Quality Assurance Policies & Procedures

SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENT POLICY
CHILD AND VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION

1. Introduction

Hartlepool College of Further Education holds, as one of its highest priorities, the Health, Safety and Welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults who are involved with courses or activities which come under the responsibility of the College. The definition of safeguarding begins with the responsibility on staff to "provide help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge and to apply" child protection duties "whether that is within or outside the home, including online".

Safeguarding and The Prevent Duty guidance: for England and Wales are front and centre of our thinking and working practices.

2. Statement of intent

All staff, governors, contractors and volunteers are required to familiarise themselves with this Safeguarding and Prevent Policy related practices and procedures upon induction to the College and when updates are notified and circulated. In addition, all staff and volunteers are required to prioritise completion of College Safeguarding training update, ensuring that everyone is aware of their role and responsibilities with respect to safeguarding and follows the necessary processes and procedures to protect young people and promote their welfare. Everyone is expected to demonstrate these values, through their behaviour, at all times.

3. Purpose

In pursuit of these aims, the Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body will approve and annually review policies and procedures with the purpose of:

• raising awareness of issues relating to the welfare of children, young people and adults and the promotion of a safe environment for children, young people and adults learning within the College

• highlighting specific safeguarding concerns

• aiding the identification of children and young people at risk of significant harm, and providing clear procedures for reporting concerns

• establishing procedures for reporting and dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff

• ensuring the safer recruitment of staff

4. Scope

This policy applies to everyone working or studying at the college; full-time, part-time and sessional staff, governors, contractors, volunteers and Learners.

It applies to its campuses at Stockton Street and Exeter Street and to all its provision delivered elsewhere, including community centres, satellite sights and employers' premises.

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5. Subcontracted Provision and Work Experience

Subcontracted providers are required to have their own safeguarding policy and associated procedures and make this available. Providers are required to have their own DSL (and one deputy as a minimum). Learners are advised through their induction about keeping themselves safe and who to raise a safeguarding concern with.

All subcontracted staff should go through full pre-employment checks including DBS numbers/dates and undertake safeguarding and Prevent training which should be refreshed annually. Sub-contractor staff information should be recorded on a Single Central Record maintained by the provider.

Subcontractor safeguarding records should be maintained and stored in accordance with GDPR and best safeguarding practice.

Contractors/Consultants/Volunteers and Others Working at College Campuses Non-employees undertaking work at College must comply with the College's Health and Safety and safeguarding requirements. This will depend on the nature, location and duration of the work but may involve confirmation of a DBS check and other pre-employment checks, a risk assessment process, a briefing on the first day of work, inclusion in contractual

terms, and participation in relevant training. All non-employees who will be unaccompanied on campus must be known and approved by HR and recorded on the Single Central Record prior to being authorised to start working on campus.

6. Visitors to College Campus

All visitors are required to sign-in at Reception on arrival and are to be collected by the person they have arrived arranged to meet. Visiting Speaker QAP 3.11.2, covers the risk assessment of visiting speakers and other visitors to College campus, similarly, protocols are in place for advising hirers of the College's facilities of their safeguarding responsibilities

7. Relevant Guidance and Legislation

The College recognises its duties under relevant legislation and guidance, as follows:

Legislation

- Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment)
- Education Act 2002
- Section 5B of the FGM Act 2003 as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Children and Adoption Act 2002
- Children and Young Person's Act 2008
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Human Rights Act 1998

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- Data Protection Act 2018
- Care Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010

Guidance

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 Department for Education (DfE) September 2025:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68add931969253904d155860/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_from_1_September_2025.pdf

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 HM Government : Working Together to safeguard children; a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6849a7b67cba25f610c7db3f/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2023_-_statutory_guidance.pdf

Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers 2024.

Prevent Duty in Further Education 2024 The Prevent duty requires all staff 'to be aware of the risk of people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism'. This includes safeguarding learners from extremist ideologies and radicalisation. Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales (accessible) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

8. **Key Definitions and concepts**

In Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of
children is defined as:
- 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
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is a broader term than child protection
which refers to the process of protecting children identified as either suffering, or likely to suffer,
significant harm because of abuse or neglect. It also involves measures and structures
designed to prevent and respond to abuse and neglect.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 also sets out definitions of the four broad categories of abuse.
These broad categories are a useful guide for staff who have responsibility for children and young people. The
categories of abuse are listed below together with possible signs and symptoms of abuse. The signs may or may
not be indicators that abuse has taken place, but the possibility should be considered. This is not an exclusive list
and many of the signs and symptoms could fall into more than one category. Also, students with learning
difficulties often exhibit some of these signs (e.g. reluctance to get undressed for physical activities, constant
tiredness) which are not necessarily signs of abuse but symptoms of their condition. However, it must also be

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remembered that young people with a disability are 3 times more likely to experience abuse or neglect than non-disabled peers.

