



Safeguarding Policy

This is a B&FC Group policy

Date approved: 6 July 2026
Approved by: Corporation Board
Responsible Manager (s): Director of Student Services, Director of Student Journey, Head of Student Support Wellbeing and Incusion
Executive Lead: Executive Principal

Applicable to employees:	Yes
Applicable to students and apprentices:	Yes
Accessible to students and apprentices:	Yes
Accessible to general public: (including clients)	Yes

Consultation

Consultation undertaken with: Safeguarding Board	Date: 19 June 2026
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Policy review frequency, normally: annually

Contents

1. Scope and purpose of the policy
2. Policy statement
3. Statutory Requirements
4. Accountability
5. Roles and Responsibilities
6. Definitions
7. Prevent
8. Online Safety
9. Safeguarding Concerns and Risks
10. Safeguarding Arrangements for Apprenticeship and Work Experience

11. Safeguarding Arrangements for Trips and Visits
12. Safer Recruitment
13. Linked Policies and Procedures
Equality Impact Assessment

Appendices

1. Safeguarding Contacts
2. Local Authority and Safeguarding Partners
3. Indicators of Risk

1. Scope and purpose of policy

This policy applies to all Blackpool and The Fylde College Group students, apprentices, employees, governors, volunteers, agency employees, contractors, subcontractors, visitors, external speakers, employers and partners involved in college activities on site, off site, online or in the workplace.

Its purpose is to provide a clear Group-wide safeguarding framework that promotes the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk; supports early identification of need; explains expectations for reporting and responding to concerns; and sets out how the College Group and each member of the Group meet their statutory duties. This policy sets the overarching safeguarding expectations, governance arrangements and minimum standards for Blackpool and The Fylde College Group. Each member of the Group will maintain local safeguarding procedures, contacts, referral routes and operational arrangements that reflect its provision, learner profile, local authority partnerships and site-specific risks. The policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- Safeguarding and promoting positive welfare is everyone's responsibility.
- The welfare of students, apprentices, and employees is paramount.
- All students and apprentices, regardless of age, disability, sex, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership status, or socio-economic background, are entitled to effective safeguarding arrangements.
- This policy should be read alongside local safeguarding procedures, employee codes of conduct, and linked Group and local College policies.

2. Policy statement

Blackpool and The Fylde College Group is committed to providing a safe, respectful, inclusive and supportive environment in which students and apprentices can learn, thrive and achieve. The College Group recognises both its moral duty and statutory responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk, and to protect them from abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm. In doing so, the College Group will:

- create a culture of vigilance, listening and timely action;
- ensure all members of the community know who they can talk to and how to get help;
- promote early help and multi-agency working where needs emerge;
- take all concerns seriously, including concerns arising online, off site or in the workplace;
- maintain robust safeguarding, child protection and safer recruitment arrangements;

- teach students and apprentices about safeguarding, healthy relationships, consent, online safety, British values and how to manage risk and seek support;
- take appropriate action in relation to allegations against employees, volunteers, contractors and other adults working on behalf of the College Group;
- support freedom of speech within the law while challenging extremism, harmful narratives, discrimination and abuse.

3. Statutory Requirements

This policy is informed by the following legislation, statutory guidance and sector expectations:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current version in force, with draft 2026 consultation changes considered before approval).
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 and the 2026 references reflected within local partnership procedures.
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004.
- Education Act 2002, section 175.
- Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021.
- Care Act 2014.
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and Prevent Duty Guidance for further education institutions.
- Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.
- Modern Slavery Act 2015.
- Human Rights Act 1998.
- Ofsted safeguarding expectations for further education and skills providers.
- Office for Students requirements relating to harassment and sexual misconduct where relevant to higher education provision.

