for young people
'Adolescence' The Netflix Series - What Does it Tell Us and How Can We Respond? - Services For Education

Operation to support Afghan and Ukrainian arrivals in the UK

DSLs will consult with appropriate professionals regarding Afghan and Ukrainian arrivals following guidance, which can be found at:
Education and childcare: Homes for Ukraine - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
For more information about supporting Ukrainian arrivals in the UK:
Situation in Ukraine: Information for guests, sponsors and families - City of Doncaster Council

Our college will:

- Provide bilingual support to enable children/young adult to access the full curriculum.
- Provide pastoral care for those learners who need it.
- Provide a Key Person in college who will liaise with families and their sponsors as required.
- Be aware of vulnerabilities for the learner and seek advice where needed.

Power to Search – searching, screening and confiscation

At TREC, we recognise that children/young people may bring prohibited items onto the college site. To ensure the safety of all children/young people and staff on site, Head of College/SLT and staff authorised by them, have a statutory power to search learners and their possessions, without consent, where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the learner may have a prohibited item. College staff can also search a learner for any item if the learner agrees. Staff will always follow DfE guidance regarding searching, screening and confiscation.

Prohibited items are:

- knives or weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- stolen items
- tobacco and cigarette papers
- fireworks
- pornographic images
- any article that is suspected to have been used or is likely to be used to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to or damage to the property of any person.
- banned items.

Key Rules and Procedures:

- **Reasonable Suspicion:** Staff must have reasonable grounds to believe a banned item is concealed before conducting a search without consent.
- **Consent:** Teachers can search learners with their agreement (under common law), and colleges can routinely search lockers or desks as a condition of use.
- **Witnesses:** A search must generally be carried out by a staff member of the same sex as the learner, and another staff member should be present as a witness.
- **Strip Searches:** College staff cannot carry out strip searches. If a strip search is deemed necessary, the police must be called.

- **Force:** Staff may use reasonable force when conducting a search for prohibited items like weapons, alcohol, or drugs, but not for items solely banned under college rules. Also see Learner code of conduct (will be signed by learner and added in learners' planners at the start of the college year), Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy.

Useful Links:
Searching, screening and confiscation at school - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Prevent

At TREC we recognise that all schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty. The college has a Prevent Risk Assessment in place which is reviewed and updated based on the current threat level.
All DSL/DDSL and Senior Leaders at TREC have familiarised themselves with
Prevent duty guidance: Guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales (publishing.service.gov.uk) and are aware of local procedures for making a referral.

From information provided through the annual Counter Terrorism Local Profile briefing, we recognise that there are some emerging issues that are particularly relevant to education settings:

- A rising number of young people becoming involved in terrorism-related offending.
- The impact of gore and exploitation content on young people's susceptibility to radicalisation.
- The role of online spaces, including platforms such as Terror-gram, gaming communities, and emerging technologies like 3D printed firearms.
- Risks related to Violence Fixated Individuals.

All staff and governors have accessed Prevent training and know how to recognise and respond to any behaviour that could link to radicalisation/extremism. Any concerns will be reported using the appropriate safeguarding procedures.

Useful links:
Prevent duty training: Learn how to support people susceptible to radicalisation | Prevent duty training
https://educateagainsthate.com/
Managing risk of radicalisation in your education setting - GOV.UK
The Prevent Duty | LGFL
Prevent duty: risk assessment templates - GOV.UK
Controlling access to school premises - GOV.UK
Designated Safeguarding Lead Handbook - Educate Against Hate
Home | Police.uk

Private Fostering

Private Fostering is when a child is cared for by someone who isn't a close relative for 28 days or longer. A close relative means either, a stepparent, grandparent, brother, sister, aunt or uncle – either by blood or marriage. A child in this context is anyone under the age of 16 or a disabled young person under 18. All private fostering arrangements must be reported to the City of Doncaster Council. In principle this should be before the arrangement is made but if this has not happened the arrangement should be reported immediately.

