



COLLEGE POLICY STATEMENT

Policy Number: No. 1L

Issue Number: 6

Policy Title: Staying Safe – Ensuring the Safety and Wellbeing of staff, students and others

Date of Next Revision: June 2016

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Scope - This policy deals with the protection of children and young people and all adults at risk. This policy refers to children and young people up to 18 years of age and adults 18 years and over.

This policy supercedes and replaces the following Somerset College policies:

- Anti Bullying.
- E-safety.
- Protection from Harassment to Learners.
- Safeguarding Children and Young People.
- Protection of under 18s in Host Family Accommodation.

Reference to staff or adults comprises teaching staff, other staff and volunteers working in the organisation, and includes contractors to the organisation with direct contact with learners, regardless of position, role or responsibilities.

The term 'safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk' embraces both child protection and a preventative approach to keeping young people and adults safe.

Staying Safe looks to protect everyone from:

- abuse or inappropriate relationships;
- grooming (in person, online, by phone, etc);
- inappropriate supervision (by parents or staff, e.g. too much);
- bullying, cyber-bullying;
- self-harm, risky behaviour;
- unsafe activities and environments;
- accidents e.g. road, home;
- crime;
- fear of crime;
- exploitation including financial, sexual exploitation;
- immigration issues;
- unsafe environments e.g. parks, sports grounds;
- homelessness and unsuitable housing;
- victimisation and prejudice due to race, sexuality, faith, gender, disability etc.;
- alcohol and drug misuse;
- eating disorders;
- anything which causes the College to be concerned that anyone might be at risk of significant harm.

Policy Statement- Somerset College has a statutory and moral duty to ensure the safety and promote the welfare of children, young people and at risk adults attending the College. The term 'Staying Safe' embraces a holistic approach to both child protection and a preventative approach to keeping young people and adults safe. The College will carry out these responsibilities under relevant legislation and formal guidance.



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The College has clear objectives:

- To provide a safe environment for children, young people and at risk adults in which to work, learn and take part in social and recreational activity.
- To identify people who are experiencing, or likely to experience significant harm or significant under achievement; providing support and taking appropriate action, with the objective of producing positive outcomes for those people.
- To foster, promote and maintain a genuine feeling of safety throughout the College via the curriculum, pastoral support, and appropriate working practices through the promotion of a College ethos where everyone feels secure, valued and listened to.
- To take action where appropriate to safeguard the person through working in partnership with other agencies

The College has processes which:

- identify children, young people and adults at risk of significant harm, or where there are concerns for a person's welfare, provide procedures for reporting and addressing such concerns;
- prevent unsuitable people from working with children, young people and adults;
- maintain channels for reporting and dealing with all allegations of abuse;
- work in partnership with local agencies including the sharing of information;
- provide a safe environment for children, young people and adults within the College.

The College will take action to:

- appoint and train a designated Child Protection Officer and a deputy Designated Child Protection Officer who will coordinate reporting procedures. Name, role and contact details will be available to all staff, students and parents/carers;
- train all staff to Recognise, Respond, Record and Report in regard to Staying Safe procedures with updates every 2 years. Induction training will be mandatory for all new staff working in the College;
- keep accurate and secure records of concerns about individuals, even when there is no need for immediate referral to outside agencies;
- provide a systematic means of monitoring children, young people and adults known, or thought to be, at risk of harm; and contribute to assessments/support plans with other agencies;
- make sources of help and support accessible for anyone who may experience abuse;
- develop effective working relationships with other agencies: Police, Social Services, Health Authority and the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB);
- train staff in safe practices to protect children, young people and adults in the learning environment, and also to protect themselves from false allegations of abuse;
- ensure safe recruitment practices by implementing enhanced checks on all new and existing staff in accordance with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), taking of references, and training interviewers in accordance with Department of Education and BIS training to effectively establish suitability for role at the time of employment ;
- provide tutorial or other curriculum, learning or pastoral support. The curriculum (both formal and informal) will be used to help children, young people and adults to develop their self-esteem, assertiveness and problem-solving skills, to promote their resilience, and help with behaviour problems such as anger.



