



Policy name	Safeguarding Policy
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Version 1	2018	Revised in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.
Version 2	2021	Re-written in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021.
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Linked to other policies	Owner
Aquinas College Behaviour Policy	Vice Principal
Aquinas College IT Acceptable Use Policy	Vice Principal
Whistleblowing Policy	Director of HR
Bereavement Policy	Vice Principal
Drugs Policy	Vice Principal
Safer Recruitment	Director of HR

Re-written in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021.
 Revised in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

Aquinas College – Safeguarding Policy

A General Policy Statement

B The Designated Staff with Responsibility for Safeguarding (including CSE & Prevent Duty)

C Dealing with Disclosure of and Procedure for Reporting Concerns including PREVENT strategy

D Reporting and Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Members of Staff

E Recruitment and Selection Procedures

F Prevent Strategy

G Safeguarding Procedures During A College Closure

Appendices

Aquinas College Safeguarding Personnel:

Danny Pearson – Principal (danny.pearson@aquinas.ac.uk)

Andrew Bailey – Vice Principal Pastoral & Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
(andy.bailey@aquinas.ac.uk)

Diane Greenidge – Head of L6th and DSL with responsibility for Looked after Children (LACs) and Young Carers (YCs) (diane.greenidge@aquinas.ac.uk)

Deputy DSLs: Cath Legg (Senior Tutor) Sonia Smith (Head of U6th) Susan Marks (Head of Pathways)

Nicola Butterworth – Student Services & Safeguarding Triage (nicola.butterworth@aquinas.ac.uk)

Diane Bailey – Student services and Safeguarding Triage (diane.bailey@aquinas.ac.uk)

Tom McGee – Chair of Governors (tom.mcgee@btinternet.com)

Hazel Dove – Safeguarding Governor (hazeldove14@hotmail.com)

Linda Barlow – Head of Human Resources and Personnel (linda.barlow@aquinas.ac.uk)

A: General Policy Statement

All Aquinas College staff are committed to maintaining a culture of effective safeguarding and the welfare of our young people is our highest priority. Safeguarding our students is at the heart of our college mission and our safeguarding and pastoral practices aim to ensure that signs and symptoms of abuse are picked up immediately, thereby drastically reducing the harm caused to our learners.

Aquinas College strives to be a Catholic college for the whole community. Christ is at the very heart of our philosophy. This is expressed in our commitment to the Gospel values of freedom, justice and love.

We affirm and value each member of our community, recognising the dignity and unique nature of each individual. In this way the presence of Christ is celebrated. We share in each other's strengths, support each other in our weaknesses and strive for the highest standards of achievement in all we do. We also encourage a questioning stance towards the values of our increasingly secular society.

In short, we aim to provide reasons for living and hoping.

The purpose of this document is to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the arrangements that Aquinas College has in place for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its students. It provides guidance to help staff who may have concerns about the safety or welfare of a student, and sets out the college's position in relation to the safeguarding process.

This policy:

- has been written in line with the Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance – Keeping children safe in education, September 2021, and any other relevant UK legislation and government guidance.
- applies at all times when the college is providing services or activities directly under the management of the Aquinas staff.
- is publicly available on the college website, staff safeguarding Google drive and Classroom and a printed copy can be made available via the college HR office.

This policy is consistent with all other policies adopted by the Governors and should in particular be read in conjunction with the following policies relevant to the safety and welfare of children:

- Student Agreement
- Behaviour Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- IT/Online Safety Policy
- Whistle Blowing Policy

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our young people is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with young people, their families and carers, has a role to play in safeguarding them and promoting their welfare. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is student-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the student.

No single professional can have a full picture of a student's needs and circumstances. If young people and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt and restorative action. In line with this understanding, any adult working or volunteering in the Aquinas community has a responsibility to recognise when a learner may be in need or be vulnerable in some way, and to respond to this recognition in a timely and appropriate way.

Our students join us from a number of local authorities within the Greater Manchester, Cheshire and Derbyshire area.

We are committed to working within the guidelines laid down by each of these different local safeguarding boards but for the purposes of this document and due to the greater proportion of our students being within the Stockport catchment area, we will make specific reference to the policies and practices of the Stockport Family, formerly Stockport Local Safeguarding Children Board.

1. Aquinas College has a statutory and moral duty to ensure that it functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people receiving education at the College.

By safeguarding we mean:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children’s health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
 (“Working Together to Safeguarding Children” 2018)

Child Protection is a part of the safeguarding agenda. It refers to the action that is required to be undertaken to protect children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. At Aquinas College we recognise the responsibility we have under Section 175/157 of the Education and Inspections Act 2002, to have arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This policy demonstrates our commitment and compliance with safeguarding legislation.

2. Throughout these policies and procedures, reference is made to “children and young people”. This term is used to mean “those under the age of 18”. The College recognises that some adults are also vulnerable, accordingly, the procedures may be applied (with appropriate adaptations) to the protection of vulnerable adults. A vulnerable adult is defined as “a person aged 18 years or over, who is in receipt of or may be in need of community care services by reason of 'mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.”
3. The College is committed to working within the Stockport Family as part of our multi-agency safeguarding partnership and to providing:

Prevention by providing a safe environment for children and young people to learn in e.g. robust staff recruitment, policies, procedures, positive college atmosphere, highly effective teaching and pastoral support for students.

Protection by early identification of children and young people who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, e.g. by neglect, physical injury, sexual abuse or emotional abuse.

Support by taking appropriate action to see that such children and young people are kept safe, both at home and at the College.

We are committed to maximising opportunities to teach about safeguarding including online safety, British values, religious education, relationships and health education. The college utilises its core studies programme (10:10, General RE and assemblies) to teach students about safeguarding issues and to ensure that we are enabling them to safeguard themselves as far as they are able.

The college will use the soft start days at the start of each academic year to provide safeguarding inductions to all new students and to review and update safeguarding messages with our existing students as they progress to their second year. Special emphasis is always placed on online safety, British values and the Prevent Strategy.

4. Accordingly, in pursuit of these aims, the Governors will approve and annually review policies and procedures with the aim of:

Raising awareness of issues relating to the welfare of children and young people and the promotion of a safe environment for the children and young people learning within the College.

Following agreed procedures to ensure staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns.

Aiding the identification of children and young people at risk of significant harm, and providing procedures for reporting concerns;

Establishing procedures for reporting and dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff;

The safe recruitment of staff.

5. In developing policies and procedures, the College will consult with, and take account of, guidance issued by the Department for Education and other relevant bodies and groups. These procedures have been developed and reviewed in cooperation with the Stockport Family.

The College is committed to 'The Stockport Family's' Prevention and Early Help Strategy approach to improving outcomes for children, young people and families as outlined in 'Stockport Safeguarding Partnership' available on the College's staff Google drive for safeguarding or at:

<http://www.safeguardingchildreninstockport.org.uk>

Stockport's definition of prevention and early help is underpinned by Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 as well as Stockport's Safeguarding Children's Board Child Concern Continuum (Levels of Need). These clearly identify the thresholds for making decisions regarding targeted support.

Staff training will ensure that colleagues are aware of the levels of need identified in:

<http://www.safeguardingchildreninstockport.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Stockport-Multi-Agency-Guidance-on-Levels-of-Need.pdf>

6. Where a child or young person might be at risk of significant harm the College will contact the appropriate Children's Social Care Services based on that student's residential address.

The Stockport Multi-Agency Safeguarding and Support Hub (MASSH) states that all professional referrals should be completed through the online form on their website:

<https://www.stockport.gov.uk/contacting-the-massh>.

If it is in the professional judgement of the College's DSLs that the MASSH requires information immediately, as the child has suffered significant harm or is at risk of immediate harm, one of the DSLs will call **0161 217 6028** or in the case of out of hours emergencies **0161 718 2118**.

In an emergency or when a child or young person is at risk of immediate harm the Police will be called on 999.

When making online referrals the DSL will inform parents unless there is a concern that informing the parents may be a risk in terms of further harm. In child protection cases, parental consent is not required.

The College will refer concerns that a vulnerable adult might be at risk of significant harm to the appropriate Adult Social Care Services.

7. The College has nominated Hazel Dove as Governor with special responsibility for Child Protection and Safeguarding issues. Hazel has undertaken appropriate training and has been checked under section 128.
8. The Principal and all staff working with children and young people receive annual training to ensure that they possess the most up to date knowledge related to safeguarding and child protection issues and responsibilities, as well as the College's procedures and policies, with refresher training from SMBC taking place at least every 3 years. Everyone working or volunteering at Aquinas is trained to recognise signs of concern and in line with this policy, must report concerns following school and local authority procedures. Staff and volunteers are updated on safeguarding issues frequently across the year by the DSL (Andrew Bailey) and Deputy DSL (Diane Greenidge) at staff meetings and INSET days. New staff and trainee teachers on the college's PGCE programme receive inductions from the DSLs and the college's Google Classroom for safeguarding is used to provide regular updates, access to materials and knowledge checks. This is available to staff off site at all times.