At TREC staff recognise that they have a statutory duty to encourage parents to notify the Local Authority of a private fostering arrangement and to follow this up by reporting to the Local Authority.

Useful links:
Caring for Children you Already Know - City of Doncaster Council
Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK

Reporting systems for our children/young people

Where there is a safeguarding concern, we will take the child's/young person's wishes and feelings into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.

We recognise the importance of ensuring children/young people feel safe and comfortable to come forward and report any concerns and/or allegations.

To achieve this, we will:

- Put systems in place for children/young people to confidently report abuse.
- Ensure our reporting systems are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children/young people.
- Make it clear to children/young people that their concerns will be taken seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback.

Safe Premises

At TREC we are committed to ensuring that children/young people feel safe when attending college. This includes when accessing off site activities such as residential visits, sporting competitions etc. and our policies reflect this.

See our:
Educational visits and Outside Classrooms Policy
Provider Access Policy

Our college toilets are all single locked toilets and therefore are not gender specific.

Where this may change, due to new premises or off site delivery for example, we will work closely with any child/young person and their family to ensure that alternative facilities are provided where required, working within the framework and official guidance.

KCSIE 2026 states – '*When discussing requests with children, schools and colleges to which part 6 of the Equality Act applies should take time to sensitively explain the constraints on social transition set out in this guidance. This includes schools explaining that supporting any degree of social transition will not include allowing access to toilets, changing rooms or boarding or residential accommodation designated for the opposite sex, and will not include allowing children to join PE classes designated for the opposite sex where there are safety reasons for single sex PE.*'

Where appropriate, safeguarding risk assessments will be developed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children/young people and staff.

Useful links:

The School Premises (England) Regulations 2012
Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK
https://oeapng.info/downloads/download-info/4-3e-safeguarding/

Safer Recruitment

At TREC we are committed to safer recruitment, will ensure relevant staff are trained and follow our safer recruitment policy and KCSIE 2026 when recruiting all staff and volunteers. This includes the whole process from application stage through to pre-appointment vetting checks. The college will undertake online searches on shortlisted candidates in accordance with KCSIE requirements and maintain robust processes for recording and reviewing pre-employment checks.

At TREC we are aware that, as part of the Crime and Policing act 2026, the supervision exemption will be removed from 1.9.26, so any unpaid person who "teaches, trains, instructs, cares for, or supervises" children will be considered to be in "regulated activity" if it is carried out frequently, or if it meets the period condition.

The period condition means:

- on more than three days in a 30-day period
- overnight

All those who fall into this category must have undergone an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information.

As per KCSIE, when asked to provide references, schools and colleges should ensure the information confirms whether they are satisfied with the applicant's suitability to work with children and provide the facts (not opinions) of any substantiated safeguarding concerns/allegations that meet the harm threshold.

The college will maintain a single central record (SCR) which will include all staff, including trainee teachers, agency and third-party supply staff. The SCR will document the statutory pre-appointment checks that have been carried out as follows:

- Identity check
- Right to Work
- Enhanced DBS Check
- Prohibition from Teaching
- Section 128 Check
- Overseas Checks
- Professional Qualifications

The SCR will be reviewed on a regular basis by the governors and any required amendments identified will be actioned immediately.

Useful links:
Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK
Safer recruitment | NSPCC Learning

Suicide Prevention

Learners who are thinking of suicide or feeling unsafe will be directed by staff immediately to the DSL/Pastoral Team who will support the learner/family and signpost to further support.

At TREC staff are trauma informed and know where to signpost to support children/young people and families who are affected by suicide.

Pleases see TREC ***Learner Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy***

Useful Links:
Papyrus UK Suicide Prevention | Prevention of Young Suicide (papyrus-uk.org)
Contacting Childline | Childline
Doncaster Samaritans
Support After Suicide
Get help now. Free and confidential,for as long as you need it. (amparo.org.uk)

Supporting children/young people at risk

At TREC we recognise that children's/ young people's mental and physical health are relevant to safeguarding. Staff should consider when mental health issues might become a safeguarding concern. Learners' TREC planners contain various signposting for help and support including Kooth, NSPCC & Mind to name a few.