4. Accountability

- The Corporation Board holds ultimate accountability for ensuring that the College Group and each member of the Group have effective safeguarding arrangements, policies and oversight.
- The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented across the College Group and that sufficient resources are available for safeguarding functions within each member of the Group.
- The Director of Student Services is the strategic safeguarding lead, Group College Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Group Prevent strategic lead/SPOC role holder for the purpose of this policy framework
- The Head of Student Support, Wellbeing and Inclusion works with the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager, safeguarding practitioners, curriculum and support teams to maintain effective day-to-day practice at locations within Blackpool and The Fylde.
- The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)/Pastoral Lead works with Safeguarding practitioners in the Personal Progress Coach (PPC), Apprenticeship

Team and Learning Support Teams to maintain effective day-to-day practice at locations within the Furness Peninsula.

- All employees, governors, volunteers and those working on behalf of the College Group are accountable for acting on concerns immediately and in line with local procedures.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Corporation Board

- Ensure the College Group and each member of the Group comply with safeguarding law and statutory guidance;
- Receive regular safeguarding assurance and monitoring information;
- Ensure an appropriately qualified and empowered DSL is appointed;
- Ensure safeguarding training, safer recruitment arrangements and allegation management procedures are in place;
- Ensure the policy is reviewed at least annually and is publicly available.

CEO/Principal and Executive Members

- Promote a whole-group safeguarding culture while ensuring effective local safeguarding practice within each member of the Group;
- Ensure safeguarding is embedded within Group strategy and within each member's curriculum, personal development, behaviour, attendance, People and quality processes;
- Enable the Group DSL, local DSLs and deputies to carry out their duties effectively, including attendance at strategy meetings and liaison with external agencies.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL)

- Provide expert safeguarding leadership, advice and decision-making;
- Manage or oversee referrals to children's social care, adult social care, police, Channel, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and other agencies in line with local safeguarding procedures;
- Support employees who make referrals and maintain appropriate child protection and safeguarding records;
- Work with curriculum, attendance, SEND, wellbeing, residential, apprenticeship and employer-facing teams so that learner needs are considered holistically;
- Promote educational outcomes by understanding how safeguarding issues may affect attendance, engagement, achievement and progression;
- Raise awareness, deliver or commission training, and ensure learners know how to seek help.

All employees, governors, volunteers and contractors

- Read and understand the safeguarding information and training appropriate to their role;
- Know the signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation, and contextual harm;

- Understand local safeguarding reporting routes and act without delay if they have a concern, receive a disclosure, or observe unsafe practice;
- Maintain professional curiosity and avoid assumptions, particularly where attendance, presentation, behaviour or wellbeing changes;
- Contribute to a safe learning environment, including online and in work-based settings;
- Follow the relevant local employee code of conduct, low-level concerns process and whistleblowing arrangements.

6. Definitions

- Adult at risk: an adult aged 18 or over who has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs), is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect
- Child: a person who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.
- Child Safeguarding: safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children through providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge; protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online; preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
- Child protection: part of safeguarding and promoting welfare and refers to the activity undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm
- Early help: support provided as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years, to improve outcomes for the child and prevent needs from escalating.
- Contextual safeguarding: an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that harm can occur in peer groups, schools, neighbourhoods, online spaces and other extra-familial contexts, and that these contexts may require assessment and intervention as part of safeguarding practice.
- Child-on-child abuse: abuse that occurs between children. It can happen both inside and outside of school or college, online or face to face, and can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying), abuse in intimate personal relationships between children, physical abuse, sexual violence, sexual harassment, consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos, causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, upskirting, and initiation or hazing-type violence and rituals.