- **Physical abuse:** Inflicting physical injury on a child.

- **Sexual abuse:** Any sexual act or exploitation of a child.

- **Emotional abuse:** Causing a child to feel fear, distress, or harm to their self-worth.

- **Neglect:** A failure to provide for a child's basic needs, which can include physical care, medical care, and supervision.

Contextual Safeguarding

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the college can occur between students outside of the environment. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.

Policy Monitoring and Reporting of Safeguarding and Prevent-
Process for monitoring effectiveness of safeguarding procedures

- **Weekly** the safeguarding team meet to review actions associated with this policy.

- **Termly** reports are provided to College Leadership Committee on Safeguarding and Prevent incidents including activities associated with promoting a positive safeguarding environment. The College's safeguarding and Prevent action plan is presented to the College Leadership Committee for progress and comments.

- **Termly** the DSL, Prevent Lead and SENCo meet with the lead governor for safeguarding.

- Regular Governor' reports are submitted to summarise safeguarding activity and actions

- Annually the Designated Leads and the Senior Manager with Operational Oversight will review the Safeguarding and Prevent Policy

9. **Key Personnel and Their Roles**

Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility

In line with KCSIE 2025, the College supports the view that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All members of the College community, including staff, governors, students, apprentices and contract staff, are

responsible for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk and must always consider what is in their best interests. No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances, therefore everyone who comes into contact with them has a role. However, there are several key personnel hold specific roles and responsibilities associated with Safeguarding and Prevent.

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Safeguarding Governor	Sally Robinson Ofsted – Deputy Director Social Care Policy In liaison with the Head of Governance to place a greater emphasis on governors knowing and fulfilling their strategic and legislative responsibilities, including about the role of the DSL. • To ensure governors lead a whole college approach to safeguarding • Ensuring all governors and trustees to receive safeguarding training at point of induction, which is regularly updated • Ensuring governors recognise their role in online safety • Ensuring that each year the governing body is informed of how the College and its staff have complied with the policy, including, but not limited to, a report on the training that staff have undertaken. Ensuring governors are keeping up to date with college and local/ contextual safeguarding issues
Senior Manager with Operational Oversight	Darren Hankey, Principal and Chief Executive • Strategic co-ordination of individuals with significant roles in safeguarding including Health & Safety, Mental Health and IT safety • Enforcing the company's safeguarding and Prevent policies • Maintaining review of guidance from DfE, ESFA and other sources in ensuring that the College's procedures are up to date; • Ensuring the application of safeguarding procedures to employers and other organisations that receive children or young people on long term external placements.
Designated Safeguarding Lead *DSL*	Deborah Caygill, Designated Safeguarding Lead • Oversight of the referral of cases of suspected abuse to the relevant Children's Hub and Safeguarding Adults team • Providing advice and support to other staff on safeguarding matters; • Working with children's social workers, the local authority virtual school head for looked-after and previously looked-after children and any other relevant safeguarding and welfare partners • Information sharing, both within the college, and with other schools and colleges on transfer including in-year and between primary and secondary education, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners • Uphold relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), • To keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals and understand the purpose of this record-keeping • Liaise with staff (especially teachers, pastoral support staff, IT technicians and special educational needs coordinators (SENCO) • Liaising with relevant support agencies and the police