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Duty of Care

Staff are accountable for the way in which they exercise authority, manage risk, use resources, and actively protect children and people from discrimination and avoidable harm. Staff should develop respectful, caring and professional relationships between themselves and people. Staff behaviour should demonstrate integrity, maturity and good judgement. e.g. management of risk in external visits/residential visits.

Breach of Trust

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, It is an offence for a person over 18 to have a sexual relationship with a young person under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that young person, even if the relationship is consensual. This applies when the young person is in full time education and the person works in the same establishment as the young person, even if he/she does not teach the child.

14 – 16s in College

The College will ensure that all 14–16 year olds are cared for and have their wellbeing needs met appropriately.

Where young people are on the roll of another education establishment there should be protocols in place between the Designated Person and the Designated officers at these establishments for communication regarding unexplained absence or other concerns. There will also be liaison with the parent and the schools.

Safe practices for these young people will be set out in a learner agreement.

Young people will be appropriately supervised and registered by qualified staff in all areas of the provision.

Other College policies and management procedures that should be read in conjunction with this policy are:

- Discipline of Learners with Challenging Behaviour Policy.
- Single Equality Scheme (E&D) Policy.
- Staff Disciplinary Policy.
- IT Policy.
- Management of Bullying & Harassment in the Workplace Policy.
- Public Interest Disclosure Policy.
- Safer Recruitment Policy.
- Social Media Policy.
- Anti Bullying Procedure.
- Discipline for Learners with Challenging Behaviour Procedure.
- Disciplinary and Appeals Procedure
- Principles for Host Families under 18 Procedure.



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Annex 1 – Protection from Bullying

Somerset College is committed to reducing and preventing bullying. The College recognises the problems associated with bullying and is committed to providing an environment in which individuals can operate effectively, confidently and competently. This includes Cyber bullying or the use of electronic media to harass, discriminate and bully any learner, member of staff or visitor to the college. This policy statement applies to all learners, members of staff and visitors to the College.

Somerset College is committed to:

- reducing and preventing bullying incidents, through promoting positive, pro-social behaviour and attitudes and changing the behaviour of “bullies” to promote pro-social relationships;
- increasing disclosure of bullying incidents to the College staff;
- intervening effectively when bullying happens;
- having a named person/champion in each division/service to act as a point of information and support for staff and learners;
- constantly establishing new methods of communicating bullying, especially amongst young people who use the new technologies to email, text, phone-video etc.;
- eliminating harassment and discrimination via the use of any electronic media. This includes offensive literature or pictures, graffiti and computer imagery, offensive text messages, misuse of social networking sites and all other digital related media;
- challenging and managing unwelcome remarks, suggestions, propositions, malicious gossip, relentless jokes and banter;
- preventing the spread of hurtful and untruthful rumours;
- sharing/distribution of personal images without an individual’s consent, knowledge or understanding of the risks involved.
- Reducing and preventing the uploading by students or staff of inappropriate images of themselves or others
- recognising the impact that cyber bullying can have on the social and emotional development and learning of young people
- recognising that all the above forms of abuse can be undertaken using digital technology particularly through social network sites and mobile phones.

Annex 2 – Protection from Harrassment

Somerset College is committed to the elimination of discrimination on the grounds of race, nationality, ethnicity, national origin, sex, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, age, religion, political affiliation, and disability or learning difficulties. It is the right of every learner to study without fear of harassment or victimisation. The College recognises the problems associated with harassment and is committed to providing an environment in which individuals can learn effectively, confidently and competently. Harassment is described as any conduct which is unwanted by the recipient and beyond the normal academic or social interaction; or which affects the dignity of any individual or group of individuals at college. Harassment may be repetitive or an isolated occurrence against one or more individuals. It can take a number of forms ranging from overt physical contact to subtler forms creating an unpleasant and intimidating environment at college.



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Annex 3 – E-Safety

Education — students

Whilst regulation and technical solutions are very important, their use must be balanced by educating students to take a responsible approach. The education of students in e-safety is therefore an essential part of the College's e-safety provision. Students need the help and support of the College to recognise and avoid e-safety risks and build their resilience.

