



Children/young person and vulnerable adult safeguarding procedures for RMET Colleges

RMET colleges believe that all children/young people and vulnerable adults have an absolute right to a life free from abuse, neglect or exploitation.

All members of staff involved with children and vulnerable adults (teaching and non-teaching) have a responsibility to be mindful of issues related to young people's safety and welfare and a **duty** to report and refer any concerns however 'minor' they appear to be.

These procedures seek to facilitate confidence in young people to speak about their concerns, fears or allegations of harm. It also aims to minimise the opportunities for abuse to occur and to detail the actions that will be taken when abuse is suspected.

How RMET will support young people to be able to talk about the concerns, fears and past and present harmful experiences

RMET and its Colleges take its duty of pastoral care seriously and will be proactive in prevention and early identification of abuse or its precedents by carrying out the following:

- The College will promote a safe and open culture among its students and staff (Please refer to the RMET Staff Code of Conduct - Appendix 2 below)
- The College will encourage staff to discuss any concerns that they have regarding safeguarding issues with the College Safeguarding Officers (CSO)
- Staff will role model a respectful and inclusive culture (Please refer to the RMET Staff Code of Conduct - Appendix 2 below)
- RMET will appoint a Trustee with special responsibility for monitoring safeguarding across the Trust
- Each College will appoint a Senior Manager and a safeguarding team, who are responsible for safeguarding students
- All new students and staff will receive induction that includes safeguarding information and procedures.
- Students have allocated staff who work as advocates to promote self-esteem and facilitate and empower students to speak up if they feel something is wrong
- Students are involved in person centred planning with their residential carers, and Student Journey Managers
- Risk assessments are undertaken for all key activities
- Strategies for working with students are shared with all staff through the Educational Planning Cycle framework
- Regular team meetings
- Annual Reviews, which include internal and external stakeholders

Training

The College acknowledges the value of staff training in supporting a respectful and inclusive culture, the identification of abuse, and proactive communication regarding any concerns. All staff will receive training on positive approaches to managing and understanding behaviour that challenges as part of their induction when starting at the college. In addition, all residential staff are required to undertake induction and training in accordance with National Minimum Standards.

All college staff will receive safeguarding training and training in the use of RMET's safeguarding policy and procedure every two years.

Members of the safeguarding team will receive update training, particularly in Child Protection and POVA, every two years.

Definitions

Child - A young person under the age of 18. However, in line with the Sexual Offences Act 2003, this age limit may be extended for young people with LLDD.

Vulnerable Adult - 'A person (18 or over) who is, or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or another disability, age or illness and is, or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.'

Dept of Health

Disclosure - A person states they have been or are being abused by another.

Allegation - Is made by a young person about another person harming them.

Abuse

- A violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person
- May consist of a single act or repeated acts, or an omission to act
- Vulnerable adults may also suffer additional types of abuse such as being manipulated financially or sexually when he or she has not consented or cannot consent, or is being discriminated against
- It can be physical, sexual or emotional, including
 - inflicting physical harm such as hitting, slapping etc
 - misuse of medication, ignoring medical or physical needs
 - exposure to sexual acts without informed consent
 - emotional abuse, such as threats, humiliation, harassment, exploitation
 - withholding the necessities of life such as food or heating
- Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subject to it

Recognition of children or vulnerable adults at risk of abuse and neglect

Recognition of signs and symptoms are dependant upon staff being open to the possibility of non-accidental injury or other forms of abuse and reporting any possible concerns to the College Safeguarding Officer.

Abuse comes in many forms and the following is not an exclusive list of the signs and symptoms that indicate abuse:

Type of abuse	Examples	Possible signs and symptoms
Physical abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hitting • Slapping • Pushing • Kicking • Misuse of medication • Inappropriate sanctions • Restraint 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fractures • Sprains • Dislocations • Lacerations • Scalds/burns • Pressure sores • Bruising • Malnutrition • Unexplained injuries • Signs of medication misuse (over or under) • Untreated medical problems • Incontinence • Self harm
Sexual abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the person has not consented to, or could not consent to, or was pressurised into consenting to • Inappropriate touch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain, itching, bleeding or bruising in the genital area • Difficulty in walking or sitting • Torn or stained clothing • Venereal disease • Changes in behaviour • Sexualised behaviour • Pregnancy
Emotional or psychological abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threats of harm or abandonment • Deprivation of contact, isolation or withdrawal from services or support networks • Humiliation, blaming, controlling • Intimidation, coercion • Harassment, verbal abuse • Critical and undermining comments • Intrusive and inappropriate comments and questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear • Depression • Withdrawal • Passivity • Confusion • Low self esteem • Deference • Aggression • Resignation • Ambivalence • Disturbed sleep pattern • Weight loss • Running away