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	• Production of an annual report to the Principal & Governors on the operation of safeguarding policies. • Updating College polces and practice aligning with key Government policies and guidance. • Staff CPD - Ensuring that all staff receive training and induction in safeguarding issues and are aware of the College's safeguarding and child protection procedures. • Promoting online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place
Student Success Coach, DSO Team Leader, *Deputy DSL*	Beth Sinclair, Lead Student Success Coach • Supporting the DSL as above • Coordinating DSO team operations • be available to provide advice and support to other staff on issues relating to child • protection • be available to listen to students studying at the College. • lead on individual cases, including liaising with parents/carers and, where appropriate, • social workers and others to safeguard young people. • maintain proper records of any child protection referral, complaint or concern (even where • that concern does not lead to a referral) ensuring that all details are recorded on the • safeguarding system. • support the provision of information to parents of children and young people within the • College to promote awareness of the College's Safeguarding Policy
[Safeguarding team] *Student Success Coaches DSOs*	Graeme Reynolds, Sharon Gray, Mary Kernan & Gemma Robinson • Supporting for the designated person, as above. • Operational support for all student safeguarding concerns
Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDCo)	Susan Harris, Head of School SEND & Alternative Provision (SENDCo) • Lead the College's provision for learners with special educational needs. • Liaise with local authorities, local schools and other training providers to ensure a positive transition experience. • Manage a staff of learning support assistants that support a range of vulnerable learners

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10. Procedure for Responding to Concerns and Disclosures

College staff who have regular contact with students are well placed to observe significant changes in a young person's behaviour, a failure to thrive, outward signs of abuse or behaviour which may indicate a risk of being drawn into terrorism or other concerns. In addition, young people may choose to share their concerns with staff they feel they can trust and with whom they are comfortable. Staff need to know how to respond sensitively to a young person's concerns and who to approach for advice. Whilst College staff are not responsible for investigating abuse it is essential that any disclosures or suspicions of significant harm, allegations of abuse, or concerns over potential radicalisation, are acted on and treated seriously. The College takes a holistic view of the welfare of its students and recognises that a wide range of contextual factors may be impacting on the wellbeing of a young person. These are likely to include family circumstances, friendship groups, the presence of specific vulnerabilities, attendance and behaviour and learning differences. The safeguarding officer will consider the full picture in dealing with cases brought to her/his attention.

The following guidelines should be followed by all staff receiving a disclosure:

1. Stay calm and reassure the young person that they are right to tell someone of their concerns.

2. Do not promise confidentiality. Be honest - explain that you need to pass the information on and why while reassuring them that only the people who need to know will be told. The young person can accompany you if they wish.

3. Allow the student to speak in their own way and at their own pace, avoid interrupting when they are recalling significant events.

4. Do not be judgemental but make a professional assessment about the likelihood of harm occurring.

5. Do not 'interview' the young person; do not ask leading questions. Ask factual questions to gather as much information as possible and to create a full picture of what has happened so that this can be reported to a safeguarding officer.

6. Only clarify what the young person is trying to say and ascertain whether there are any immediate issues of safety for the young person or any other children.

7. Notify the Safeguarding team by recording on CPOMs, as soon as possible and that working day, noting as accurately as possible what was said using the young person's own words. Include the time, context and location of the disclosure. If the concern is urgent verbally inform the safeguarding officer immediately in person and record on CPOMs later.

8. Do not investigate any suspicions, allegations or incidents of abuse, but report them within the hour (or as soon as practicable) to a safeguarding officer and pass on all written notes.

9. Do not contact the young person's parents/carers. The safeguarding officer will seek advice from a Designated Safeguarding Lead who will then contact the local authority Children's Services, local Prevent Coordinator or another agency as appropriate.

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10. Where there is a concern that a young person is experiencing, may already have experienced abuse or neglect, is suffering or is likely to suffer 'significant harm' the Designated Safeguarding Lead will refer immediately to Children's Social Care (CSC) at the appropriate local authority.

11. Where there is concern of an immediate threat to life emergency services must be contacted immediately

12. In exceptional circumstances, if the Designated Safeguarding Leads are not available advice should be sought from the duty manager or a member of the Senior Leadership Team, who will liaise with the required services as appropriate. All staff had a right and responsibility to refer concerns directly to the Childrens Hub if necessary.

13. In the case of disclosure from an adult at risk, referrals will be made to appropriate adult services e.g. adult social care

11. Documenting Safeguarding Incidents

In order to formalise the recording of safeguarding incidents, relevant safeguarding documentation issued by the Local Authority will be used by the Designated Person or Deputy Designated people once they have dealt with a safeguarding issue. Upon completion, the form will be returned to the Designated Person who will store the documents in a secure location on CPOMs

The Threshold of need

The "threshold of need" in safeguarding is a set of criteria used to determine the level of support a child requires, ranging from universal services to statutory intervention. It is a guiding principle to ensure children and families receive a timely and proportionate response based on their assessed needs, from universal support for those with no significant concerns to high-risk intervention for children suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

