

Post Title:	Care-experienced Safeguarding Officer (CSO)
Place of Work:	Dual-sited across Hadlow & Tonbridge Colleges, although occasional cross-college cover and travel will be required.
Hours of Work:	37 hours per week (Monday to Friday) / 40 weeks per annum
Salary:	Tier 4 (Spot Salary) pro-rata
Responsible to:	Deputy Head of Welfare & Safeguarding with close liaison with Head of Welfare & Safeguarding
Responsible for:	Managing a caseload of Looked After Children and Care Leavers, organising support meetings, advocating for their rights, ensuring educational attainment, and supporting with welfare and safeguarding needs.

Summary:

The Safeguarding Support Officer oversees the well-being, safeguarding, and educational support of Looked After Children and Care Leavers, ensuring their needs and statutory entitlements are met through advocacy, transition support, crisis intervention, and collaboration with internal teams and external stakeholders.

Duties, Responsibilities and Accountabilities:

1. Designated Member of Staff — Caseload & Statutory Liaison

- Identify and manage a caseload of Care Experienced learners, ensuring their needs are effectively assessed and met, acting as the Designated Member of Staff.
- Liaise with Virtual Schools for Looked After Children, and with the relevant Local Authority Leaving Care Service/Personal Adviser for Care Leavers, recognising that these are distinct statutory routes.
- Conduct pre-enrolment/enrolment transitional meetings with learners, carers, and agencies, obtaining safeguarding files and ensuring correct learner identification of care-experienced learners across college systems.
- Advocate for Care Experienced learners, ensuring their voices are heard and rights upheld, liaising with social workers, healthcare providers, Virtual Schools, and other stakeholders to provide comprehensive support.
- Provide cover for other Colleges on occasion, where another CSO is unavailable.

2. Personal Education Plans, Transition & Progression Support

- Organise and attend Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings in line with statutory timescales, obtaining and monitoring curriculum reports, attendance, and tutor engagement to plan for learner welfare and progression.
- Support educational attainment by collaborating with curriculum areas to overcome learning barriers.
- Support access to statutory entitlements, including the 16-19 Bursary Fund's vulnerable bursary category for care-experienced learners.
- Assist Care Leavers in accessing training, apprenticeships, and employment as part of post-16/19 transition planning.

3. Monitoring, Records & Reporting

- Monitor eTrackr and PowerBi reports to swiftly identify and address concerns, maintaining a risk indicator report for all care-experienced learners.
- Maintain accurate, confidential records of interactions, interventions, and progress on College systems, sharing information with stakeholders only where appropriate and lawful under data protection and confidentiality requirements.
- Prepare termly reports evaluating service delivery and outcomes, including disciplinarys, withdrawals, and PEPs.

4. Wellbeing & Safeguarding Support (shared with WSO Team)

- Promote learner wellbeing by providing emotional and practical support, including life skills, working with internal departments and external agencies to facilitate the learner journey.
- Act as first point of contact for safeguarding or welfare concerns arising within your own caseload, escalating concerns outside this remit to the WSO/DSO team.
- Contribute case information to relevant multi-agency meetings concerning your caseload, attending in person only when specifically requested.
- Where capacity allows, support the wider Welfare & Safeguarding team by managing safeguarding and welfare cases beyond the Looked After Children and Care Leaver caseload.

5. Professional Development

- Attend relevant staff meetings and training, invest in your own CPD, and achieve/maintain at least a Level 3 qualification in Safeguarding.
- Undertake any other reasonable duties as required by management.

All employees of the College are expected to work in such a way that delivers the following behaviours:

1. Customer focussed, through a “can do” attitude.
2. Consistent and reliable.
3. Has a collaborative, supportive and tolerant approach.
4. Reflective, and embraces new initiatives in order to improve performance.

These behaviours will form part of the criteria within the Appraisal process.

PERSON SPECIFICATION			
CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL ✓	DESIRABLE ✓	ASSESSED BY (Application, Task, Interview)
(1) Qualifications:			
Educated to level 3 safeguarding or equivalent	✓		Application / Interview
Degree or equivalent qualification in Social Work, Child Welfare, Education, or a related field.		✓	Application / Interview
(2) Knowledge to include:			
In-depth understanding of legislation and best practices related to Looked After Children, Care	✓		Application / Task / Interview
Knowledge of DfE guidelines on safeguarding students and experience in their practical	✓		Application / Task / Interview
(3) Experience to include:			
Managing a caseload of Looked After Children and/or Care Leavers, ensuring holistic needs assessed and met.		✓	Application / Task / Interview
Conducting transitional meetings and managing safeguarding files across educational systems.		✓	Application / Task / Interview
Advocating for vulnerable groups, liaising with social workers, healthcare providers, external agencies.	✓		Application / Task / Interview
Organising and participating in PEP meetings, monitoring learner progress, and supporting educational attainment.		✓	Application / Task / Interview
Responding to safeguarding concerns and collaborating with external agencies.	✓		Application / Task / Interview
(4) Skills and Attributes to include:			

Proven ability to build positive working relationships with third parties and staff at all levels of the organisation	✓		Application / Task / Interview
Strong interpersonal and communication skills, able to engage effectively with learners, carers, colleagues, and external agencies.	✓		Application / Task / Interview
Excellent written and verbal communications; accurate record-keeping using case management/IT systems; ability to manage highly sensitive and confidential information	✓		Application / Task / Interview
Proficient in analysing and interpreting data from monitoring systems to identify trends and address concerns and report preparation, with meticulous attention to detail	✓		Application / Task / Interview
Excellent organisational skills with the ability to manage multiple priorities and deadlines effectively.	✓		Application / Task / Interview
(5) Personal Attributes and Other Requirements:			
Able to work flexibly throughout the week/over the year by prior agreement to support the programme area	✓		Application / Task / Interview
Empathetic, non-judgemental, and approachable; calm and resilient under pressure; able to manage competing priorities	✓		Application / Task / Interview
Enhanced DBS (including barred list check); ability to travel between Colleges, with access to a car during the working day	✓		Application

General:

The job description sets out the main duties of the post at the date when it was drawn up. Such duties may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the post or the level of responsibility entailed. Such variations are a common occurrence and cannot of themselves justify a reconsideration of the grading of the post.

All staff are expected to be professional, co-operative, and flexible within the needs of the post, their team and the Group and to comply with the Group's employment policies and procedures but in particular the Code of Conduct, DBS, Health & Safety and Data Protection Policy, which can be located on the Group StaffNet system or via the People Department.

Please sign as confirmation of your understanding and acceptance of the role. You should retain one copy for your records and return one copy to the People Department.

Sign: _____

Print: _____

Date: _____