



East Coast College

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedure

Quality Document Number	QD017
Version	September 2026
Document Owner	Director of Inclusion
Review Period	Annual
Review Date	August 2027
JCC/ECG approval	N/A
Student council	n/a
SLG Approval	n/a
Recommended by SLG to Quality and Standards Committee	n/a
Approved by Corporation	22 September 2026

This document can be provided in a larger font, electronically or other accessible requirement, upon request.

Policy Consultation & Review

This policy is available on the College website, intranet and in printed form on request. We inform students, parents and carers about this policy at induction and through College information media.

The policy is provided to all staff (including temporary staff, Governors and volunteers) enclosed with their offer letter alongside our Staff Code of Conduct. In addition, all staff are provided with Part One of the statutory guidance '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*' (DfE, September 2026), where understanding is verified via Smartlog Safeguarding training completion

All staff who are employed, commissioned or contracted to teach or work on behalf of the college, in either a paid or unpaid capacity, should be familiar with college procedures and protocols for safeguarding.

Throughout the policy the term 'student' also encompasses apprentices where applicable

Throughout this policy, the term "staff" refers to employees, governors, agency staff, volunteers and any other person working for or on behalf of the College in either a paid or unpaid capacity. Unless otherwise stated, all references to staff within this policy apply equally to these groups and carry the same responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of students.

1 Purpose & Aims

1.1 The purpose of East Coast College's safeguarding policy and procedure is to ensure every student registered at the College is safe and protected from harm. The college recognises its particular responsibilities to those under the age of 18 years (referred to in this document as "young people") and those who are classed as a vulnerable adult*. This means we will always work to:

- Identify those at risk and protect them from maltreatment; Be that at College, in the home or online;
- Prevent impairment of student's health & development, or access to education;
- Ensure that young peoples' and vulnerable adults' development takes place in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- Undertake that role so as to enable students at the college to have the best outcomes;
- Ensure the College is a safe environment;
- Ensure all staff understand their responsibility to provide a safe environment in which students can learn

*A vulnerable adult is someone who is over the age of 18 and who is, or may be, unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm, exploitation or radicalisation – Definition taken from *'No Secrets: Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse'* (Home Office/Department of Health, January 2015)

This policy will give clear direction to students, staff, parents, carers, governors, volunteers and visitors about expected behaviour and our legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the physical, emotional and mental wellbeing of all students at the College and to ensure that all members of the College community are treated with dignity and respect.

- 1.2 The College fully recognises the contribution it can make to protecting young people and vulnerable adults from harm and supporting their wellbeing. For the purposes of this policy and its associated procedures, 'harm' is taken to mean neglect, physical, financial, emotional or sexual abuse, sexual harassment, harassment or bullying arising from any circumstances, of which we become aware. Further information regarding types of abuse can be found in Part One of the statutory guidance *'Keeping Children Safe in Education'* (DfE, September 2026).
- 1.3 The College recognises that low attendance, persistent absence, repeated absence and students missing education can be indicators of safeguarding concerns. Staff safeguarding training supports understanding of the potential safeguarding implications of poor attendance and encourage the reporting of any concerns through the College's safeguarding procedures.
- 1.4 The Designated Safeguarding Leads and the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Team will consider attendance alongside all other available information when assessing concerns and determining appropriate interventions. The College will work in partnership with students, parents and carers to understand and address attendance concerns. Where appropriate, support may also involve other professionals and agencies, including Early Help, Children's Services, health professionals and local authority services. Concerns about attendance will always be considered within the wider context of a student's welfare, wellbeing and safety.
- 1.5 This policy applies to all students, staff, parents, carers, governors, volunteers and visitors to the College and to all employers providing an experience of work for our students.

2 Our Ethos

- 2.1 The wellbeing of our students is of paramount importance. The College will establish and maintain an ethos where all students feel secure, safe and listened to. Students at the College will be able to talk freely to any member of staff if they are worried or concerned about something. All students have access to safeguarding and wellbeing advice at the College within college operating hours.

2.2 Everyone who works for the College has a responsibility to safeguard. We recognise that staff at the College play an important role as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for young people and vulnerable adults to prevent concerns from escalating. All staff are advised to maintain an attitude of '*it could happen here*' where safeguarding is concerned and to understand that an issue not being reported does not mean an issue is not happening. We will ensure that all staff working in all parts of the College understand their personal responsibilities and have access to:

- The Safeguarding & Wellbeing referral mechanism (Mylink)
- Safeguarding Team phone numbers
- Access to a Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Leads are responsible for overseeing the response to reported allegations or suspicions of harm for every student.

2.3 All staff will, through ongoing training and induction, know:

- how to recognise indicators of concern
- that students may not feel ready or know how to tell someone they are being abused
- how to respond to a disclosure from a student
- how to record and report this information. This information is clearly identified via the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Referral Flowchart (safeguarding handbook in shared drive)) which highlights the difference in response to a non-urgent concern and a concern which involves immediate risk of harm.
- Visitors (including regular visitors) must adhere to the Visitors Policy through liaison with the People Team. A record of these declarations will be stored by the People Team. All visitors and contractors will be required to read safeguarding information at sign-in. See Visitors Policy for further guidance.
- understand online safety, including an understanding of the expectations linked to roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring
- be aware that children being absent from college, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities.

2.4 Students will be informed that what they tell us will be kept confidential but may be shared with or without consent if it is deemed someone is at risk of immediate or significant harm. The aim will always be to gain consent prior to sharing information but this may not always be possible. Every student will know what the person they have spoken to will have to do with any information they have chosen to disclose.

