



An aspect report by HM Inspectors on behalf of the  
Scottish Funding Council



Safeguarding arrangements  
and practice in  
Scotland's colleges  
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# 1. Introduction and methodology

## Introduction

Responsibility for safeguarding in Scotland's colleges ranges from ensuring the safety and welfare of children and adults at risk to a general duty of care extended to all learners and staff. In discharging this, colleges deal with diverse groups of learners in a complex landscape. They do so in an environment that strives to be adult and inclusive. Colleges face the challenge that maintaining this environment introduces a greater element of risk to vulnerable learners<sup>1</sup> since it introduces them to new experiences such as work placements, and exposes them to a wider range of adults than they may have previously encountered.

How colleges address safeguarding is reflected in their policies and procedures, and how these are promoted to their learners, staff and visitors. Colleges have made great progress in ensuring that they have policies and procedures in place to guide safeguarding practice and that the practices are, in turn, based upon principles of empowering young people. The external quality arrangements for Scotland's colleges<sup>2</sup> require that colleges complete a safeguarding pro-forma (see Appendix 1) to ensure that they have policies and procedures in place to guide safeguarding practice. Having policies and procedures is essential but does not of itself ensure that safeguarding is effective. The more important evidence is that which indicates the operation and impact of these policies and procedures in practice.

This report identifies the approaches, main features and best practice in safeguarding arrangements within Scotland's colleges and makes recommendations for improvement.

The report addresses this through:

- investigating the level of understanding of safeguarding held by college managers and their staff, both with regard to specific responsibilities and legal requirements and also more generalised responsibilities concerning duty of care;
- evaluating the impact of safeguarding approaches on those designated as vulnerable groups, both from the perspective of protection and engagement in learning and the wider college environment;
- identifying excellence and sector-leading and innovative practice; and
- making recommendations for improvement to current practice.

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<sup>1</sup> For a list of vulnerable learners, as identified in *16+ Learning Choices Policies and Practice framework*, see Appendix 4

<sup>2</sup> *HMIE External quality arrangements for Scotland's colleges, September 2008*

## Methodology

Thirty-eight of Scotland's 43 colleges completed an HMIE questionnaire seeking information on current approaches to safeguarding. The responses to this provided a picture of policies and practice across the sector. Colleges provided information about current practice in:

- meeting statutory duties;
- the wider duty of care and the identification of vulnerable learners;
- staff recruitment, induction and training;
- safeguarding practice within the wider college environment, including within work experience arrangements; and
- the college ethos and its impact on providing a safe environment for all staff and learners, including approaches to on-line safety.

HM Inspectors selected ten colleges for more detailed discussion (see Appendix 2). These were chosen to reflect the diversity of the sector and HM Inspectors met with senior managers with responsibility for safeguarding; groups of staff; and groups of learners. Discussions sought to explore in more detail staff awareness of safeguarding practice and emerging issues within Scotland's colleges.

HM inspectors also engaged with a number of other partner organisations. This included *Scotland's Colleges* (formerly the *Scottish Further Education Unit*), which provides a support and training service for college staff on related issues, and *Respectme*, which has worked with colleges in developing their approaches to safeguarding.

This evidence was supplemented from an analysis of recent HMIE evaluative activity in Scotland's colleges (see Appendix 1) and through wider consideration of relevant policy documents and literature.

## Summary of findings

- All colleges<sup>3</sup> have policies and procedures to address safeguarding. These help ensure that learners know who to contact if they have concerns and that staff are clear about actions they should take. However, although policies and procedures are regularly reviewed, colleges vary in the consistency of their approach to involving learners in reviewing and assessing the impact of policies.
- All colleges have safe recruitment policies in place and apply these to all staff, volunteers and, where relevant, to sub-contractors. However, there is no robust system for applying these policies to staff from outwith the UK. This is particularly relevant in obtaining disclosures.
- All colleges ensure staff, learners and volunteers receive basic information on the legal requirements of child protection and most use in-house staff and external partners to extend awareness through training events and workshops. *Scotland's Colleges* provided a valued service in this area for many colleges.

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<sup>3</sup> Of Scotland's 43 colleges, 38 responded, a return rate of 88%. 'All colleges' within this paper refers to all colleges who responded to the questionnaire.

- Staff and learners generally have a high level of awareness of safeguarding policies and procedures. Colleges use a variety of means, including posters, leaflets and plasma screens, to ensure that important messages are communicated.
- All colleges have complaints procedures that are made known to all learners, staff and visitors. Allegations of abuse or neglect are always progressed through formal procedures. Whilst colleges monitor formal complaints, they vary in the extent to which they use information derived from informal complaints in order to identify emerging issues.
- Colleges have clear and effective procedures in place to safeguard and support those learners under 16 who attend college as part of a school/college partnership arrangement. In the case of young people with additional support needs leaving school to attend college, schools use transition forms to signal a young person's needs to college. However, colleges note difficulties in identifying the needs of learners over 16 who choose not to volunteer important information, particularly in the case of young people who have been looked after by the local authority, either in care or at home (LAC/LAAC)<sup>4</sup>. Colleges with good partnership networks with social work and voluntary agencies in particular are more successful in identifying these young people.
- Colleges vary in the extent to which they use out-of-college learning experiences to extend and enrich learning. Where they do, colleges prepare learners and placement providers well, taking account of the needs of learners through a rigorous process of risk assessments.
- More than a few colleges have residential accommodation. This is covered by appropriate safeguarding procedures. These help to ensure the safety and security of residents, particularly those under the age of 18 or adults at risk.
- All colleges address internet safety through 'acceptable use' policies to ensure appropriate use of information and communications technology (ICT). Staff and learners are required to adhere to these policies. In addition, the majority of colleges provide information to learners about online safety. A few colleges have gone further and tackled the issue of 'cyberbullying' through effective awareness raising and training.
- Colleges strive to create an ethos of mutual respect and some colleges have successfully adopted a specific high profile campaign which focuses learners' attention on acceptable behaviours towards each other.
- All colleges agree that they face a complex and changing environment with regard to safeguarding. They identify the following contributory factors:
  - increasing numbers of school learners within colleges;
  - difficulties in identifying vulnerable learners and emerging groups in need of support, as well as difficulties in identifying learners who pose a risk to themselves and others;
  - striking a balance between managing risk and pursuing inclusive practices when organising the learning experiences, and particularly work experiences, of vulnerable adults; and
  - maintaining meaningful dialogue with agencies involved in safeguarding.

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<sup>4</sup> LAC – looked after children and young people  
 LAAC – looked after and accommodated children and young people

All colleges address safeguarding and meet legal obligations, generally showing careful regard for learners. However, the following issues and inconsistencies emerged and these provide an agenda for developing safeguarding practices further.

The main issues emerging for colleges to take forward are:

- consolidation of an appropriate safeguarding policy that is cross referenced to other policies and procedures in an effective way;
- ensuring mechanisms to check the effectiveness and impact on learners of procedures through self-evaluation;
- adopting a consistent approach to promoting safe use of the internet to support staff and advise and empower learners;
- adopting an approach to updating safeguarding training for staff that incorporates monitoring impact;
- improving approaches to identifying vulnerable learners, based on establishing and maintaining effective information-sharing with partner organisations/agencies;
- adopting a systematic approach to identification of those learners who pose a risk to themselves and others; and
- developing the involvement of the student association in safeguarding through providing information and signposting for learners and engaging in the development of policies and practice.

