Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Child Protection and Safeguarding

This document relates to	
Shaftesbury Millie College	✓
Shaftesbury Education	✓

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1. Purpose

This Standard operating procedure outlines the procedures for safeguarding and child protection at Shaftesbury Millie College for students in the 16-18 programmes. The college is committed to ensuring that all students are safe, supported, and protected from harm. Our approach to safeguarding is based on the principles of:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment within or outside the home, including online
- Making sure children receive safe and effective care
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

2. Scope

This Standard operating procedure applies to all employees, volunteers, contractors, and visitors at Shaftesbury Millie College. It is focused on safeguarding students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), who are at higher risk due to communication barriers, discrimination, or social isolation.

3. Responsibilities

- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):**
  The DSL is responsible for safeguarding and child protection across the college. They manage safeguarding concerns, liaise with external agencies, and ensure compliance with statutory safeguarding requirements. In addition, the DSL provides safeguarding training to all staff, audits safeguarding learning modules, and holds weekly meetings with the Deputy DSLs (DDSLs) to review and manage cases. The DSL also oversees the administration of CPOMS, attends safeguarding meetings within the Education Directorate, completes local authority safeguarding audits, and

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coordinates auditing visits from the local advisory board member responsible for safeguarding.

- **Deputy DSL(s):** Support the DSL and take on their duties in the DSL's absence.
- **All Staff & Volunteers:** Must recognise and report safeguarding concerns immediately, in line with reporting procedures. They are responsible for fostering a safeguarding culture.
- **Senior Leadership Team (SLT):** Ensures that safeguarding policies are implemented, reviewed, and adhered to.

4. Safer Recruitment

The following Safer recruitment checks are in place:

- **DBS Checks:**
  All staff, volunteers, and contractors must undergo a mandatory **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check** before employment to ensure they are suitable to work with children (Children Act 1989; Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006).
- **Pre-Employment Checks:**
  In addition to the DBS check, other statutory recruitment checks must be carried out, including verification of identity, qualifications, and employment history.
- **Staff References:**
  References from at least two previous employers must be obtained before staff can commence work. This helps verify the candidate's suitability for working with children and confirms their employment history. References must be scrutinised to ensure there are no safeguarding concerns
- **Staff Disclosure:**
  Staff must disclose any relationships or associations that could affect safeguarding, including potential conflicts of interest or concerns about their conduct.
- **Single Central Record (SCR):**
  The college maintains a **Single Central Record (SCR)** to document all recruitment checks for staff, volunteers, and governors, ensuring compliance with safer recruitment procedures. **Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) have oversight and conduct regular checks.**

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5. Staff training

Induction Training:
All new staff must complete safeguarding training as part of their induction. All staff have an **essential** face-to-face session with the DSL during their first week, which highlights understanding of safeguarding issues, including abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and how to respond and report effectively. Followed by a more in-depth two-hour session within the first three weeks that focuses on identifying early signs of abuse, good reporting practice, contextual safeguarding and confidentiality.

- **Safeguarding Policies Overview:** Staff are introduced to the college's safeguarding procedures, recognising signs of abuse, and the reporting process.
- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Introduction:** Staff learn about the role of the DSL and DDSL's and how to escalate safeguarding concerns.

E-Learning Modules

In addition, all staff have key e-learning modules to complete as part of their probation including:

- **Child Protection and Safeguarding:** Covers signs of abuse, reporting responsibilities, and safeguarding children in educational settings.
- **Adult Safeguarding:** Focuses on protecting vulnerable adults, recognising abuse, and responding with dignity and respect.
- **Prevent Duty:** Educates staff on preventing radicalisation, recognising signs of extremism, and their responsibilities under the Prevent strategy.
- **GDPR:** Staff learn how to handle personal data in compliance with GDPR, ensuring confidentiality and safeguarding sensitive information.

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6. Recognising and Reporting Abuse:

Abuse includes physical, emotional, sexual abuse, and neglect. Staff must report any concerns to the DSL or Deputy DSL immediately using the CPOMS system. See separate standard operating procedure for using CPOMS. If a child is in immediate danger, 999 must be called before reporting to the DSL.

Peer-on-Peer Abuse: Includes bullying, exploitation, and sexual harassment. These must never be dismissed as 'banter'. All incidents are taken seriously and reported to the DSL for investigation.

7. Responding to Allegations:

Allegations Against Staff: Must be reported immediately to the Principal or the Director of education if the Principal is implicated. The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) must be informed within one working day.

Whistleblowing: Protection is provided to staff who report concerns. Staff should report any low-level concerns about colleagues' conduct to the Principal, or via the whistleblowing email.

8. Record Keeping and Confidentiality

All safeguarding records must be kept securely and treated as confidential:

- Records on CPOMS are covered by two-factor authentication.
- Paper copies of supporting documents should be uploaded to CPOMS and then shredded, or if essential to kept, then kept in a locked cabinet, in a locked office.
- Access to safeguarding records is restricted to the DSL, DDSL's Principal, and relevant external agencies.
- Records must be retained for 25 years after the student leaves the college.

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- Information will only be shared when it is necessary to protect a child. Safeguarding always overrides confidentiality in cases of risk or harm.

9. Early Help

Shaftesbury Millie College is committed to providing early help, working with local agencies to identify children and families who would benefit from support.