2.5 Throughout students' time at East Coast College, we will provide activities and opportunities for students to develop the skills they need to identify risks, build resilience and stay safe. Our response should be preventative and reactive – managing the needs of students who are at risk of immediate harm as well as

addressing the risk factors of potential crisis, building resilience and encouraging positive decision making.

- 2.6 At all times we will work in partnership and endeavour to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers and colleagues from other agencies in line with '*Working Together to Safeguard Children*' (HM Government, Amended March 2026).
- 2.7 Where we have control over media and access to online resources, we will endeavour that students are not exposed to inappropriate content. Internet traffic will be subject to filtering and monitoring via software (currently Smoothwall) along with user agreements and code of conduct agreements for all staff and students.
- 2.8 East Coast College recognises that some safeguarding scenarios may disproportionately impact those with particular protected characteristics and the importance of trusted adults in supporting disclosures. The College also recognises that positive action may be required to support students with protected characteristics or perceived protected characteristics such as LGBTQ+ students.

3 Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 It is the responsibility of every member of staff, volunteer and visitor to the College to ensure that they carry out the requirements of this policy and, at all times, work in a way that will safeguard and promote the wellbeing of all students.

The Governing Body

- 3.2 The Governing Body is accountable for ensuring the effectiveness of this policy and our compliance with it. Although our Governing Body takes collective responsibility to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of our students, we also have a named governor who champions safeguarding within the College. This, however, does not remove responsibility from the Governing Body as a whole and all individual governors to ensure safeguarding duties are met in line with '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*' (DfE, September 2026).
- 3.3 The Governing Body will ensure that:
 - The safeguarding policy is in place and is reviewed annually, is available publicly via the College website and has been written in line with national guidance and the requirements of the Norfolk and Suffolk Safeguarding Children and Adults Partners' policies and procedures;
 - A minimum of one senior board level (or equivalent) governor is designated as the Safeguarding Link Governor

- The College's IT system has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place to limit exposure to online risks and that this is regularly reviewed in line with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (HM Government, Amended September 2026).

The College contributes to inter-agency working in line with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (HM Government, Amended March 2026);

- At least one member of the senior leadership team is designated safeguarding lead trained and that there are alternate and appropriately trained members of staff identified to deal with any issues in the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Leads. There will always be cover for this role during core college hours. Outside of these core college hours the responsibility falls to the Duty Principal or Security Rangers;
- All staff receive a safeguarding induction and are provided with a copy of this policy, a copy of Part 1 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (DfE, September 2026) and the staff code of conduct;
- All staff, including governors, undertake appropriate safeguarding training;
- Procedures are in place for dealing with allegations against members of staff, governors and volunteers in line with statutory guidance;
- Safer recruitment practices are followed in accordance with the requirements of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (DfE, September 2026);
- They remedy without delay any weakness in regard to our safeguarding.
- The governing body will receive assurance regarding the effectiveness of filtering and monitoring systems and the College's response to emerging online harms, including those facilitated through artificial intelligence technologies.

3.4 The Governing Body will receive a termly and an annual safeguarding report to provide assurance that safeguarding arrangements remain effective and compliant with statutory and regulatory requirements. The report will summarise areas such as safeguarding training completed, any outstanding training requirements, key safeguarding activity undertaken during the term, and any emerging trends, risks, or areas of focus. The report will not contain personal or identifiable information relating to individual students.

The Principal

3.5 The Principal is responsible for:

- Identifying members of the senior leadership team to be Designated Safeguarding Leads (Keeping Children Safe In Education, DfE, September 2026);
- Ensuring that the safeguarding and wellbeing policies and procedures agreed by the governing body are followed by all staff.

The Deputy Principal

3.6 The Deputy Principal is responsible for:

- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and such concerns are addressed sensitively in accordance with agreed Public Interest Disclosure ('Whistleblowing') procedures; (see whistleblowing procedure)
- Overseeing the liaison with the Local Authority Designated Officer at the Norfolk and Suffolk Safeguarding Children and Adults Partners in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff or ensuring the Designated Safeguarding Leads do this when the Deputy Principal is not available. The Head of People and Wellbeing Team will be kept informed by the Deputy Principal or Designated Safeguarding Leads at all stages;

The Designated Safeguarding Leads

- 3.7 The Designated Safeguarding Leads will carry out their role in accordance with the responsibilities outlined in of *'Keeping Children Safe in Education'* (DfE, September 2026). The Designated Safeguarding Leads will provide supervision, advice and support to other staff on student safeguarding and wellbeing matters. Any concern for a student's safety or wellbeing will be recorded and made available to the Designated Safeguarding Leads or designated member of the safeguarding and wellbeing team who will consider the context of the concern.
- 3.8 The Designated Safeguarding Leads or designated members of the safeguarding and wellbeing team will represent the College at child protection conferences, core group or child in need meetings. Through appropriate training, knowledge and experience the Designated Safeguarding Leads or designated member of the safeguarding and wellbeing team will liaise with Children's Services and other agencies where necessary, and make referrals of suspected abuse to Children's Services, take part in strategy discussions and other interagency meetings and contribute to the assessment of students. They will also contribute to partner consultations regarding commissioning of local services around safeguarding.
- 3.9 The Designated Safeguarding Leads and designated members of the safeguarding and wellbeing team will ensure written records and safeguarding files are maintained and that they are kept confidentially, centrally and stored securely.
- 3.10 The Designated Safeguarding Leads, in collaboration with the People Team, is responsible for ensuring that all staff members and volunteers are aware of our policy and the procedure they need to follow. They will ensure that all staff, volunteers and regular visitors have received appropriate safeguarding information during induction and have undertaken the agreed annual training on safeguarding, PREVENT and online safety.
- 3.11 The Designated Safeguarding Leads will co-ordinate the college action plan and implementation of the PREVENT agenda in line with the *'Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015'* and *'CONTEST'* (HM Government 2023).

