

**Safeguarding Policy**

***A framework to protect students and staff from harm, ensuring their safety and well-being through prevention and response to safeguarding concerns.***

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# Introduction

1. The policy has been developed as part of St. David’s College’s commitment to realise the potential of all in our community as encompassed in our mission:

***‘A Catholic College for the community seeking to discover and realise the full potential of all, in an atmosphere of love, service and respect inspired by Christ’***

1. This policy seeks to safeguarding learners in order for them to achieve their full potential by protecting learners from abuse or neglect and educating those around them to recognise the signs and dangers.
2. As a college we are committed to removing barriers to learning and will work with learners in conjunction with external support where necessary, to promote their inclusion in all that college has to offer.
3. We recognise the profound impact of trauma and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) on individuals' wellbeing and development. We are committed to adopting a trauma informed approach in our policies and practices to create a safe, supportive, and healing environment for all
4. The college follows the All-Wales Child Safeguarding procedures in relation to specific and identifiable safeguarding issues that prevent learners from accessing their education.
5. The college follows the Social Services and Well-being Wales Act (2014), which emphasizing that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
6. The college follows a Catholic approach to safeguarding, which calls upon both individuals and the community to create a safe environment for young people, respond promptly to any concerns or complaints, provide care for those who have been harmed, and promote the overall wellbeing of all.
7. In line with our Catholic beliefs, we are committed to being an anti-racist college, actively working to understand and improve how we safeguard members of our community from minority ethnic backgrounds.

# Purpose and Scope

1. In line with our Catholic values, we strive to ensure that our safeguarding practices protect and support the wellbeing of every individual, with particular care for those who may be more vulnerable or at risk.
2. A significant number of our learners come from the most deprived communities in Wales, reflecting the significant socio-economic challenges many of our students face.
3. The proportion of learners from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic backgrounds has risen steadily at the College, well above the city’s and the Welsh national averages.
4. St. David’s College’s cultural and ethnic diversity is a defining feature of our community, mirroring Cardiff's vibrant population.
5. At the heart of St David’s College ethos is the vision that all are created in the image of God and thus all individuals have an inherent dignity which should be safeguarded and protected.
6. The College, in line with Catholic Social Teaching has a preferential option for the poor and thus pays particular attention to learners from disadvantaged backgrounds.
7. As a Catholic college, we are deeply committed to safeguarding all our learners ensuring that each individual is supported and protected.

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# Definitions

## What is Safeguarding

Safeguarding refers to the measures and actions taken to protect individuals, particularly children and vulnerable adults, from harm, abuse, and neglect. It encompasses promoting their welfare, ensuring their rights, and creating an environment where they feel safe and supported. Safeguarding involves a collaborative approach among various stakeholders, including educational institutions, social services, health care providers, and law enforcement, to ensure the safety and well-being of those in their care.

## Types of Abuse

Abuse can take various forms, including:

* **Physical Abuse:** The intentional infliction of physical harm or injury.
* **Emotional Abuse:** Behaviour that negatively impacts a person’s emotional well-being or self-esteem.
* **Sexual Abuse:** Any non-consensual sexual activity or exploitation.
* **Neglect:** Failure to provide necessary care, support, or supervision to an individual.
* **Financial Abuse:** Misappropriation or exploitation of an individual's financial resources.
* **Institutional Abuse:** Poor care practices within institutions or organizations that harm individuals.

# Legal Framework

The College will operate within statutory duties and adhere to Welsh Government policies and regulations to fulfil its safeguarding responsibilities. Relevant legislation and guidance include:

1. **Keeping Learners Safe:** Guidance for local authorities, governing bodies, and proprietors of independent schools under the Education Act 2002 (Welsh Government Document No: 283/2022, issued March 2022).
2. **Safeguarding Children in Education:** Guidance for handling allegations of abuse against teachers and staff (Welsh Government Circular No: 009/2014, issued April 2014).
3. **Children Act 1989 and 2004:** Establishes the framework for child protection and safeguarding responsibilities, including Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and Sections 141F, 141G, and 141H regarding local authorities and governing bodies.
4. **Working Together Under the Children Act 2004:** Provides guidance for local safeguarding boards and statutory partners.
5. **All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008:** Outlines procedures for child protection in Wales.
6. **Allegations of Professional Abuse Procedures:** As per AWCPP Part IV and Welsh Government Circular 009/2014 for handling allegations against educational staff.
7. **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006:** Section 59 pertains to safeguarding individuals aged 18 and over.
8. **Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (PREVENT Duty):** Mandates specified authorities, including colleges, to prevent individuals from being drawn into terrorism.
9. **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974:** Ensures safe working conditions within the College.
10. **Data Protection Act 1998:** Governs the handling of personal data in safeguarding processes.
11. **Human Rights Act 1998:** Protects individual rights in safeguarding practices.
12. **Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998:** Protects whistleblowers reporting concerns about safeguarding.
13. **Mental Capacity Act 2005:** Protects and empowers individuals who may lack the capacity to make decisions regarding their care and welfare.

