

RUNSHAW COLLEGE

POLICY TITLE: Safeguarding Policy		
APPROVED BY: Governors	AUTHOR: Jane Pearson	
POLICY OWNER: Andrea Neild	POSITION: Assistant Principal	VERSION: 21
LAST UP DATED: August 2026	REVIEW DATE: August 2027	
Strategic DSL/Policy Lead	Assistant Principal Student Experience and Support (DSL) – Andrea Neild	
Operational DSL	Head of Safeguarding and Wellbeing (DSL) Jane Pearson	
Operational Deputy DSL	Team Leader for Safeguarding and Wellbeing (DDSL) Katie Ferguson	
Person with responsibility for CLA	Safeguarding and Wellbeing Officer (DDSL) Michelle McKinnon and Stephanie Gibson	
Deputy DSLs	There is a duty DDSL for each working day of the week, divided by team of 5.4 FTE staff.	
Governor with Safeguarding oversight	Gary Crowe	

1. Introduction and Purpose

This policy defines the responsibilities, processes and procedures relating to the protection of all students at Runshaw College, including children under the age of 18 and those over 18 who are vulnerable adults.

2. Scope

This policy sets out how Runshaw College identifies vulnerable groups, defines management and staff responsibilities, and reports and records safeguarding concerns and incidents. It reflects the strengthened expectations in KCSIE 2026, including Family Help, information sharing, online safety, child-on-child abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, mental health, serious violence, exploitation, children who are questioning their gender, safer recruitment and regulated activity.

All allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and treated in accordance with the College's procedures in recognition that any individual, child or vulnerable adult can be subject to abuse and it is the responsibility of all staff to act upon any concern,

no matter how small or trivial it may seem, an 'it could happen here' approach should be taken.

3. The Safeguarding Team

3.1 Strategic

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) with strategic responsibility for Safeguarding issues is the **Assistant Principal** – Student Experience and Support.

3.2 Operational

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) with operational responsibility for Safeguarding issues is the **Head of Safeguarding and Wellbeing**. They are responsible for day-to-day co-ordination, action, and liaison with other agencies.

In addition to Operational DSL, the College has 5.4 FTE DSL-trained staff, with a designated Duty DSL in place each working day during term time. This provides robust cover for DSL and Deputy DSL absence, ensuring safeguarding activity continues without delay, including through monitoring of the confidential safeguarding mailbox.

Safeguarding contact details:

Email: safeguarding@runshaw.ac.uk

Tel: 01772 644377

Room: M301

Other members of the Senior Management Team (SMT) who are DSL trained and form, with the other DSL's, the Wellbeing Facilitator, and the Safeguarding Team Leader the College's wider Safeguarding Team.

All DSL training is monitored via HR, the Safeguarding Steering Group, and Governors for compliance and is evidenced via HR records.

All DSL-trained staff receive regular safeguarding training to ensure their knowledge remains current and reflects statutory updates, including Family Help, information sharing, online safety and AI-related harms, harmful sexual behaviour, serious violence, exploitation and guidance relating to children who are questioning their gender. Training is recorded by HR and reviewed through appraisal and annual safeguarding audit processes.

4. Statutory Obligations

Runshaw College prioritises the health, safety and welfare of everyone involved in activities that come under the responsibility of the College.

College Governors, Senior Management, staff and volunteers must understand and comply with their statutory obligations to safeguard and promote the health and welfare of children/young people and vulnerable adults.

This policy is reviewed at least annually, supersedes all previous versions and

responds to the College's statutory duties under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and Section 94 of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The review will consider all relevant statutory safeguarding guidance in force, including Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and, where applicable, the safeguarding implications of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act.

All staff, including agency staff, volunteers and contractors who work directly with students, must read and understand **Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026** and the **College Safeguarding Policy** as part of their induction and annual safeguarding update requirements.

In addition, all staff are expected to read, understand and comply with the relevant College policies, procedures and guidance documents referenced within this policy.