We also recognise the additional safeguarding challenges children with SEND can face and the potential barriers to identifying abuse and neglect in this group of children. This might include:

- assumptions that indicators of abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's / young person's disability without further exploration.
- the potential for children/ young people with SEND being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

See TREC Learner Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy, SEN and Disabilities Policy & Behaviour Policy

The use of 'reasonable force' in schools and colleges

At TREC we recognise that there are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in schools and colleges to use 'reasonable force' to safeguard children. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children and / or young people. This can range from guiding a child/ young person to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a child/young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between learners or blocking a learner's path, or active physical contact such as leading a learners by the arm out of the classroom.

At TREC we will:

- Only use 'reasonable force' as a last resort, and the staff who are likely to use 'reasonable force' will be appropriately trained.
- Log all incidents where 'reasonable force' has been used and inform parents/carers.
- Recognise the additional vulnerability of children and young people with SEND, mental health problems or medical conditions when using 'reasonable force.'

Also see TREC Behaviour Policy & Physical Restraint Policy

Useful links:
Use of reasonable force in schools - GOV.UK
Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Visitors to the college

At TREC all visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff. All visitors will be provided with safeguarding information on their arrival.

If the visitor is unknown to the setting, we will check their credentials and reason for visiting before allowing them to enter the setting. Visitors should be ready to produce identification.

Visitors to the college who are visiting for a professional purpose, will be asked to show photo ID and are expected to sign in using the visitor's EntrySign system located in the entrance to Unit 10 and wear a visitor's badge.

All other visitors, including visiting speakers, will be accompanied by a member of staff at all times. We will not invite into the college any speaker who is known to disseminate extremist views and will carry out appropriate checks to ensure that any individual or organisation using college facilities is not seeking to disseminate extremist views or radicalise children/young people or staff.

Useful links:
School visitors and safeguarding | NSPCC Learning
Please see TREC's Provider Access Policy

Whistleblowing

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the leadership team.

At TREC all staff are aware of the Whistleblowing policy and know what to do if there are concerns about safeguarding practices within the setting.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels are open to them.

- Contact the Safeguarding Adviser or LADO at City of Doncaster Council.
- If the concerns relate to the Head of college, these should be raised with the Chair of Governors.
- Ofsted may request that the Local Authority investigate any whistleblowing concerns.

Also see our Learner & Parent Complaints Policy.

Useful links
Whistleblowing Advice Line | NSPCC

Young Carer's

At TREC we recognise that a young carer is a child or young person who provides regular and on-going care and emotional support to a family member with physical or mental health problems, has a disability, or misuses drugs or alcohol.
Staff understand that the key feature of being a 'young carer' is that caring responsibilities continue over

time and can make a young carer vulnerable, when the level of care and their responsibility to the person they look after, becomes excessive or inappropriate and risks impacting on emotional or physical wellbeing, educational achievement, and life chances.

Staff are aware that Doncaster has a team of workers who can support children who are identified as being Young Carers. They can be contacted on 01302 736099 or by email young.carers@doncaster.gov.uk

Useful links
Young Carers - City of Doncaster Council
Young carers | Barnardo's (barnardos.org.uk)

Appendix 1: types of abuse

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child or young person. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or young person by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children and young people of all forms of domestic abuse. Children and young may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children and young people may be abused by
an adult or adults or by another child or young person.

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

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

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

specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their college's policy and procedures for dealing with it.