Andrew Bailey – Vice Principal Pastoral, is a member of the College Senior Leadership Team with special responsibility for child protection issues. He is Designated Safeguarding Lead along with Diane Greenidge, who is also DSL trained and is Head of Lower 6th with lead responsibility for safeguarding / child protection. Diane is a member of the wider College Senior Management Team and is the designated teacher for LACs. Sonia Smith, Head of U6th, is DSL trained as is Catherine Legg one of our Senior Tutors and Susan Marks, Head of Pathways.

At Aquinas we believe that the welfare of every student is paramount, and we take safeguarding very seriously. Therefore, should staff have any concerns they feel are of a safeguarding nature, they are expected to report, record and take the necessary steps to ensure that the child is safe and protected and that key staff in college are aware promptly of any such concerns. We are aware that this can lead to challenge from parents/carers, but at all times we collectively work to ensure that the student is at the heart of all our decisions and that we act in their best interests

As part of our commitment to and compliance with safeguarding legislation and guidance; we also refer to and provide staff access to:

- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 \(2019\)](#)
- [What to do if you are worried a child is being abused. 2015](#)
- [keeping-children-safe-in-education--2021](#)
- [Guidance for safer working practice for staff working in education settings.](#)
- [Greater Manchester Safeguarding Policies and Procedures](#)
- [Preventing and tackling bullying advice](#)
- [Sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges](#)

- IT acceptable use policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Behaviour Policy
- Student Agreements

9. The designated safeguarding leads submit an annual report to governors which reviews how the duties have been discharged. Staff are given regular updates on the number and type of concerns current to that college year at staff meetings.
10. The College requires that all staff are familiar with the definitions of, and indicators of abuse as outlined in KCSIE 2021 Part 1 and Annexe A and in Appendix 1 of this policy.
11. The College's Safeguarding Policy is written in conjunction with the College's Behaviour and IT¹ policies as well as in conjunction with its Safer Recruitment, Whistleblowing and Disciplinary Policies².

Safeguarding concerns related to bullying, peer on peer abuse, harassment of any kind, online abuse, or radicalisation are all relevant to the College's Behaviour Policy³ and possible sanctions outlined therein.

12. Wherever the College engages with visiting speakers the following is expected:
- They are made aware of the College's safeguarding procedure on arrival and wear a visitor badge at all times.
 - The College will approve the content of their presentations or purpose of their visit, taking all reasonable steps possible to ensure that they do not present any threat to our students as a result of any content they may present or deliver.
 - They will be accompanied by a member of staff throughout their visit and will not leave reception without a member of college staff.
 - If a visitor becomes a concern at any time during their visit they will be escorted from the premises and we will alert the necessary agency/authority and possibly the Police.

13. Information sharing and confidentiality:

We take data handling and information sharing seriously. College staff have received appropriate training in relation to information sharing and confidentiality.

¹ The IT usage policy is located on every log-in screen on the College PCs and the College's shared staff safeguarding drive.

² The College policies related to staff recruitment, whistleblowing and disciplinary proceedings are available in the College's staff shared drive.

³ The College's Behaviour Policy is available on the College website and on the College's shared staff safeguarding drive. All students are required to consent to this policy and the IT usage policy at induction.

We have a trained Data Protection Officer (DPO) as required by the UK General Data Protection Regulations (UKGDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) to ensure that our college is compliant with confidentiality and information sharing requirements as demanded by the Data Protection, Privacy and Electronic Communications (Amendments etc.) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. Our DPO is Andrew Moss (IT Manager.)

Sharing information enables practitioners and agencies to identify and provide appropriate services that safeguard and promote the welfare of students. We will only share information about young people and families when it is appropriate and lawful to do so. We seek to work in partnership and will when possible inform parents and carers of concerns. In some specific instances, this may not be possible for example, if sharing information would increase risk, or if it is against local or national guidance.

Where we share information in relation to safeguarding or a child protection matter we follow local and national guidance, we pay particular regard to Information sharing advice for practitioners in safeguarding services and Data Protection Toolkit for Schools.

B: The Staff Safeguarding Procedure within Aquinas College:

Children in need

A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Reporting concerns:

1. All staff should complete a safeguarding concern form if they have any concern about a student's safety. The concern form is located on MyAquinas on the pastoral log page. The concern form can also be found on the College's Safeguarding Google Classroom class drive. Both are accessible to all staff on and off site.
2. The member of staff completing the form should save a copy for themselves and hand a copy of the form to the College's safeguarding triage at Student Information or email safeguarding@aquinas.ac.uk.

It is essential that staff raising a concern remember the following:

- Stay calm and reassuring when dealing with the student
- Listen to and take what the student says seriously
- Tell the student that they are right to tell someone
- Let them know that you understand how difficult it is to talk about such experiences
- Explain that you will need to involve other people and why
- Be supportive - let the student know that they are not to blame
- Give realistic encouragement
- Make a written record on a 'Record of Concern Form' of what is said by the student – unprompted. Focus on who, where, when.
- If a member of staff cannot access a concern form for any reason, they should make written notes of the concern and a student's comments and attach these to a concern form at the earliest opportunity. A form would be made available by the safeguarding triage.

If the concern is raised outside college then the member of staff has a responsibility to contact the College and inform a member of the safeguarding triage or a DSL of what the concern is and what action has been taken.

If a member of staff has a concern that a student is in immediate risk of harm and they are outside college or unable to contact college for any reason, they must contact the Police immediately.

3. Once a concern form has been submitted to the College's safeguarding triage they will alert the DSLs and the DSL will process the concern, log it on Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMS) and take appropriate action. Where necessary the DSLs will engage other staff to facilitate support for and monitoring of the student and the concern and refer to external agencies.
4. All concern forms will be stored securely in college and DSL alerts will be raised via a secure messaging system. All further actions related to the concern will be added to CPOMS as will interactions with external or partnership agencies.
5. All students who have a concern raised about them will have a safeguarding badge added to their MyAquinas page to alert all staff. Senior and Group Tutors are expected to be aware of the students in their cohorts and tutor groups, who have safeguarding concerns and what support they are required to offer.

Similarly, any safeguarding transfer files from non-CPOMS schools will be stored securely in college along with previous years' safeguarding concern forms, in line with the College's Data Protection Policies.

6. DSLs will meet weekly with the Principal to review that week's concerns and to detail actions and outcomes to the Principal. Where appropriate wider staff in contact with the student will be alerted to the nature of the concern and any actions that they need to complete in caring for that student.
7. CPOMS will be used to keep staff updated of issues related to the safeguarding concern for instance engagement with external agencies. Information will also be added to the college's pastoral log to keep wider staff engaged with a student aware of relevant information related to the safeguarding concern.
8. Staff should follow the process outlined in steps 1-7 above except in the following case:

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers, along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining students, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies.

All staff at Aquinas are aware that they have a legal responsibility to **report personally** any case of FGM that has been disclosed to them. They are also aware that they are required **at the same time** to log the incident and to record the time and date of their police report, via the College's normal safeguarding procedure.

In cases where staff believe a student is at risk, or in suspected cases of FGM (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence,) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over, in these cases, staff should follow normal college safeguarding procedures and alert the DSL.

If a student discloses a safeguarding concern to a member of staff, they should not:

- Promise confidentiality
- Make promises or reassurances you cannot keep
- Press for details or ask leading questions which may invalidate court proceedings
- React emotionally

- Interrupt or stop a student during a disclosure
- Underestimate your role as a trusted adult
- Forget to make time and seek support for yourself

Staff should not investigate concerns or allegations themselves but should report them immediately to the safeguarding team. The DSLs will then decide how to action the concern and if necessary, make a referral in accordance with Stockport Family guidelines.

Generally no staff other than the DSL or Principal should make referrals to external agencies, however if after discussion with the DSL a member of staff believes that a referral should be made but the DSL does not, he or she may make the referral via the Stockport Family Safeguarding online referral process, or via the appropriate means for referral to authorities outside Stockport.

Where this occurs the member of staff referring needs to log with the Principal that they have felt the need to refer, and any concerns they have with the DSL's failure to refer and detail the nature of the referral.

We will notify any Lead Social Worker if:

- a student subject to a Child Protection Plan (CPP) is excluded (fixed term or permanent)
- there is a prolonged unexplained absence of a student on a CPP, or as agreed as part of a CPP
- additional concerns arise

Confidentiality

Any child or young person who wishes to disclose must be informed that the member of staff has a professional responsibility to share the relevant information about the protection of the child with other professionals. If a child or young person confides in a member of staff and asks for the information to be kept secret, they must be informed that the member of staff has a responsibility to share the information with someone who can help. This needs to be done with care and sensitivity and the child or young person needs to be reassured that the matter will only be discussed with people who need to know.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. 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.

The DSL should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with a new school or college in advance of a student leaving.