Special attention is drawn in this document:

- [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#): A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children DfE, with substantive updates 18 March 2026
- [What to Do if You Are Worried a Child is Being Abused - Advice for Practitioners](#)
- [Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges - GOV.UK](#)
- UKCIS guidance: [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes advice for education settings](#)
- Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners:
[Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers](#)
[Sharing information to safeguard children and young people in the education sector in the UK | ICO](#)
- Recommended self-assessment tool to plan, and use digital technology to keep children safe online, prevent cyber incidents and upgrade & maintain technology in cost-effective ways with recommendations to help meet the digital and technology standards.
[Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges - Guidance - GOV.UK](#)
[Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges - Filtering and monitoring: core standard - Guidance - GOV.UK](#)
Guidance on capabilities and features that should be in place for users in educational settings.
- Guidance on Generative AI: [Generative artificial intelligence in education](#).
- [Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance](#)

5 Governing Body Responsibilities

Governing bodies and proprietors have a strategic leadership responsibility for safeguarding arrangements and must ensure they comply with them under legislation. They must consider this guidance, ensuring policies, procedures and training in college are effective and comply with the law. The Principal should ensure that the policies and procedures, adopted by their governing bodies and proprietors (particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect), are understood, and followed by all staff.

Governing bodies and proprietors should have a senior board level (or equivalent) lead to take leadership responsibility for college's safeguarding arrangements.

Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that all governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools and colleges are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole college approach to safeguarding. Their training should be regularly updated.

Governor safeguarding oversight will include assurance that filtering and monitoring arrangements are reviewed at least annually, with evidence that systems work on all relevant devices and locations.

Governing bodies and proprietors should be aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 21, the Equality Act 2010, (including the Public Sector Equality Duty 23), and their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

5.1 Policies and Training

The Governors will ensure that:

- They review an annual report on policies, procedures, training and safeguarding arrangements.
- The Safeguarding Policy and all supporting policies and systems policies, procedures, training ~~in relation to~~ are effective, always comply with the law and provide for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare.
- The Safeguarding Policy is reviewed annually in line with current legislation and is available publicly via the college website.
- The College provides and monitors training that is reviewed at least annually and updates are provided to staff as appropriate.
- Without delay, any deficiencies or weaknesses regarding Child Protection arrangements are remedied.
- All staff are issued with a copy and have read the latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education – September 2026
- Staff must read Part 1 in full. The previous shortened Part 1 summary should not be used as an alternative to Part 1.

5.2 Designated Roles

The Governors will ensure that:

- There is designation at Board level to take leadership responsibility

for Safeguarding arrangements for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

- There is a Designated Governor, who is assigned to act upon Safeguarding concerns if necessary, i.e. allegations against senior managers. This is the Principal for Senior Managers and the Chair of Governors, for allegations made against the Principal.
- A Governor is nominated to be responsible for liaising with the Local Education Authority and/or partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Principal.
- A senior member of the College's Leadership Team is designated to take lead responsibility for child protection (Designated Safeguarding Lead- DSL), and this is explicit in their job description. The DSL has the appropriate authority and the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings – and/or to support other staff to do so – and to contribute to the assessment of children.
- There is a designated member of staff to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after and to ensure that this person has appropriate training.

5.3 External links

The Governors will ensure:

- Multi-agency working is facilitated in order that safeguarding partners, have a shared and equal duty to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that the College contributes to multi-agency, working in line with statutory guidance.
- There is a clear accountability for the commissioning and/or provision of services designed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.
- Relevant staff have due regard to the data protection principles, which allow them to share personal information, as provided for in the Data Protection Act 2018, and the UK GDPR – 7 Golden Rules for Sharing Information (Appendix 5).
- Children are taught about how to keep themselves and others safe, including online. It should be recognised that effective education will be tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children, including children who are victims of abuse, and children with special educational needs or disabilities.
- Preventative education will include age and stage appropriate teaching about online harms including sharing images, deepfakes, pornography, misogynistic influencers, AI-generated harmful content and where to seek help.