Additional college policies that support this document include:

* Student Dignity (Anti-bullying) Policy
* Health and Safety Policy
* E safety Policy
* Equality Policy
* Counselling Policy
* Studentship Policy
* Prevent Policy
* Illegal Substances Policy
* Antiracism Action Plan
* Fitness to Study Policy
* Attendance Policy
* Safe recruitment policy

# Roles and Responsibilities

## The College’s role:

1. The College is committed to protecting and safeguarding the wellbeing and interests of all young people in its care, reflecting its dedication to Catholic values and the dignity of every individual.
2. Protecting young people from exploitation is a fundamental priority, aligned with the College's mission as a Catholic institution.
3. The College is committed to providing staff with appropriate training, guidance, and direction in safeguarding, recognizing its importance in creating a supportive environment.
4. A safe and secure College environment is essential for the wellbeing of all students, supported by the College Charter that promotes three key behaviour expectations: **Be Ready, Be Respectful, Be Safe.**
5. College behavioural expectations not only guide staff behaviour but also foster a culture of safety and respect among students, reinforcing the College's mission to uphold Catholic values in all aspects of its community.
6. All staff at the College are trained in the use of *MyConcern* and are required to report any safeguarding concerns through this platform.
7. Concerns are initially managed internally by the appropriate staff members, in accordance with the College's safeguarding procedures.
8. If deemed necessary, the College will seek support and intervention from external agencies to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the learner.
9. For learners over the age of 18, the College will contact their next of kin (NoK) if appropriate and if it is deemed safe for the learner. However, there is no obligation to do so unless specifically requested by the learner.
10. In cases where the College believes a learner is in immediate danger, emergency services will be contacted to provide urgent intervention.
11. These safeguarding practices align with the College’s Catholic values, ensuring that the dignity, safety, and wellbeing of every learner are upheld as a priority.

## Role of all Adults:

All staff at St. David’s College are expected to:

1. Report and record all safeguarding concerns they have about young people they work with.
2. Treat the welfare of young people with the utmost importance and take a Trauma informed approach in all interactions and decisions.
3. Follow all safeguarding processes required of them and work to ensure action is taken to ensure learners are safe.
4. Be vigilant and alert to potential indicators of abuse and neglect, ensuring that any signs are documented and reported appropriately.
5. Be aware of the risks posed by individual abusers or potential abusers, and take necessary precautions to mitigate these risks in the environment.
6. Understand the effects of abuse and neglect on young people's physical and emotional wellbeing, particularly on those learners that come from marginalised backgrounds and recognize how this may manifest in their behaviour and performance.
7. Actively contribute to all stages of the safeguarding process, including reporting concerns, participating in investigations, and supporting affected individuals as needed.
8. Undertake annual professional learning to ensure they are able to fulil their safeguarding duties.

## Role of Pastoral Staff

All pastoral tutors to:

1. Actively foster the welfare and potential of all young people, recognizing their fundamental right to protection from harm.
2. Ensure all staff are informed about any safeguarding concerns around the learner and any reasonable adjustments.
3. Create an inclusive environment where young people feel safe to express concerns, while regularly monitoring their wellbeing for any signs of distress.
4. Regularly monitor attendance to identify any patterns or changes in behaviours.
5. Report Concerns: Promptly report any safeguarding concerns to the designated safeguarding person (DSP) or relevant authorities, adhering to the College’s safeguarding procedures

## Designated Safeguarding Person

The Designated Safeguarding Person is the Assistant Principal – Learner Culture who is supported by the Director of Safeguarding and Studentship

The Designated Safeguarding Persons’ roles are to:

1. Lead the college to ensure its safeguarding policies are implemented.
2. Have strategic leadership of the college’s Safeguarding strategy, to ensure there is a culture of safety within the college.
3. Provide line management to the Safeguarding team.
4. Keep the Principal fully informed of all Safeguarding issues that may arise
5. Liaise with the College Governor with special responsibility for Safeguarding
6. Report to Governors regularly on Safeguarding issues
7. Liaise with the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer who has special responsibility for Safeguarding within the Archdiocese of Cardiff
8. Ensure the College Governor with special responsibility for Safeguarding receives appropriate training in Safeguarding
9. Deal with complaints against adults working in the College.
10. Ensure the college operates Safe Recruitment practices.

## Director of Safeguarding and Studentship

The Director of Safeguarding and Studentship is supported by the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager.

1. The Director of Safeguarding and Studetship’s roles are to:
2. Deputise for the DSP in their absence and lead the college to ensure its safeguarding policies are implemented.
3. Keep the Assistant Principal fully informed of all Safeguarding issues that may arise
4. Liaise with the College Pastoral and Wellbeing teams with special responsibility for Safeguarding.
5. Provide annual training to all staff on Safeguarding and Studentship.
6. Lead on the colleges’ Prevent strategy.
7. Meet with learners, parents and external stakeholders for concerns related to safeguarding and studentship
8. Lead on Fitness to Study meetings.
9. Ensure the college operates Safe Recruitment practices.