Supporting vulnerable students and students at Risk

Statistically children or young people with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. College staff who work in any capacity with students with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and/or emotional and behavioural problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

The college will endeavour to support vulnerable students through:

- Its ethos and culture which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment; giving students a sense of being valued.
- Its behaviour policy and studentship agreement, both of which are aimed at supporting vulnerable students in college. All staff will agree to a consistent approach, working to support students in developing positive behaviour.
- Liaison with other appropriate agencies which support the student.
- Developing supportive relationships.
- Recognition that students living in difficult home environments are vulnerable and need support and protection.
- Monitoring student welfare, keeping accurate records and notifying appropriate agencies when necessary.
- Ensuring designated safeguarding staff and their team have the opportunity to attend face to face SSCP training and network updates. (For example, Network events, child sexual exploitation, domestic violence, drugs / alcohol substance misuse, Female Genital Mutilation-FGM, etc.)
- Ensuring information is transferred safely and securely when a student with a child protection record moves to another school/college. Also notifying Key Workers or Social Workers where a child leaves the college (as appropriate)

Students with special needs and disabilities

We ensure that staff have knowledge and understanding of the additional barriers which can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in children with special needs/disabilities.

These barriers **can** include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- Students with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by things like bullying without outwardly showing any signs; and
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

We regularly review our training and practice to enable staff to respond to these specific needs.

Early Help for Children and Families

Most parents can look after their children without the need of help other than from their family or friends. However, some parents may need additional help from our college or other services such as the NHS. Providing help early is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later.

Our college will work together with other agencies to provide a coordinated offer of early help, in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and local guidance, to any child or young person who needs it.

We will pool our knowledge within the College and with other agencies about which families or young people need additional support in a range of ways so that we can work out how best to help them. We will work closely with targeted early help services and Children's Social Care if we feel families need more support and input, or young people are at risk of harm, and we will continue to provide support if other services are also needed.

Children missing from education

Where students are found to be missing extended periods of education and these absences have not been covered by our attendance policy, we will consider there to be a potential safeguarding issue. The College's attendance policy expects parents/carers to alert us to any period of absence and where we have not had contact or there are periods of prolonged absence, the college will attempt to contact parents/carers to share concerns.

If necessary, an early help assessment may be required and in cases where the college considers the student to be at risk of harm then a referral will be made to social services.

Mental Health

All staff are expected to be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

The college recognises that only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem however, staff are well placed to observe students day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. This may lead to early help procedures being initiated.

Where students have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. The college expects that staff are aware of how these students' experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education, and therefore to respond accordingly when working with said students.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action will be taken, following the steps outlined above.

The college's wellbeing mentors and counsellors are points of referral for students requiring support with mental health concerns. Diane Greenidge is the college's Mental Health lead.

Child Protection Conferences

The College will endeavour to be represented at all Child Protection Conferences usually by the DSL or student's Senior Tutor. If the College is unable to be represented at the Child Protection Conference, a written report will be submitted.

Peer on Peer abuse

We understand that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This may include:

- bullying (including cyber bullying and prejudice-based behaviours),
- gender based violence/sexual assaults
- taking, collecting and sharing of naked or semi-naked images and upskirting
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- initiating/hazing type violence and rituals

In order to prevent any instances of peer on peer abuse we induct all students in our college mission and behaviour policies at soft start for both year groups and use 10:10 and General RE lessons to educate our students in terms of what is acceptable behaviour and to promote a tolerant and inclusive college environment.

Students are made aware of the 'disclosure' option on their MyAquinas page which allows them to share concerns discreetly with Senior Tutors and DSLs. Students are encouraged to use this function to share or disclose information when they feel unable to approach staff directly with a concern.

Once a student's disclosure has been read by a Senior Tutor or DSL they are able to share it with other relevant colleges via MyAquinas if appropriate.

Any form of peer on peer abuse is completely at odds with our college mission and we are committed to ensuring that procedures are in place to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse. The college's behaviour policy and studentship agreement are shared with and discussed with all students during the soft start.

All allegations of peer on peer abuse will be recorded by the member of staff receiving the allegation on a Record of Concern, they will be investigated by the student's Senior Tutor and dealt with in line with the College's behaviour policy and Studentship Agreement.

Where necessary perpetrators may be suspended while an investigation is concluded and potentially be withdrawn from college.

Any student affected by peer on peer abuse will be supported via the college's pastoral systems which include access to the college counsellors.

All students are made aware that abuse is abuse and will not be tolerated.

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing, and it may adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support.

We understand that reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are extremely complex to manage. We will not tolerate or accept such behaviour, and recognise that it is essential that victims are protected, offered appropriate support and every effort is made to ensure their education is not disrupted.

It is also important that other students, adult students and college staff are supported and protected as appropriate. We take reports of sexual harassment and sexual violence seriously and will always act to address reports and concerns we do this by:

- Not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as "banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "young people being young people";

- Challenging behaviour (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia and flicking bras and lifting skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them; and
- Understanding that all the above can be driven by wider societal factors beyond college, such as everyday sexist stereotypes and everyday sexist language. Ensuring we have a whole college approach (especially preventative education).
- We will always make referrals as appropriate and ensure staff are trained and informed of our approaches to this matter.

Sharing of nude or semi-nude pictures (sometimes referred to as sexting)

In the latest advice for schools and colleges (UKCIS, 2020), this is defined as the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams online by young people under the age of 18. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums. It could also involve sharing between devices via services like Apple's AirDrop which works offline.

Where staff members or others working in our setting become aware of the sharing of any such imagery the following steps should be taken.

- Complete a record of concern immediately and refer this to the DSLs.
- Never view, copy, print or save the imagery yourself or ask a student to share or download (this is illegal).
- Do not delete the imagery or ask the student to delete it.
- Do not ask the student(s) involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery. This is the responsibility of the DSLs.
- Do not say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved.
- Explain to the young people involved that it must be reported as a safeguarding concern and that they will receive support from the safeguarding team.
- Do not share information about the incident beyond the DSLs. They will take responsibility for how best to action the concern.

Further advice can be found here:

[sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people](https://www.ukcis.org/working-with-children-and-young-people/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people)

Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying is covered in our behaviour policy and will be treated as peer on peer abuse.

Complex Safeguarding

Complex safeguarding is used to describe criminal activity (often organised) or behaviour associated with criminality, involving often vulnerable children where there is exploitation and/or a clear or implied safeguarding concern.

In Stockport domestic abuse has been included within this definition in acknowledgement of the similarities between the process of grooming and controlling victims of domestic abuse and those subject to complex abuse, and the need for a specialist and sensitive approach to working with children and families at highest risk of all these areas of concerns to reduce risk and effect positive outcomes. Stockport family have agreed that the following areas are encompassed within complex safeguarding:

- Domestic Abuse including honour-based violence and forced marriage
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Serious Organised Crime – including Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- Modern Slavery and Trafficking
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Radicalisation and Extremism

Contextual Safeguarding

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the college and/or can occur between children and young people outside the college. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) will consider the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of students should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a student's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Children's social care assessments should consider such factors, and the college will provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse.

Use of mobile phones

Mobile phones have a place in education, especially on trips/visits when they are often the only means of contact available and can be helpful in ensuring students are kept safe.

We will:

- Only use mobile phones appropriately, and ensure staff have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse and know how to minimise the risk.
- Ensure the use of a mobile phone does not detract from the quality of supervision and care of students.
- Ensure all mobile phone use is open to scrutiny.

- Ensure staff are vigilant and alert to any potential warning signs of the misuse of mobile phones.
- Ensure staff are responsible for their own behaviour regarding the use of mobile phones and understand how to avoid putting themselves into compromising situations, which could be misinterpreted and lead to potential allegations.
- Ensure the use of mobile phones on trips/visits is included as part of the risk assessment, for example, how to keep personal numbers that may be stored on the phone safe and confidential.
- Adhere to the college policy that any recording of images is done on college owned and approved devices for college purposes i.e. marketing.

Extremism, Radicalisation and Prevent

Aquinas College seeks to protect young people from the influences of all violent extremism including, but not restricted to;

- Extremist Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist ideology
- Islamic extremist ideology
- Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups
- Extremist animal rights movements.

The current threat from terrorism and extremist groups in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of vulnerable people. Groups may seek to influence vulnerable children and involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation.

Aquinas is clear that where there is concern in respect of exploitation of this kind it will be treated as safeguarding concern. We are aware of the duties placed on us under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015- [prevent-duty-departmental-advice](#)

Prevention work and reductions of risks will include the 10:10 curriculum, SEND policy, assemblies, integration of students by gender and SEN, the application of the behaviour policy and a commitment to building and maintaining an inclusive and fair college environment and community.

Supporting HE and Adult Learners

The College uses the term “HE and Adult Learner” to refer to students who are enrolled on one of the College’s HE and Adult courses, and who are over the age of 18. Students who are over 18 but who are enrolled on a 16-19 course will fall under the policy and procedures applied to full time 16-19 students, as will part time learners aged 16-19 who are enrolled on part time adult learning courses.