7. Prevent

The College Group recognises that protecting learners from radicalisation and extremism is part of its wider safeguarding duties. Any concern that a learner may be susceptible to extremist ideology, radicalisation or terrorism-related influence will be treated as a safeguarding concern and managed through normal local safeguarding procedures, including referral to Channel where appropriate. To meet its Prevent responsibilities, the College Group will ensure that:

- A Group Prevent Policy will be maintained, setting out the College Group's overarching Prevent governance, responsibilities, risk assessment expectations and assurance arrangements, with local procedures in place for each member of the Group;
- The College Group and each member of the Group will have due regard to the Prevent Duty in all relevant aspects of their work;
- The Director of Student Services is the strategic Prevent lead / single point of contact (SPOC) within this policy framework;
- Employees will receive Prevent awareness training as part of mandatory safeguarding training, with additional role-specific training where required;
- Learners will be supported to develop critical thinking, digital resilience and confidence to challenge extremist narratives safely and lawfully;
- Risk assessment, referral pathways, visiting speakers, events, use of premises and online risks will be managed through local Prevent procedures and risk assessment arrangements within each member of the Group.

8. Online Safety

Online safety is a safeguarding issue. The College Group recognises that learners may be exposed to risk through content, contact, conduct and commerce, and that online harm can occur both on and off College Group systems. The College Group will manage online safety through Group expectations and local arrangements, including the following:

- Each member of the Group will maintain filtering and/or monitoring arrangements appropriate to its provision and learner profile;
- Learners will be taught how to keep themselves safe online, including privacy, consent, reporting, critical evaluation of online material and digital reputation;
- Employees will understand how online safety links to child protection, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, harassment, coercion, fraud, radicalisation and wellbeing;
- Concerns involving online abuse, grooming, coercive control, bullying, sharing of intimate images, AI-enabled abuse or harmful digital behaviour will be reported through local safeguarding procedures;
- The College Group will work within linked Group and local IT acceptable use, cyber security, data protection and behaviour policies.

Online Safety and KCSIE 2026

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 places increased emphasis on emerging online harms and the need for colleges to recognise how digital environments can contribute to safeguarding risk. In line with this, the College Group will ensure that its online safety

arrangements, curriculum, employee training and safeguarding procedures take account of the following areas:

- Misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy narratives
- Artificial Intelligence related safeguarding risks, including AI-generated intimate imagery and manipulated content;
- Online misogyny and its interaction with harmful sexual behaviour;
- Technology-facilitated abuse, including deepfakes, impersonation, coercion and harassment.

9. Safeguarding Concerns and Risks

Any student or apprentice may experience safeguarding harm. Employees should be alert to need, vulnerability and risk, including but not limited to the issues below. These are not labels for individual learners; they are examples of areas of risk that may require support, assessment or referral through local safeguarding procedures. The list is non-exhaustive:

- abuse and neglect;
- child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment, sexual violence, bullying and hazing;
- child criminal exploitation, county lines and serious violence;
- child sexual exploitation;
- domestic abuse and teenage relationship abuse;
- honour-based abuse, forced marriage and female genital mutilation;
- modern slavery, trafficking and exploitation;
- radicalisation and extremism;
- online abuse, including grooming and image-based abuse;
- sharing of self-generated intimate images or videos, including AI-generated or manipulated imagery;
- poor mental health where it becomes a safeguarding concern;
- substance misuse;
- homelessness and hidden homelessness;
- children missing education, repeated and prolonged absence and unexplained non-attendance;
- risks affecting learners with SEND, disabilities, care experience, social workers or other additional vulnerabilities.

10. Safeguarding Arrangements for Apprenticeships and Students on Work Experience

- The same safeguarding expectations apply to apprentices and learners on industry placement, work experience, work trials, or other work-based activities.
- Employers and placement providers must be made aware of safeguarding expectations, local escalation routes, and how to report concerns about a learner or employee.
- Adults supervising children on work experience must be subject to appropriate checks and risk assessments in line with current safer recruitment and KCSIE expectations.

- Apprentices and placement learners must know how to access the relevant local safeguarding support whilst off campus.