##  The Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager

The Safeguarding & Wellbeing Manager’s role is to co-ordinate work related to Safeguarding.  This includes:

1. Dealing with reports of abuse against children and young people
2. Making referrals to Safeguarding agencies if appropriate
3. Ensuring all adults working in the College receive training in basic Safeguarding
4. Ensuring that all new staff are properly inducted in respect of Safeguarding
5. Ensuring all staff are up to date on training on the latest or emerging safeguarding issues and practices
6. Liaising with the Senior Leadership Team to ensure prevention strategies are embedded into the pastoral programme that all students follow.

## Deputy Designated Safeguarding Persons

The college has a team of Deputy Designated Safeguarding Persons (DDSPs). A list of these DDSPs are maintained and reviewed on an ongoing basis and their details are shared with staff, students, parents and visitors

The DDSP’s roles are:

1. To advise the DSP on operational Safeguarding processes
2. Deal with reports of abuse against children and young people
3. Making referrals to Safeguarding agencies if appropriate
4. Deputise for the DSP in their absence
5. To coordinate safeguarding issues
6. To contribute to policy and procedures
7. To contribute to the review the operational success of policy and procedures
8. To participate in a forum where serious concerns are raised and any precedents, where necessary, are formulated and actioned
9. To contribute to the college’s duties under PREVENT.
10. To allow dissemination, where appropriate, by group members to their own functional areas

##  College Governor

The role of the College Governor with special responsibility for Safeguarding is John Edwards whose role is:

1. To liaise with the Safeguarding Manager on matters relating to the Safeguarding policy.

## Multiagency Role

1. The College collaborates with colleagues in Social Services, Health, the Police, and the Voluntary and Independent Sectors to challenge and combat abuse, while promoting the rights of vulnerable individuals and young people.
2. Abuse can manifest as isolated incidents or a series of events and may occur in various settings, including the individual's home, day or residential centres, clinics, hospitals, and the College itself.
3. Safeguarding children, young adults, and vulnerable adults is a collective responsibility that requires the involvement of all individuals within the College community.
4. The College has developed this safeguarding policy to actively contribute to the reduction of abuse and to support the wellbeing of those in its care.
5. In line with the South Wales Adult Protection Forum policy, the College acknowledges that an effective response to the abuse of vulnerable adults necessitates a multi-agency approach. This approach should be coordinated locally by each local authority's social services department and involve core services such as health and police, alongside agencies dedicated to the care and protection of vulnerable adults.
6. The College recognises its role within this multi-agency framework and is committed to working collaboratively with partner organizations to enhance safeguarding efforts.
7. The College partners with Cardiff Council's Youth Engagement Team and participates in multi-agency meetings with local police to better understand community trends and improve safeguarding practices for learners.
8. Additionally, the College engages with community organisations to provide staff and learners with the knowledge and resources needed to effectively address safeguarding concerns.

# Safeguarding Procedures

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* 1. All staff members are required to raise concerns related to safeguarding, behaviour, and wellbeing through the MyConcern platform.
	2. Concerns reported via MyConcern will be reviewed by the Safeguarding Manager and triaged to the appropriate staff for further action.
	3. Where necessary, teaching staff will be informed of safeguarding concerns related to individual learners to ensure appropriate support and monitoring.
	4. The College will contact the learner's Next of Kin (NoK) to inform them of any safeguarding concerns if the learner is under 18 and the College deems it safe to do so.
	5. If deemed necessary, the College may invite the Next of Kin to participate in a multi-party meeting to discuss safeguarding concerns and collaboratively develop support strategies. This could be in a form of completing a Health and Additional Support Plan, if safeguarding concerns are affecting attendance.
	6. The College will inform relevant external agencies, including Social Services, the Police, and Prevent, as necessary to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the learner.
	7. **In** instances where the safety of other learners is at risk, the College will act in accordance with its Fitness to Study Policy.
	8. All records and communications regarding safeguarding concerns will be securely stored in MyConcern and maintained in compliance with GDPR regulations. All staff with access to MyConcern are expected to uphold the confidentiality of sensitive information.
	9. In the case of self-harm, the College will require the learner to go home if safe to do so or seek medical treatment. They will not be permitted to return until a risk assessment has been conducted to keep the learner and other safe.
	10. In the event of an overdose, the learner will be transported to the Accident & Emergency department, or emergency services will be contacted as necessary. In the case of recurrent incidents the college will act in accordance to its Fitness to Study Policy.
	11. The safeguarding team will monitor college-wide patterns of behaviour and will ensure that all staff are informed and provided with guidance regarding relevant protocols.
	12. All learners identified with safeguarding concerns will be highlighted on the College MIS system and their attendance will be monitored as a priority to ensure their ongoing wellbeing.
	13. Learners identified as ‘In care’ at enrolment or through their time at college will be put on a ‘risk register’ to monitor and support by the Safeguarding and wellbeing team.
	14. Learners that have identified as being ‘Young Carers’ to have a Care and Support plan completed by the Safeguarding & Wellbeing manager. This is to be monitored through the year.

# Complaints

All concerns regarding Safeguarding procedures to be addressed to Assistant Principal – Learner Culture

For formal complains the college will refer to the complaints policy.