Safeguarding vulnerable adults - A vulnerable adult is defined as someone who is over 18 years of age and in receipt or need of community care services in order to maintain their independence. Adult students are able to disclose information about their circumstances at enrolment, induction and during their programme of study. All staff working with HE and Adult learners receive safeguarding training as part of the College's training programme. Some team members also attend training on vulnerable adults where necessary.

Any member of staff who becomes aware of a situation should act. Staff can report their concerns to the DSL in college and/or contact Stockport Adult Social Services: 0161 217 6029
adultsocialcare@stockport.gov.uk

Safeguarding Non-Vulnerable Adults - If a member of staff suspects that an adult student who is not deemed to be 'vulnerable' under the definition provided is the subject of abuse, the full range of appropriate college support services should be offered. Where there is a suspicion that the abuse may involve criminal activity, this should be recorded, and with consent (or without, if danger level is deemed to be high – as long as the person is informed), this can be referred to the DSL and external referrals can be made. It should be remembered that adults who are possibly experiencing abuse may live with younger siblings or have children of their own. The risk to these children should be considered. Actions taken by a member of staff should be appropriate and proportionate.

Procedures and Record Keeping

Aquinas College will follow [Greater Manchester Safeguarding Procedures](#) in detail and adhere to any local guidance and policies from SSCP as required.

Safeguarding Records are held electronically on CPOMS and where required hard copies of records or reports relating to Safeguarding and Child Protection concerns are kept in a separate, confidential file, securely stored. Authorisation to access these records is controlled by the Principal and DSL.

The college ensures that safeguarding information, including Child Protection information, is stored and handled in line with the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UKGDPR).

These UK GDPR principles are as follows - also further information can be found at www.ico.org.uk and more specifically at <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/principles/>

- Lawfulness, fairness and transparency
- Purpose limitation
- Data minimisation
- Accuracy
- Storage limitation
- Integrity and confidentiality (security)
- Accountability (i.e. not just complying, but being able to demonstrate organisational compliance)

Together with individual's rights.

All records will provide a factual, evidence-based account using the student's words. Timely, accurate recording of every episode/incident/concern/activity/actions will be made **including telephone calls to other professionals**. Records will be signed, dated and where appropriate, witnessed. Support and advice will be sought from Children's Social Care (via the MASSH), Senior Advisor for Safeguarding in Education (SASE) or the Local Area Designated Officer (DO), whenever necessary.

There is always a DSL available who has the necessary seniority and skills, has undertaken appropriate safeguarding training, and is given the time to carry out this important role.

This safeguarding policy is updated annually or in line with any new DfE guidance (as required).

In the case of child protection referral, the DSL will contact MASSH immediately (alongside any other emergency or support services that may be required).

In the case of poorly explained serious injuries / injuries causing concern or where behaviour or concerns arouse suspicion or if in any doubt, the DSL should contact the MASSH for advice. The DSL will keep written (electronically or by hand), signed, timed and dated records detailing any disclosures and action taken as near to the time of disclosure as possible even when no investigation is undertaken; should the MASSH agree to initiate a referral verbally a Child Protection Referral Form will still be required within 24 hours.

Allegations are always shared directly with the Principal. Where an allegation of abuse is made against any member of staff/ volunteer, deputy or designated safeguarding person, the Principal will speak with the Designated Officer (DO) at the Safeguarding Children Unit to discuss the next steps.

If the allegation is against the Principal, the Chair of Governors should be contacted immediately, and s/he seek advice from the DO. If the allegation is against both Principal and Chair, then the DO should be contacted directly.

No member of staff will conduct their own investigation or pass on information to the alleged perpetrator. Professionals can contact the DO directly if they feel it is more appropriate to do so.

Aquinas College has a whistleblowing procedure. It is part of a professional's duty to report safeguarding issues, without the expectation of anonymity. Safeguarding and whistleblowing should not be confused. "Safeguarding" refers to reporting concerns designed to protect children from harm and acting to enable all students to have the best outcomes. In contrast "whistleblowing" describes the disclosure of concerns regarding a danger or illegality that has a public interest, usually because it threatens others or impacts on public funds. All members of staff are aware of the college whistleblowing procedure and are aware of their duty to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk.

College staff can also contact the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline if they do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection processes - 0800 028 0285.

Where college has a statutory duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) it will do so ensuring that the DO and the Senior Advisor for Safeguarding in Education are aware.

Complaints regarding Safeguarding Procedures

Staff who are unhappy with the College's safeguarding procedures are encouraged to complain to the Designated Governor. See the College's Whistleblowing Policy.

C: Designated Staff with Responsibility for Child Protection (including CSE & Prevent Duty)

Senior Staff with Lead Responsibility

The designated senior member of staff with lead responsibility for child protection issues is Andrew Bailey (Vice Principal and Child Protection Officer) email: andy.bailey@aquinas.ac.uk.

Andrew is assisted by Diane Greenidge (DSL, Head of L6th, Mental Health Lead with responsibility for Safeguarding and Looked after Children), email: diane.greenidge@aquinas.ac.uk.

They have a key duty to take the lead and the responsibility for raising awareness within the staff of issues relating to the welfare of children and young people and the promotion of a safe environment for the young people within the College.

They have received training in child protection issues and inter-agency working, as required by the Stockport Family approach to safeguarding, and receive refresher training at least every 2 years. They keep up to date with all developments in child protection issues. The designated senior member of staff is responsible for:

- Overseeing the referral of cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the Children’s Social Services Department.
- Liaise with the Principal to inform him of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations.
- Providing advice and support to other staff on issues relating to child protection.
- Maintaining a proper record of any child protection referral, complaint or concern (even where a concern does not lead to a referral).
- Ensuring that parents of students within the College are aware of the College’s safeguarding policy. This is available on the college website.
- Liaising with the Stockport Family Safeguarding Officer, or appropriate Local Children’s Safeguarding Board.
- Liaising with secondary schools which send students to the College to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for the students.
- Liaising with employers and training organisations that receive students from the College on placements to ensure that appropriate safeguards are put in place.
- Ensuring that staff receive basic training in child protection issues in line with KCSIE 2020 and are aware of the College child protection procedures and policy.
- Referring cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required.
- Referring cases where a crime has been committed to the Police as required.
- Referring cases of CCE, CSE, human trafficking or modern slavery to the National Referral Mechanism as required.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/human-trafficking-victims-referral-andassessment-forms/guidance-on-the-national-referral-mechanism-for-potential-adult-victims-of-modern-slavery-england-and-wales>
- The designated senior member of staff will provide an annual report to the College setting out how the College has discharged its duties. They are responsible for reporting deficiencies in procedure or policy identified by the Stockport Family (or others) to the College at the earliest opportunity.

The College’s Senior Tutor team as members of the College’s Senior Management Team and managers of the College’s pastoral systems, have a responsibility to monitor students within their cohorts who have a safeguarding concern raised about them, report on progress or further concerns to the DSLs and where necessary attend safeguarding meetings for students for whom they are Senior Tutor.

Designated Governor: Hazel Dove: hazeldove14@hotmail.com

The designated governor with responsibility for child protection issues is Hazel Dove. The designated Governor is responsible for liaising with the Principal and Senior Staff Member with Lead Responsibility over matters regarding child protection, including:

- Ensuring that the College has procedures and policies which are consistent with the Local Safeguarding Children Board’s procedures
- Ensuring that the College reviews and updates the College policy on child protection each year.
- Ensuring that each year the governing body is informed of how the College and its staff have complied with the policy, including but not limited to, a report on the training that staff have undertaken. The designated governor may also be a key link in the liaison with the Children’s Integrated Services Safeguarding Team in connection with allegations against the Principal or the Senior Staff Member with Lead Responsibility. This will not involve undertaking any form of investigation but will ensure good communication between the parties and the provision of information to assist enquiries. To assist in these duties, the designated governor shall receive appropriate training as directed by the Stockport Family.

D Reporting and Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Members of Staff

The procedures apply to all staff, whether teaching, administrative, management or support, as well as to volunteers. The word “staff” is used for ease of description.

1. Introduction

In rare instances, staff from educational institutions have been found responsible for child abuse. Because of their frequent contact with children and young people, staff may have allegations of child abuse made against them.

The College recognises that an allegation of child abuse made against a member of staff may be made for a variety of reasons and that the facts of the allegation may or may not be true. It is imperative that those dealing with an allegation maintain an open mind and those investigations are thorough and not subject to delay.

The College recognises that the Children Act 1989 states that the welfare of the child is the paramount concern. It is also recognised that hasty or ill-informed decisions in connection with a member of staff can irreparably damage an individual’s reputation, confidence and career. Therefore, those dealing with such allegations within the College will do so with sensitivity and will act in a careful, measured way. We will take all possible steps to safeguard our young people and to ensure that the adults in our college are safe to work with children. We will always ensure that the procedures outlined in Part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory guidance for educational establishments and colleges, September 2020 are adhered to.