E-Safety education will be provided in the following ways:

- A planned e-safety programme should be provided as part the Tutorial system.
- Students should be taught in **all** lessons to be critically aware of the materials / content they access on-line and be guided to validate the accuracy of information.
- Students should be helped to understand and adopt safe and appropriate use of IT, the internet and mobile devices both within and outside College.
- Students should be taught to acknowledge the source of information used and to respect copyright when using material accessed on the internet.
- Rules for use of IT systems / internet will be posted in IT rooms and displayed on log-on screens.
- These rules will be available for the students in their handbook.
- Through staff acting as good role models in their use of ICT, the internet and mobile devices.

Education — parents/carers

Many parents and carers have only a limited understanding of e-safety risks and issues, yet they play an essential role in the education of their children and in the monitoring/regulation of the children's on-line experiences. The College will therefore seek to provide information and awareness to parents and carers through: letters, parents evenings

Education & Training — Staff

It is essential that all staff receive e-safety training and understand their responsibilities, as outlined in this policy. Training will be offered as follows:

- A planned programme of formal e-safety training will be made available to staff.
- All new staff should receive e-safety training as part of their safeguarding training.

Training — Governors

Governors will receive e-safety briefing through College Safeguarding sessions.

Users will be made responsible for the security of their username and password must not allow other users to access the systems using their log on details and must immediately report any suspicion or evidence that there has been a breach of security.

Remote management tools are used by staff to control workstations and view user's activity. Appropriate security measures are in place to protect the servers, firewalls, routers, wireless systems, work stations, hand held devices etc from accidental or malicious attempts which might threaten the security of the College systems and data.



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The College infrastructure and individual workstations are protected by up to date virus software.

An agreed policy is in place for the provision of temporary access of "guests" onto the College system, for example limited access, account expires after a specified time, no internet access.

An agreed policy is in place regarding the use of removable media (e.g. memory sticks / CDs / DVDs) by users on College workstations / portable devices.

Any personal data stored outside of the Colleges secure network must be encrypted.

E-safety should be a focus in all areas of the curriculum and staff should reinforce e-safety messages in the use of ICT across the curriculum.

Where students are allowed to freely search the internet, e.g. using search engines, staff should be vigilant in monitoring the content of the websites the people visit.

It is accepted that from time to time, for good educational reasons, students may need to research topics (e.g. racism, drugs, and discrimination) that would normally result in internet searches being blocked. In such a situation, staff can request that IT Services Staff can temporarily remove those sites from the filtered list for the period of study. Any request to do so, should be auditable, with clear reasons for the need.

Students should be taught in all lessons to be critically aware of the materials/ content they access on-line and be guided to validate the accuracy of information

Students should be taught to acknowledge the source of information used and to respect copyright when using material accessed on the internet.

Use of digital and video images - Photographic, Video

The development of digital imaging technologies has created significant benefits to learning, allowing staff and students instant use of images that they have recorded themselves or downloaded from the internet. However, staff and students need to be aware of the risks associated with sharing images and with posting digital images on the internet. Those images may remain available on the internet forever and may cause harm or embarrassment to individuals in the short or longer term. There are many reported incidents of employers carrying out internet searches for information about potential and existing employees. The College will inform and educate users about these risks and will implement policies to reduce the likelihood of the potential for harm.

When using digital images, staff should inform and educate students about the risks associated with the taking, use, sharing, publication and distribution of images. In particular they should recognise the risks attached to publishing their own images on the internet e.g. on social networking sites.



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Staff are allowed to take digital/video images to support educational aims, but must follow College policies concerning the sharing, distribution and publication of those images, where parental/student permission is given (on parental consent forms). Care should be taken when taking digital/video images that students are appropriately dressed and are not participating in activities that might bring the individuals or the College into disrepute.

Students must not take, use, share, publish or distribute images of others without their permission.

Photographs published on the College website, or elsewhere that include students will be selected carefully and will comply with good practice guidance on the use of such images. Students' full names will not be used anywhere on a website or blog, particularly in association with photographs. Written permission from parents or carers will be obtained before photographs of students are published on the College website or prospectus. Student's work can only be published with the permission of the student and parents or carers.

Data Protection

Personal data will be recorded, processed, transferred and made available according to the Data Protection Act 1998.

Unsuitable/inappropriate activities

Some internet activity e.g. accessing child abuse images or distributing racist material is illegal and would obviously be banned from College and all other ICT systems. Other activities e.g. cyber-bullying would be banned and could lead to the instigation of College disciplinary procedures or criminal prosecution.