3.12 The Designated Safeguarding Leads or designated members of the safeguarding and wellbeing team are responsible for ensuring liaison with education and other providers to transfer safeguarding information for students in a timely manner. Where relevant this will also include that current Service Level Agreements for information sharing are in place.

3.13 One of the Designated Safeguarding Leads will also be the College's senior mental health lead.

Safeguarding Co-ordinators

3.14 Safeguarding Co-ordinators are responsible for:

- Receiving and recording information from any staff, volunteers, children, parents or carers who have safeguarding concerns;
- Assessing the information promptly and carefully, clarifying and obtaining more information about the matter as appropriate;
- Consulting with relevant agencies to agree actions required;
- Making formal referrals to relevant agencies and completing risk assessments where required;
- Keeping timely and accurate formal records of referrals, concerns and actions taken, providing data as requested;
- Acting as Appropriate Adult if police are required to speak to a child on college premises
- Keeping the Designated Safeguarding Leads informed of any urgent or high risk / high profile cases.

4 Training & Induction (Coordinated by The People Team as part of Continuous Professional Development)

4.1 When new staff, Governors, volunteers or regular visitors join the College they will be informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place and asked to complete appropriate safeguarding training prior to commencement of employment via the People Team. They will be given a copy of the College's safeguarding policy and Part One of '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*' (DfE, September 2026) along with the staff code of conduct and told who our Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead for Safeguarding is. They will also be given information on how to refer disclosures or other concerns. Staff understanding of the College's safeguarding policy and Part One of '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*' (DfE, September 2026) is confirmed by completion of the annual SmartLog safeguarding training.

4.2 Every new member of staff or volunteer will have an induction period that will include essential safeguarding information. This programme will include basic safeguarding information relating to signs and symptoms of abuse, how to manage a disclosure from a student, how to record any issues of confidentiality. The induction will also remind staff and volunteers of their responsibility to safeguard all young people and vulnerable adults at the College and the remit of the role of the Senior Designated Safeguarding

Lead. A minimum of annual safeguarding training will also take place on current themes, legislative changes, PREVENT and online safety. For more information on online safety please refer to section 5.14 of this policy.

- 4.3 In addition to the safeguarding induction, all members of staff will undertake appropriate safeguarding training in accordance with Norfolk and Suffolk Safeguarding Children and Adults Partner's advice. This will be coordinated and recorded by the People Team. In addition to annual training updates, further staff updates will be given via team meetings and informal case review with the referrer and members of the safeguarding and wellbeing team, following referrals.
- 4.4 All regular visitors to the College will be given a set of our safeguarding procedures and contact details for the safeguarding and wellbeing team. They will also be required to agree to the Code of Contact for Partners which includes agreement to adhere to East Coast College's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. Details of these agreements will be stored within the Single Central Record. Any partner who is expected to visit campus more than once in an academic year is classified as a regular visitor.
- 4.5 The Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead and members of the safeguarding and wellbeing team will attend multi-agency training courses as advised by Norfolk or Suffolk Safeguarding partners. In addition to this, the Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead and the safeguarding and wellbeing team members will attend Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead training as advised by Norfolk and Suffolk Safeguarding Children and Adults Partners guidance.
- 4.6 The governing body will also undertake appropriate training to ensure they are able to carry out their safeguarding duties. Governors will be expected to maintain an understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities under Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, including the sections relevant to governing bodies and oversight of safeguarding arrangements.
- 4.7 We will ensure our staff keep up to date with the most recent local and national safeguarding advice and guidance in line with '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*' (DfE, September 2026) including:
- PREVENT;
 - Gender-questioning students
 - Faith and / or gender based abuse such as. Antisemitism, misandry & misogyny
 - Online safety including the use of Ai and Filtering and monitoring systems
 - extra-familial abuse such as Child Sexual and Criminal Exploitation (e.g. County Lines) or serious youth violence;
 - The Designated Safeguarding Leads will also provide regular safeguarding updates for staff.

4.8 It will be required that staff with recruitment responsibilities will complete safer recruitment training prior to involvement with recruitment in line with the People Team's requirements.

4.9 The People Team will coordinate and collate CPD updates where legislative changes dictate need.

5 Procedures for managing concerns

5.1 The College adheres to safeguarding procedures that have been agreed locally through the Norfolk or Suffolk Safeguarding Partners.

5.2 Every member of staff including volunteers are advised to maintain an attitude of '*it could happen here*' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the wellbeing of a student, staff members have a responsibility to take action as outlined in this policy.

5.3 All staff are required to report any concerns that they have and not to see these as insignificant. A referral may be justified by a single incident such as an injury or disclosure of abuse or concerns may accumulate over a period of time and are evidenced by building up a picture. It is crucial that staff record and pass on all concerns in accordance with this policy to allow the Designated Leads and safeguarding and wellbeing team to record a timeline and access support for the student at the earliest opportunity. The factual and accurate recording of these concerns at the time of concern will give referral agencies the best information and opportunity to progress a referral.

5.4 It is not the responsibility of the College staff to investigate safeguarding and wellbeing concerns or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation. All staff, however, have a duty to recognise concerns and pass the information on promptly in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy. During Safeguarding training staff will be advised to not ask leading questions and the reasons for this. Staff will also be advised to not promise confidentiality during a disclosure.