6 Senior Leadership Responsibilities

6.1 Recruitment

Senior Leadership will ensure that:

- Staff and volunteers are recruited in accordance with The Safer Recruitment and Engagement Policy. Safer recruitment and

engagement arrangements will reflect the September 2026 changes to regulated activity, including the removal of the supervised/unpaid exception for frequent or overnight volunteer activity where barred list information is required.

- Staff undertake all statutory responsibilities to check staff who work with children, taking proportionate decisions on whether to ask for any checks beyond what is required; and ensures volunteers are appropriately supervised.
- DBS arrangements will include consideration of self-employed individuals, trainee teachers, contractors, volunteers and adults supervising students on work experience, with the College taking the lead in safeguarding allegation management where responsibilities are shared with a third party.

6.2 Training and support

Senior Leadership will ensure that:

- Induction for all staff and volunteers includes training on the roles and responsibilities of the Safeguarding Team and the Safeguarding Policy.
- Induction training will make staff aware of complementary policies and systems which support safeguarding as part of the induction which include:
 - The Code of Professional Conduct
 - Student Harassment & Bullying Policy
- Safeguarding response to children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods. Induction training will cover an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to ‘filtering and monitoring’.
- KCSIE 2026 update: Induction and annual updates will include staff responsibilities to identify and report concerns about child-on-child abuse, serious violence, weapons, exploitation, modern slavery, online harms and mental health risks including self-harm and suicidal ideation.
- Annual mandatory training and updates are provided and monitored for all staff as part of their contractual arrangements.
- Updates will be communicated by the Staff Bulletin, briefings and/or meetings.
- Support, guidance and appropriate supervision is provided to staff who require it, dealing with issues which may arise from their involvement in relation to the safeguarding of students.

6.2 Policies and procedures

Senior Leadership will ensure that:

- A minimum annual review of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures takes place.
- Supporting policies and systems are reviewed with knowledge of the requirements of “Keeping Children Safe in Education”.
- Linked behaviour, attendance, online safety, IT, trips, work experience, safer recruitment, low-level concerns and allegations policies should be checked for alignment with KCSIE 2026.

- Students, parents/guardians/carers of learners under 18 can access the College's Safeguarding Policy and associated procedures via the Runshaw College website.

6.3 Multi-agency working and external links.

Senior Leadership will ensure that:

- The College plays a part in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements to support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together.
- Multi-agency work will include use of Family Help pathways and timely liaison with social care, police, health, mental health services, local authority education services, virtual school heads and other relevant partners.
- Children's/Adult Social Care Services and Police are notified where there is a cause for concern, so that they can investigate and take necessary action.
- Procedures are in place to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns or would have been had they not resigned.
- Where services or activities are provided on the College premises by another body, the body concerned Must have appropriate policies and procedures in place regarding safeguarding children and child protection.

6.4 Sharing Information

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect. The Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) does not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

Senior Leadership will ensure that:

- Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of child.
- Safeguarding information shared with another setting is clearly presented, relevant, necessary and appropriately contextualised. Care must be taken not to omit information where it may be relevant to understanding or managing safeguarding risk.
- Information received from other settings is assessed and any necessary safety and support plans are in place before the child arrives where the information indicates risk to the individual or others.

6.5 Online Safety

Senior Leadership will ensure that:

- The College's Acceptable Use of IT Facilities Policy and Internet Access and Online Safety Policy detail how we keep young people safe when using the internet and mobile technology. This will include how appropriate filtering and monitoring technology on college devices and college networks form part of its work in this area.
- Online safety arrangements will include consideration of the four Cs,

including content, contact, conduct and commerce risks, and will specifically consider deepfakes, simulated harmful online AI interactions, AI-generated intimate images, cybercrime, financially motivated sexual extortion and misogynistic online influence.