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

City of Doncaster Council

Appendix A. Low-Level Concerns

(taken from City of Doncaster LA model)

Rationale

Governing bodies and proprietors should have policies and processes to deal with **any** concerns or allegations which **do not** meet the harm threshold, referred to as 'low-level' concerns. It is important that schools and colleges have appropriate policies and procedures in place to manage and record any such concerns and take appropriate action to safeguard children. This model policy reflects the statutory requirements and guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).
Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK

Contents

- Introduction
- What is a low-level concern?
- Staff code of conduct and safeguarding policies
- Sharing low-level concerns
- Recording low-level concerns
- References
- Responding to low-level concerns

Introduction

As part of our whole school/college approach to safeguarding, at The Ridge Employability College (TREC) we will promote an open and transparent culture in which **all** concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the college (including supply teachers, volunteers, and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

We will create a culture in which **all** concerns about adults are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately in line with GDPR. This will:

- enable us to identify inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour early
- minimise the risk of abuse
- ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the college are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with our ethos and values.

What is a low-level concern?

At The Ridge Employability College we understand that the term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and

- does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children/ young people
- having favourites
- taking photographs on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy
- engaging with a young person on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, or
- humiliating children/young person.

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

Low-level concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources. For example: suspicion; complaint or disclosure made by a child/young person, parent, or other adult within or outside of the organisation or as a result of vetting checks undertaken.

We will ensure that all low-level concerns are shared responsibly with the right person and recorded and dealt with appropriately. Ensuring they are dealt with effectively should also protect those working in or on behalf of schools from becoming the subject of potential false low-level concerns or misunderstandings.

Staff code of conduct and safeguarding policies

At The Ridge Employability College we will ensure that our staff code of conduct, behaviour policy and safeguarding policy and procedures are implemented effectively and ensure that appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard children and facilitate a whole school/college approach to dealing with **any** concerns.

We will ensure that we can achieve the purpose of our low-level concerns policy by:

- ensuring our staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour, in themselves and others
- empowering staff to share any low-level safeguarding concerns
- Addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage
- handling and responding to such concerns sensitively and proportionately when they are raised, and
- helping identify any weakness in the school's safeguarding system.

Sharing low-level concerns

At The Ridge Employability College all low-level concerns are shared with the Head of College/DSL. The Head of College will be the ultimate decision maker in respect of all low-level concerns (unless the concern is regarding the Head of College in which case it will be the Chair of Governors). The Head of College may consult with the DSL and take a more collaborative decision-making approach.

Low-level concerns which are shared about supply staff and contractors will be notified to their employers, so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

If there is any doubt as to whether the information has been shared about a member of staff as a low-level concern in fact meets the harm threshold, we will consult with the LADO.
Tel: 01302 737332
Email: LADO@doncaster.gov.uk

See appendix A.1: LADO Thresholds

At The Ridge Employability College we will create an environment where staff are encouraged and feel confident to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

Recording low-level concerns

At The Ridge Employability College all low-level concerns will be recorded in writing. The record will include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and action taken. The name of the individual sharing their concerns will also be noted, if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that will be respected as far as reasonably possible.

See appendix A.2: low-level concern form

Records will be kept confidential, held securely and will comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

Records will be reviewed so that potential patterns of inappropriate, problematic, or concerning behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, a course of action will be decided upon, either through disciplinary procedures or where a pattern of behaviour moves from a low-level concern to meeting the harm threshold, in which case it will be referred to the LADO. Consideration will also be given to whether there are wider cultural issues within school that enabled the behaviour to occur and where appropriate policies may be revised, or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again.

Records will be kept on staff files.

References

Only substantiated concerns/allegations (including a group of low-level concerns about the same individual) that meet the harm threshold will be disclosed in references. Concerns will not be included in references unless they relate to issues which would normally be included in a reference, for example, misconduct or poor performance. It follows that a low-level concern which relates exclusively to safeguarding (and not to misconduct or poor performance) should not be referred to in a reference.

Responding to low-level concerns

At The Ridge Employability College the Head of College/DSL (or nominated Level 3) will collect as much evidence as possible following a perceived low-level concern being raised by a third party. They will do this by speaking:

- directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously, and
- to the individual involved and any witnesses.

The information collected will help the Head of College to categorise the type of behaviour and determine what further action may need to be taken. This information will be recorded in writing along with the rationale for their decisions and action taken.