5.5 The safeguarding and wellbeing team should be used as a first point of contact for concerns and queries regarding any safeguarding concern in the College. Any member of staff or visitor to the College who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that a student is at risk of harm must report it immediately to the designated member of the safeguarding and wellbeing team.

5.6 All concerns about a student should be reported without delay using one of the agreed reporting methods.

5.7 Following receipt of any information raising concern, a Designated Safeguarding Lead or designated member of the safeguarding and wellbeing team will consider what action to take. This may lead to onward referrals being completed or seeking advice in line with the local multiagency safeguarding arrangements, police or other agencies as

required. All information and actions taken, including the reasons for any decisions made, will be fully documented. This information will be stored within the central safeguarding and wellbeing recording systems which recognise that safeguarding issues are complex and may have many facets.

- 5.8 All referrals will be made in line with local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Referrals may be made to all tiers within child and adult services.
- 5.9 Staff should always follow the reporting procedures outlined in the safeguarding procedure in the first instance. However, they may also share information directly with multi-agency safeguarding partners or the police if they have followed the reporting procedures outlined in this policy but feel appropriate action has not been taken.
- 5.10 Any member of staff who does not feel that concerns about a student have been responded to appropriately by the College safeguarding team and in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy should raise their concerns with the Senior Management Team. If any member of staff does not feel the situation has been addressed appropriately at this point, they should contact local multi-agency safeguarding partners directly with their concerns.
- 5.11 Any concerns raised by contractors such as cleaning staff, are to be raised with Estates and will then be directed through the usual reporting procedure.
- 5.12 The College seeks to provide support to safeguard adults from abuse or neglect in line with *The Care Act 2014*. The local authority have a responsibility to promote individual wellbeing, which includes mental health and emotional wellbeing, protection from abuse and neglect and participation in education and training (including young carers). We will refer to this Local Authority responsibility as a best practice guide in conjunction with referral support provided by our collaboration with the Local Safeguarding Adults Partnership.
- 5.13 It is noted that those with SEND are more likely to experience some forms of abuse or harassment. Where appropriate, members of the safeguarding and wellbeing team will work with other curriculum and support staff as well as relevant external parties to ensure communication and other needs are met while managing a safeguarding concern for a student with SEND.

5.14 Gender-questioning students

The College recognises that gender-questioning and / or Trans students may experience additional vulnerabilities, including bullying, discrimination, social isolation, exploitation, online abuse and mental health difficulties. Staff should maintain a safeguarding-focused approach and must not make assumptions regarding a student's circumstances, experiences or needs. Staff will make the Wellbeing Team aware of all gender questioning or trans student so support to the student and their teaching teams can be co-ordinated centrally. Decisions

relating to support for gender-questioning and trans students will be made on a case-by-case basis, considering factors such as the student's age, wishes, views, welfare, legal rights and guidance, safety, and individual circumstances. The College will work with parents/carers and relevant agencies where appropriate and in the best interests of the student. Where there may be a conflict between safeguarding considerations, equality duties and other legal rights, advice will be sought from the Designated Safeguarding Lead and relevant external agencies.

5.15 Faith-based abuse and hate incidents

The College recognises that students may experience abuse, harassment, bullying or discrimination based on their religion, faith, perceived religion or ethnic background. This includes antisemitism, anti-Muslim hatred and other forms of faith-based prejudice. Any incident of faith-based abuse, discrimination, harassment or hate will be treated seriously and considered through both safeguarding and disciplinary procedures. The College adopts a zero-tolerance approach towards such behaviour and will provide support to affected students.

5.16 Gender-based abuse

The College recognises that gender-based abuse can affect anyone and may include misogyny, misandry, coercive behaviour, sexualised bullying, online abuse, harassment, controlling behaviour or prejudice motivated by sex or perceived sex. Gender-based abuse may occur between peers, within relationships, online or in wider social settings. Such concerns will be responded to through safeguarding and inclusion and disciplinary procedures as appropriate.

5.17 Misuse of Ai

The College recognises that artificial intelligence may be used to facilitate abuse. This can include the creation, possession or distribution of manipulated, synthetic or sexualised images, voice recordings or videos. Such behaviours may constitute child-on-child abuse, and will be responded to through safeguarding and inclusion and disciplinary procedures as appropriate.

6 Online Safety

6.1 The College recognises that online safety is a fundamental safeguarding issue and that many safeguarding concerns may occur wholly online or may be facilitated through the use of technology. The College also recognises that technology is a significant factor in many safeguarding and wellbeing concerns and that almost all forms of abuse, exploitation and harmful behaviour may include an online element. This may include communication through social media, messaging platforms, gaming environments, artificial intelligence applications, websites, online forums or other digital technologies. Online risks should therefore be considered when assessing any safeguarding concern. The College recognises that many forms of child-on-child abuse may occur online or may be facilitated through technology, including sexual harassment, cyberbullying, coercive and controlling

behaviour, sharing of intimate images, hate-based abuse, exploitation and the use of artificial intelligence technologies to target, manipulate or abuse others.

6.2 Online risks can be understood using the 4 Cs framework:

- **Content:** Being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, including pornography, extremist material, misinformation, disinformation, self-harm content, hate content or content promoting harmful behaviours.
- **Contact:** Being subjected to harmful online interactions with other users, including grooming, coercion, exploitation, harassment, radicalisation or pressure from peers or adults.
- **Conduct:** Personal online behaviour that may increase risk, including cyberbullying, sharing intimate images, online abuse, creating or distributing harmful content, misogyny, misandry, faith-based abuse or other harmful behaviours.
- **Commerce:** Risks associated with online financial activity, including fraud, scams, gambling, phishing, financial exploitation, identity theft and inappropriate commercial pressures.