## 2. Background

The term 'safeguarding' is increasingly used by colleges and other agencies to describe the approaches they take to protect and secure the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults. There is no legal definition of safeguarding.

*'It is a concept that has evolved from the initial concern about children and young people in public care to include the protection from harm of all children and young people and to cover all agencies working with (them)...<sup>5</sup>*

The term is now widely accepted to encompass the procedures and practices of an agency to ensure the reduction of risk of harm and actions taken to address concerns about welfare. The term is now applied to include adults at risk, a term itself that has been widened to include those whose needs for additional support and services may be temporary or short term.

HM Inspectorate of Education's guidance on safeguarding describes the underpinning principles upon which safeguarding practices are based.

*'Everyone has a responsibility to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults.  
Every child, young person and vulnerable adult has, at all times, a right to feel safe and protected from any situation or practice which may result in physical or emotional harm.  
Above all, the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults is the paramount consideration and we must all work together to ensure they are protected.'<sup>6</sup>*

These principles are enshrined in law and should guide practice in all educational establishments, including schools, centres and colleges. The principles determine how institutions deal with disclosures of abuse and secure a safe environment for their learners.

Safeguarding includes legal obligations described in several pieces of legislation, for example:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003
- Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act 2004
- Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007.

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<sup>5</sup> Department of Health (2002) *Safeguarding children: a joint chief inspectors' report on arrangements to safeguard children*

<sup>6</sup> HMIE (2008) *Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance: protecting those at risk, the adults who work with them and inspection/review team members*



The following legislation has also played a significant role in shaping approaches in safeguarding:

- The Age of Legal Capacity (Scotland) Act 1991
- The Children (Scotland) Act 1995
- The Police (Scotland) Act 1997
- The Data Protection Act 1998
- Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 1998.

In addition, legislation on equalities has a bearing on safeguarding for example the Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003 and the Disability Discrimination Act (2005) through proscribing discriminatory practices. There are also high level policy documents such as *Looked After Children and Young People: We Can and Must Do Better* (2007)<sup>7</sup> which makes recommendations to support children and young people who are looked after by local authorities.

Ultimately, all are rooted in the Articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by the UK in 1991, and the Human Rights Act 1998. At a fundamental level, this means that children and young people have the right to be protected from abuse and exploitation; to hold and express views on any matters concerning them; and to be treated as individuals. Public bodies have the responsibility to uphold these rights. The Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000 and the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 iterate these rights for vulnerable adults.

Colleges provide further and higher education to a wide range of learners. This includes some who are under 16, vulnerable adults and those considered at risk. In doing this, it is important that colleges uphold the right to education and personal development of adults at risk and ensure that no learners are isolated from mainstream college activities. As part of the self development of learners, colleges should also encourage young people to be involved in safeguarding themselves. In so doing, they need to provide opportunities through the curriculum to help achieve this. Colleges also have obligations under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 not to discriminate against those whose sentences are regarded as spent.

The Human Rights Act has particular significance for colleges and their responsibilities in safeguarding. Based on the principles of equality, dignity and respect, it describes certain rights such as the right to education and the right not to be subject to degrading treatment. These principles place a responsibility on colleges to respect the rights of individuals not to be harmed, physically or psychologically, whilst at college and to prevent others, as far as is possible, from infringing these.

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<sup>7</sup> Looked After Children and Young People: We Can and Must Do Better  
<http://holyrood inquiry.org/Publications/2007/01/15084446/0>



In addition to the specific protection owed to vulnerable groups, colleges have a general duty of care to all their learners, staff and visitors. A duty of care is understood as:

*'...the obligation to exercise a level of care towards an individual, as is reasonable in all the circumstances, to avoid injury to that individual or his property.'*<sup>8</sup>

This duty of care is seen in the development of health and safety policies that cover accommodation, equipment and the working practices of colleges and also those who carry out work on their behalf. The duty of care is particularly relevant in the case of young people between the ages of 16 and 21 since the law accepts that there are clearly times when they can be seen as in need of additional care<sup>9</sup>. Accordingly, safeguarding within colleges should extend to protecting the rights of vulnerable groups but also ensuring that college operations do not harm any of the users of college services. In doing so, colleges not only protect their learners, staff, partners and visitors, but also protect the college against financial and reputational damage.

In developing their approach to safeguarding, not all colleges have access to that local authority support and guidance that helps ensure consistency across the schools' sector. Colleges may not be part of a local network for child protection. Whilst *Scotland's Colleges* has been a key source of support in providing advice, including assistance in drafting safeguarding policies, colleges remain largely autonomous in their operation with regard to safeguarding practices. This has resulted in a wide range of policies, procedures and approaches within the sector in relation to safeguarding.

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.jisclegal.ac.uk/ManageContent/ViewDetail/tabid/243/ID/871/Duty-of-Care-in-the-Further-and-Higher-Education-Sectors--01102002.aspx>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.jisclegal.ac.uk/ManageContent/ViewDetail/tabid/243/ID/871/Duty-of-Care-in-the-Further-and-Higher-Education-Sectors--01102002.aspx>

### **3. College responses to safeguarding requirements**

#### **Meeting statutory duties**

All colleges have policies and procedures in place to address safeguarding. Some have an overarching or comprehensive policy that is cross-referenced to other related policies and procedures. Others have a variety of discrete policies and procedures that address the safeguarding of children and adults at risk. *Scotland's Colleges* have been effective in raising awareness of changes in legislation. Support for the sector has included guidance and development of a draft safeguarding policy. However, in a few instances, policy statements are not fully consistent with other relevant material as a result of inconsistencies in updating.

#### *Named person*

All colleges have a named person with designated responsibility for safeguarding under the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003. In almost all colleges, this is a non-teaching member of staff, often, but not always, a member of the management team. In most colleges, the named person is also the contact person for school link courses. This named person provides advice on safeguarding issues within the college and is the person notified in the event of disclosures. In more than a few colleges, several staff members share this responsibility, sometimes forming a safeguarding team. In almost all colleges, these staff are members of learner support or guidance services. Most colleges have senior members of staff who can be contacted evenings or weekends over safeguarding issues.

Most colleges have welcomed increasing numbers of school link learners in recent years. This, however, raises issues of safety and supervision associated with timetabling and travel. School learners are subject to local authority procedures and colleges work in partnership with education services, particularly in areas of reporting absences and incidents, health and safety, and discipline. In all colleges, the named member of staff with responsibility for safeguarding ensures that there are processes in place to notify schools as soon as possible in the event of absences or incidents occurring within the college.

#### *Contact with parents/carers*

Most colleges have procedures that address staff contact with parents and/or carers. These also cover supported learning programmes and/or college nurseries. Almost all colleges have procedures in place to deal with, and report on, learners leaving college without permission. In most colleges, these procedures apply specifically to learners under 16 years of age, forming part of the school/college partnership agreement with the local authority.