Further guidance can be found in:
Keeping children safe in education 2024 (publishing.service.gov.uk)
Developing and implementing a low-level concerns policy: a guide for organisations which work with children (farrer.co.uk)

Appendix A.1: Doncaster LADO Threshold Document

City of Doncaster Council

DONCASTER SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP

Introduction

This document provides guidance to agencies about when a referral should be made to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) following an allegation about an adult in paid or voluntary employment / activities with children.

DONCASTER SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP – online procedures for responding to allegations against staff, carers or volunteers, can be found at:
https://doncasterscb.proceduresonline.com/p_alleg_against_staff.html

The Doncaster online LADO Referral form can be found at:
https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/doitonline/safeguarding-concern-lado-local-authority-designated-officer-referral-form

All LADO enquiries should be sent to the LADO inbox: LADO@doncaster.gov.uk

LADO REFERRALS THRESHOLD DOCUMENT

The procedures for dealing with allegations need to be applied using your professional judgement. Not all allegations, incidents and concerns will fit exactly in the example boxes below. Some cases will not meet the criteria set. Many cases will either not meet the criteria set, or may do so without the need for a police investigation / enquiries by Doncaster Children's Services. In these cases, local arrangements should be followed. Some allegations may require immediate intervention by Children's Services and/or South Yorkshire Police, it is your responsibility to contact Doncaster MASH, Emergency Social Services Team and/or the Police in these circumstances.
The LADO should be informed within 24hrs of all allegations that come to an organisation's attention that appear to meet the criteria set out below. If once the referral has been made, the LADO's view is that the Police, Children's Services and/or any regulatory body should be consulted, LADO will advise as to who is responsible for making the relevant referrals.
Suspension should be considered in any case where there is cause to suspect a child/ren is at risk of significant harm, or the allegation warrants investigation by the police, or is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. People must not be suspended automatically, or without careful thought. Employers must consider whether the circumstances of a case warrant a person being suspended

from contact with children as part of their role until the allegation is resolved. NB. Neither the local authority, the Police, nor Children's Social Care can require an employer to suspend a member of staff or a volunteer. The power to suspend is vested in the employer alone.

Where an organisation is confident that LADO referral criteria is **not** met, they should maintain a record of the incident/information received and any actions they have taken internally as a result (in case further information comes to light which calls into question why no formal LADO referral was made). The matter should be dealt with by the employer through their HR/ internal management procedures.

In all cases where a referral to LADO is made, irrespective of the outcome, it is the responsibility of the employer to inform the employee/volunteer of the outcome of the referral and/or LADO process. An employer will be advised as to when this information is able to be shared with the employee/volunteer, so as not to prejudice any ongoing investigations. In the case of manager-less organisations, the LADO will agree who the best person is to keep the person subject to the LADO process informed.

Conduct

Threshold Not Met	Threshold Met
This list is not exhaustive - examples could include: • **Complaint made by a parent or carer or a comment made by a child that does not seem to have any corroborating evidence. There is no presentable evidence and/or witness accounts do not corroborate the allegation.** • **Member of staff alleged to have acted or reacted in a way considered inappropriate but not harmful.** • **Parental or child complains about an incident to outside agency e.g. Ofsted, who have referred to LADO for further enquiries; allegation made but manager believes at this point they can deal with this internally.**	This list is not exhaustive - examples could include: • Allegation made with credible corroborating evidence, where a child has been placed at risk of harm due to the actions/behaviour of the professional/volunteer. • A residential worker drags a child/young person out of the room during an incident. Appropriate restraint techniques were not used. The child was not in immediate danger at the time. • A Supervising Social Worker (SSW) has formed an inappropriate (non-sexual) relationship with a Foster Carer. The SSW purposefully fails to report a safeguarding incident involving the Foster Carer and the child in placement, due to the over-friendly relationship she has with the Carers.