There are however, a range of activities which may, generally, be legal but would be inappropriate in a College context, either because of the age of the users or the nature of those activities. The College believes that the activities referred to in the following section would be inappropriate in a College context and those users, as defined below, should not engage in these activities in College or outside College when using College equipment or systems. The College policy restricts certain internet usage as below:

Staff or students shall not visit internet sites, make, post, download, upload, data transfer, communicate or pass on, material, remarks, proposals or comments that contain or relate to:

- child sexual abuse images;
- promotion or conduct of illegal acts, e.g. under the Child Protection, Obscenity, Computer misuse and Fraud legislation;
- adult material that potentially breaches the Obscene Publications Act in the UK
- criminally racist material in the UK;
- pornography;
- promotion of any kind of discrimination;
- promotion of racial or religious hatred;
- threatening behaviour including promotion of physical violence or mental harm;
- any other information which may be offensive to colleagues or breaches the integrity of the ethos of the College or brings the College into disrepute;



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- use College systems to run a private business;
- use systems, applications, websites or other mechanisms that bypass the filtering or other safeguards employed by the college;
- uploading, downloading or transmitting commercial software or any copyrighted materials belonging to third parties, without the necessary licensing permissions;
- revealing or publicising confidential or proprietary information (e.g. financial / personal information, databases, computer / network access codes and passwords);
- creating, storage or propagating computer viruses or other harmful files;
- carrying out sustained or instantaneous high volume network traffic (downloading/uploading files) that causes network congestion and hinders others in their use of the internet;
- on-line gaming (non-educational);
- on-line gambling;
- file sharing.

Social Media

Whilst valuing the use of social media (Facebook, Twitter etc) as an educational and marketing tool, staff and students need to be aware of the risks associated with its use. Items published on social networks have the potential to remain available forever and may cause harm or embarrassment to individuals or the College in the short or longer term. Publishing negative or untrue items about an individual or organisation can lead to College disciplinary, civil action and/or criminal prosecution.

Staff using social media for educational or other College work purposes, are responsible for the monitoring of its content.



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Annex 4 – Protection of under 18s in Host Family Accommodation

The College will ensure that processes are in place that will minimise situations where the abuse of learners may occur whilst they are in host family accommodation arranged by the College.

This will be undertaken by:

- ensuring that one key member of the host family makes a disclosure application to the Disclosure & Barring Service prior to placing learners with them;
- ensuring that all potential host families are interviewed and their attitudes to, and experience of, looking after young people is thoroughly explored. Particular focus will be given to whether they have any conviction for criminal offences that may affect any decision to place learners with them;
- ensuring that there are appropriate placements based on the families' understanding of the cultural and social background of the learners as defined in the College's Single Equality Scheme policy statement;
- seeking and listening to learners' concerns and acting upon them through regular weekly one-to-one tutorials with the College tutor responsible for their welfare;
- prohibiting sexual relationships between staff/host family members and learners under the age of 18 years

“All staff should clearly understand the need to maintain appropriate boundaries in their dealings with students. Intimate or sexual relationships between staff and students will be regarded as a grave breach of trust, and any sexual activity between a member of staff and a student under 18 years of age may be a criminal offence”

NEOST Guidance on Conduct (2002)

- requiring staff to report to a senior manager any concern or allegation about College practices or the behaviour of colleagues which is likely to put learners at risk of abuse or other serious harm. Provided that this is done in line with the Public Interest Disclosure policy and is made in good faith, the staff member/s concerned will be protected from retribution or disciplinary action.