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Type of abuse	Examples	Possible signs and symptoms
Financial abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theft • Fraud • Exploitation • Pressure in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions • The misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate money to pay bills • Disappearing benefit payments • Sudden or large withdrawal from bank account • Inadequate clothing • Lack of personal belongings • Poor standard of possessions
Neglect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ignoring medical or physical care needs • Failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services • The withholding of the necessities of life such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dehydration • Malnutrition • Unexplained failure to respond to prescribed medication • Infections • Pressure sores • Inadequate clothing • Hypothermia
Discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offensive language or behaviour that is directed at a person because of disability, ethnic origin, race, skin colour, culture, sexual orientation, size, gender or age • Any other form of harassment, slurs or similar treatment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Withdrawal • Anger/aggression • Loss of self esteem • Imitative behaviour
Cyber bullying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear • Depression • Withdrawal • Loss of self esteem • Disturbed sleep pattern • Weight loss • Running away

Reporting abuse

Procedures for staff and volunteers

It is the responsibility of staff to report concerns, NOT to decide whether it is or is not abuse.

The need to protect the child/vulnerable adult must be paramount. Therefore, even if you may think the allegation may be untrue, it is still necessary to report it.

It is not the job of college staff to investigate these concerns

The following procedure **must** be followed by all college staff or volunteers when:

1. a student discloses to them that abuse has, or may have, occurred
2. they witness an incident of abuse
3. they have a significant concern that a student may have been or is being abused

1. Procedure for staff and volunteers responding to a disclosure from a student

The member of staff must report the disclosure from the student to a designated College Safeguarding Officer (see Appendix 1 below) as soon as possible and in any event within two hours. If this is not possible, then the Duty Manager or a senior manager must be notified as soon as possible.

RECEIVE

- When a student makes a disclosure of abuse, **staff will not question the alleged victim about the incident**
- At this point it is not appropriate to gather specific information about what has happened. Avoid leading questions; respond to the student but do not interrogate as any further questioning by staff could affect the validity of any statement collected by police at a later date
- Listen without displaying shock or disbelief
- Accept what you are told - you do not need to decide whether or not it is true
- Clarify anything you do not understand

REASSURE

- Acknowledge the student's courage in telling
- Do not promise confidentiality
- Avoid making statements or promises that are incorrect
- Remind them they are not to blame - avoid criticising the alleged perpetrator
- Do not promise that "everything will be alright now" (it might not be)

RESPOND

- **The student may be in a state of shock or very anxious, therefore it is important to explain carefully what you will do next, i.e. inform the College Safeguarding Officer or the Duty Manager**
- Always encourage and allow the individual to be involved in any next steps and where possible support the student to speak directly to the College Safeguarding Officer, accompanied by a supportive adult
- Seek to ensure the person's safety
- Do not confront the alleged perpetrator

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- If the alleged abuse happened very recently
 - Do not allow access to any room where this may have occurred
 - Items that are given to you must be handed over to the safeguarding officer for safe keeping at the time of reporting the allegation.

RECORD

- Recording must be done as soon as possible and during the disclosure if appropriate, including:
 - Name of student and date of disclosure
 - Facts of the conversation/disclosure
 - Date and time of the alleged incident(s)
 - Use the student's own words where possible
 - Your observations of the student's behaviour, appearance and emotional state
- Cross out mistakes - do not use Tippex and do not destroy your original notes - they may be needed later on and must be given to the College Safeguarding Officer

SUPPORT

- Making a disclosure can be emotionally and psychologically traumatic and/or distressing. It is therefore important to consider what kind of support will be needed for the student
- Student disclosures and allegations can be extremely stressful and time consuming - it is important to ensure you, as the recipient, seek appropriate support