Physical Harm / Abuse	
Threshold Not Met	Threshold Met
This list is not exhaustive - examples could include: • A young person in a children's home is involved in a confrontation, subsequently making accusations of physical harm where there were several witnesses and there is evidence that the incident/allegation could not have happened. • A child accuses a Teacher of pushing them, when it appears they were being guided away from a situation (covered by 'Use of Reasonable Force' DfE 2013). • A nursery worker is seen by a parent to be pulling a child away from a situation; parent considers this is done roughly but the worker claims it was to remove the child from a confrontation where they may have	This list is not exhaustive - examples could include: • A disclosure by a child or young person that uses the word 'hit' or 'hurt.' There is conflicting or lack of evidence to disprove the allegation. • Intentional use of non-restraint that has caused an injury to the child being restrained. • An incident witnessed where there is a physical exchange between staff and child or young person. It is unclear whether self-defence or retaliation was involved. The matter needs full investigation.

been harmed/ may have harmed another child and there is evidence to support this.	

Sexual Harm / Abuse	
Threshold Not Met	**Threshold Met**
This list is not exhaustive – examples could include: • A young person tells their teacher that another teacher 'makes her feel funny when he looks at her' but no evidence that there is harmful intent. • A professional or volunteer makes a remark of a sexual nature that is not aimed at an individual child or group of children but is considered unprofessional, without any evidence of harmful intent. • A residential worker shows her holiday photos to some young people and accidently shows a picture of her in a bikini. There is no evidence of harmful intent.	This list is not exhaustive – examples could include: • A child alleges that a professional has touched them inappropriately. • A teacher is communicating with a child on an online platform and there is communication that could be interpreted as sexual or an act of grooming. • Professional or volunteer meets or attempts to meet a child outside the work environment, for the purpose of sexual activity.

Emotional Harm/Abuse	
Threshold Not Met	**Threshold Met**
This list is not exhaustive – examples could include: • A child is upset because a teacher has shouted at them in the classroom. • A foster carer does not buy a child in placement some sweets as punishment for their behaviour. • A taxi driver refuses to let a child out of the car until they have paid the fare. The taxi driver contacts switchboard immediately for support in resolving the situation.	This list is not exhaustive – examples could include: • Making deliberate targeted and derogatory remarks to a child, for example regarding the child's ethnicity. • A member of residential staff refuses to allow a child to have planned telephone contact with their parent as a means of punishment. • A dance teacher calls a child 'fat' and constantly punishes them for making mistakes during rehearsals.

Neglect	
Threshold Not Met	Threshold Met
This list is not exhaustive – examples could include: • A nursery worker leaves the room for a short period of time, leaving the room understaffed and outside of staffing ratios. • A young person complains that their Foster Carer has bought them second-hand shoes for school. • An overnight carer accidently falls asleep for ten minutes whilst on shift. The person being cared for is unharmed.	This list is not exhaustive – examples could include: • A foster carer receives complaints against them about poor practice and standards of care, including children in their care presenting as not always clean or appropriately dressed. • A Social Worker's own child is placed on a Child Protection Plan for neglect. • A football coach intentionally fails to seek medical attention for a young person who is injured whilst playing, despite them presenting as significantly unwell.

Appendix A.2: low-level concern form

Low-Level concern Form

Please use this form to share any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than a 'nagging doubt' – that an adult may have acted in a manner which:

- is not consistent with The Ridge Employability College Code of Conduct, and/or
- relates to their conduct outside of work which, even if not linked to a particular act or omission, has caused a sense of unease about that adult's suitability to work with children/young people.

You should provide a concise record – including brief context in which the low-level concern arose, and details which are chronological, and as precise and accurate as possible – of any such concern and relevant incident(s) (and please use a separate sheet if necessary). The record should be signed, timed and dated.

Name of Staff member:	**Role:**
Details of concern:	

Signed:	**Date/Time:**
Received by:	**Date/Time:**
Action Taken: (specify)	

This Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed and updated annually. Any important updates throughout the year will be added and the policy re-issued.

Revised: August 2026

Author: Jo Howe – School Improvement Adviser – Safeguarding

Reviewer: Debra Whittington – DSL TREC

Review date: July 2027 (or when changes occur)