- Appropriate filters are in place to protect students when they are online on college's IT systems or recommended resources and, are informed by the risk assessment required by Prevent Duty.
- The effectiveness of these filters will be regularly checked via South West Grid for Learning (swgfl.org.uk) tool to check college's filtering provider is signed up to relevant lists (CSA content, Sexual Content, Terrorist content Your Internet Connection Blocks Child Abuse & Terrorist Content).
- The senior leader responsible for filtering and monitoring, supported by the DSL and IT support, will check filtering and monitoring systems at least annually and keep evidence that filtering works on relevant college devices and networks.
- Online safety is taught via Progress Mentors and within curriculum where appropriate and covers, content, contact, conduct, contract, conspiracy theories, misinformation and disinformation. Resources from [Educate Against Hate](#) have been shared with Progress Mentors to support planning and delivery.
- Online bullying by students, via texts and emails, is managed through Student Harassment and Bullying Policy and the Student Disciplinary Policy. When dealing with such issues staff should refer to:
 - Sharing images of nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education setting working with children and young people how to respond to an incident.

6.6 Child-on-Child Abuse

Child-on-child abuse can take many forms, including bullying, cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying, abuse within intimate personal relationships, harassment, violence, serious physical assault, threats involving weapons and harmful language or behaviour. This may include behaviour linked to sexism, misogyny, misandry, homophobia, biphobia, racism, culture or any other derogatory or violent conduct.

The College recognises child-on-child abuse as preventable and ensures that concerns are reported to the DSL, whether they occur on or off site. Responses will consider risk and support needs for both the victim and the alleged perpetrator, with timely support to prevent escalation. The College will ensure:

- Students can report child-on-child abuse to any member of staff, the Safeguarding Team, or anonymously via the student portal.
- Reporting routes are promoted during induction and throughout the academic year.
- All staff receive training on identifying, reporting and responding to child-on-child abuse.
- Progress Mentor Group sessions reinforce acceptable behaviour, reporting routes, sanctions and support available.
- Students feel confident to seek help and are appropriately supported.
- DSLs follow Keeping Children Safe in Education and engage with local safeguarding partners where appropriate.

- Clear systems are in place to record, assess and respond to concerns.

6.7 Sexual Abuse

The College recognises sexual abuse, including sexual assault, sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour, and provides support to affected students. Harmful sexual behaviour may occur online, face-to-face, or both. Assessment will consider age, developmental stage, individual needs, risk and the potential for escalation to sexual violence.

College will ensure:

- Students who have experienced sexual abuse can report to any member of staff or directly to the safeguarding team or report anonymously via student portal.
- These systems are well promoted as part of student induction, and throughout the academic year.
- All staff receive training in relation to sexual abuse.
- This subject is covered in the Progress Mentor Group Sessions so that students are clear about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and the sanctions and interventions for poor behaviour.
- Students feel confident to ask for help.
- Students are supported.
- Resources from [Shore](#) have been shared with Progress Mentors and learners to support this.
- DSLs will engage with local safeguarding partners as appropriate.
- DSLs refer to guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education in relation to immediate response, considering confidentiality and completing risk assessments.
- DSLs will consider any risk of intrafamilial harms and any necessary support there may be for siblings following incidents.

6.8 Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

Operation Encompass is a Police and education early information sharing partnership which enables colleges to offer immediate support for children and young people experiencing domestic abuse and other traumatic experiences.

The Safeguarding Team will review Operation Encompass notifications, alongside any relevant domestic abuse information, to ensure support reflects the child's needs and wishes. This will include consideration of controlling or coercive behaviour where relevant and in line with statutory guidance.

6.9 Children who are lesbian, gay, bi, or Gender questioning (LGBT)

College staff will recognise that children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT.

The College will distinguish between support for children who are lesbian, gay or bisexual and support for children who are questioning their gender. Requests relating to social transition will be considered carefully, sensitively and individually, with safeguarding, parental involvement, Equality Act and Human Rights Act considerations recorded.

Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. College will ensure that:

- all students who identify as lesbian, gay, bi, or gender questioning have a safe space.
- All students who self-identify as non cis gender will have a named member of staff that they can approach to speak out or share their concerns. Staff should not initiate changes relating to social transition unless a decision has been made by the College through the appropriate safeguarding and senior leadership process. Records should accurately reflect required safeguarding information, including biological sex where this is necessary for safeguarding and risk assessment.
- This is in addition to the normal wellbeing and safeguarding facilities available to all students.

