Welcome to the first safeguarding newsletter of the academic year 2020/21.

These newsletters will give you an update on safeguarding issues in College. Each one will also provide you with some information about a specific safeguarding issue affecting young people and further links to extra support/ reading. September's issue is about peer on peer abuse including sexual harassment

College updates

It is great to see students back in college. We thank them for the maturity and responsibility they are showing in continuing to carry out their twice weekly testing.

Since July staff have received the full mandatory safeguarding training and also extra training about Prevent, e-safety, FGM (female genital mutilation), sexual harassment, drugs awareness, exploitation & vulnerability and bereavement.

In addition pastoral tutors and learning support assistants have received Mental Health Champion training.

Tutors are conducting face to face individual consultations with their 1st year students over the next few weeks. Students are being asked to book appointments using the link that has been sent to them by e-mail and on Teams. Conversations will focus on the students' wellbeing and how well they are coping with the transition back into college, as well as their academic progress and routines. Please encourage your son/daughter in any of the year groups to contact their tutor straight away if they have any worries or concerns.

LINK is a scheme that was set up last year to support students to connect with others. It has been really successful and has already helped a number of students who may otherwise have found it difficult to form friendship groups in a new college environment. For more information about this please contact Breege Seville breege.seville@wsfc.ac.uk

Online safety

We have an online safeguarding filter, run by e-Safe (now part of Smoothwall) which is on all the machines in college including laptops and operates using keystroke technology. This is to ensure staff and students are safe when they are in the digital environment at the college. E-safe monitors the digital environment in relation to safeguarding concerns and alerts us to the earliest warning signs of risks to safety, welfare and wellbeing, which enables us to intervene early.

What does e-Safe do?

 It not only monitors words and phrases for safeguarding risks in all languages, but also detects evidence of safeguarding risks in images and videos. E-Safe will flag safeguarding concerns and activity in the following areas:• Illegal behaviour • Bullying •Mental health •Racism •Pornography •Child sexual exploitation •Profanities and vulgarities.

Alerts are sent to Julie Ferman to investigate and then appropriate support can be put in place. Online safety is also covered as part of our tutorial programme.

More information about online safety can be found in our Early Help Offer in the Safeguarding tab on our website. Below are some useful websites with sections for parents on how you can also help your teen to be safe online.

www.thinkuknow.co.uk www.net-aware.org.uk www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre

We recognise that young people are vulnerable to physical, sexual and emotional abuse by their peers or siblings. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), physical abuse sexual violence and sexual harassment; sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); initiation/ hazing type violence and rituals.

Abuse perpetrated by young people can be just as harmful as that perpetrated by an adult. It is important to remember the impact on the victim of the abuse as well as to focus on the support for the young person exhibiting the harmful behaviour.

Sexual harassment means 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. Sexual harassment can include;

- Sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- Sexual "jokes" or taunting;
- Physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature, interfering with someone's clothes
- Online sexual harassment which may include: non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos.
- Sexualised online bullying; unwanted sexual comments and messages, including on social media;
- Sexual exploitation; coercion and threats;
- Sexual Violence.

Staff at the College make it clear that sexual harassment is not acceptable, is never to be tolerated and is not 'banter', or an inevitable part of growing up. Students are made aware of the importance of respect, their rights and responsibilities, what constitutes abuse (including harmful sexual behaviour, bullying and cyber-bullying) and how any incidents of abuse will be addressed through the Student Conduct Policy (available on our website). We have a zero-tolerance approach to any form of sexual abuse or harassment, including between peers.

We will ensure that any form of abuse or harmful behaviour is dealt with immediately and consistently to reduce the extent of harm to the young person, with full consideration to the impact on that individual's emotional and mental health and well-being. We will treat all disclosures with sensitivity, ensuring that the student's voice is heard and that support is given at every stage of the disclosure.

Students can report incidents of peer on peer abuse including sexual harassment in the following ways;
- their tutor, Head of Year or any member of staff
- a member of the safeguarding team
- using the reporting tool on the website in the safeguarding tab

Not knowing what constitutes street harassment and what to do, limits our ability to take action. The following is a link to online training to give the tools to stand up to street harassment.

www.standup-international.com/gb/en/

Julie Ferman