Receiving an Allegation

A member of staff who receives an allegation about another member of staff should follow the guidelines for dealing with disclosure immediately.

The allegation should be reported immediately to the Principal, unless the Principal is the person against whom the allegation is made, in which case the report should be made to the Chair of Governors – Tom McGee. The Principal (or Chair of Governors, if the allegation is against the Principal) should:

Obtain written details of the allegation from the person who received it, that are signed and dated. The written details should be countersigned and dated by the Principal (or Chair of Governors).

Record information about times, dates, locations and names of potential witnesses.

The Principal or Chair of Governors will initially contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to receive advice before undertaking further investigations. Any member of staff or volunteer who does not feel confident to raise their concerns with the Principal or Chair of Governors should report their concerns directly to the LADO: Gerard Sweeney 0161 474 5657 gerard.sweeney@stockport.gov.uk www.safeguardingchildreninstockport.org.uk

- The College together with Children’s Social Care and the police, if they are involved, will consider the impact on the child or young person concerned and provide support as appropriate.
- The Principal will ensure that the child and family are kept informed of the progress of the investigation.
- The Human Resources Team will be contacted at the earliest opportunity for advice in relation to the investigation of any allegation in line with the College’s Disciplinary Policy, where appropriate.
- The staff member who is the subject of the allegation will be advised to contact their union, professional association or a colleague for support, (depending on the outcome of the safeguarding strategy meeting which is normally chaired by the LADO).
- The Human Resources Team will ensure that the staff member is provided with appropriate support, if necessary, through occupational health or welfare arrangements.
- The Principal will appoint a named representative to keep the staff member updated on the progress of the investigation; this will continue during any police or section 47 investigation or disciplinary investigation.

Other potential outcomes are:

- The allegation represents inappropriate behaviour or poor practice by the member of staff and is neither potentially a crime nor a cause of significant harm to the child. The matter should be addressed in accordance with the College disciplinary procedures.
- The allegation can be shown to be false because the facts alleged could not possibly be true.

Enquiries and Investigations

Child protection enquiries by Social Services or the Police are not to be confused with internal, disciplinary enquiries by the College. The College may be able to use the outcome of external agency enquiries as part of its own procedures. The child protection agencies, including the Police, have no power to direct the College to act in a particular way; however, the College should assist the agencies with their enquiries.

The College will suspend its own internal enquiries while the formal police or social services investigations proceed; to do otherwise may prejudice the investigation. Any internal enquiries shall conform to the existing staff disciplinary procedures.

If there is an investigation by an external agency, for example the Police, the Principal (or Chair of Governors) should normally be involved in, and contribute to, the inter-agency strategy discussions. The Principal (or Chair of Governors) is responsible for ensuring that the College gives every assistance with the agency's enquiries. He/she will ensure that appropriate confidentiality is maintained in connection with the enquiries, in the interests of the member of staff about whom the allegation is made.

Suspension of Staff

Suspension should not be automatic. In respect of staff other than the Principal or Vice Principal, (i.e. Senior Post Holders), suspension can only be carried out by the Principal. In respect of the Principal or Vice Principal, suspension can only be carried out by the Chair of Governors (or in his/her absence, the Vice Chair).

Suspension may be considered at any stage of the investigation. It is a neutral, not a disciplinary act and shall be on full pay. Consideration should be given to alternatives: e.g. paid leave of absence; agreement to refrain from attending work; change of, or withdrawal from, specified duties.

Suspension should only occur for a good reason. For example:

- where a child is at risk.
- where the allegations are potentially sufficiently serious to justify dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct.
- where necessary for the good and efficient conduct of the investigation.

If suspension is being considered, the member of staff should be encouraged to seek advice, for example from a trade union.

Prior to making the decision to suspend, the Principal (or Chair of Governors) should interview the member of staff. This should occur with the approval of the appropriate agency identified by the LADO. In particular, if the police are engaged in an investigation the officer in charge of the case should be consulted.

The member of staff should be advised to seek the advice and/or assistance of his/her trade union and should be informed that they have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative. The member of staff should be informed that an allegation has been made and that consideration is being given to suspension. It should be made clear that the interview is not a formal disciplinary hearing, but solely for raising a serious matter which may lead to suspension and further investigation.

During the interview, the member of staff should be given as much information as possible, in particular the reasons for any proposed suspension, provided that doing so would not interfere with the investigation into the allegation. The interview is not intended to establish the member of staff's innocence or guilt, but to give the opportunity for the member of staff to make representations about possible suspension. The member of staff should be given the opportunity to consider any information given to him/her at the meeting and prepare a response, although that adjournment may be brief.

If the Principal (or Chair of Governors) considers that suspension is necessary, the member of staff shall be informed that he/she is suspended from duty. Written confirmation of the suspension, with reasons, shall be despatched as soon as possible and ideally within one working day.

Where a member of staff is suspended, the Principal (or Chair of Governors if it is the Principal) should:

- be informed of the suspension in writing.
- receive a report that a member of staff has been suspended pending investigation, the detail given to should be minimal.
- Where the Principal has been suspended, the Chair or Vice Chair of Governors will need to take action to address the management of the College.
 - The parents/carers of the child making the allegation should be informed of the suspension. They should be asked to treat the information as confidential. Consideration should be given to informing the child making the allegation of the suspension.
 - Senior staff who need to know of the reason for the suspension should be informed.

Depending on the nature of the allegation, the Principal should consider, with the Chair of Governors, whether a statement to the students of the College and/or parents/carers should be made, taking due regard of the need to avoid unwelcome publicity.

The Principal should consider carefully and review the decisions as to who is informed of the suspension and investigation. The Stockport Family LADO or equivalent officer at the appropriate LSCB and external investigating authorities should be consulted.

The suspended member of staff should be given appropriate support during the period of suspension. He/she should also be provided with information on progress and developments in the case at regular intervals.

The suspension should remain under review in accordance with the College disciplinary procedures.

The Disciplinary Investigation

The disciplinary investigation should be conducted in accordance with the existing College Disciplinary Procedures.

The member of staff should be informed of:

- the disciplinary charge against him/her.
- his/her entitlement to be accompanied or represented by a trade union representative or work colleague.

Where the member of staff has been suspended and no disciplinary action is to be taken, the suspension should be lifted immediately, and arrangements made for the member of staff to return to work. It may be appropriate to offer counselling.

The child or children making the allegation and/or their parents should be informed of the outcome of the investigation and proceedings. This should occur prior to the return to college of the member of staff (if suspended).

The Principal (or Chair of Governors) should give consideration to what information should be made available to the general population of the College.

2. Allegations without foundation

Obviously false allegations may be indicative of problems of abuse elsewhere. A record should be kept, and consideration given to a referral to the Stockport Safeguarding team in order that other agencies may act upon the information.

In consultation with the DSL and/or the Chair of Governors, the Principal shall:

- inform the member of staff against whom the allegation is made orally and in writing that no further disciplinary or child protection action will be taken. Consideration should be given to offering counselling and support in order to rebuild the member of staff's confidence.
- inform the parents/carers of the alleged victim that the allegation has been made and of the outcome.
- where the allegation was made by a child other than the alleged victim, consideration to be given to informing the parents/carers of that child.
- prepare a report outlining the allegation and giving reasons for the conclusion that it had no foundation and confirming that the above action had been taken.

In some circumstances, consideration should be given to broader disclosure of details of the outcome of the investigations, for example if the matter is of general importance, has become common knowledge or the subject of general gossip. There is a need to provide accurate details for public information.

3. Records

It is important that documents relating to an investigation are retained in a secure place, together with a written record of the outcome and, if disciplinary action is taken, details retained on the member of staff's personal and confidential file. Where the allegation is found to be without foundation, a record of the allegation, investigation and outcome should be retained.

If a member of staff is dismissed or resigns before the disciplinary process is completed, he/she should be informed about the College's statutory duty to inform the Secretary of State for Education under the Children and Adults Barred List procedure.

4. Monitoring Effectiveness

Where an allegation has been made against a member of staff, the designated Governor, together with the senior staff member with lead responsibility should, at the conclusion of the investigation and any disciplinary procedures, consider whether there are any matters arising from it that could lead to the improvement of the College's procedures and/or policies and/or which should be drawn to the attention of the Stockport LSCB. Consideration should also be given to the training needs of staff.

D Recruitment and Selection Procedures

Responsibility for Safer Recruitment: Linda Barlow, Director of Human Resources email: linda.barlow@aquinas.ac.uk

The college pays full regard to part three of DfE guidance ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ 2021 and with reference to the ‘Position of Trust’ offence (Sexual Offences Act 2003). We ensure that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works in the college who is likely to be perceived by the students as a safe and trustworthy adult.

