



EST. 1948

**MOORLANDS
COLLEGE**

Safeguarding Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document establishes the principles that govern Moorlands College's commitment to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults in the work of Moorlands College through its staff, students, volunteers and trustees.
- 1.2 The College seeks to be a safe environment for children and vulnerable adults across all of its activities. Safeguarding is a collective responsibility, and this policy applies to every staff member, student, volunteer, trustee or visitor within the College community.
- 1.3 The policy and related procedures document are aligned to the Quality Code for Higher Education, the Care Act 2014, and "Child Protection in England: Legislation, Policy and Guidance," NSPCC, 2016. Together, they should be read in light of the College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, and the Academic Framework chapter on Student Support.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 Safeguarding means to protect people's wellbeing and human rights, enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect,¹ paying particular attention to those who are less able to safeguard themselves, namely, children and vulnerable adults.
- 2.2 A child is defined as anybody under the age of 18.
- 2.3 The College defines vulnerable adults as those who are experiencing or are at risk of harm, abuse or neglect due to having a clearly identified additional need such that they are unable to look after themselves. Whilst the Care Act 2014 does not define vulnerable adults, it states that the safeguarding duties presented apply to those "unable to protect themselves from the risk or experience of abuse or neglect."
- 2.4 For clarity, whilst mental health or other concerns may mean an adult is more vulnerable than others, unless the definition in 2.3 is fully satisfied, this policy and related procedures will not be an appropriate guide.

3. General responsibilities

- 3.1 The College is responsible for:
 - equipping staff — and, where it is responsible for student placements, students — with the skills needed to keep children and vulnerable adults safe
 - supporting staff who are working with those who have been abused or are particularly at risk of harm from themselves or others
- 3.2 To enable this:
 - the Executive Leadership Team appoints a senior member of staff as a Safeguarding Lead, who is appropriately trained and experienced

¹ NHS definition that covers adult and child safeguarding. See <https://www.england.nhs.uk/safeguarding/about/>

- the Board of Trustees appoints a trustee responsible for safeguarding, to whom the Safeguarding Lead provides reports
- the College recruits safely, ensuring the suitability of staff, trustees, students and volunteers who work with children and vulnerable adults on behalf of the College — this involves ensuring written references are received and following them up, that a DBS check has been completed for relevant roles, and that each person receives a copy of this policy
- the College ensures that anybody “whistle-blowing” is fully protected from any prejudicial actions

3.3 The Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:

- the development and publication of procedures relating to safeguarding, including the Prevent referral process, and ensuring that they are understood and followed
- periodically reviewing the documentation to ensure compliance with changes in legislation and guidance on protecting children and vulnerable adults
- keeping the trustee responsible for safeguarding aware of any on-going safeguarding issues and their management
- submitting an annual report to the Board of Trustees on safeguarding, including a brief, anonymised description of any issues and how they were managed
- due diligence related to safeguarding on any institutional partner organisations, ensuring they have appropriate policies and procedures in place, and ensuring that the Placements Team carry out due diligence related to safeguarding on providers of a programme-related placement, ensuring they have appropriate policies and procedures in place
- recording of concerns and notification of social services and/or police, when appropriate
- appropriate training of staff, trustees, students and volunteers, including on
 - safe practice
 - signs of abuse
 - the need to immediately refer any concerns about instances or threats of abuse or harm to self or others to the Safeguarding Lead of the College or of the relevant organisation. (Note that normal practices of confidentiality do not apply when a person is at risk of or has experienced abuse or harm from self or others)
 - the Prevent duty

3.4 The primary responsibility of other members of the College communities is to report any concerns relating to safeguarding to the Safeguarding Lead. If the Safeguarding Lead is unavailable, a message for them should be left with the College’s Reception or given to a personal tutor, flagged as relating to Safeguarding. The matter should not be discussed more widely (see section 4).

4. Safeguarding information

- 4.1 When an issue has been identified as raising safeguarding concerns by the Safeguarding Lead, only relevant people are informed. This always includes the trustee responsible for safeguarding.
- 4.2 Where a student is involved in the issue an appropriate level of information may also be shared with their personal tutor(s), the chaplains, the Principal, the relevant Programme Leader and/or Regional Centre Senior Tutors.
- 4.3 Where a member of staff is involved in the issue, an appropriate level of information may also be shared with the Principal and the person’s line manager.
- 4.4 Where a trustee is involved in the issue, an appropriate level of information is normally shared with the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

4.5 All information about safeguarding issues, such as written records and referrals of concerns, is held in secure, centralised record stores, and only accessed by authorised staff. All personal data will be processed by the College in accordance with the College’s Data Protection Policy.²

5. Admission of students under 18 years old

5.1 In the exceptional case where a person under 18-years old is admitted to study as per the Admissions Policy, the College acknowledges that it has an enhanced duty of care towards them given their status as a child. No student will be allowed to live in College accommodation under 16 years old.

5.2 To protect the welfare of such a student the College:

- requires that the prospective student’s parent/guardian signs a consent form confirming that the College is not in *loco parentis*
- ensures that, whilst away from home, appropriate contact is made with the Local Authority of the student
- ensures the student’s emergency contact details includes those of parents/guardians
- ensures that DBS disclosures are obtained for any staff members or volunteers expected to have close, unsupervised contact with the student
- notifies the Facilities Manager, the Chair of the Student Representatives Association, the Safeguarding Lead, the Principal and the relevant personal tutor(s) and the Programme Leader

6. Use of College facilities by external organisations

6.1 College facilities may be hired for events that may involve children or vulnerable adults. In such cases, the College assumes no liability for the conduct of individuals by those who are hiring. In order to mitigate risk as far as possible, the College requires that the organisation provides a copy of their safeguarding policy in advance of their booking. This will be reviewed by the Safeguarding Lead and if it is not acceptable, the College facilities will not be rented out.

7. Document History

17 December 2014	Significant revision to pre-existing paperwork approved by SMT
8 September 2016	Revisions approved by Academic Board and SMT to allow incorporation into College Life Handbook.
7 September 2017	Approved by Academic Board: addition of line about protection of whistle blowers.
4 April 2019	Approved by Academic Board: strengthening of alignment with the Quality Code; increase of scope to cover adults at risk because of mental health issues; reduction in quantity of examples of good practice; various clarifications.
19 September 2019	Approved by Academic Board: addition of material about the flow and storage of information, and of annual reporting to Board of Trustees; change from “Safeguarding Officer” to “Safeguarding Lead”.
December 2021	Approved by Board of Trustees: Significant revisions, including separation of documentation into policy and procedures; definition of vulnerable adults; addition of Prevent duty under safeguarding; addition of students admitted under 18 years old and due diligence for working with partners and hire of facilities.

² This complies with, and contextualises the Data Protection Act 2018, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)