A few colleges have adopted a procedure whereby young people between the ages of 16 and 18 sign a form to agree that parents can be contacted in the event of absences. Parallel arrangements exist with regard to adults at risk. Notification of absence procedures can also apply to other groups of learners such as international learners or learners from open prisons.

#### *Review of policies and procedures*

Colleges review safeguarding and related policies and procedures regularly. Almost all are in the process of updating child protection policies to incorporate adults at risk. All colleges consider the impact of policies and practice on learners, staff and partners and more than a few consult widely on these with staff and partners, including local education authorities. A few colleges have a child protection or safeguarding working group which can identify matters of concern and raise issues to be addressed through senior management. In most colleges, learners have an input to reviewing policies through learner representation on the college board of management and other quality committees, including those for equal opportunities. In a few colleges, learners are consulted more widely in drafting policies. Commendably, in one college, learner representatives receive training in safeguarding and play a significant role in the drafting and revision of relevant policy and procedures.

### *Children in college*

All colleges have policies and procedures that address safeguarding of children under 16 in college on school link programmes. In colleges where children not on school link programmes are regularly enrolled on programmes, there are clear procedures set out. For example, children must be accompanied outwith the classroom. One college also asks the school to identify any young people with additional support needs (ASN) prior to any school visits. These processes are communicated to schools and parents. However, a few colleges have no policy or procedure to address safeguarding of children in college under other circumstances (for example, accompanying parents who are students at the college).

### *Dealing with disclosures of abuse*

Practice in colleges around disclosures of abuse is unambiguous and consistent. All colleges have clear policies and procedures in place to address disclosures and the action to be taken by staff. Colleges make both staff and learners aware of these through a range of means. This includes input in induction sessions and the use of wallet-sized cards and display of posters giving the names of staff responsible for safeguarding. Colleges have policies and procedures in place to allow staff to deal effectively with issues such as domestic violence, abuse or forced removal of children and young people. Any incidences of domestic violence which involve children are reported to the appropriate authorities.

All colleges have clear policies and procedures relating to:

- health and safety at work (including those relating to the administration of medicines within college or on work experience placements);
- first aid at work; and
- document retention.

## **Staff recruitment, induction and training**

### *Safe recruitment*

All colleges operate 'safe recruitment' procedures that acknowledge the employer's responsibility to ensure as far as possible the suitability of the individual for appointment. These procedures require certain background checks are carried out before appointment, including obtaining satisfactory references.

### *Enhanced disclosure of staff*

All colleges require all college staff to undertake enhanced disclosure prior to taking up appointment. This means that almost all college staff are disclosed (with the exception of a very small number of pre-existing staff). In almost all instances, disclosures are renewed on a three year basis. All colleges apply safe recruitment procedures, including enhanced disclosure as far as this is possible, to staff from beyond the UK. They ensure that workers are eligible to work in the UK and have relevant qualifications<sup>10</sup>. A few colleges also check with, or seek advice from, other agencies such as UK Border Agency (UKBA); the Home Office; or the local authority. A few colleges ask candidates to provide a criminal record certificate from their country of origin and one college does not appoint unless such information is provided. However, colleges recognise that there is no robust system in place and managers could not be certain how effective these measures are.

The pace of legislative change, as well as developing technologies, present challenges for colleges. For example, under the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland Act) 2007, the Scottish Government is introducing a new membership scheme to replace current disclosure arrangements for people who work with vulnerable groups<sup>11</sup>. Most colleges are apprehensive about keeping abreast of the changes and meeting timescales although they anticipate that the new system will simplify the disclosure process. As a result, more than a few colleges have begun updating their safeguarding policy.

### *Enhanced disclosure of others*

Colleges employ a range of measures to deal with those who work in the college but may not be employed directly. Where catering and cleaning services are contracted out, colleges require staff to be disclosed at enhanced level. Where appropriate, these staff are included in college training events. For contractors undertaking maintenance work, more than a few colleges have agreements with local authorities to use their list of contractors who are approved for working in schools. In a few examples, where other contractors are required, colleges ensure that they are escorted whilst on the premises. Where learners need the support in college of care

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<sup>10</sup> A few colleges use UK NARIC, which is the national agency responsible for providing information and advice about vocational, academic and professional qualifications.  
[www.naric.org.uk](http://www.naric.org.uk)

<sup>11</sup> The Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme is due to be launched late in 2010 and will replace and improve upon the current disclosure arrangements for people who work with children and protected adults. During the first year only those new to the vulnerable groups' workforce will be joining the new membership scheme. Over the following three years the current relevant workforce will be phased in to the scheme.

There is more information on the PVG Scheme available at:-

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/children-families/pvglegislation>

staff who are not employed by the college, colleges require such staff to be disclosed and to produce their enhanced disclosure certificates. Where learners are accompanied by carers who are undisclosed, such as family members, colleges ensure that a member of the college staff is always present.

In more than a few colleges, key members of the student representative council (SRC), generally the student president and vice-president, are required to undergo enhanced disclosure. Where volunteers work in a college, they are subject to the same procedures as members of staff. Volunteers require enhanced disclosures and undergo the same induction, training and awareness raising as staff.

### *Staff briefings and CPD*

Once staff are recruited, colleges are required to ensure that all new staff receive a briefing on safeguarding. Colleges provide this within staff induction and their human resource departments maintain records of this. More than a few colleges go beyond the minimum requirements and supplement these briefings with training events and workshops, and most also issue informative cards or leaflets. In more than a few colleges, all teaching staff receive mandatory training on child protection in addition to briefings. This is updated every three years. More frequent training is provided for staff working with more vulnerable learners. More than a few colleges are developing computer-based training programmes, often doing so in conjunction with other colleges, to ensure that all staff have undertaken training. One college requires staff to undertake assessment following their mandatory safeguarding training, to establish understanding of the key messages. Colleges also provide training for managers in their safeguarding responsibilities towards staff. However, in one college, staff reported there had been no recent continuous professional development to update and maintain awareness.

The majority of colleges organise CPD sessions on safeguarding issues with relevant input from partners such as the police, college legal advisers and voluntary organisations, including for example, Stonewall and *Respectme*. Some staff have made use of input from *Scotland's Colleges* on child protection and safeguarding, personal relationships with learners and working with young learners.

In providing safeguarding training and awareness raising for staff, colleges do not distinguish between teaching and non-teaching staff or volunteers. All staff have access to policies and procedures on college intranets. A few colleges have adopted a high profile college-wide campaign that emphasises safeguarding and mutual respect.

The majority of colleges provide learner representatives with briefings on safeguarding and awareness raising of college policies and procedures. More than a few colleges employ a Student Liaison Officer who provides support to learner representatives, including advice on, and awareness of, college procedures. The majority of colleges use *sparqs*<sup>12</sup> training or similar to guide representatives in their responsibilities to learners.

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<sup>12</sup> [www.sparqs.ac.uk](http://www.sparqs.ac.uk)

sparqs (student participation in quality Scotland) is funded by the Scottish Funding Council to assist and support learners and their representatives.