We do this by operating safer recruitment practices including:

Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau Check	Barred List Check (if working regulated activity before DBS certificate is available)
Two professional references	Establish confirmation of physical and mental fitness for the role
Identity confirmation	Confirmation of right to work in the UK
Qualification check	Confirmation of professional registration (if appropriate)
Staff suitability declaration (if appropriate)	Prohibition from teaching check (only if employed as a teacher)
Overseas police checks (if appropriate) follow the right government guidance following the UK’s exit from the European Union Government website	
Childcare Disqualification Regulations check (schools and colleges providing childcare, reception classes of in wraparound care for children up to the age of 8 – only)	Prohibition from teaching check (colleges only - if employed as a teacher)

In line with statutory guidance we maintain a single central record to evidence checks completed for staff and volunteers working in the college community, this document is under constant review. It is amended and updated for every new starter and leaver. All new staff, volunteers, governors and other people working at Aquinas are added, which in reality means it is reviewed on a near weekly basis.

The HR Director is a member of SLT and has responsibility for ensuring that all relevant checks are carried out and documented on the single central record. Supporting evidence for recruitment checks is included in the staff member’s personnel file. References will always be sought before confirming a person’s appointment, these will be written and about previous employment, this will check that information is not contradictory or incomplete. At least one reference will be from the candidate’s current employer.

When a candidate is not currently employed, verification of their most recent period of employment and reasons for leaving will be obtained from the organisation where they were employed.

Some of our senior leaders and governors have completed safer recruitment training. At least one member of every interview panel for a position in the college (paid or voluntary) will have completed safer recruitment training. This training is refreshed when appropriate.

Where students are involved in the recruitment process e.g. to conduct an interview, they are briefed for this role and the need to treat information confidentially.

All contracts with supply agencies are specific about what checks, and evidence is needed to be completed before any individual commences work at the college, and that they will be expected to present identification upon arrival.

This document is reviewed termly by a member of the SLT.

Our commitment to safer recruitment continues post appointment, we ensure that:

- Any disciplinary proceedings against staff related to safeguarding and child protection matters are concluded in full in accordance with government guidance “Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021” and SSCP, DO and HR Policy, procedures and guidance.
- All staff and other adults on site are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationship with students and parents, following the Code of Conduct.
- Staff are clear how to raise a concern, and where, when appropriate, to find ‘whistleblowing’ policies. They are also confident of how to report concerns of misconduct.
- All staff are required to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings that may affect their suitability to work with children and young people (whether received before or during their employment at the college).
- Supply teachers are informed of expectations regarding behaviour and behaviour management. Any concerns relating to supply teachers or others will be passed to the DO and or others as required.

NB. Whilst the placing Teaching Agency is responsible for the investigation, the referring college will be expected to assist with this process.

More detailed information can be found by visiting [Greater Manchester Safeguarding Procedures-allegations management](#)

For further information see the College’s Safer Recruitment Policy.

E Prevent Strategy Policy

Aquinas College is committed to protecting students from extremism and radicalisation.

The College will work with other agencies and professional bodies to ensure the safety of students and to engage staff with the Prevent Agenda which is part of the wider safeguarding duty.

The College will endeavour to provide a learning environment where students can safely discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and extremist ideas and ensure that they understand these issues and learn how to challenge such ideology.

Our principle objectives are that:

- 1) All governors, teachers and support staff will have an understanding of radicalisation and extremism and why there is a need to be vigilant in College.
- 2) All governors, teachers and support staff will be familiar with the College policy/strategy on anti-radicalisation and extremism and will follow the appropriate procedures when issues arise.
- 3) All parents and students will be informed that the College has policies in place to keep students safe from harm and that the College regularly reviews its systems to ensure they are appropriate and effective.

College Strategy:

- 1 To comply with its statutory duty, the College will actively engage with partners such as the Police, the Prevent Co-ordinator and the Local Children's Safeguarding Board.
2. A risk assessment will be carried out to assess where or how students or staff may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism and actions will be put in place to reduce any identified risk.
3. Appropriate training for staff and governors will be organised to take forward the Prevent agenda, including developing the curriculum to challenge and educate about extremism and exemplify common values.
4. IT policies and procedures will incorporate the Prevent duty and filters will be used to restrict access to harmful content which could draw individuals into terrorism.
5. The College will seek to engage with and consult students about plans for implementing the duty.
6. The College's pastoral care and welfare services will be used to support students who are at risk.

7. The College will communicate and promote the importance of the duty to all stakeholders through its website and other publications.
8. In relation to the duty, the College will regularly review security and safety arrangements and procedures linked to the hiring out of College premises/ facilities.
9. The College's Strategy and Policy for Protecting Students from Extremism and Radicalisation will be reviewed annually and reported on to governors as part of the Safeguarding Report.

For further support please contact GMP Prevent Team 0161 856 6362 or go to:

<https://www.stockport.gov.uk/the-channel-process/making-a-referral-to-the-channel-panel>

Prevent Duty Guidance: Anti-terrorist hotline: 0800 789 321

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

<http://www.preventtragedies.co.uk/>

<http://www.familiesmatter.org.uk/>

<http://educateagainsthate.com/>

F Safeguarding procedures during a college closure

During a college closure these procedures will be reviewed by our DSLs on a weekly basis as circumstances continue to evolve or following updated Department for Education advice or guidance. Students and parents/carers will be informed of procedures and updates to procedures via email and the College website. Staff will be given weekly updates via virtual briefings, email and updates on the staff Google Classroom for Safeguarding.

We will ensure that on any given day all staff and volunteers in attendance will be aware of who the DSL and deputy DSLs are and how staff and volunteers can to speak to them.

Safeguarding priority

During a closure the safeguarding of all learners – whether they are currently at home or in attendance – continues to be our priority. The following fundamental safeguarding principles will remain the same:

- the best interests of learners continue to come first
- if anyone in our college has a safeguarding concern, they will act immediately
- a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy DSL will always be available
- no unsuitable people will be allowed to gain access to students
- students should continue to be protected when they are online.

Current College Position

The way colleges would operate in a closure situation, such as in response to coronavirus (COVID-19) is fundamentally different to business as usual. Senior leaders would base decisions about accessibility of buildings based on considerations including the reasons for closure and availability of staff.

In cases of closure due to coronavirus we would follow the DFE guidance and provide care for students who are vulnerable and students whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

The College would continue to work closely with our three safeguarding partners and would ensure these procedures are consistent with their advice. This will include expectations for supporting students with education, health and care (EHC) plans, the local authority designated officer and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need.

Roles and responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities for safeguarding will remain in line with our Child Protection Policy.

If possible, our DSL and at least one deputy DSL will be available on site during the college day. Where this is not possible, we will:

- have a trained DSL or deputy DSL available by phone and/or online video; or
- ensure we have access to a trained DSL or deputy DSL from another school or college by phone and/or online video.

Where our DSL or a deputy DSL cannot be on site, then in addition to one of the above options we will also ensure a senior leader from the College takes responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with EHC plans.

Those who have a social worker include children who have a child protection plan and those who are looked after by the local authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

There is an expectation that vulnerable students who have a social worker will be able to attend college, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk and provided it is possible for them to access the college buildings safely. Where it is not possible to offer access to vulnerable students, we will liaise with the local authority to find acceptable alternative arrangements.

Those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the local authority and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered access to college in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. Many of our learners with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

In any case of closure, we will encourage all of our students to attend virtual lessons and deliver our teaching, including our core curriculum, remotely if needed but again within the boundaries of our IT safe usage policy.

Senior leaders in our college, especially the DSL know who our most vulnerable students are, and they have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support. We will expect group tutors and senior tutors to monitor vulnerable students on a weekly basis and where there are concerns about levels of engagement or responses senior tutors will alert the DSLs.

We will continue to work with social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

Increased vulnerability or risk

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of students and their parents. Staff will be aware of this in setting expectations of students' work where they are at home. Where we are providing for vulnerable students on site, we will ensure appropriate support is in place for them.

Attendance

Where a student is expected but does not arrive at college, we will follow our attendance procedure and attempt to contact the family. If contact cannot be made, the DSL or a deputy DSL will be informed.

The DSL or a deputy will attempt to contact the parents through various methods, such as telephone, FaceTime, Skype or by contacting a relative in the first instance. If contact cannot be made or if the DSL deems it necessary, we will undertake a home visit or ask an appropriate agency to do so. A risk assessment will be carried out before any such visit is made.

Where a vulnerable child does not take up their place, we will notify their social worker.

Reporting concerns about students or staff

The importance of all staff acting immediately on any safeguarding concerns remains if the college is closed and remote teaching is in place. Staff will continue to follow our safeguarding procedures and advise the DSL of any concerns they have about any child. College will ensure that all staff have access to our safeguarding concern forms and related documentation remotely.

In a situation where college is closed and we engage in remote teaching and learning (as in the COVID-19 crisis,) college recognises that the varied arrangements in place in such a situation do not reduce the risks that students may face from staff. As such, it remains extremely important that any allegations of abuse made against staff are dealt with thoroughly in accordance with our allegations against staff procedures outlined in this safeguarding policy.