6.10 Learners who pose a significant risk to themselves or to others

• Learners with Criminal Conviction Disclosures

College is committed to safeguarding all learners and staff. To protect the college community while respecting individual rights, all criminal disclosures—whether during enrolment or while studying—are assessed through a structured risk process. Risk assessments help us balance safety with the right to education and the presumption of innocence under the Human Rights Act 1998.

Where a learner is subject to a criminal allegation or has disclosed a conviction, the Head of Safeguarding and Wellbeing and Head of Studies will complete a risk assessment. The Assistant Principal for Student Experience and Support will decide on suitability to study, with or without conditions.

Where there are concerns that a learner may be carrying or intending to carry a weapon, or where serious violence risk is identified, the DSL will assess risk to the individual and others and ensure an appropriate safety and support plan is considered.

• Learners with significant mental or physical health concerns

Significant mental health and physical health conditions can sometimes impact the safety of the individual or others. Where a concern has been identified the Head of Safeguarding and Wellbeing and the Head of Studies will meet with the learner to discuss a risk assessment

and a safety plan. This is reviewed as appropriate and at least once every 12 weeks. Risk assessments and safety plans are audited as part of the Safeguarding Operating Framework.

Staff should remain alert to warning signs linked to self-harm, eating disorders, suicidal ideation or plans to end life. Where a learner is believed to be in immediate danger, emergency health or emergency services support must be sought without delay.

Runshaw College retains the right to refuse someone admittance, or to revoke enrolment where a risk is identified that cannot reasonably be mitigated against.

6.11 Report to Governors

Senior Leadership will ensure that:

- An annual report on policies, procedures, training and safeguarding arrangements is presented to the Governing body.

6.12 Responding to low-level concerns

Senior Leadership will ensure that:

- The college low-level concerns policy should set out the procedure for responding to reports of low-level concerns.

7 Safeguarding Team

7.1 Roles and responsibilities of the Safeguarding Team

The Designated Safeguarding Lead, (DSL) will ensure that:

- During term time, the designated safeguarding lead and/or a deputy should always be available during college hours for college staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
- Availability arrangements should include sufficient deputy DSL cover, escalation routes and shared safeguarding mailbox monitoring so that absence, leave or illness does not create a breakdown in safeguarding activity
- The Safeguarding Team have the appropriate authority, skills, experience, knowledge and time to deliver the service effectively.
- The Safeguarding Team follow safeguarding procedures.
- The Safeguarding Team understand the filtering and monitoring systems and processes that are in place.

7.2 Multi agency working and external links.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead, (DSL) will ensure:

- The Team complies with all the requirements of record keeping and allegations reported to them.
- The Team abides by GDPR in relation to the protection and safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.
- Referrals are clearly documented with any serious concern being reported the DSL or if they are unavailable a member of the Senior Management Team at the earliest opportunity.
- Referrals are made using the guidance from Keeping Children Safe in

Education process.

- Where exploitation may amount to modern slavery, DSLs should consider both child protection processes and the National Referral Mechanism. Children referred through the NRM may have access to an Independent Child Trafficking Guardian.
- The Team complies with the Local Children's Safeguarding Partnership Child Protection Procedures and Multi-agency Adult Protection Procedures.
- The Team refers cases to Channel where there is an appropriate concern relating to radicalisation and extremism.
- While a Channel referral is being assessed, any further or new information that comes to light should be passed to police and relevant partners as appropriate
- The DSL takes overall responsibility for recording essential information about each case and for collecting reports and notes as appropriate.
- A member of the Team will act as an appropriate adult where police investigations may take place onsite. Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance - [PACE Code C 2019](#).
- Liaise with staff (especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT technicians, senior mental health leads and special educational needs coordinators (SENCO's), or the named person with oversight for SEND in a college and senior mental health leads) on matters of safety and safeguarding and welfare (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies so that children's needs are considered holistically.
- Liaise with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the mental health support team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health.
- The College will promote good mental wellbeing, identify pupils early who may be experiencing mental health problems, ensure early targeted support and liaise with or refer to specialist services where needed.
- Work with strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement at school or college. This includes:
 - Ensuring that the school or college knows who its cohort of children who have or have had a social worker are, understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort, and
 - Supporting teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social worker reach their potential, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there is still a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.