Internal support services involved in Early Help include:

- PBS Behaviour Lead
- Student Counsellor (external)
- Parent Support Group
- Physiotherapy (external)
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- PBS Lead
- Care Lead
- Pastoral and Wellbeing Lead

These team members collaborate with the DSL to assess needs using the Common Assessment Framework or routes identified by the Local Authority. This may include referrals to services such as CAMHS, Educational Psychology, and external counselling.

10. Partnership with Parents

We are committed to working in partnership with parents and carers, and encourage open communication through student planners, emails, and phone calls. Parents are informed about our safeguarding policies via the college website, which also includes links to a wide range of resources on safeguarding topics and signposts for additional help and guidance. Any concerns discussed with parents will be recorded on CPOMS. When concerns are raised, early help and support options are offered.

In some cases, it may not be appropriate to discuss concerns with parents if it could put the child at greater risk. In such situations, the Police or Children's

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Services will notify the DSL about domestic abuse incidents, and we will act to monitor and support the child's welfare, working closely with all involved agencies.

11. Multi-Agency Collaboration

The college works closely with external agencies, including social services, the police, healthcare providers, and safeguarding partners (Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships and Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub.)

In line with the Prevent Duty, staff are trained to identify signs of radicalisation and must report concerns to the DSL. Referrals may be made to the Channel programme when necessary.

The college is also registered with **Operation Encompass**, allowing us to receive timely notifications from the police regarding students who have experienced domestic abuse. This enables us to provide appropriate support at the earliest opportunity.

The college will share information in compliance with GDPR and data protection regulations, ensuring the safety of the student is the top priority.

12. Enhanced Safeguarding Considerations for SEND Students

Risk Assessments: Individual risk assessments are conducted for all SEND students. Including e-safety and Prevent risk assessments.

Communication Support: The college adopts a total communication approach to supporting students' communication and staff receive training on strategies to support non-verbal students and those with specific communication needs.

Safeguarding Measures: Additional safeguards are implemented for intimate care, physical intervention, and personal safety for SEND students.

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13. Confidentiality and Data Protection

While safeguarding records are confidential, safeguarding concerns always take precedence over confidentiality when a child's safety is at risk. Staff should not promise confidentiality in cases of suspected abuse.

Information may be shared without consent where it is deemed necessary to protect the child's wellbeing, in line with GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

14. The Prevent Duty

As part of safeguarding, the college takes action to prevent students from being drawn into extremism or terrorism.

All staff receive training on recognising the signs of radicalisation. If staff are concerned, they must refer students to the DSL for appropriate action, which may include referral to the Channel programme for support.

Student who are at risk of radicalisation have a PREVENT risk assessment

The DDSL and PREVENT Lead for Millie college is Geoff Lively
glively@shaftesburygroup.org - 07710702686

15. E-Safety & Digital Safeguarding

The college has an online safety policy that all new staff are required to read during their first week and all staff have ongoing access to.

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The college ensures the online safety of students by implementing robust filtering and monitoring systems. With the support of college e-safety risk assessment.

Safeguarding staff/volunteer training for staff covers e-safety, responsible use of technology and AI use. Where needed additional training on specific e-safety areas is delivered to staff.

Students receive bespoke/differentiated education on responsible use of technology, and those with independent access to devices linked to the internet complete a personal online safety agreement.

All students have e-safety risk assessments

The college has an online safety champion – Ben Church bchurch@shaftesburygroup.org, who works closely with the curriculum lead – Aaron Gregory agregory@shaftesburygroup.org to ensure e-safety is built into the curriculum.

The curriculum lead and online safety champion deliver e safety forum training for parents to support their understanding.

Use of students using AI tools is monitored, and risk assessments are carried out to ensure they do not expose students to harmful content.

16. Contextual Safeguarding

The college recognises that safeguarding risks can arise outside the school environment. Contextual safeguarding is covered in staff training and the college works with external agencies to identify and address these risks, particularly those related to family dynamics, peer relationships, or community influences.

17. Attendance

Shaftesbury Millie College recognises that poor attendance can be an indicator of potential abuse. The **DSL, who holds attendance responsibility**, monitors attendance on a daily basis, with concerns being reported at safeguarding

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meetings for team review. This ensures that any patterns of poor attendance are promptly addressed and investigated, supporting the safeguarding of all students.

Attendance and safeguarding reporting are delivered to the Local advisory board and are part of the monthly KPI reporting programme that is reviewed by the Shaftesbury Director of education.

18. Equal Opportunities & Safeguarding

Safeguarding procedures are inclusive and take into account the needs of vulnerable groups, including students with SEND, young carers, and those from diverse or at-risk backgrounds.

19. Serious Incident Notifications

The DSL must report any serious safeguarding incidents to Ofsted. The principal will inform the relevant authorities about any serious allegations or incidents.

If an allegation against a staff member is substantiated and they are dismissed, a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) will be made.

20. Monitoring and Review

This Standard operating procedure is reviewed annually by the DSL and SLT, ensuring it remains aligned with legislative changes and best practice.

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Safeguarding incidents will prompt immediate reviews of procedures. Feedback from staff, students, and parents will be incorporated into the review process.

21. Contact Information

- **DSL Contact:**

Emma Browning ebrowning@shaftesburygroup.org - 01202 625562

- **Deputy DSL Contact:**

Geoff Lively glively@shaftesburygroup.org - 07710702686
Rebecca Burgess rburgess@shaftesburygroup.org - 07711154594
Sarah Jeans sjeans@shaftesburygroup.org - 07711154594

- **Local Authority Safeguarding Contact:** LADO@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk 01305 221122
- **Emergency Services:** 999

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