6.3 The College will take reasonable steps to reduce these risks through education, staff training, effective safeguarding procedures, filtering and monitoring systems, awareness campaigns and access to pastoral and safeguarding support. The College recognises that filtering and monitoring systems are an important safeguarding tool but do not eliminate all online risks. Staff should remain vigilant and report concerns in accordance with College safeguarding procedures.

6.4 The College recognises that online harms can affect students both on and off campus. Online behaviour and activity will be considered as part of the assessment of any safeguarding concern, as abuse may occur entirely online, may occur both online and offline, or may be facilitated through the use of technology. Where online behaviour presents a safeguarding risk to a student, member of staff or the wider College community, appropriate action will be taken regardless of where the activity took place.

6.5 Students are expected to: use digital technology responsibly, legally and respectfully; protect their personal information and passwords; respect the privacy and dignity of others; comply with College Acceptable Use and Student Code of Conduct requirements; report concerns relating to online safety, abuse, exploitation or inappropriate content.

6.6 Students must not: use technology to intimidate, harass, bully or threaten others; access, possess, create or distribute illegal, harmful or inappropriate content; use artificial intelligence tools to create or share harmful, deceptive or sexualised content relating to another person; record or distribute images, video or audio recordings of others without appropriate consent; attempt to

bypass College security, filtering or monitoring systems; misuse College technology resources.

- 6.7 All online safety concerns will be treated seriously and responded to in accordance with this safeguarding policy. Support may include parental involvement, pastoral intervention, safeguarding support, counselling, disciplinary processes, referral to external agencies and, where appropriate, involvement of the police.
- 6.8 The College will ensure that online safety education is embedded within induction activities, the Careers and Wellbeing Tutorial Programme, curriculum delivery and wider safeguarding awareness activities. Online safety education will reflect emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, and recognise that safeguarding concerns may occur online, offline or through a combination of both. Particular focus will be given to the 4 Cs of online safety, bullying, online relationships, consent, misinformation, artificial intelligence, privacy, scams, exploitation, healthy online behaviours and digital resilience.
- 6.9 The College recognises that online safety is not solely a technology issue but a safeguarding issue. Staff should consider whether an online element is present whenever a safeguarding concern is identified and respond in accordance with safeguarding procedures.
- 6.10 The Governing Body will ensure that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place, regularly reviewed and supported by clear staff responsibilities in line with statutory safeguarding guidance.

7 Child-on-child abuse, sexual violence and harassment.

The College views that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable and will not be tolerated in any of its forms. In the event of an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment between children the College will follow the protocols laid out in *'Keeping Children Safe in Education'* (DfE, September 2026) and *'When To Call The Police: Guidance for School and Colleges'* (NPCC, 2020). Examples of sexual violence or sexual harassment could include, but are not limited to, Consensual or non-consensual making or sharing of nudes or semi nudes, use of generative Ai to create sexualised imagery of a child, physical contact without consent, sexualized language, jokes or comments relating to an individual's alleged sexual activity. Sexual harassment may also include misogyny or misandry.

- 7.1 Actions taken may include removing the alleged perpetrator from shared classes or college premises pending investigation. This should not be perceived as a judgement of guilt on the alleged perpetrator.
- 7.2 The College adopts a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child-on-child abuse. Abuse will never be dismissed as banter, horseplay, part of growing up, harmless fun, relationship issues or experimentation. All reports will be taken seriously, recorded and responded to appropriately.

- 7.3 Allegations of child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment will be recorded and investigated in line with safeguarding protocols outlined in this policy and procedure. Support will be given to all parties including, where relevant, referrals to external agencies for specialist interventions. It is noted that support for an alleged perpetrator can happen concurrently with investigations and disciplinary procedures. Child-on-Child abuse is not limited to harms of a sexual nature and can also take the form of serious violence, gender-based hate, faith-based hate or Ai generated imagery for example.
- 7.4 The College's Careers and Wellbeing Tutorial (PSD) Strategy includes reinforcement of the concept that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable. While it is noted that there is a gendered aspect to reporting of sexual violence and sexual harassment the concept that anyone can be a victim or a perpetrator is embedded as part of this programme.
- 7.5 In line with the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019 instances of 'upskirting' will be viewed as sexually harmful behaviour and criminal.
- 7.6 It is noted that those witnessing sexual violence or harassment may also be impacted and support will be made available via college and partner support systems.
- 7.7 With all safeguarding disclosures and particularly those relating to sexual violence and sexual harassment we must ensure that students feel reassured that they are being taken seriously and are being supported to keep safe.
- 7.8 We recognise that teenage relationship abuse, domestic abuse and control and coercion 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 if they 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

8 Records and information sharing

- 8.1 If staff are concerned about the wellbeing or safety of any student at the College, they will report their concern in one of the agreed methods. Any concerns should be passed to the designated member of the safeguarding and wellbeing team without delay.
- 8.2 Any paper-based information recorded will be scanned and attached digitally to the safeguarding system and not with the student's academic file. Safeguarding information will be shared within college on the basis of 'need to know for support in the student's interests' and on the understanding that it remains strictly confidential. Consent for sharing of this information will be gained wherever possible from relevant parties.