7.3 Training

The Designated Safeguarding Lead, (DSL) will ensure:

- DSL training is updated every 2 years for appropriate staff.
- The Safeguarding Team update their knowledge, skills and understanding of relevant safeguarding issues on a regular basis.

- Staff undertake Prevent awareness training.

7.4 Children who are Looked After (CLA), Children previously Looked After and Children in Kinship Care

The Designated CLA Safeguarding Team member will:

- Maintain an overview and records relating to CLA and previously CLA.
- Link with Virtual School Heads to promote the education of children with a social worker and children in kinship care.
- Liaison with Virtual School Heads should include attention to attendance, educational outcomes and ambitious targets for children in care, children with a social worker and children in kinship care where applicable.
- Ensure that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status.
- Work with appropriate external agencies in the best interests of the child.
- Support staff working with the young person sharing information as necessary.
- Facilitate prompt action if required to safeguard the child.
- Promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after.

8 Individual Staff Responsibilities

All staff and volunteers working for Runshaw College must be aware of and understand responsibilities in relation to the protection of children and vulnerable adults. All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. This should not prevent staff a professional curiosity and/or speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child.

Staff should understand that safeguarding issues often overlap and that some groups may have additional vulnerabilities, including children with SEND or health issues, young carers, pregnant or parenting young people, children with family members in prison and children showing early signs of abusive, violent or harmful behaviours.

Each member of staff should ensure that they:

- Attend all training and take responsibility for reading updates or other materials as directed.
- Read "Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 – Part 1: safeguarding information for all school and college staff", which will be made available to them via training and the Staff Bulletin.
- Follow the Safeguarding procedures.
- Report any concerns immediately via the Safeguarding Helpline (01772 644377) or the Safeguarding email, Safeguarding@runshaw.ac.uk , or by clicking on the green safeguarding button on the staff portal landing page. Concerns may result from direct contact with the student or third-party information. Evidence is not required to pass on a concern.
- Are aware that young people can be harmed online via hurtful and abusive messages, enticing young people to engage in age-inappropriate

conversations, sharing and producing indecent images or encouraging risk taking behaviour e.g.:

- Online harms include exposure to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, harmful contact, harmful conduct, commerce risks, cybercrime, deepfakes, AI-generated or AI-facilitated harms and financially motivated sexual extortion.
 - Content: learners being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material.
 - Contact: learners being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users
 - Conduct: learner's personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm
 - Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

8.1 Disclosure

Each member of staff should ensure that they:

- Take all complaints, allegations, disclosures or suspicions seriously.
- Keep questions to a minimum.
- Do not promise confidentiality. *(The College complies with the requirements of the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 and the Human Rights Act 1998, which allows for disclosure of personal data where this is necessary to protect the vital interests of a child/young person/vulnerable adult).*
- Record as soon as possible what has been said.
- Without stopping a student talking about the abuse, staff must, as soon as reasonably possible, contact the DSL who will take over the responsibility for managing the disclosure.
- Do not keep any notes or discuss with other staff.

If the student is in immediate risk emergency services should be contacted if contact cannot be made with any of the DSLs or any Senior Manager. If no contact is possible with a Runshaw DSL that day staff must refer to the Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool and Lancashire Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP) for details of how to report concerns about the safety or welfare of a child/young person or vulnerable adult or Children's Social Care (Appendix 1).

If staff believe a child is in danger because of a mental health crisis, self-harm risk or risk of suicide, they should seek immediate emergency support in line with College procedures.

Guidance for reporting a concern out of hours can be found in Appendix 1.