Colleges train and support their named member of staff with responsibility for safeguarding in a range of different ways. In all colleges, the named person attends meetings with representatives of other colleges, either through a local child protection or safeguarding network or via one of *Scotland's Colleges* communities of practice. This allows them to share issues of concern and good practice and disseminate information back to their colleges. All have links to local child protection networks and can be involved in case meetings with other professionals, including social workers, throughcare and aftercare teams and police. A few colleges provide basic child protection training for council workers. College staff attend training relating to vulnerable adults and adults at risk with council employees in social work.

### *Staff support*

Most colleges have a code of conduct for staff that addresses relationships and what is acceptable behaviour between staff and learners. The majority of colleges ensure staff are clearly informed of professional conduct and safeguarding via wallet cards issued to all staff and/or poster displays in staff workrooms. In one college, a paragraph has been added to the staff contract of employment, stressing the college's duty of care to learners and standards of professional behaviour.

Most colleges offer support from a counselling service to staff who have been involved in a challenging safeguarding issue. In one college, there is a strategy in place to support learners who are undertaking training/education in child protection as a part of their programme and where this has raised issues for them personally.

Senior managers in more than a few colleges have received anti-terrorism training from the police. This covers staff and learner safety as well as radicalisation. Training offers advice to senior staff on possible courses of action when a learner may be at risk of radicalisation or of being drawn into criminal behaviour generally. This places the college in the position of identifying and reporting certain patterns of behaviour, a role which is consistent with child safeguarding and supporting adults at risk.

## **Awareness of safeguarding policies and procedures**

### *Staff awareness*

Staff are highly aware of college policies and procedures, and they understand and put into practice their responsibilities. They are clear about the procedures in the event of a disclosure and about the role played by the member of staff with designated responsibility for safeguarding. Most have consulted this person at some point. Staff recognise the general duty of care, are alert to any emerging needs for support and deal with these appropriately. Staff have regular meetings to discuss and share good practice relating to safeguarding. Most report that there is a seamless link between general support and child/adult protection matters.

Staff involved in teaching care subjects and those teaching or supporting learners with ASN are particularly familiar with safeguarding issues. Often, this is based on their own professional knowledge. More than a few colleges use this expertise to deliver in-house training and awareness raising workshops.



### *Learner awareness*

Colleges make safeguarding procedures known to learners within learner induction. They provide written material via cards, induction handbooks or college diaries. Most colleges place procedures on the college intranet and make these accessible to staff and learners. A few colleges make use of displays, for example on plasma screens to highlight safeguarding messages. Learners are aware of the people to contact if they have a problem. Generally, this will be a named course tutor, a schools' coordinator for school pupils, or manager with responsibility for learner services. In some colleges, awareness of safeguarding policies and procedures among learners is mixed. However, younger learners are generally more aware of these and of contact names because of the additional care colleges take to inform learners under 18.

Colleges also make safeguarding known to learners through the work of class representatives. Learners generally view class representatives as a point of contact when they experience problems. Class representatives receive training in their responsibilities towards learners and *sparqs* training deals with safeguarding.

Many learners also receive safeguarding input on specific programmes, such as 'child protection' units in care programmes, and content in 'citizenship' classes.

All colleges have comprehensive and well documented complaints procedures in place that address issues such as bullying and homophobia. Information on complaints procedures is available to learners in student handbooks and during induction.



## 4. Meeting the 'duty of care'

### The wider duty of care and the identification of vulnerable learners

Most colleges are very good at responding to the needs of learners. However, they express frustration over difficulties in identifying certain groups of vulnerable young learners, and in particular, those who have been looked after by the local authority (LAC/LAAC). Most colleges have specific policies and procedures to address young carers and care leavers and more than a few have a designated member of staff for such learners. A few colleges are involved in specific projects<sup>13</sup> in these areas and one college has a '*young and vulnerable learners*' policy and a protocol for LAC/LAAC. However, for most colleges, this remains an area of concern because of inconsistencies in identification. Where this information is provided, it is usually contained within transition forms from schools. Colleges also have good links with local authorities and voluntary organisations. However, many young people simply choose not to be identified. They are not routinely asked on application forms if they are care leavers<sup>14</sup>. Few colleges systematically track the progress and achievement of these young people although there is some good practice in this area. One college now monitors and tracks the attendance and attainment of LAC/LAAC young people in college, using recorded statistics to provide a benchmark to consider the effectiveness of their interventions with learners.

Identification is an issue in other areas. Colleges also express concern over increased incidence of learners with mental health problems, including those that are drug/alcohol related, which are not always brought to their attention.

#### *Partnership working*

Establishing and maintaining productive partnerships with statutory and voluntary agencies is very important in identifying emerging groups of vulnerable learners, including young unaccompanied asylum seekers. Most colleges work in partnership with external organisations in meeting safeguarding responsibilities, for example, in partnership with social work departments in working with adults at risk. Also, a few colleges have police links via community police officers.

Most colleges support vulnerable learners through providing information on issues such as: drug abuse or domestic violence; use of speakers from support agencies; and making leaflets and posters available in the library and student association areas. Colleges have a wide range of contacts with external organisations and can refer learners to these, often helping learners set up appointments if they choose to do so. A few colleges work in partnership with agencies, including Barnardo's, which can support learners experiencing mental health problems. However, not all learners are aware of these partnerships and some outreach centres do not receive this information.

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<sup>13</sup> Several colleges are involved in projects funded by the SFC to improve provision for looked after young people (care leavers), as part of the response to the Scottish Government report 'We Can and Must do better'. The Frank Buttle Trust is developing a UK Quality Mark for college provision, similar to the existing FBT Quality Mark for universities.  
[www.buttletrust.org](http://www.buttletrust.org)

<sup>14</sup> UCAS, the agency which deals with applications to higher education, now asks university applicants to identify on application forms if they are care leavers.

### *Staff vigilance*

Identification of vulnerable learners often takes place as a result of staff vigilance. Most colleges allocate responsibility for front line guidance to a member of staff with regular contact with the learner. These members of staff play an important role in safeguarding, and young people know who they are and how to contact them. Colleges also regard the disciplinary process for learners as an important part of safeguarding as it can help to identify learners at risk, through learners disclosing information to explain their actions in certain situations, for example, having been the victim of bullying in the past. Most colleges have good tracking arrangements for learners in place. Careful use of attendance monitoring procedures allow staff to identify young people experiencing problems and at risk of dropping out. It also allows colleges to employ measures to support learners in such circumstances.

All colleges have comprehensive procedures in place to recognise learners with ASN. Transition information is available for young people with ASN and these learners have learning support plans that are communicated to relevant staff on a 'need to know' basis. Most colleges choose to interview all applicants for full-time programmes and can identify undisclosed support needs that would allow these to be explored. To be certain that interviewers are skilled and suitably prepared to ensure this happens, a few colleges train interviewers and provide additional guidance to help them explore such issues.

### *Student association*

The student association, often through their SRC, is involved in the identification and support of learners at risk in some colleges. Learner representatives receive training in safeguarding and dealing with disclosures. However, in more than a few colleges, learners do not feel that the student association played a significant role in identifying or meeting needs and were unable to identify any groups run by them or any support given to learners who are potentially at risk from discrimination.