Staff training and induction

College closure may make it unlikely that any form of staff training can be accessed or completed successfully. For the duration of the COVID-19 measures, our DSL are unlikely to receive their refresher training. In line with government guidance, our trained DSLs will be classed as trained even if they cannot receive this training.

All current college staff have received safeguarding training and have read Part One and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education. When new staff are recruited or volunteers join us, they will receive a safeguarding induction in accordance with our safeguarding policy.

Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children.

When recruiting new staff, we will continue to follow our Safer Recruitment policy.

In response to COVID-19, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has made changes to its guidance on standard and enhanced DBS ID checking to minimise the need for face-to-face contact.

It is essential from a safeguarding perspective that we are aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers/contractors are on our college site and that the appropriate checks have been carried out on those individuals. We will continue to maintain our single central record (SCR) during these measures to ensure we have this awareness.

Peer on peer abuse

We recognise that students can abuse their peers and our staff are clear about the College's policy and procedures regarding peer on peer abuse.

All peer on peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. We also recognise that abuse can still occur during a college closure or partial closure and between those students who do attend the college site during these measures.

Our staff will remain vigilant to the signs of peer-on-peer abuse and will follow the process set out in our safeguarding policy.

Online safety

It is likely that students will be using the internet and engaging with social media far more during any closure. Our staff are aware of the signs of cyberbullying and other online risks and our filtering and monitoring software remains in use during this time to safeguard and support students.

Our staff will follow the process for online safety set out in our safeguarding policy. Staff and students will be sent clear guidance re: online safety, cyber bullying and peer on peer abuse at the beginning of any period of closure.

Staff who interact with students online will continue to look out for signs that they may be at risk. If a staff member is concerned about a child, that staff member will report that concern to the DSL.

Where the DSL has identified a student to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive additional pastoral support in college, they will ensure that a communication plan is in place to support that student. Details of that plan will be shared with relevant staff.

Appendix 1

Types of abuse:

All concerns raised within college will be categorised by the DSLs. The categorisation and action will be relayed to, and approved by, the Principal at weekly safeguarding meetings.

As already outlined by this policy in sections A and B wherever a student is at risk of immediate harm appropriate referrals to Stockport Family or the Police will be made by the DSLs.

In cases where referrals are not made but internal pastoral actions or disciplinary actions are required and taken, the DSLs will act in accordance with the College's Catholic Mission Statement, Behaviour Policy and with the aid of the College's pastoral systems. DSLs will be responsible for the direction and involvement of other staff and pastoral mechanisms within the College.

Abuse: is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

Physical Abuse: Physical abuse causes harm to a child's person. It may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning or suffocating. It may be done deliberately or recklessly, or be the result of a deliberate failure to prevent injury occurring. It can also occur when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. It can include the deliberate and malicious withholding of physical needs.

Neglect: Neglect is the persistent or severe failure to meet a child or young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a failure to provide adequate food clothing or shelter, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also involve neglect of, or inadequate response to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Sexual Abuse: Sexual abuse involves a child or young person being forced or coerced into participating in or watching sexual activity. It is not necessary for the child to be aware that the activity is sexual and the apparent consent of the child is irrelevant. The acts may involve physical contact including penetrative or non-penetrative acts.

They may involve non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

The college follows the advice and guidance provided by Project Phoenix: Tackling **Child Sexual Exploitation** together in Greater Manchester. Schools and colleges are required to:

- Look for the indicators that young people are being drawn into abusive relationships – questions to consider are: are they missing college, are they regularly tired, are they receiving gifts that aren't accounted for, do they lack self-esteem, are they using drugs or alcohol, are they known to be hanging around with older adults?
- Gather information and intelligence to assist police can disrupt these offenders and help the child and others.
- Educate our students about healthy relationships

Emotional Abuse: Emotional abuse occurs where there is persistent emotional ill treatment or rejection such as to cause serious and adverse effects on the child's or young person's behaviour and emotional development, resulting in low self-worth. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is present in all forms of abuse. Appendix 1 contains further details on indicators of abuse.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

See earlier definition and procedure outlined in Section B of this policy.

Peer on peer Abuse

All Staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as Peer on Peer abuse). This is most likely to include, but not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying)
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm.
- Sexual Violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault

- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may stand alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, to cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.
- Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery)
- Initiation/ hazing type violence and rituals

Where a student is found to have committed a serious act of peer on peer abuse their place at Aquinas College will be forfeited as per our behaviour policy. If the abuse requires it then the Police will be informed and parents will be made aware that the Police have been informed.

Serious Violence

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from college, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts of possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

All staff should also be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these.

Being drawn into terrorism

The college acknowledges and implements the **Prevent strategy**, published by the Government in 2011. We recognise that preventing young people being drawn into terrorism is essentially a safeguarding issue.

Consequently, the College will respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it.

We will seek to prevent young people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given appropriate advice and support.

The college will work with other agencies where there are risks of radicalisation we need to address.

If a Channel Referral is made parents will be notified unless it is deemed that notifying parents may lead to a risk of harm. Staff will follow the Channel Referral process as outlined by Stockport Safeguarding procedures:

<https://www.stockport.gov.uk/the-channel-process/making-a-referral-to-the-channel-panel>

Online Safety

As schools and colleges increasingly work online, it is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. As such, governing bodies and proprietors should ensure appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place.

All activity on the College intranet and devices is monitored by Barracuda Network Protection. Logs and activity reports are monitored by Andrew Bailey (DSL), Linda Barlow (HR Manager), Andrew Moss (IT Manager). Danny Pearson (Principal) and Diane Greenidge (DSL) are also able to access reports and logs at any time.

The College's IT Policy is displayed on the log-in screen of all College PCs. Students are made aware of this policy and how to stay safe online during the soft start to each college year and at specific assemblies in the first half-term.

Unprofessional Conduct

Additionally, the College notes and draws to the attention of the College staff, via training, the criminal offences that may be committed in connection with the welfare of children, in particular those involving abuse of trust which prohibits staff from engaging in or encouraging sexual activity with students who are under the age of 18 or vulnerable. Such activity with a student over 18 is unprofessional and would not be tolerated by the college.

Appendix 2:

Indicators of Abuse

Signs of possible child abuse

It is important to remember that lists such as the one below are neither completely definitive nor exhaustive. The information in such lists has to be used in the context of the child's whole situation and in combination with a range of other information related to the child and his/her circumstances.

There can be an overlap between all the different forms of child abuse and all or several can co-exist.

1. Physical Abuse

Signs of possible physical abuse

- Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent.
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries.
- Refusal to discuss injuries.
- Untreated injuries, or delay in reporting them.
- Excessive physical punishment.
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
- Fear of returning home.
- Aggression towards others.
- Running away

When considering the possibility of non-accidental injury it is important to remember that the injuries may have occurred for other reasons, e.g. genuine accidents or medical disorders.

2. Physical neglect

Signs of possible physical neglect

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Frequent lateness and/or unexplained non-attendance at College
- Untreated medical problems

- Low self-esteem
- Poor peer relationships
- Stealing

3. Emotional Abuse

Signs of possible emotional abuse

- Low self-esteem
- Continual self-deprecation
- Sudden speech disorder
- Significant decline in concentration
- Socio-emotional immaturity
- 'Neurotic' behaviour (eg rocking, head banging)
- Self-mutilation
- Compulsive stealing
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Running away
- Indiscriminate friendliness

4. Sexual Abuse

Signs of the sexually abused child

Not all children are able to tell parents that they have been assaulted. Changes in behaviour may be a signal that something has happened.

These are general indicators that child may be troubled though not necessarily about a sexual assault. The child may have some of these problems or none at all. It is the combination, frequency and duration of signs that will alert you to a problem. Try to notice all changes in usual behaviour.

It is important to remember that in sexual assault there may well be no physical or behavioural signs.