REPORT

- Report the incident or disclosure to the College Safeguarding Officer or Duty Manager
- The College Safeguarding Officer or the Duty Manager will take responsibility for the matter and will take all necessary action. However if you have questions or need additional support speak to them about this
- Following the incident or disclosure complete a Safeguarding form as soon as possible and submit it to the College Safeguarding Officer

2. Procedure in the case of witnessing abuse and/or assault

- Seek to ensure the young person's safety, without endangering yourself
- Assess the situation and where someone is at severe risk of harm contact the emergency services by dialling 999
- Contact the College Safeguarding Officer or the Duty Manager immediately
- Seek to ensure the student has no contact with the alleged abuser. It may be necessary to inform other staff on duty that there has been an incident but information passed to them must be kept to a minimum
- If the incident involves an adult working with students, please refer to RMET Whistle Blowing Policy and Procedure for guidance

3. Procedure where a member of staff or volunteer has concerns of abuse and/or neglect

- Discuss concerns with the College Safeguarding Officer or a College Senior Manager
- If the concerns involve an adult working with students, please refer to RMET Whistle Blowing Policy and Procedure for guidance

Please refer to **RMET Safeguarding Flow Chart** - procedure when an allegation of abuse is disclosed or an incident of abuse is witnessed - Appendix 3 below

College Safeguarding Officer Procedures

1. Procedure for the College Safeguarding Officer to respond to possible, alleged, or suspected abuse or serious cause for concern

The College Safeguarding Officer who receives the report of an allegation or suspicion of abuse or concerns will:

1. In the case of an incident that poses immediate danger, take necessary steps to ensure the safety of the person in question and any other person who might be at risk
2. Listen and record concerns/allegations/disclosure
3. Assess the information received and decide on the appropriate steps of action, in consultation with the college safeguarding team or college management team
4. If necessary, report the matter to the appropriate local authority team i.e. Children/Young Persons or Vulnerable Adult Protection Teams and seek advice
5. Notify the Principal or Assistant Principal in the Principal's absence within two hours
6. Confirm contact with the appropriate local authority team in writing within 24 hours
7. Ensure that the Safeguarding form is completed by the person who reported the original concern
8. Assess the situation at this point in the process and decide on appropriate next steps in collaboration with college safeguarding team
9. If necessary, and in collaboration with the college safeguarding team, continue to:
 - a. review the details of the case as required
 - b. share and review the advice from the local authority protection team
 - c. plan key actions that need to be undertaken in following up the details of the completed safeguarding report
10. Ensure that written records are kept of all conversations, meetings etc to do with the safeguarding issue at hand

Please refer to **RMET Safeguarding Flow Chart** - procedure when an allegation of abuse is disclosed or an incident of abuse is witnessed - Appendix 3 below

2. Procedure for the College Safeguarding Officer if an allegation involves an adult working with students

In the event that the allegation of abuse is about an adult working with students, the College Safeguarding Officer shall also:

1. Inform the Local Authority Designated Office (LADO). The LADO and College Safeguarding Officer will decide if the allegation meets the criteria for a strategy meeting based on whether the adult working with students has:
 - Behaved inappropriately in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child/young person or vulnerable adult
 - Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child/young person or vulnerable adult
 - Behaved towards a child/young person or vulnerable adult in a way that indicates he/she is unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults
2. Follow the Local Authority Safeguarding Children's Board Allegation Management procedures
3. Notify the Principal, who will contact and involve Human Resources as required
 - The College Safeguarding Officer and the Principal will take advice from the LADO. However, where there is reasonable suspicion that the allegation is serious; the College will immediately suspend the member of staff on a

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temporary basis pending a clear outcome from an investigation or agreement with the LADO.

- Staff suspension is not in itself a disciplinary action and will be used for the following reasons
 - ❖ To protect the student or others from possible further abuse
 - ❖ To allow a full investigation without the danger of influence by the member of staff
 - ❖ To protect the member of staff from further allegations

4. Where the allegation is against the College Principal the College Safeguarding Officer must report to the Chief Executive or the Chair of the Trustees (contact details to be obtained through the HR Department)

The College recognises that this can be a very uncomfortable experience for the adult involved, and will seek to support them through the Human Resources Department.

Staff are reminded that when a member of staff or volunteer is suspended they are not guilty of any crime. The issue should not be discussed with others. This is a very difficult situation and if an individual requires support to hold the situation professionally, they should discuss their needs with the College Safeguarding Officer.