### *Residential accommodation*

In colleges where there is residential accommodation, colleges take safeguarding very seriously and encourage staff and learners to be vigilant and signal if someone needs support. Staff, wardens and learners are alert to any issues and can refer to appropriate staff members. Wardens provide round the clock cover and are sensitive to any concerns and are easily contacted. Learners are reassured by helpful procedures, such as being able to phone or text wardens. In colleges with residents under 18 years of age, there are additional arrangements and guidance in place to provide support. In one college, there is separate accommodation for under 18s which ensures that effective safeguarding arrangements can be put in place. However, in one college, learners wish to see more training in safeguarding for staff wardens and the appointment of student wardens.

### *Other vulnerable groups*

The majority of colleges recognise asylum seekers as potential vulnerable learners and make provision for them via learner support or guidance services. Several colleges make good use of English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) provision. More than a few colleges have specific provision in place for asylum seekers, having worked extensively and effectively with this group.

Provision includes use of a named member of staff and partnership arrangements with police and supported accommodation services for young unaccompanied asylum seekers. Most colleges make similar provision for non-English speakers and have named staff with responsibility for international learners.

Colleges work with other potentially vulnerable groups such as single parents, homeless learners and learners with mental health problems. This also includes specific disability groups such as those on the autistic spectrum, or those with sensory impairments. In all instances, colleges adopt an individual approach that identifies learning needs and support requirements. In the former, this is done through college learning support services and in the latter through these and partnerships with other agencies. A few colleges reference their policies and practice to *Partnership Matters*<sup>15</sup>.

All colleges have complaints procedures that address a range of issues such as bullying and homophobia. More than a few have specific 'bullying and harassment' policies, 'dignity at work' policies and specific 'whistle blowing' procedures. In most colleges, learners report that bullying is not an issue at college. Younger learners often contrast this with school experiences. However, in the case of one college, bullying remains an issue, often arising from community/family feuds. The college is taking steps to reinforce its anti-bullying policy and practices in working with the student association.

### **Safeguarding practice within the wider college environment, including within work experience arrangements**

#### *Work experience*

Colleges recognise that being inclusive brings challenges and risks, particularly for the most vulnerable learners. One area where colleges have been very successful in balancing inclusion and risk is in providing learning experiences in the workplace. Most colleges have provision in place for work experience which is subject specific and learners undertake work experience at different points in their programmes. Learners who are under 16 do not go out on work experience unless in partnership with the school. However, in more than a few colleges, learners on special programmes do undertake work experience and the college supports this through ensuring that the learner is well prepared and by carefully vetting the placement.

All colleges offering work experience placements provide pre-placement guidance and input. Most colleges also provide learners with a placement handbook. Before learners go on placement, a trained member of staff carries out a risk assessment taking account of learner needs within a designated placement. Colleges make provision for learners who require additional support while on placement. One college has entered into a partnership with ENABLE Scotland which provides a supported employment worker to accompany and work alongside assisted learners in the workplace. The worker withdraws only when the learner is secure, safe, and confident.

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<sup>15</sup> Partnership Matters  
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk./Publications/2009/05/08155445/0>

All colleges offering work experience ensure that learners have a contact in the workplace and in the college. The latter will oversee the placements and have regular contact with both workplace and learner. The learner can raise any issues of unwanted attention or exploitation in regular one-to-one meetings in college. Learners are encouraged to feed back any poor practice they witness in the workplace, particularly in care and education settings, and are assured that they will not be disadvantaged as a consequence.

A named college contact will inform work placement providers of the expectations of the college, including expectations around the health and safety of the learners and safeguarding. Most colleges require placement providers to sign an agreement to confirm responsibility for the learner's welfare. More than a few colleges provide a handbook for placement providers, as well as information available through placement agreements and handbooks<sup>16</sup>. One college issues employers with helpful cards giving information on *Safeguarding and the duty of care* towards students.

In one college an effective work experience policy is in place and is used to support staff and learners. The college has very clear guidelines on the information to be provided to learners and employers. There are liaison officers who oversee learners in placement and where learners have concerns, they can speak to named college staff. There are clear procedures for dealing with unacceptable behaviour the learner may encounter in the workplace. Learners are cautioned about inappropriate language, unwanted sexual attention and exploitation. The college takes care to ensure that placements are appropriate to the individual's needs and a risk assessment is carried out. Employers are well known to the college staff.

#### *Learners who may pose a risk to themselves or others*

Colleges have obligations under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 not to discriminate against learners whose convictions are spent. However, they must also advise learners that certain programmes lead to employment which is exempt from this. Colleges with programmes that involve learners undertaking work experience in locations where they are in contact with children or vulnerable adults (particularly in care, leisure or education settings) have arrangements for the enhanced disclosure of these learners. Many colleges address also this through the process of individual interviews of all applicants. Colleges recognise learners with relevant criminal convictions, and/or who may pose a risk to themselves or other learners, as vulnerable learners. As such, they require additional safeguarding support such as managed risk assessment procedures alongside support from external agencies such as police, criminal justice services, and voluntary agencies. A few colleges have partnerships with local open prisons and learners from these establishments have attended full-time and part-time courses. These colleges use a pre-programme risk assessment and agree this in conjunction with the respective institution.

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<sup>16</sup> A few colleges make reference to guidance issued by HSE for employers i.e. *The right start: work experience for young people*.

### *Study visits*

In the case of unsupervised study visits, colleges adopt a similar approach to work placements where risk assessments are carried out and measures put in place to mitigate any risks. The college prepares learners before the visit. There is a named member of college staff who is the contact person for the learner and any significant others. Several colleges have international departments or international workers who have specialist knowledge in this area and can advise both staff and learners. However, in more than a few colleges, learners only go abroad on supervised study visits and procedures exist for these, including specifying minimum staffing levels. Procedures include pre-trip preparation and risk assessments, briefings for staff and learners and making appropriate arrangements within destinations.

Most colleges have enhanced arrangements in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of learners with additional support needs when on visits out of college.

## 5. The college ethos and providing a safe environment for all staff and learners

### Approaches to online safety

All colleges have procedures in place to address 'acceptable use' of the internet. Learners are asked to adhere to these procedures before being given email accounts. All colleges monitor appropriate use of ICT. Colleges block access to inappropriate sites and encourage and develop vigilance amongst staff. However, a few colleges identified that their 'acceptable use' policy did not cover safe use and online safety.

Overall, most colleges provide learners with guidance on safe use of ICT and safety online and issue cards and leaflets such as '*be safe online*'. A few colleges train staff in internet safety and deliver units to learners on internet safety. In one college, however, learners reported that no specific advice had been provided about risks of placing personal information on social networking sites.

### *Social networking*

Colleges vary in their attitudes to social networking. The majority of colleges provide advice to staff on the use of social networking sites and more than a few are developing policies or have this under discussion. A few colleges restrict all access to social networking sites although more than a few make limited use of social networking as a learning and communication tool. In a few colleges, some staff are using social networking sites for contacting learners. The colleges provide guidance and training to support them in this. In colleges with residential accommodation, access to social networking sites is permitted in the evenings and at weekends, because of its importance for remote and international learners.