Reference Appendix B The referral process

12. Students with Particular Vulnerabilities

The College recognises that the circumstances of specific categories of students render them particularly vulnerable to certain types of abuse. Safeguarding procedures are customised in these instances, to address these vulnerabilities and specialist safeguarding officers have been identified to offer support in these areas of provision. These categories include:

- students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Looked After Children (LACs) / Young Care Leavers (YCLs)
- Students who are privately fostered
- students on English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses
- students whose programmes include Work Based Learning (WBL) including apprentices
- adults at risk (vulnerable adults)
- Students participating in 14-16 programmes and alternative provision

Children and adults with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities are subject to additional safeguarding challenges as they may have difficulties with communication, are at higher risk of peer group isolation and may

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be disproportionately affected by bullying. College staff are made aware that behaviour, mood and injury may relate to possible abuse and not just the physical or learning needs of SEND learners through safeguarding training and other opportunities.

Student Induction/ Taught tutorial programme - During the induction period in September, students are given details of what to do if they need to report abuse - including being given names and contact details of our trained and experienced Safeguarding Team. The reception team holds details of the lead member of staff on Safeguarding Duty and any student with concerns in college hours can access support. Students are taught about safeguarding, including in relation to online safety, that safeguarding training for staff, including online safety training, is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole school or college safeguarding approach and wider staff training and curriculum planning.

RESPECT The College prides itself on treating every student as an individual, whilst helping them to achieve their individual goals. We embrace diversity and we also believe that every person who passes through our doors deserves and will get our unconditional help and respect. The College has clear and high expectations of learners in terms of their behaviour, attitude and quality of work demanded. The HARTS campaign is promoted: -

> **H**ard working
> **A**mbitious
> **R**esilient
> **T**hankful and Respectful
> **S**elf-aware and regulating

13. Policy Monitoring and Reporting of Safeguarding and Prevent - Process for Monitoring Effectiveness of Safeguarding Procedures

- **Weekly** the safeguarding team meet to review actions associated with this policy.

- **Termly** reports are provided to College Leadership Committee on Safeguarding and Prevent incidents including activities associated with promoting a positive safeguarding environment. The College's safeguarding and Prevent action plan is presented to the College Leadership Committee for progress and comments.

- **Termly** the DSL, Prevent Lead and SENCo meet with the lead governor for safeguarding.

- Regular Governor' reports are submitted to summarise safeguarding activity and actions

- **Annually** the Designated Leads and the Senior Manager with Operational Oversight will review the Safeguarding and Prevent policy and present to the College Leadership Committee and Governing Body

14. Process for the Safe Managing of Data Information

The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children formation must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. It is a key factor identified in many serious case reviews (SCRs), where poor information sharing has resulted in missed opportunities to take action

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that keeps children and young people safe. data subjects will be informed what data is being collected and for what purposes

- data will be stored safely and securely with robust access arrangements in place
- consent to share data will be requested where/when this is necessary
- data will only be shared on a need-to-know basis and using secure transfer mechanisms
- data will not be retained for any longer than is necessary
- digital and hard copy data will be securely destroyed when it is no longer needed, or the retention period has   expired

Information sharing Safeguarding Records and Transfer of Safeguarding Files

Guidance on information sharing for people who provide safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers. Published 26 March 2015 Last updated1 May 2024

Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Where children leave the college, the designated safeguarding lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term to allow the new school or college to have support in place for when the child arrives.

The College will keep records of all safeguarding concerns and cases including records of partnership work required in order to safeguard or protect a child or young person from risk of harm. These records will be kept away from other student records and kept secure in locked filing cabinets within the safeguarding offices (for paper files transferred to the college) or online n the safeguarding system/secure documents folder on SharePoint.

Transfer of Safeguarding Files

Transfer of safeguarding files to the College The College will collect details of the last school/college attended by students and, where the student is under 18, will write to the local authorities to request that any safeguarding records are transferred to the College as soon as possible by an agreed secure method. When the files are received a confirmation receipt will be sent to the former school/college. KCSIE, 2025, states that files must be received within five working days from enrolment.

