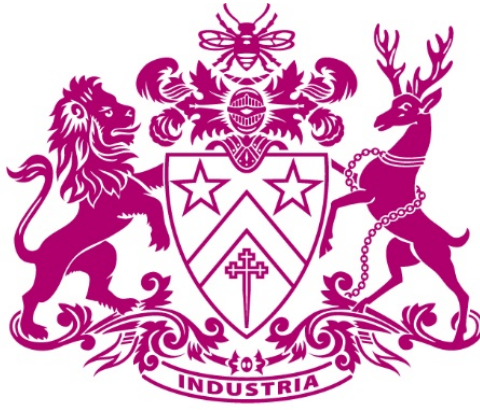




Fettes College

Responding to Safeguarding Concerns Information for Students

2026/27

Updated: June 2026

Review: June 2027

Responsibility:

CMD

FETTES COLLEGE

Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

Information for Students

What happens after I talk to a member of staff about a safeguarding concern?

Definitions:

- Antagonist – the person who has carried out a hurtful act (sometimes called a perpetrator)
- Subject – the person to whom a hurtful act has been done (sometimes called a victim or survivor)
- Peer – someone who is of a similar age to you
- Corroboration – further information to support an initial report

Non-Child Protection Incidents

If you talk to a member of staff at school about an incident such as a one-off hurtful comment (verbally or online) or deliberately leaving someone out, it is likely that:

- this would be passed on to the antagonist's Houseparent
- the antagonist would be spoken to
- the subject would be spoken to – to check they are OK
- a record would be kept of these conversations having happened
- these can be 'education' moments and they might not necessarily lead to disciplinary action, with each being dealt with as individual cases.

This means that if further incidents are raised involving the same students, a bigger picture can be built up and further action (e.g. sanctions from the Deputy Head) can be taken. Suspension (pending investigation) or exclusion are possible outcomes. This is all part of our Fettes Counter-Bullying and Promoting Positive Behaviour Policies. An investigation will be initiated to establish the facts and ensure the necessary corroboration for all reported incidents.

Child Protection Incidents

If you talk to a member of staff about something which suggests you have experienced or are at risk of experiencing significant harm (from sexual harassment or abuse, or any kind of abuse or neglect, which could be between children or an adult to a child) this is what will happen:

- All members of staff have a legal obligation to pass this incident on to a member of the Child Protection (CP) team: Miss McDonnell, Mr Archibald or Mr Dundas.
- A member of the CP team will then decide on further action, probably by meeting with the student(s) involved, based on whether they think anyone is at risk of, or has suffered, significant harm.
- It is likely that the Deputy Head (Pastoral) will also be made aware of the situation, and your Houseparent, so that they can support you through this. We will discuss with whom you are happy to share this information and agree what details we can pass on.
- If you are under the age of 16 it is likely that your parents/guardians will also need to be informed. If you are 16-18, we would recommend that your parents/guardians be informed. A risk assessment, regarding informing your parents/guardians, would be undertaken if we think that telling them might put you more at risk.

- If a crime might have been committed, it is the legal obligation of the CP team to pass the matter on to the police. The police are likely to want to come to school and speak to the subject, but the subject does not have to speak to the police if they do not want to. If you choose not to speak to the police, that does not mean that we think the incident did not happen.
- Depending on the nature of the incident, the CP team may also pass on the concern to Social Care (a government-led organisation which aims to protect the wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults, sometimes called Social Services) and possibly the police.
- We may also seek advice from our external Child Protection consultant, to ensure students are effectively supported in school by staff.

For non-CP incidents there may be the possibility of disciplinary action. In order to gain a full picture of the incident it is likely that we will have to speak to others, not just rely on one interpretation of what happened.

Because of the confidential nature of any Child Protection concern, the number of staff and students involved and details that are shared are kept to an absolute minimum. If you are not directly involved in the incident, you may not be made aware of the outcome. However, communication with the subject and antagonist is of course essential so that they know what action is being taken and what the next steps might be.

Details of specific incidents (of any level of severity, anything that has left you feel uncomfortable, upset etc.) need to be passed on to staff so that action can be taken (including potentially sanctioning antagonists and supporting students who are involved) and positive change can happen.

Students are encouraged to pass any concerns to staff if they or someone they know has been hurt by something that has happened, and therefore a follow up action is required to try and avoid future incidents happening. Students should be supporting their peers who report such incidents, in order to effect positive change – being an ally not a bystander. By not telling people, the behaviour is accepted.

We are aware that incidents of this nature can have an impact on friends and year groups and we have support mechanisms in place, such as speaking to House Staff or the Medical Centre. There is always someone here to listen to you.

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