### *Cyberbullying*

Some colleges make specific reference to 'cyberbullying'<sup>17</sup>. A few colleges have organised staff training on this issue, delivered by the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP). One college has raised this in the student handbook and provided awareness sessions for staff and learners in order to raise awareness of the impact of cyberbullying on the victim and the consequences for the perpetrator. The college uses the *Respectme* anti-bullying materials and learners are aware of cyberbullying and of learners who had been disciplined for this in the past. However, in other examples, cyberbullying is not addressed and a few young learners are not aware that sending offensive or threatening texts is regarded as bullying.

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<sup>17</sup> The following quote is from [www.stopcyberbullying.org](http://www.stopcyberbullying.org)

*'Cyberbullying' is when a child, preteen or teen is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another child, preteen or teen using the Internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile phones. It has to have a minor on both sides, or at least have been instigated by a minor against another minor. Once adults become involved, it is plain and simple cyber-harassment or cyberstalking. Adult cyber-harassment or cyberstalking is NEVER called cyberbullying.*



One college which monitors all complaints has identified an increase in complaints relating to students texting other students, suggesting that cyberbullying is more prevalent and needs to be addressed.

All colleges restrict the use of mobile phones in class, allowing limited use in exceptional circumstances. Colleges generally prohibit their use in workshops.

### *Supporting college staff*

All colleges ensure that college staff can be easily accessed through college emails, making certain that contact between learners and staff happens within a professional context. In most colleges, staff cannot be contacted through personal social networking sites outwith the college. For example, a few learners explained how staff would not accept an invitation to be a 'friend' on a social networking site. However, more than a few colleges do not provide guidance to staff on contact with learners through social networking, outwith the college network.

### **Dealing with complaints and allegations**

All colleges have a complaints procedure in place. College staff and learners report that these work well. In all colleges, learners are aware of the complaints procedure and the action to take and/or who to contact in the event of a complaint.

Colleges aim to address issues promptly, placing an emphasis on resolution rather than blame. They seek to deal with issues promptly and informally where possible, to signal the college's zero tolerance of abusive behaviour. However, colleges vary in the extent to which they follow up and record informal complaints, although a few colleges use such records in order to identify emerging issues.

### **The college ethos and providing a safe environment for all staff and learners**

A few colleges make use of a highly visible campaign to promote a positive college ethos and stress mutual respect. Most colleges do not have a specific approach but have procedures and policies that are intended to support this. For example, one college includes 'team ethos, values and culture' in all team self-evaluation reports, requiring the teams to examine their approach and take action where appropriate. Other colleges reinforce a positive ethos throughout the college by such means as learners having individual time with guidance tutors; the college charter; the Motivated College programme<sup>18</sup>; involvement in charity fundraising; and displaying safeguarding information throughout the college. Colleges also recognise the importance of staff modelling acceptable behaviour and in a few colleges, learners and staff agree expectations of each other and sign a 'contract' agreeing a code of behaviour.

Most colleges develop and maintain an ethos of mutual respect through consultation with learners and acting on issues they raise. Colleges report progress back to learners. Most learners feel that their views in the college are taken into account.

More than a few colleges have a 'respect' policy or an anti-bullying strategy in place. This applies only to learners in some cases and to learners and staff in others.

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<sup>18</sup> This programme has been provided through *Scotland's Colleges* and emphasises a whole college approach to developing its culture.



However, as with approaches to 'dignity at work' most colleges take the view that this cannot be isolated from other policies and approaches. This includes policies and procedures that address bullying and emphasise mutual respect, including equalities, staff grievance and disciplinary policies, backed up with the appropriate procedures. More than a few colleges have explicit statements within college mission statements and values that emphasise mutual respect.

A few colleges have the support of a chaplaincy team which is non-denominational. The team members meet with guidance staff and provide support for staff and learners, as well as general support. One college cited the support provided by a member of the chaplaincy team to staff and learners after the death of a learner.

All colleges take health and safety responsibilities towards learners very seriously. Learners receive health and safety information at induction and within the student handbook as well as advice about health, safety and hygiene in class, and workshops. In the majority of colleges, the health and wellbeing of learners is addressed, through recreational groups and input from speakers on drug and alcohol misuse. A few colleges work in partnership with health services to train staff and student representatives in giving advice on sexual health and offering practical help such as distributing condoms and pregnancy testing.

HMIE and college staff recognise the important role of the college leadership in safeguarding. Leadership in this area includes recognition of the college's vulnerable communities, working closely with them, and the approachability of, and tone set by, members of the senior management team.

## **6. Good practice**

The following good practice was identified in interviews with college managers, staff and learners. It provides examples of the actions colleges can take that ensure that their safeguarding policies and procedures are effective in meeting their legal obligations, but also in recognising their general duty of care towards all learners.

### **Reviewing policies and consulting with learners**

- Learner representatives trained in safeguarding and able to make a meaningful and effective contribution to reviewing the impact of safeguarding policies and practices on learners.
- A focus in policies and practice on developing positive behaviours rather than preventing negative ones.
- The contribution of non-teaching staff with a distinct learner focus in areas such as learner engagement.

### **Recruitment, training and support of staff**

- Use of a code of conduct for carers not employed by the college, outlining the college approach and procedures in safeguarding.
- Clarification of the skill sets necessary to work with more vulnerable learners and creation of relevant posts which play a key role in safeguarding.
- Joint work with health services to train staff and student representatives in giving advice on sexual health.
- Use of 'mediation' training for guidance staff and others to develop confidence and skills in dealing with confrontational situations with learners.

### **Awareness of safeguarding policies/procedures**

- Learner representatives play a significant role in raising awareness of safeguarding policies and procedures through specific officers within the SRC with responsibility for Equality and Diversity; ESOL; LGBT.
- Maximising the potential of the role of SRC representatives. This role is likely to be effective where the representatives are known and highlighted. In one college, they have been provided with college 'hoodies'. Learners then know they can be approached over issues related to safeguarding.
- Attention to gender balance and ensuring that safeguarding groups are as diverse as possible to represent the range of learners.
- Communicate safeguarding messages on plasma screens and encourage learners to look at them by also displaying photos of learners at college events.

## Dealing with complaints and allegations

- Monitoring and following up all complaints, including those that are informal and/or anonymous<sup>19</sup>. Although some complaints of this nature cannot be resolved, analysis provides useful evidence of emerging issues.
- Running high profile college campaigns stressing individual responsibility to report incidents that infringe the college's code of conduct.
- Encouraging learners to speak out. One college has a space known as *The Chair* modelled on the 'Big Brother room' where learners can go and talk about any college matter. This offers learners a facility to raise any issues of concern. In another, class representatives have a consultative committee which holds monthly meetings where complaints and issues can be raised, including problems related to accommodation services.
- Learner support services concentrated in a single accessible central location. This can be helpful to learners in terms of identification of how to access support.

## Young people and adults at risk - identification and support

- A code of conduct for interviewing learners, alongside training for interviewers. This enables them to identify and explore issues such as undisclosed convictions or mental health problems.
- Developing buddying and mentoring arrangements to support new and/or vulnerable learners.
- Being aware of the needs of the college's disadvantaged communities and working in partnership with specialist agencies to provide wraparound and sustained support.
- Providing CPD sessions to make staff aware of the needs of different groups such as LAC/LAAC, raising awareness of the issues and enabling them to develop appropriate teaching and support strategies.
- Monitoring and tracking the progress (attainment and attendance) of LAC/LAAC young people in college, providing a means of measuring the impact of support measures for these vulnerable learners.
- Developing a *Partnership Matters* agreement setting out transitional arrangements for young people and partners including NHS, local authorities, and relevant voluntary bodies. This has been recognised nationally as good practice.
- Recognising that international learners and ESOL learners can experience difficulties compounded by their lack of language skills and providing a named member of staff with guidance and support responsibilities.