Transfer of Safeguarding Files from the College

When a student for whom there is a safeguarding record leaves the College, the DSL will ensure that the safeguarding record/s are transferred to the new school/college once this information is known. The following procedure should be followed:

- Tutors will collect information about the intended destination of a student under 18 transferring from the College and pass this information to MIS.
- The DSL will receive a list every month from MIS with details of young people who will be transferring from the College to a new school/college and who are known to the safeguarding team.
- For each student on the list, the DSL will confirm with the new school/ college that the transfer has, or will be, taking place and, if yes, obtain details of the DSL there

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- As soon as the young person has enrolled at the new school/college, the DSL will arrange for the transfer of the file via secure means and ensure receipt is confirmed, the transfer should take place within five days of enrolment at the new provision
- Where appropriate, the DSL will also share information with the DSL at the new school/college in advance of the student leaving e.g. where this would allow the new school/college to put relevant support in place for when the student arrive
  Reference QAP 4.2 Data Protection

15. Recruitment and Selection Process

Staff Recruitment

Hartlepool College of Further Education (the College) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all vulnerable groups (children and adults). As part of this commitment the College ensures that key Human Resource processes, notably recruitment decisions, are well informed through a consistent and thorough process of obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information from and about applicants and new members of staff or volunteers. The overall aim of this data collection is to provide greater protection for vulnerable members of society, staff and students. All staff and volunteers are required to share this commitment to support and engage in measures that afford greater protection to such vulnerable members.

Safer recruitment processes are applied following **QAP 4.3.2** to deter unsuitable applicants from applying for roles within the College, and to identify and reject them if they do.

Reference QAPP 4.3.2 Appointments Procedure-Safer Recruitment

Successful applicants are given an induction programme that fully outlines their roles and responsibilities in relation to Health & Safety, IT services/ online safety and Safeguarding.

Student Recruitment

The College does not wish to debar individuals with criminal records from taking advantage of the opportunities provided by the College. In general, a criminal record is not to be regarded as an obstacle to study. In any event, the College will take into account, when dealing with existing students and selecting applicants for admission, criminal convictions which are deemed spent, unspent or pending under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 unless such convictions are deemed as "exceptions" under the terms of The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2013. Applicants will be interviewed by the DSL and the final approval will be made by the Principal.

QAP 3.2 appendix A, it is part of the colleges Admissions Policy.

[Appendix A - Screening of Applicants and Learners who are Ex-Offenders.pdf

16. Staff Code of Conduct

All staff undertake a thorough induction programme that sets our clear expectations with regards to the code of conduct QAP 4.3.17. Annually the College, as part of its professional development plan, ensure that all staff have read and understand the

Code of Conduct QAP 4.3.17

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Staff Continuous Professional Development The Senior Manager with Operational Oversight is responsible for agreeing an annual staff development programme that ensures staff are kept up to date with current safeguarding guidance, contextual safeguarding issues and e-safety.

The College ensures that, as part of the requirement for staff to undergo regular updated safeguarding training, including in relation to online safety.

Relate to possible abuse and not just the physical or learning needs of SEND learners through safeguarding training and other opportunities.

Receiving an Allegation about a Member of Staff

The allegation should be reported immediately to either the Principal, Head of HR or Designated safeguarding Lead.

- obtaining written details of the allegation from the person who received it, that are signed and dated. The written details should be countersigned and dated by the DSL/HR.
- recording information about times, dates, locations and names of potential witnesses.
- Where the allegation is considered to be either a potential criminal act or indicates that the child has suffered, is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, the matter should be reported immediately to the LADO

Reference QAP 3.12 Managing Allegations against staff

Summary of Appendices Supporting this Policy

Appendix A Forms of Abuse
Appendix B Making a Referral
Appendix C The Prevent Duty/Radicalisation and Extremism
Appendix D Working Safely
Appendix E Managing Visitors Onsite
Appendix F On-line Safety
Appendix G Safer Recruitment
Appendix H Child Sexual Exploitation
Appendix I Sexual Violence and Harassment including Upskirting
Appendix J Staff Conduct – Personal Relationships
Appendix K Child Criminal Exploitation and County Lines
Appendix L Children Missing form Education
Appendix M Children in Care
Appendix N Mental Health and Wellbeing
Appendix O Whistleblowing

Above appendices have been updated as needed to align with guidance changes.
All Appendices can be accessed on the College Staff Portal page [QAPPs section]:
https://hcfe.sharepoint.com/sites/StaffPortal/SitePages/3.aspx

and College Website: https://www.hartlepoolfe.ac.uk/college/safeguarding