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Roles and Responsibilities

Role of the Designated Person:

- Refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies.
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise within the College when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
- Liaise with Manager to inform of any issues/ongoing investigations, and ensure there is always cover for the role.
- Train in how to recognise signs of abuse, and when it is appropriate to make a referral. Training should be updated on a 2 yearly basis.
- Working knowledge in how the Local Safeguarding Children's Board works, the conduct of case conferences, and be able to attend and contribute to these when necessary.
- Ensure all staff have access to and understand the College Safeguarding policy.
- Ensure all staff have child protection/Safeguarding induction training and are able to recognise and report any concerns as they arise.
- Keep detailed, accurate and secure written records of referrals/concerns.
- Have access to resources and attend relevant or refresher training courses at least every 2 years.
- Ensure Safeguarding policy is updated and reviewed annually, and following ratification is returned by the governing body to the Local Authority
- Ensure students/parents/carers see copies of the Safeguarding policy, which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made, and the role of the establishment.
- Where a young person leaves an establishment, ensure the file/information is transferred to a new establishment.
- Provide annual report to Board of the Corporation

Role of the Governing Body, Senior Management Team and Principal & Chief Executive

A Governor with special responsibility for Safeguarding Children, called the Nominated Child Protection Governor will be nominated by the Board of the Corporation and will liaise with the Director of Student Services and Foundation Learning, who is the member of the Senior Management Team with lead responsibility for Safeguarding young people and adults.

The Governing Body must:

- make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the institution are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children receiving education or training at the institution and in considering those arrangements, have regard to any guidance given from time to time by the Secretary of State;
- the governing body should ensure the institution has a safeguarding policy and procedures that satisfy and evidence statutory requirements and consider safeguarding needs in DCSF 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education 2007';
- have procedures for dealing with allegations against staff/volunteers that comply with LSCB procedures, balance the need to protect children whilst protecting staff/volunteers from false/unfounded accusations;



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- have a senior staff member to lead on Safeguarding, advise/support staff/ liaise with Local Authority and other agencies. He/she must be a member of Senior Management who has status/authority to carry out role e.g. commit resources to Safeguarding and direct staff as appropriate;
- ensure all new staff who work with young people receive written statements about institutions Safeguarding policy/procedures and name/contact of Designated Person;
- ensure designated staff receive inter-agency training appropriate to their role, when first appointed, and refresher training every 2 years;
- all staff receive refresher training every 2 - 3 years;
- remedy any deficiencies or weaknesses in Safeguarding arrangements without delay;
- annually review policies/procedures and how duties are discharged, and send the annual Safeguarding Report to the Governing Body to the Local Authority (LA);
- request LSCB advice if required (LAs can provide advice/support and access to training/policies/procedures, but do not have to and can charge);
- in addition, the Chair of the Board is nominated to be responsible for liaising with partner agencies, as appropriate in the event of the allegation of abuse being made against the Principal.

The Principal should ensure through the Senior Management Team:

- policies and procedures are fully implemented and followed by all staff;
- sufficient resources and time are allocated so that Designated Person and staff can attend strategy discussions, interagency meetings, contribute to assessments etc;
- staff/volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor/unsafe practices by addressing these sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with public interest disclosure policies;
- make Policy/Procedures available to parents/carers on request;
- operate safe recruitment and ensure checks on new staff and volunteers;
- reporting Cases to the Secretary of State. It is essential that cases are reported if a person ceases to work in an education setting and there are grounds for believing he/she may be unsuitable to work with children, or may have committed misconduct. The Secretary of State will consider whether to prohibit the person from working with children in the future or place restrictions on their employment in educational establishments. FE institutions have a statutory duty to make reports, and to provide relevant information to the Secretary of State.

Public Interest disclosure

Staff should acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior management and/or relevant external agencies (Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998) This should be a mechanism by which staff can voice concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion.

Staff Training

The Designated Officer and Deputies will be trained to LCSB Level 3 in Safeguarding. Members of the Safeguarding Team will be trained to LCSB Level 2 in Safeguarding All staff will receive adequate training to familiarise themselves with Safeguarding issues and responsibilities.



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Relevant Statutory Legislation and Guidance:

The College will ensure that all staff and students are aware of and adhere to the relevant legislation and guidance both voluntary and statutory that attaches to the Staying Safe agenda.

Formulation – This policy was formulated by the Director of Student Services and Foundation Learning, reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and approved by the Board of Governors

Review – This policy statement will be reviewed within three years of the approval date, or sooner, in response to changes in legislation or College organisation. This will be initiated by the Director of Student Services & Foundation Learning.

Authorised by

Approved by

.....
Director of Student Services &
Foundation Learning

.....
Principal and Chief Executive

Date

Date

Uncontrolled copy