- 8.3 Electronically stored information will remain within the College's bespoke safeguarding system and is only accessible by designated MIS staff with responsibility for maintaining this system and by members of the safeguarding and wellbeing team. Copies of electronically completed paperwork such as search records or action plans will be uploaded to student E-ILPs unless deemed by the student/completing staff member that content is sensitive. In these instances, they will be sent by email as a password protected document to the email address agreed by the student.
- 8.4 Sharing of information external to East Coast College will take place within the framework outlined by '*Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026*) and '*Working Together to Safeguard Children*' (HM Government, Amended March 2026). Consent for sharing this information will be gained wherever possible.
- 8.5 When a student leaves the College, the Designated Safeguarding Leads will seek to contact with the Designated Safeguarding Lead/MASH team at the new college or training provider/County and will ensure that the safeguarding file/information is forwarded to them in an appropriately agreed manner. We will retain evidence to demonstrate how the file has been transferred; this may be in the form of a written confirmation of receipt from the receiving college and/or evidence of recorded delivery.
- 8.6 The Student Finance and Learning Support teams will provide the safeguarding and wellbeing team with a list of vulnerable students and will update this information as needed. Vulnerable students include but are not limited to Children in Care, Care Leavers, Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children, those subject to a Special Guardianship Order, those subject to a Child Arrangement Order, those who currently require social worker support, Young Carers under 25, carers of those with an additional need aged 25 or over, those who disclose they are adopted, those with a mental health support need, students accessing Free College Meals and/or College, bursary and those with Educational Health Care Plans, disabilities, SEND, certain health conditions or are accessing High Needs funding.
- 8.7 The destinations of withdrawn students will be checked termly to pick up additional safeguarding concerns related to children missing education who we are unable to contact. The college provides enrolment updates to local authorities.
- 8.8 immediately following the Colleges enrolment procedures, the Designated Safeguarding Leads and/ or members of the Safeguarding and Wellbeing team, will contact the stated previous school of each student to request the students Safeguarding file. East Coast College will provide the schools Designated Safeguarding Lead or nominated staff member with a secure electronic portal for digital copies of the file to be uploaded. Confirmation of upload and receipt will be recorded on a transfer record document to ensure relevance, quality and functionality of the uploaded file. We acknowledge the requirements outlined by *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026* to ensure all safeguarding files are transferred within 5 days of the start of

College term and are committed to upholding this value where at all possible. The Designated Safeguarding Leads and/or members of the safeguarding and wellbeing team will work collaboratively with safeguarding teams in sending schools and colleges to ensure efficiency.

9 Working with parents and carers

- 9.1 The College is committed to working in partnership with parents and carers to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of young people and vulnerable adults and to support them to understand our statutory responsibilities in this area.
- 9.2 When new students join the College, parents and carers will be informed that we have a safeguarding policy. A copy will be provided to parents on request and is available on the College website. Parents and carers will be informed of our legal duty to assist our colleagues in other agencies with safeguarding enquiries and what happens should we have cause to make a referral to an external agency where the need arises.
- 9.3 We are committed to working with parents and carers positively, openly and honestly. We ensure that all parents and carers are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. We respect parents' and carers' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission or it is necessary to do so in order to safeguard a student from harm and in line with '*Information Sharing for advice for Safeguarding practitioners*' (HM Government, May 2024).
- 9.4 In line with the updated advice in Keeping Children Safe In Education September 2026 we will seek to share with parents and carers any concerns we may have about their child unless to do so may place a person at increased risk of harm. We will work with parents and carers to determine what is in the best interests of the student. A lack of parental/carer engagement or agreement regarding the concerns the College has about a student will not prevent the Designated Safeguarding Leads making a referral to multi-agency safeguarding partners or other relevant agency in those circumstances where it is appropriate to do so.
- 9.5 In order to keep young people and vulnerable adults safe the College requires accurate and up to date information regarding:
- Emergency contact details
 - Any details on court orders where contact is to be withheld
- 9.6 As part of ongoing communication with parents and carers East Coast College will share information and advice to support parents and carers with ensuring their child's online safety when not at college.

10 Child Protection conferences

- 10.1 Children's Services will convene a Child Protection conference once a child protection enquiry under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 has been undertaken and the young person is judged to be at continuing risk of significant harm. A review conference will take place once a young person has been made the subject of a Child Protection Plan in order to monitor their safety and the required reduction in risk.
- 10.2 Safeguarding and wellbeing team members may be asked to attend a child protection conference, strategy or core group meeting on behalf of the College in respect of individual young people. All reports for child protection conferences will be prepared in advance using the guidance and education template provided by Children's Services. The information contained in the report will be shared with parents and carers before the conference as appropriate and will include information relating to the young person's physical, emotional and intellectual development and their presentation at College. In order to complete such reports, all relevant information will be sought from staff working with the young person in College. Strategy meetings are convened at short-notice to agree a plan in respect of a new concern/new information received and as such does not include the parent/carer and information should not be shared with the parent/carer before the strategy meeting unless agreement to do so has been received from the meeting chair.

11 Safer recruitment for staff and volunteers

- 11.1 We will ensure that at least one member of every staff and / or Governor recruitment panel has completed appropriate safer recruitment training. At all times the Principal and Governing Body will ensure that safer recruitment practices are followed in accordance with the requirements of '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*', (September 2026).

There will be a mandatory question on safeguarding at all interviews and any gaps in employment will be explained in the interview/references.