Signs of possible sexual abuse

Behavioural

- Lack of trust in adults or over-familiarity with adults
- Fear of a particular individual

- Social isolation – withdrawal or introversion
- Sleep disturbance (nightmares, irrational fears)
- Running away from home
- Reluctance or refusal to participate in physical activity or to change clothes for physical activities
- Low self-esteem
- Drug, alcohol or solvent abuse
- Display of sexual knowledge beyond the child's years
- Unusual interest in the genitals of adults or children or animals
- Expressing affection in inappropriate ways, e.g. 'French kissing'
- Fear of bathrooms, showers, closed doors
- Abnormal sexualised drawing
- Fear of medical examinations
- Developmental regression
- Poor peer relations
- Over-sexualised behaviour
- Compulsive masturbation
- Stealing
- Psychosomatic factors, e.g. recurrent abdominal pain or headache
- Sexual promiscuity

Physical/Medical

- Sleeplessness, nightmares, fear of the dark
- Bruises, scratches, bite marks on top of the thighs or genital areas
- Itch, soreness, discharge, unexplained bleeding from the rectum or penis
- Pain on passing urine or recurrent urinary infection
- Stained underwear
- Unusual genital odour
- Anxiety/depression
- Eating disorder, e.g. anorexia nervosa or bulimia
- Discomfort/difficulty in walking or sitting
- Venereal disease, sexually transmitted diseases
- Soiling or wetting in children who have been trained
- Self- mutilation/suicide attempts

Appendix 3: Associated College Policies

1. Aquinas College Code of Conduct
2. Aquinas College Behaviour Policy
3. Aquinas College Drug Policy
4. ICT Acceptable Use Policy
5. Bereavement Policy

1. Code of Conduct

Fairness. Integrity. Respect. Equality. Diversity

These are the values we uphold at Aquinas and these are the values we expect you to have too. This means:

Attend all sessions as indicated on my timetable, arrive punctually, with the correct equipment.	Take pride in completing all work set to the best of your ability and submit on time. It also means completing independent study to develop a wider understanding of your subjects.	Only use mobile phones in classrooms or other learning environments when allowed for the purpose of the lesson.
Don't wear coats or hats/hoods in lessons or other learning environments.	Don't consume food or non-bottled drinks in lessons, the Learning Centre or non-designated eating areas.	Behave appropriately and use appropriate language in all areas of the college, at all times.
Follow College Health and Safety guidance and keep all doorways and corridors clear and avoid sitting on the floor. Do not drop litter and keep the college tidy.	Use IT responsibly and safely. Do not publish or post images and notices of other students and staff.	Any smoking related behaviour must only take place in the designated smoking area.

2. Aquinas College Behaviour Policy

The College's behaviour policy aims to ensure that we are able to deliver on the College's Catholic mission and afford all students an exceptional learning experience.

We expect that all students accept the terms of our Studentship Agreement which they sign at the beginning of each academic year and that they also accept and respect the College's core values. These documents are focused on behaviours for learning and exist to create a positive and productive climate within classrooms and around the College site.

Our behaviour policy is written in conjunction with our safeguarding policy which can be found on the College's website.

Unacceptable Behaviour:

We deem any behaviour that fails to adhere to the studentship agreement or core values as unacceptable. The College will use sanctions including:

Removal from lessons – Any student who arrives at a lesson without the correct equipment or having failed to complete work integral to that lesson maybe asked to leave and return with the correct equipment and required work. Similarly, any student who is disrupting the learning of other students may be asked to leave the lesson. Where necessary parents and Senior Tutors will be notified of these incidents.

10:10+ sessions – Students who have missed lessons without parental authorisation; students who have failed to submit or complete work by agreed deadlines; students who have handed in work that is clearly below the level they are capable of, may have a 'Thrive case' opened for them. This may require students to attend extra sessions within a subject area, or if the case is referred to a Senior Tutor, they may be required to attend 10:10+ sessions. These sessions are registered, and monitored and allow students the chance to catch up on or improve upon their assignments and studentship. Failure to attend a 10:10+ session will result in parental notification. Persistent failure to attend will lead to a final written warning and the student may lose their place at college.

Final Written Warnings – Final written warnings will be issued to any student failing to make significant improvements to their studentship while having a Thrive case opened for them, or in cases of seriously unacceptable behaviour for instance cases of peer on peer abuse.

Meeting with parents/carers – When necessary and the issue requires it we will ask parents/carers to attend a meeting to discuss the most appropriate course of action and to agree a time frame and course of action to ensure the issue is resolved.

Suspension - We will seek to resolve behaviour issues as quickly as possible and with as little disruption to a student's education as possible. However, when there are serious issues with behaviour we may suspend a student pending a parent/carer meeting. Suspensions will occur when we believe that an issue needs addressing quickly and with parent/carer input before it is appropriate for a student to return to college. Students who are suspended will be expected to email their subject tutors to ensure they have access to the work they will miss when suspended. They may also need to attend referral sessions to catch up when they return to college. A final written warning will usually follow a suspension.

Exclusion – Excluding a student will be a last resort and will only occur when all of our other means of support and behaviour management have been exhausted, or in serious cases where behaviour presents a risk to the wellbeing and safety of other students and staff. Such cases would include:

- Possession of an illegal substance, drugs or drug related paraphernalia.⁴
- Possession of a weapon.
- Peer on peer abuse including cyber bullying.⁵
- Persistent failure to adhere to social distancing measures during COVID 19.

Peer on peer abuse:

Any form of peer on peer abuse (including bullying and cyber bullying, or any form of sexual harassment,) is completely at odds with our college mission and we are committed to ensuring that procedures are in place to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse. All allegations of peer on peer abuse will be recorded, they will be investigated and dealt with in line with the behaviour policy and studentship agreement. Where necessary perpetrators may be suspended while an investigation is concluded and potentially be withdrawn from college.

Any student affected by peer on peer abuse will be supported via the college's pastoral systems which include access to the college counsellors. Peer on peer abuse is not tolerated and is very clearly a breach of the studentship agreement and the College's core values.

Students can use the 'disclosure' option on their MyAquinas page which allows them to share concerns discreetly with Senior Tutors. Students are encouraged to use this function to share or disclose information when they feel unable to approach staff directly with a concern.

College ID:

All students must wear their college lanyard and ID at all times. Students who do not have their ID must sign in at reception in order to be issued with a temporary ID. Students who forget their ID on more than 3 occasions will be sent home to collect it and parents/carers will be notified.

⁴ See College drug policy available on website

⁵ See College safeguarding policy available on website.

Any lessons missed as a consequence of needing to return home to collect ID will count as unauthorised absences and any work missed will need to be caught up.

3. Aquinas College IT Acceptable Use Policy

Students are responsible for their actions, conduct and behaviour whilst using college computer equipment in the same way that they are responsible during classes or at break time. Use of technology should be safe, responsible and lawful.

Aquinas College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students at the College. As part of our safeguarding policy we expect Students to follow the protocols within this document.

Policy for using college computer equipment

- Be aware that your treatment of college computer services is supervised, and your screen can be captured at any point
- You must not use college equipment to undertake any form of Cyber bullying including making abusive comments, sharing pictures, videos or personal information without the consent of the owner, creating or posting on websites to make fun or spread malicious rumours about someone or blackmailing individuals for any purpose
- Do not eat in computer areas
- Leave areas tidy when you leave
- Do not change any of the system settings
- Report any faults to a member of staff
- Do not install any software
- Do not make copies of any software, music or video files downloaded from the Internet

Policy for using the Internet and Email in college

For your own protection and that of others, your use of e-mail and of the internet will be monitored by the College

- Use the Internet to search for and access materials that are linked to your studies
- Occasional personal, social or non-educational use of the internet and email is tolerated in LRC's and other common areas subject to the availability of resources, priority is given to students undertaking work as part of their studies
- The Internet must not be used for:
 - Downloading illegal, offensive or obscene material
 - Downloading or accessing materials that infringe personal liberties or promote extreme political views or radicalisation
 - Creating websites that are obscene, defamatory, infringe copyright, infringe personal liberties or promote extreme political views or radicalisation

- Creating commercial websites
- Downloading program files, including gaming software or media files (unless this is part of your studies and your tutor has given consent)
- The downloading of any form of 'virus' software
- You must not send any offensive messages by email
- The college is not responsible for what you send in emails, and can pass on your details to a suitable authority if anyone complains about an email you have sent

Policy for using the college's network systems

- Do not log on to anyone else's account, access their files / emails, or destroy, copy, alter or move anyone else's files
- Only access your own folder on the network or within Office 365
- Do not change any access rights to folders on computers or network areas

Tablets and other electronic equipment protocol

Electronic equipment such as Tablet computers, laptops, iPads, MP3 players are brought onto College premises entirely at the risk of the student. You are free to use the guest wireless access under the same conditions as the main system. Inappropriate use of such equipment will be dealt with in accordance with this policy

Agreeing to this policy

- At the end of this induction you will be asked to accept the College Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)
- It is important that you understand your responsibilities, so if you are ever unsure about what is allowed always ask a member of staff

Abusing the college's computer services can result in disciplinary action including losing your rights to access the college systems and, in some circumstances, the passing on of your details to a suitable authority.

Appendix 4: Useful Links, Further Advice and Guidance

Local Guidance

- [Greater Manchester Safeguarding Procedures- follow the link and search key words.](#)
- [Stockport Suicide Prevention](#)
- [Stockport Early Help Assessment](#)
- [Information Sharing and Team Around the School](#)
- [Information Governance](#)
- [Levels of Need](#)

National Guidance & Resource

- [keeping-children-safe-in-education 2021](#)
- [When to call the police- guidance for schools and colleges](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children-2018](#)
- [What-to-do-if-you're-worried-a-child-is-being-abused](#)
- [Teachers-standards](#)
- [Prevent-duty-guidance](#)
- [Educate Against Hate](#)
- [Safeguarding-children-who-may-have-been-trafficked-practice-guidance](#)
- [Multi-agency statutory guidance on FGM](#)
- [sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings](#)
- [Sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges](#)