Where a member of staff or volunteer is returning to work following an investigation, specific supportive measures will be put into place.

Guidance for all record keeping

The College Safeguarding Officer will maintain a confidential record of details of possible, alleged, or suspected abuse or serious cause for concern.

As far as possible, the following information shall be recorded for each case:

1. Date and time of the record
2. Name and address of child/vulnerable adult
3. Age, date of birth
4. Parents/Carers and Social Worker details
5. Name and address of adults involved if known
6. Date and time of the alleged incident
7. Nature of concern or allegation
8. If the child/vulnerable adult arrived with an injury
9. Child's/vulnerable adult's explanation of what happened in their own words
10. Adult's explanation of what happened
11. Any questions that were asked
12. Signature of person recording the incident, concern or allegation

The safeguarding file may also include the additional records:

1. Any notes, meeting minutes, memoranda, correspondence etc. dealing with the case
2. All Safeguarding and/or Serious Occurrence forms completed in connection with the case
3. Any other relevant materials e.g. art work, written work, articles etc

Copies of reports, notes etc will be kept securely locked at all times, but will be shared in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

In all cases above

A Safeguarding form must be completed by the person who has concerns or received the allegation of abuse or witnessed an incident that involved abuse. This form must be forwarded within 24 hours to the College Safeguarding Officer. Where this is not possible, it should be sent to the Duty Manager.

The College Safeguarding Team

The college safeguarding team consists of college staff who have received specific training in identifying and working with child and vulnerable adult protection and are familiar with the Local Authority adult and child protection procedures.

The college safeguarding team may include a range of staff such as the Principal or Assistant Principal, Human Resources Manager, Counsellors, Student Journey Manager, Residential Manager, College Nurse etc.

The team will meet regularly to discuss previous or current cases, to share information and good practice, review procedures and make recommendations for further actions.

The role of the college safeguarding team is to work in a collaborative way to:

- Support the safeguarding officers to do their work effectively
- Promote an effective and inclusive safeguarding culture for students, staff, volunteers and the public

Confidentiality

All staff at the college are expected to work within the bounds of the RMET's Confidentiality Policy. However, the needs and wellbeing of the young person will take precedence over issues of confidentiality (please read RMET Confidentiality Policy for further details); therefore all concerns should be reported to the College Safeguarding Officer.

On this basis, the college reserves the right in certain circumstances to inform outside agencies even when permission has not been given by a member of staff, volunteer, student, parent or carer.

Once a safeguarding procedure is initiated, information will only be shared on a need to know basis. Please contact the College Safeguarding Officer with any further concerns or need for clarification.

Informing parents

The College aims to work with parents/carers in all safeguarding matters unless:

- The parent/carer or close family member is suspected of being involved with the alleged abuse
- The young person is over the age of 18 and specifically asks the college not to inform their parent/carer. In these circumstances we will work actively with the young person to understand the reasons for their decision.

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- The College Safeguarding Officer has reasonable grounds to suspect that talking to the parent/carer may put them or the young person in danger

Informing external agencies

The College will inform the student's Social Worker in the event of a possible, alleged or suspected abuse or serious cause for concern.

The College will inform Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Learning and Skills Council of all possible, alleged or suspected abuse or serious cause for concern at the stage when they involve the Local Authority safeguarding teams. (please refer to Appendix 1 for college specific information)

Appendix 1 - RMET College specific safeguarding Information

Freeman College

College Safeguarding Officers

- Ollie Cheney - Assistant Principal
- Bonny Etchell - Anderson - Head of Education and Therapy

Contact numbers - for Sheffield

- Safeguarding Children Service 0114 2734934
- Adult access team 0114 2734908

Further advice is also available on the Sheffield Safeguarding Children's Board website and the Sheffield County Council website.

<http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/safe--sound/protection-from-abuse/adults>

<http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/safe--sound/protection-from-abuse/child-protection>

<http://www.safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org.uk/index.asp?pgid=114364>

<http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/safe--sound/protection-from-abuse/jointprotocol>

Glasshouse College

College Safeguarding Officers

- Liz McDonald - College Nurse
- Bobin Van Schoor - Student Journey Manager

Contact numbers - for Dudley

- Children & Families Helpdesk 01384 818181
- Safeguarding Children Service 01384 813000
- Local Authority Designated Office 01384 813249
- Adult Protection Unit 01384 813249
- CQC 0117 9307110

Further advice is also available on the Dudley Safeguarding Children's Board website and the Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council website.