- 11.2 As part of the College's whole-college approach to safeguarding, recruitment and selection procedures are designed to deter and prevent individuals who are unsuitable to work with children and vulnerable adults from applying for positions and to identify and reject unsuitable applicants. The College will undertake all appropriate pre-employment checks in line with statutory guidance and *Keeping Children Safe in Education* 2026. These checks include obtaining a minimum of two references, one of which will normally be from the applicant's current or most recent employer, verifying identity, right to work in the UK and relevant qualifications, reviewing employment history, and completing Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks where appropriate.

Any offer of employment will be conditional upon the satisfactory completion of all required pre-employment checks. The College will undertake children's

barred list checks where a role constitutes regulated activity and will use all appropriate means to ensure that those appointed are suitable to work with children and adults at risk. Prohibition from Teaching checks will be completed for all new teaching staff, and Section 128 checks will be undertaken where required for leadership and management positions. Shortlisted candidates will also be required to complete a self-declaration regarding their suitability to work with children. The College may undertake any additional checks required by legislation, statutory guidance or identified through the recruitment process.

The College's Recruitment and Selection policy will also provide guidance on specific law such as the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and actions required for agency staff.

- 11.3 Shortlisted candidates will be asked to self-declare information such as criminal records or other information which may make them unsuitable to work at the College. In line with '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*' 2026 this information will not be requested at application stage. In addition, the college reserves the right to conduct an online search of information in

the public domain for shortlisted candidates to help identify any incidents or issues that have happened which the school or college might want to explore with the applicant at interview.

- 11.4 We will maintain a Single Central Record of all safer recruitment checks carried out in line with statutory requirements. This will be held securely within the People Team and subject to audit by the Head of the People Team and Designated Safeguarding Leads.

- 11.5 Members of the Governing Body will be recorded on the Single Central Record and will have an enhanced DBS and barred lists check.

- 11.6 Written notification will be obtained from any agency, or third party organisation, that the organisation has carried out safer recruitment checks in line with '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*' (DfE, September 2026).

- 11.7 Where East Coast College is facilitating or supporting industrial placements, the Industrial Placement Policy and Procedure will be followed. If industrial placements require DBS checks, East Coast College will support students to complete these. Where students disclose unspent criminal convictions the Safer Learning for All procedure is followed.

12 Safer working practice

- 12.1 The College educates a substantial number of children and young people and is committed to maintaining robust safer recruitment practices. The College will assess each role against the statutory definition of regulated activity as set out in safeguarding legislation and current guidance. From September 2026, this includes ensuring that volunteers engaged in regulated activity are subject to the appropriate DBS and barred list checks. The

College recognises changes introduced from September 2026 regarding regulated activity and the removal of the supervision exemption. Recruitment and vetting arrangements for volunteers will therefore be assessed in accordance with the current statutory definition of regulated activity with children

12.2 All adults who come into contact with our students have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their wellbeing. There is a legal duty placed upon us to ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of our students are competent, confident and safe to do so.

12.3 All staff will be provided with a copy of the College's code of conduct at induction and will be required to carry out their duties in accordance with this advice.

12.4 If external professionals, visitors or volunteers are working with young people or vulnerable adults they will be accompanied at all times on college premises and when seeing students.

Known visiting professionals will be required to sign in at Reception and inform another member of staff of their whereabouts in College, who they are with and for how long as well as signing out when they leave. This applied even when the partner has completed a Code of Conduct and supplied DBS details (non- statutory only). see external visitors' policy for further details.

12.5 Guidance about acceptable conduct and safe practice will be given to all staff and volunteers during induction. All staff and volunteers are required to carry out their work in accordance with this guidance and will be made aware that failure to do so could lead to disciplinary action.

12.6 Where a room booking is requested by an external agency or person details of the booking person and organisation (if applicable) will be recorded by the staff member taking the booking using the agreed form. In accordance with Home Office guidance and 'Martyn's law 2025, both the name and organisation will be internet searched by the person taking the room booking to ensure they are not publicly affiliated with any proscribed or extremist group. This will be recorded on the agreed form. It will also be confirmed that the booking person or organisation has appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place. Any concerns will be raised with the Designated Safeguarding Leads or designated member of the safeguarding and wellbeing team (see external visitors policy).

12.7 Parents/carers of students under the age of 18 are informed that photographs of students may be used unless permission is withdrawn by the parent/carer for agreed safeguarding reasons, the individual student will be informed of rationale for this. Photograph permission for students will be gained as part of the enrolment process and withdrawn consent recorded on the student's ProMonitor page. Marketing will confirm with subjects that photo consent previously gained is still valid before publication of photographs or identifying characteristics external to East Coast College.

12.8 Clinical safeguarding supervision can be provided by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and / or Deputy Lead. If there is a conflict in the content of supervision required this will be provided by the agreed external counselling provider. Supervision for the Designated Safeguarding Lead is available from the agreed external counselling provider.

13 Managing allegations against staff including agency staff, volunteers and contractors

13.1 Our aim is to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the wellbeing and very best outcomes for all our students. We recognise that sometimes an allegation of abuse may be made. All staff must be familiar with and abide by the College's Professional Code of Conduct for Staff which is provided to all staff on appointment.

13.2 We will take all possible steps to safeguard our young people and vulnerable adults and to ensure that the staff and volunteers in our College are safe to work with them. We will always ensure that the procedures outlined by the Norfolk and Suffolk Safeguarding partners and '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*', (September 2026) are adhered to and will seek appropriate advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer. The Local Authority Designated Officer can be contacted on 0300 123 2044 (Suffolk) or 0344 800 8020 (Norfolk).