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<sup>19</sup> HMIE guidance recommends that, where an anonymous allegation is received, staff should record in writing the words used, where the allegation is by telephone, or retain the actual written complaint; and report the matter immediately to the relevant person.

## **Risk assessments; work experience and other out-of-college experiences**

- Ensuring that learners with support needs can undertake work experience by working in partnership with relevant voluntary organisations. One college works with ENABLE to provide a supported employment worker who accompanies assisted learners into the workplace, withdrawing when the learner is secure, safe, and confident.
- Building pre-placement guidance into the curriculum. In some colleges, learners undertake a unit which provides general work preparation and ensures that learners understand how to raise issues that might concern them.

## **Safe use of ICT**

- Empowering learners to use ICT safely. For young learners, some colleges provide formal input and learners undertake a unit on online safety at Intermediate 1 level.
- Partnership work can also be effective here. In one college, a group of young learners received a visit from the police, following staff concerns about the use of social networking. The police provided information to learners and stimulated a productive discussion on safe behaviour.
- The student association can play a role in online safety. In one college, learner representatives are involved in discussions with staff about a social networking pilot and they have put together material to advise students on using the site safely.

## **College ethos**

- Ensuring strong leadership on safeguarding has a positive influence on staff, learners and college partners. A few colleges have adopted high level campaigns to stress the positive ethos within the college and have underlined these messages in induction addresses to staff and learners.
- Building and using local partnerships to support learners and staff. A few colleges have community police officers who meet with staff and learners on a regular basis. This helps to increase learners' sense of security and can also offer practical advice on matters such as domestic violence or drug dealing. A few colleges have a non-denominational chaplaincy team who meet with guidance staff and provide general support for staff and for learners.
- Developing a strategy involving the safeguarding team and counselling service to support learners who undertake child protection units as part of their programmes (e.g. childcare). For a few learners, visiting these topics can awaken painful memories of abuse and bad treatment at the hands of others.
- Training workplace mediators to support staff. In one college, mediators help to resolve workplace disputes between staff, resulting in a significant decrease in formal grievances in the college.
- Training staff and learners in mental health first aid.

## 7. Recommendations

The main issues for colleges to address are:

- Colleges should have a clear safeguarding policy backed up by procedures that refers to other key policies (including the ICT policy). These should be reviewed in line with changes in legislation. An effective safeguarding policy should also encompass a consistent approach to promoting safe use of the internet to support staff and advise and empower learners.
- Colleges should have in place mechanisms to check the effectiveness and impact on learners of their procedures. Staff should reflect on these in self-evaluation and identify opportunities for enhancement.
- Colleges should adopt an approach to updating safeguarding training for staff that incorporates monitoring impact and effectiveness. Staff should have opportunities to ask questions or seek clarification. Colleges should be confident that policies and practice have been understood.
- Colleges should continue to improve approaches to identify vulnerable learners, based on establishing and maintaining effective information sharing with partner organisations/agencies. Generally, colleges have systems in place to support vulnerable learners. However, identifying such learners is not always straightforward.
- Colleges should adopt a similar approach to identifying those learners who pose a risk to themselves and others.
- Colleges should engage the student association more effectively in safeguarding. The role of Student Associations in providing information and signposting for learners, and engaging in the development of policies and practice, should be developed further.
- Colleges should continue to build partnership with statutory and voluntary groups and work with them in developing their safeguarding approaches.

## Appendices

## SAFEGUARDING/CHILD PROTECTION PRO FORMA

Name of College: Town: Authority
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***The Principal should arrange for responses to be provided to the following questions, indicating particular strengths or development required in each section. The Managing Inspector (MI) and/or delegated team member will discuss the pro forma information provided with relevant staff during the inspection/review to add comments/evaluations as relevant. This electronic shell will expand to take text of responses but can also be completed by hand. Additional space is available on the third and fourth pages of this pro forma to allow for further entries/handwritten text if required prior to discussion with MI. This pro forma must be signed and dated by the person who provides initial entries.***

Is there a Policy(ies) in place to safeguard, as relevant, children, young people and vulnerable adults? Please provide details.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence: (eg date of policy/when last reviewed or due for review)	
Have <u>all</u> staff been trained in Child Protection/Safeguarding policy and procedures? [e.g. support staff; visiting specialist teachers and instructors/tutors; staff involved with outdoor/residential education, arts and sports education; steps taken to provide parents/carers/helpers involved with children with guidance on safe working practices.] Please describe training provided centrally and expectations for local training initiatives.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence: (e.g.: induction training – staff CPD record maintained?/annual refresher training/volunteer checks)	
Please provide brief details of any recent or current allegations (and by whom) which should be drawn to the attention of the inspection/review team regarding abuse (physical, bullying, emotional, sexual, neglect) of children, young people and vulnerable adults.	
Evidence:	

Please provide brief details of any recent or current complaints/concerns about staff in relation to their conduct towards children, young people or vulnerable adults.	
Evidence:	
Please briefly describe how these concerns are recorded eg according to local or national policy? Who maintains such records, where are these held and who has access to them?	
Evidence:	
Please describe steps taken, where appropriate, to draw these concerns to the attention of relevant board of management/local authority staff/police.	
Evidence:	
Have children, young people and vulnerable adults access to an independent complaints procedure? Please provide details.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Is there a named member of staff who oversees complaints? Please provide details.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence:	
How do you ensure that particular groups at risk, for example learners with additional support needs, LAC/LAAC, are known to relevant staff and their specific needs addressed?	
Evidence:	
What are the procedures in place to ensure that children, young people and vulnerable adults who live in families where substance/alcohol abuse and/or domestic violence is/are present, are known and supported effectively, including effective inter-agency partnership working?	
Evidence:	



<p>Where relevant, describe any procedures for tracking the whereabouts of learners absent from centre/ school/college placement, (a) for a day (b) those at risk, including the excluded, those removed from the school roll in the last 12 months, those on part-time placements, those whose whereabouts are uncertain, and those absent for lengthy periods due to illness.</p> <p>If appropriate, describe the arrangements made for these individuals at (b) to ensure they receive a regular and sufficient amount of educational support and/or signal gaps in provision.</p>
<p>Evidence:</p>
<p>Describe the procedures in place related to the safe recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers, including training and supervision arrangements. Are there clear procedures, consistently applied, regarding Disclosure Scotland checks?</p>
<p>Evidence:</p>
<p>Provide details of any Child Protection Coordinator (CPC), or similar, appointed for the centre/school/ college/service/Council. Give brief details of any specific training programmes which such a post holder must undertake. Provide details of any Deputy CPC appointed.</p>
<p>Evidence:</p>
<p>What steps are taken to ensure that ICT is not used in an abusive manner eg safe use of Internet policy, bullying involving text messaging, mobile telephone photographic images etc?</p> <p>How do you ensure children and young people use the internet safely but take increasing responsibility for its safe use as they get older? Is there e-safety training for staff, children and young people?</p>
<p>Evidence:</p>