8.2 Remote Learning

There may be occasions when college delivers a mixture of on-site and remote learning or completely switches to remote learning. Should this happen it is essential staff continue to refer any safeguarding concerns they have regarding a student as per this policy.

The Safeguarding Team will continue to support students when working remotely and are contactable by email or Teams calls.

Vulnerable students –

Protecting vulnerable students remains a priority during any period of remote or blended learning. Vulnerable students include those with a social worker, children and young people up to the age of 25 with an Education, Health and Care Plan, and those affected by exploitation, serious violence, domestic abuse, homelessness or temporary accommodation. This also includes young carers, pregnant or parenting young people and students with significant mental health needs.

Local authorities have the key day-to-day responsibility for delivery of children's social care. Social workers and Virtual School Heads continue to work with vulnerable children.

College staff should continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. If college staff receive direct contact from a social worker or another external agency, they should contact the Safeguarding Team.

Mental Health – Negative experiences and distressing life events, can affect the mental health of everyone. Mental Health issues can bring about changes in a young person's behaviour or emotional state which can be displayed in a range of different ways, and that can be an indication of an underlying problem.

Online safety – It is more important than ever that college provides a safe environment online. College will continue to ensure that appropriate filters are in place to protect students when they are online on the College's IT systems or recommended resources.

It is especially important that all staff who interact with students, online, continue to look out for signs a student may be at risk. Any such concerns should be reported to the Safeguarding team.

Staff need to consider the safety of their students when they are asked to work online and refer to Professional Practice Guidelines and the College must ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with Privacy and Data Protection/ UK GDPR requirements.

8.3 Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or gender questioning.

A child or young person being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not itself an inherent risk factor for harm, however, other children can sometimes target them. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who are.

At Runshaw College we have a zero-tolerance approach to any form of bullying and harassment, and the associated linked policy should be referred to.

Keeping Children Safe in Education makes reference to the Cass Review and that caution is necessary for children questioning their gender as there are many unknowns about the impact of social transition and children may well have wider vulnerabilities including having complex mental health and psychological needs and in some cases additional diagnoses of Autism and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

As such, staff need to be mindful when supporting a gender questioning child and take a cautious approach and consider the broad range of individual needs in partnership with parents/carers (other than in the exceptionally rare circumstances where involving parents would constitute a significant risk of harm to the child), including any clinical advice that is available and how to address wider vulnerabilities such as bullying. . There is also Guidance for Schools and Colleges in relation to Gender Questioning Children, for additional support when deciding how to proceed. The College will follow statutory KCSIE 2026 guidance on children who are questioning their gender. Individual arrangements will be kept under review, with the rationale for decisions recorded. Where facilities or arrangements require adaptation, safeguarding risk assessments will be considered and decisions will avoid rigid rules based on gender stereotypes.

9 Linked Policies

Other Related Policies and Codes of Conduct:

- Attendance Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Disclosure of Information Policy
- Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Made Against Staff, Volunteers and Governors Policy
- Trips and Residential Policy
- Experience of Work Policy
- Freedom of Expression Policy
- Professional Practice – Guidelines for Safer Working Practice for all Staff who Work with Children, Young People or Vulnerable Adults
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- IT Access, Usage and Online Safety Policy
- Prevent Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy
- Safer Recruitment and Engagement Policy
- Code of Professional Conduct
- Student Harassment and Bullying Policy
- Volunteering Policy

Guidance for Out of Hours Safeguarding Concerns:

Staff who have any concerns for the welfare of a student out of college hours should follow guidance as outlined below:

If staff have immediate concerns for a student's safety or that a student is at risk to the safety of themselves or others, they should call emergency services by dialling 999.

If staff have non-urgent concerns about a student, they should refer the student to the 24/7 Student Assistance phone line - 0800 028 3766 (please also see the [Wellbeing@Runshaw](#) area of the website) and/or call the relevant Local Authority (a list of contact numbers are in Appendix 1).

Staff may also want to signpost students to other external services. A comprehensive, but not exhaustive, list can be found on Appendix 2.