<http://safeguardingchildren.dudley.gov.uk>

<http://www.dudley.gov.uk>

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College Safeguarding Officers

- Julian Pyzer - Head of Residential and Nutrition
- Roger Duncan - Head of Education and Therapy

Contact numbers - for Gloucestershire

- Children & Families Helpdesk 01452 426565
- Safeguarding Children Service 01452 583636
- LADO 01452 426994
- Adult Protection Unit 01452 425879
- CQC 0117 9307110

Further advice is also available on the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children's Board website and the Gloucestershire County Council website.

<http://www.gscb.org.uk>

<http://gscb.org.uk/handbook>

<http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk>

Further information regarding the identification and actions following an allegation can be found in:

- Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education 2007
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006
- Every Child Matters 2003

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Appendix 2 - RMET Code of Conduct - for staff relating to and working with young people and vulnerable adults at an RMET College

As a member of Ruskin Mill Educational Trust staff, you should

1. Recognise that the safety, well-being and enjoyment of participants is of greater importance than their performance.
2. Treat everyone with dignity and respect.
3. Ensure everyone has equal opportunity to take part and contribute.
4. Show consistently high standards of professional behaviour and appearance, acting as a positive role model for RMET.
5. Avoid using inappropriate language in front of, about, or to a student.
6. Avoid showing favouritism to any individual.
7. Avoid physical contact unless it is justified in the context of the activity, explained to the individual, and with their permission.
8. Avoid doing things of a personal nature that a student can do for themselves.
9. Challenge any form of abuse, bullying, discrimination, bad language, violence or any other offensive or inappropriate behaviour.
10. Report any concerns using the process in this policy.
11. Promote the positive aspects of fair play, team-work and self-respect. Challenge anyone who goes against this.
12. Establish with students, at the start of any session, the behaviour expected of them.
13. Maintain a safe environment.
14. Ensure all students are adequately supervised at all times, in line with recommended supervision ratios for the activity.
15. Have access to a phone and a first aid kit, or a first aid trained person.
16. Ensure that due care is given to the weather and the environment, with regard to clothing, equipment, health and safety, and activities.
17. Be aware of all necessary procedures and information relevant to your position. This will include emergency procedures, risk assessments, medical information etc
18. Do not place yourself in a situation where you may be open to suspicion or allegation, or where your actions may be misinterpreted.
19. Follow guidance from the Positive Approaches to managing behaviour that challenges, training and policy.

Appendix 3 - RMET Safeguarding Flow Chart for all staff and volunteers -
 procedure for responding to possible, alleged or suspected abuse or serious cause for concern

A RMET staff member or a volunteer has

- Observed a possible, alleged or suspected abuse or serious cause for concern
- Received a disclosure from young person or vulnerable adult (Historic or current)

Is there immediate need for medical attention or is there immediate danger?

YES: Attend to the individual, call the Duty Manger and if not available call 999 and stay with the person

NO: Record all information about the concern, incident or disclosure, including signs, symptoms, date and signature

Report your concern to College Safeguarding Officer or Duty Manager within two hours

1. Complete the RMET Safeguarding Reporting Form and submit it with any notes ASAP to the College Safeguarding Officer
2. College Safeguarding Officer will offer advice and support

The above completes the initial referral process.

What happens next...?

College Safeguarding Officer determines appropriate course of action

Deemed to be a safeguarding issue

Deemed to be a Serious Occurrence

Refer to RMET staff disciplinary procedures

Outcome of disciplinary process may lead to further safeguarding issue

If it involves a member of staff the CSO will also follow the procedure A- C below

A - College Safeguarding Officer refers to Principal and Human Resources Manager for a decision re: immediate suspension pending internal or external investigation

B - Disciplinary investigation process initiated (this may be delayed pending a police/SSD investigation)

C - Outcome of disciplinary procedure will determine the course of action - informed by any SSD/police info and any other relevant factors

1 - College Safeguarding Officer consults with the appropriate Social Services Department* and follows up in writing (using RMET Safeguarding Report Form) within 24 hours.

2 - Social Services Department or police investigate

3 - Outcome of investigation determines action