11. Safeguarding Arrangements for Trips and Visits

- All educational visits, residentials, enrichment trips and off-site activities must include appropriate risk assessments that consider safeguarding and clear local reporting arrangements.
- Trip leaders must ensure suitable supervision, communication arrangements, emergency contacts and escalation routes are in place.
- Additional planning must be undertaken where activities involve overnight stays, vulnerable learners, external providers, international travel or higher-risk environments.
- Any safeguarding concern arising during a trip or visit must be reported immediately through the relevant safeguarding team and, where necessary, emergency services or local safeguarding agencies.

12. Safer Recruitment

The College Group is committed to preventing unsuitable people from working with learners and will follow safer recruitment practice in line with statutory guidance, Group expectations and local recruitment procedures. This will include the following arrangements:

- Pre-employment checks will be completed as required, including identity, right to work, employment history, references, qualifications, DBS and barred list checks where relevant, prohibition and Section 128 checks where applicable, and any other role-specific checks.
- Online searches of shortlisted candidates will be completed where required by current guidance and relevant Group or local procedure.
- At least one person on the interview panel will have completed safer recruitment training where this is required by Group or local procedure.
- Each member of the Group will maintain a robust single central record for required categories of employees and others.
- Allegations, concerns meeting the harm threshold, and low-level concerns about staff, volunteers, agency employees, contractors and others working on behalf of the College Group will be managed promptly through the appropriate safeguarding, People and LADO processes, in line with Group expectations and local procedures.

13. Linked Policies and Procedures

Group:

- Low Level Concerns Policy 26-27
- Prevent Policy 26-27

Blackpool and The Fylde:

- Positive Student Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying and Anti-Harassment Policy (Student)
- Appropriateness of Study Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- IT Systems Acceptable use Policy
- Security policy
- Employee professional boundaries policy

Furness:

- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- HR Policy
- Acceptable Use of IT Policy (Students)

Appendix 1

Safeguarding Contacts

Role	Name	Contact Details
Strategic Safeguarding Lead / Group DSL	Matt Dillon, Director of Student Services	
Furness DSL	Helen Gibson, Director of Student Journey	
Blackpool and The Fylde DDSL	Rebecca Skatrrats, Head of Student Support, Wellbeing and Inclusion	
	Sally Chapman, Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager	
Furness DDSL	Julia Wright, DDSL/Safeguarding Officer	
Safeguarding Enquiries	Blackpool and The Fylde: safeguardingadministration@blackpool.ac.uk	For non-urgent enquiries and information requests.
	Furness College: safeguarding@furness.ac.uk	

Appendix 2

External Local Authority and Safeguarding Partners

Service	Area	Contact	Use
Request for Support Hub / children's social care	Blackpool	01253 477299	For child welfare / safeguarding concerns.
Emergency Duty Team	Blackpool	01253 477600	Out of hours child safeguarding concerns.
LADO	Blackpool	01253 477541 lado@blackpool.gov.uk	Allegations or concerns about adults working with children.
Children's social care / Care Connect	Fylde / Wyre / Lancashire	0300 123 6720	For child welfare concerns.
Emergency Duty Team	Lancashire	0300 123 6722	Out of hours child safeguarding concerns.
LADO	Lancashire	lado.admin@lancashire.gov.uk	Use Lancashire online referral arrangements for concerns about professionals.
Police emergency	All areas	999	Immediate danger or risk of serious harm.
Police non-emergency	All areas	101	Police advice or non-emergency reporting.

Service	Area	Contact	Use
Prevent concern email	Lancashire	concern@lancashire.pnn.police.uk	Non-urgent Prevent concerns as referenced by Fylde Council guidance.
NSPCC Helpline	National	0808 800 5000 help@nspcc.org.uk	Advice and support.

Appendix 3 Indicators of Risk

Indicators of safeguarding risk may present in different ways and may involve one concern or a pattern of concerns over time. They should not be viewed in isolation, dismissed as minor, or explained away without professional curiosity. Any change in a learner's presentation, behaviour, attendance, relationships or online activity should be considered in context and, where there is a concern, reported in line with local safeguarding procedures.