13.3 In line with '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*' (September 2026), if staff have safeguarding concerns or an allegation is made about a staff member or volunteer who works at the College this should be referred to the Principal or the Director of People and Wellbeing or deputy in their absence, who will appoint an investigating officer. Should an allegation be made against the Director of People and Wellbeing, this will be reported to the Principal. In the event that the Principal is not contactable on that day, the information must be passed to and dealt with by the Director of Governance. Should an allegation be made against a member of the Governing Body, this will be reported to the Director of Governance. In the event that the Director of Governance is not contactable on that day, the information must be passed to and dealt with by the Director of People and Wellbeing.

13.4 Concerns may include that a staff member or volunteer including agency staff has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child or vulnerable adult or may have harmed a child or vulnerable adult;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or vulnerable adult;
- behaved towards a child or vulnerable adult in a way that indicated they may pose a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults;
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

- 13.5 Where appropriate, through basic enquiries an assessment of transferable risks to children with whom the person works should be undertaken by an appointed case manager who can if in doubt seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), in keeping with Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2026 para. 439 & 444.
- 13.6 When basic enquiries are concluded and initial facts are established by the allocated case manager, a referral will be completed to the relevant LADO, by the Designated Safeguarding Leads, The Executive Director of People and Recruitment or the People Team manager and discuss the nature, context and content of the allegation and agree a course of action.
- 13.7 Where the allegation involves an agency/contracted member of staff the Director of People and Wellbeing will liaise with the agency/contractor manager in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026)
- 13.8 Where the concern is 'low level' and does not meet threshold of harm for referral to the LADO a record should be made of this and retained alongside the individual's personnel records. If required a consultation can be completed with the LADO team to confirm next steps. This may be the result of an individual concern or cumulative concerns. Patterns will be reviewed to identify wider concerns and/or training needs.
- 13.9 Any member of staff or volunteer who does not feel confident to raise their concerns with Principal or Chair of Governors should contact the Local Authority Designated Officer directly on 0300 123 2044 (Suffolk) or 0344 800 8020 (Norfolk). Advice can be gained from the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice line on 0800 028 0285 or help@nspcc.org.uk.
- 13.10 The College has a legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person. If these circumstances arise in relation to a member of staff at the College, a referral will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual in accordance with advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer.
- 13.11 Staff are required to self-refer to their line manager or The People Team, for support if they feel they have been in a situation which could be misinterpreted, viewed as compromising or they have reflected does not meet expected professional standards.

14 Residential placements (including trips) under 18

- 14.1 Where students are placed by the college in a residential setting arrangement will be made in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026) and Further Education Residential Accommodation: National Minimum Standards (July 2026). This includes ensuring suitable facilities are provided to Trans and gender-questioning students as appropriate.
- 14.2 This will include ensuring unmonitored contact with parents/carers and external support services such as ChildLine.
- 14.3 Students placed in residential settings by the College will have access to a named person(s) to whom they can report personal problems and concerns. This person(s) will have undergone safeguarding training and will be available outside of core College hours.
- 14.4 All staff participating in educational visits, residential trips and off-site activities have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of students throughout the duration of the visit. This responsibility applies at all times during the trip, including periods of travel, organised activities, free time, evenings and overnight stays where applicable. Staff must maintain appropriate levels of supervision, remain vigilant to safeguarding concerns, and take prompt action in accordance with College safeguarding procedures where concerns arise. This responsibility applies to all students participating in the visit, including those aged 18 and over, where they may be considered adults at risk or where the College has assumed responsibility for their safety and welfare during the activity. All staff are expected to act in accordance with the principles of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and the safeguarding expectations set out within the Further Education Residential Accommodation: National Minimum Standards, ensuring that the welfare of students remains paramount throughout the visit.

15 Relevant policies

- 15.1 To underpin the values and ethos of the College and our intent to ensure that students at the College are appropriately safeguarded the following policies are also included under our safeguarding umbrella. This can all be found on the college intranet:

- Staff Code of Conduct;
- Recruitment Policy
- Whistleblowing;
- Security Threat Procedure;
- PREVENT;
- Student Inclusion and Disciplinary;
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy;
- First aid Policy;

- Industry placement Policy and Procedure;
- Student Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure
- SEND Policy;
- IT Acceptable Use Policy;
- E-resources Acceptable Use Policy;
- Procedure for Video Conferencing and Webinars;
- Procedure for use of Social Media in learning;
- Visitor Policy inc. external speaker procedure
- Procedure for Live Streaming;
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

16 Statutory frameworks

This policy has been developed with reference to the latest versions of relevant legislation, statutory guidance and local safeguarding partnership procedures, including but not limited to:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- Information Sharing Advice for Safeguarding Practitioners (DfE, May 2024)
- Further Education Residential Accommodation: National Minimum Standards (July 2026)
- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Care Act 2014
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Revised Prevent Duty Guidance
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK GDPR
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
- Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance on Female Genital Mutilation
- Criminal Exploitation of Children and Vulnerable Adults: County Lines Guidance
- When to Call the Police: Guidance for Schools and Colleges
- Relevant Norfolk and Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership procedures

The Safeguarding Team

Designated Safeguarding Leads

Alex Wallace – Director of inclusion

Gary Jefferson – Deputy Principal of Curriculum and Quality

Ann Wall – Director of People and Wellbeing

Safeguarding Team Posters / contact details can be found on the below links:

[Organisation - Documents - Posters - All Documents](#)

<https://livelowestoftac.sharepoint.com/sites/staff/organisation/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2Fstaff%2Fororganisation%2FShared%20Documents%2FPosters&p=true&ga=1>