Any actions should be followed up completing the safeguarding referral form, found on staff portal landing page 'Report a Safeguarding Concern'.

Appendix 1: Safeguarding Contacts for External Referrals (August 2026)

Local Authority	Service	Contact Number	Out of Hours
Lancashire County Council	Children's Social Care Referrals	0300 123 6720	0300 123 6722
Lancashire County Council	Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	01772 536 694	N/A
Blackburn with Darwen	Children's Social Care Referrals (MASH)	01254 666400	01254 587547
Blackpool	Children's Social Care Referrals (Request for Support Hub)	01253 477299	01253 477600
Bolton	Children's Social Care Referrals (Integrated Front Door)	01204 331500	01204 337777
Sefton	Children's Social Care Referrals (CHAT Team)	0151 934 4013	0151 934 3555
St Helens	Children's Social Care Referrals (Contact Cares / MASH)	01744 676767 (Option 2)	0345 050 0148
Wigan	Children's First Partnership Hub	01942 828300	01942 828300

Appendix 2: Other Safeguarding and Wellbeing Support Services

Organisation	Service	Contact Details	Availability
Wisdom	College's Student Assistance Programme app, providing confidential wellbeing, counselling, legal and financial information, self-help resources and 24/7 guidance for students.	0800 028 3766.	24/7
Hub of Hope	UK's largest mental health support directory – to find support if outside of local area	https://hubofhope.co.uk/	24/7
NSPCC Helpline	Advice and support for anyone concerned about a child's welfare	Tel: 0808 800 5000	Telephone: Monday-Friday 8am-10pm, weekends 9am-6pm.
Childline	Confidential support for children and young people under 19	Tel: 0800 1111 Website: www.childline.org.uk	24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
Samaritans	Emotional support for anyone experiencing distress or suicidal feelings	Tel: 116 123 (free) Website: www.samaritans.org	24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
PAPYRUS	Suicide prevention support for under	Tel: 0800 068 4141 Text: HOPE to 88247	24 hours a day, 365 days a

Organisation	Service	Contact Details	Availability
HOPELINE247	35s and those concerned about them	Website: www.papyrus-uk.org	year.
YoungMinds Parent Helpline	Mental health advice and support for parents and carers	Tel: 0808 802 5544 Email: parents@youngminds.org.uk Website: www.youngminds.org.uk	Monday, Thursday, Friday 9.30am-4pm. Tuesday and Wednesday 9.30am-6pm.
The Mix	Support for young people aged 11-25	Website: www.themix.org.uk	Online support and information for young people.

The UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018

The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 introduce new elements to the data protection regime, superseding the Data Protection Act 1998. Practitioners must have due regard to the relevant data protection principles which allow them to share personal information.

The UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 place greater significance on organisations being transparent and accountable in relation to their use of data. All organisations handling personal data need to have comprehensive and proportionate arrangements for collecting, storing, and sharing information.

The UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children and young people safe.

To effectively share information:

- All practitioners should be confident of the processing conditions, which allow them to store, and share, the information that they need to carry out their safeguarding role. Information which is relevant to safeguarding will often be data which is considered 'special category personal data' meaning it is sensitive and personal.
- Where practitioners need to share special category personal data, they should be aware that the Data Protection Act 2018 includes 'Safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a condition that allows practitioners to share information **without consent**.
- Information **can be shared legally without consent**, if a practitioner is unable to, cannot be reasonably expected to gain consent from the individual, or if to gain consent could place a child at risk.
- Relevant personal information can be shared lawfully if it is to keep a child or individual at risk safe from neglect or physical, emotional or mental harm, or if it is protecting their physical, mental, or emotional well.

Seven Golden Rules of sharing information

- 1 Remember that the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information

sharing but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.

- 2** Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
- 3** Seek advice from other practitioners, or your information governance lead, if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
- 4** Where possible, share information with consent, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 you may share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be clear of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you do not have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.
- 5** Consider safety and well-being: base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.
- 6** Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up to date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely (see principles).
- 7** Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.