<p><b>Additional notes provided by centre/school/college/service/Council</b></p>

Head of Centre/Headteacher/Principal/Head of Service/Director of Education or nominee

**Signature:**      **Name:**

**Post Held:**                                      .      **Date:**

### **Colleges involved in fieldwork for this report:**

- Aberdeen College
- Angus College
- Anniesland College
- Cumbernauld College
- Dumfries and Galloway
- Edinburgh's Telford College
- Newbattle Abbey College
- Oatridge College
- Sabhal Mor Ostaig College
- West Lothian College

### Key documents and websites

#### Documents

HSE 2002 *The Right Start: work experience for young people: health and safety basics for employers*

Scottish Executive 2003 *It's everyone's job to make sure I'm alright: report of the child protection and audit review*

Scottish Government/Who Cares? Scotland 2006 *A different class: educational attainment – the views and experiences of looked after young people*

Scottish Executive, 2007 *Looked after children and young people: we can and we must do better*

Scottish Government 2009 *Protecting Vulnerable Groups scheme: Progress update No.3 October 2009*

Scottish Government, 2009 *Valuing Young People: principles and connections to support young people achieve their potential*

Scottish Government/Tayside Police 2009 *Keeping Children safe: what we all need to know to protect our children* HMIE 2008 *Count us in: improving the education of our looked after children*

HMIE 2008 *Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance: Protecting those at risk, the adults who work with them and inspection/review team members*

HM Inspectors of Schools and the Social Work Services Inspectorate 2001 *Learning with care: the education of children looked after away from home by local authorities*

#### Websites

##### Care leavers

Frank Buttle Trust website – the Frank Buttle Trust supports young care leavers in higher education.

[www.buttletrust.org/](http://www.buttletrust.org/)

Improving the Education of Looked After Children: A Guide for Local Authorities and Service Providers – July 2009

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/03/25142835/1>

Edinburgh University care leavers leaflet

<http://www.sra.ed.ac.uk/careleavers/Supporting%20Looked%20After%20Children%20and%20Care%20Leavers%20into%20Higher%20Education%20Leaflet.pdf>

Learn Teach Scotland

<http://www.ltscotland.org>

LTS looked after children web site

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/lookedafterchildren/index.asp>

TES article on Care Leavers and college – April 2009

<http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6011351>

### ***Child protection***

Getting It Right for Every Child – home page

The Scottish Government

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/childrenservices/girfec>

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) – home page

<http://www.ceop.gov.uk>

### ***Protecting vulnerable groups***

Protection of Vulnerable Adults Scheme

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics?People?Young-People/children-families/pvglegislation>

Protecting vulnerable groups – email address

[Pvg.enquiries@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Pvg.enquiries@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)

### ***Safeguarding in colleges***

JISC Legal provides guidance to the college and university sectors on legal issues, particularly around the use of ICT in learning.

<http://www.jisclegal.ac.uk>

Notes on the duty of care in Further and Higher Education sectors in Scotland

<http://www.jisclegal.ac.uk/ManageContent/ViewDetail/tabid/243/ID/871/Duty-of-Care-in-the-Further-and-Higher-Education-Sectors--01102002.aspx>

<http://www.jisclegal.ac.uk/Portals/12/Documents/PDFs/dutyofcare.pdf>

Human Rights in FE and HE

<http://www.jisclegal.ac.uk/Portals/12/Documents/PDFs/humanrightsoverview.pdf>

### ***Safe recruitment***

Information on the rehabilitation of offenders and spent and unspent sentences

[www.apex.scotland.org](http://www.apex.scotland.org)

Disclosure Scotland website

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

Information on the work of the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) which support the assessment and management of the most serious sexual and violent offenders.

[www.noms.justice.gov.uk](http://www.noms.justice.gov.uk)

Safer Recruitment Through Better Recruitment Guidance

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/03/13154149/0>

UK NARIC is the National Agency responsible for providing information and advice about vocational, academic and professional skills and qualifications from all over the world.

[www.naric.org.uk](http://www.naric.org.uk)

### Vulnerable young people

The list below is not intended to be exhaustive but to indicate the range of young people who could be considered 'vulnerable' and require consideration within safeguarding.

From  
Scottish Government 2010 *16+ Learning Choices: Policy and Practice Framework*

Due attention should be given to the following groups of vulnerable young people, many of whom will have clearly identifiable additional support needs:

- Looked After children and care leavers
- Young carers
- Young parents
- Winter leavers
- Young offenders, including those in custody
- Young people with low attainment in school
- Young people on a school roll who persistently truant
- Young people with physical or mental health problems or disabilities
- Young people involved in alcohol or drug misuse
- Young people with behavioural issues
- Young people for whom English is a second language
- Young people leaving special schools
- Young people who are homeless
- Young people who are a risk to themselves or others
- Young people who have interrupted learning, including as a result of transient lifestyles
- Young people who do not sustain an initial positive destination
- Young people with other identified additional support needs

(Scottish Government, 2010 p12)



## Glossary of terms

The report uses a number of terms which have specific meaning within its context.

**ASN** additional support needs

**Barnardo's** voluntary organisation representing children and young people

### CEOP

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre '*delivers a multi-agency service dedicated to tackling the exploitation of children*'. As well as gathering intelligence, the Centre offers a training programme, available to schools, colleges and other agencies working with children and young people.

**CPD** continuous professional development

### Cyberbullying

Defined as bullying using the internet or mobile phones, between children or young people under 18.

### Disclosures, enhanced disclosures

Disclosure Scotland undertakes the work of the Scottish Criminal Records department and provides information on unspent criminal convictions (see below) for employers. Those working with children or vulnerable adults require 'enhanced disclosure' which provides information on all criminal convictions.

**ESOL** English for speakers of other languages

### ENABLE

Voluntary organisation representing children, young people and adults with learning difficulties and disabilities, and their parents.

**ICT** Information and communication technology

**LAC** Looked after children and young people

**LAAC** Looked after and accommodated children and young people

**LGBT** Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender

### PVG

The Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme, due to be launched late in 2010.

**Respectme** Scotland's anti-bullying service

## **Scotland's Colleges**

The central body providing support, training and representation for all of Scotland's colleges.

## **Spent sentences**

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 specifies the rehabilitation periods beyond the expiry of a criminal sentence within which offences are regarded as current and will be disclosed to employers. Some sentences are never spent. The act also makes it an offence to discriminate against those whose sentences are lie outwith this period and these are regarded as 'spent'. However, for those working with children and vulnerable adults, no offences are regarded as spent and will be disclosed to employers (see 'enhanced disclosure' above).

## **Sparqs**

*Student participation in quality Scotland* is funded by the Scottish Funding Council to assist and support learners and their representatives.

**SRC**                      Student Representative Council

## **Stonewall**

Voluntary organisation representing young people who are lesbian or gay.

**UKBA**                      UK Border Agency

## **UK NARIC**

The national agency responsible for providing information and advice about international vocational, academic and professional qualifications.

[www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk)

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