- Physical indicators: unexplained or repeated injuries, frequent minor injuries, injuries with inconsistent explanations, poor hygiene, inappropriate clothing, persistent hunger, fatigue, untreated medical or dental needs, or signs that basic care needs are not being met;
- Behavioural and emotional indicators: withdrawal, fearfulness, low mood, anxiety, aggression, hypervigilance, sudden changes in confidence or presentation, sexualised behaviour, self-harm, risk-taking behaviour, reluctance to go home or to a particular setting, or responses that appear disproportionate to the situation;
- Attendance and engagement indicators: repeated or prolonged absence, unexplained patterns of lateness, going missing during the College day, non-engagement with learning or support, sudden decline in performance, avoidance of particular people or places, or inconsistent attendance linked to possible external pressure or harm;
- Contextual and exploitation indicators: association with older peers or unknown adults, unexplained gifts, money or possessions, multiple phones or changes in phone use, hotel use, secrecy about whereabouts, debt, intimidation, transport patterns suggesting exploitation, unexplained injuries after being missing, or evidence that a learner is being controlled, coerced or pressured by others;
- Online and digital indicators: distress after being online or using a device, coercive or controlling messaging, pressure to share images, account hacking, impersonation, blackmail, threats to share intimate images, exposure to harmful content, excessive monitoring by another person, or behaviour suggesting grooming, exploitation or technology-facilitated abuse.

Equality Impact Assessment

Impact Assessment for the 4 strands of Equality, Safeguarding, Health and safety and Sustainability					
Initial Form to be completed with Risk Assessments or as part of a proposal or change to a policy, plan or new way of working					
Title of Activity: Safeguarding Policy Name and title of proposer: Matt Dillon, Director of Student Services				Revision or New New	
Equality and Diversity. Are there students, apprentices, other customers, community/stakeholders, and/or colleague concerns that the proposed policy, project or change may be discriminatory or have an adverse impact on people with protected characteristics?					
A	Students/Apps/Customer	No	If so, how many individuals / which groups of are likely to be affected?		
B	Community/stakeholders	No			
C	Colleague	No			
Equality group		Positive impact High Low None	Negative impact High Low None	Reason / comments for positive impact why it could benefit any /all of the equality groups	Reason /comments for negative impact /what could disadvantage any/all of the equality groups
Gender (Men/women/Non-binary/Transgender)		N	N		
Age		N	N		
Race or ethnicity		N	N		
Learning difference		N	N		
Physical and/or sensory disability		N	N		
Mental health need		N	N		
Sexual Orientation		N	N		
Religion and Belief		N	N		
Marriage and civil partnership		N	N		
Pregnancy and maternity		N	N		
Carers/care experienced		N	N		
Socio Economic deprivation indicators		N	N		
Applies to ALL groups		N	N		
What changes or actions do you recommend to improve the service, project, policy, or change to eradicate or minimise the negative impacts identified? Who will be responsible for monitoring these actions?					
Have students, apprentices/other customers, communities and/or colleagues been consulted in the review / proposed change?					
A	Students/Apps/Customers	Non			
B	Community	No			
C	Colleague	Yes			
	If yes, who and how many have you involved and how have they been involved?	Members of CLT, Members of Safeguarding Board Members of Exec and Directors			
Safeguarding: Are there any aspects of this proposal which could cause a Student/member of staff/visitor to feel unsafe? If yes, how has this been considered? What are the risks? What are the benefits?					No
Health and Safety: Have any risks been identified? If yes, how has this been considered? What are the risks? What are the benefits?					No
Sustainability: Are there expected benefits or impacts on sustainability issues? If yes, how have these been considered?					No
Evidence: What evidence do you have for your conclusions and expectations for these conclusions? How will this impact be monitored for all these considerations?					
Is this policy of a high/medium or low risk?:					Low