
Safeguarding Policy

1. Policy Statement

This policy has been developed to ensure that all staff at Skill Step Training are working together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

This policy describes the management systems and arrangements in place to create and maintain a safe learning environment for all our learners and staff. It identifies actions that should be taken to address any concerns about child safety and welfare including protecting learners and staff from extremist views, vocal or active, which are opposed to fundamental British values. All opinions or behaviours which are contrary to these fundamental values and the ethos of the organisation will be vigorously challenged.

The Managing Director or, in their absence, the authorised members of staff, have the ultimate responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people goes beyond implementing basic child protection procedures. It is an integral part of all activities, functions, culture and ethos of Skill Step Training

In accordance with guidance set out in 'Working together to Safeguard Children – July 2018, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education – September 2019' and 'The Prevent Duty', Skill Step Training will work in partnership with other organisations where appropriate to identify any concerns about child welfare and take action to address them

2. Scope

Skill Step Training aims to create and maintain a safe learning environment where all learners and adults feel safe, secure and valued and know they will be listened to and taken seriously. Skill Step Training is committed to the principles outlined

in ‘Working together to Safeguard Children – July 2018, ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education – September 2019’ and ‘The Prevent Duty’ and implements policies, practices and procedures which promote safeguarding and the emotional and physical well-being of children, young people and staff.

Skill Step Training is committed to supporting the delivery of effective early help through multi-agency working, a consistent application of the thresholds and the use of a single agency assessment.

3. Legal Framework

The statutory inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié and the first joint Chief Inspectors report of safeguarding children highlighted the lack of priority status given to safeguarding. The government response to these findings included the Green Paper Every Child Matters and the provisions in the Children’s Act 2004. Section 11 of the Children’s Act 2004 places a duty on all agencies to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. No single profession can have a full picture of a child’s needs and circumstances and, if children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes in to contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

Skill Step Training is committed to the government national framework: Working Together to Safeguard Children.

See also:

- Data Protection Policy
- Equality Policy
- Health and Safety policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Social Networking Policy

4. Safeguarding Adults: 6 Principles

4.1 Empowerment

We give individuals the right information about how to recognise abuse and what they can do to keep themselves safe. We give them clear and simple information about how to report abuse and crime and what support we can give. We consult them before we take any action. Where someone lacks capacity to make a decision, we always action in his or her best interest.

4.2 Protection

We have effective ways of assessing and managing risk. Our local complaints and reporting arrangements for abuse and suspected criminal offences work well. We take responsibility for putting them in touch with the right person.

4.3 Prevention

We train staff how to recognise signs and take action to prevent abuse occurring. In all our work, we consider how to make communities safer.

4.4 Proportionality

We discuss with the individual and where appropriate, with partner agencies what to do where there is a risk of significant harm before we take a decision. Risk is an element of many situations and should be part of any wider assessment.

4.5 Partnership

We are good at sharing information locally. We have multi-agency partnership arrangements in place and staff understand how to use these. We foster a 'one' team approach that places the welfare of individuals before the 'needs' of the system.

4.6 Accountability

The roles of all agencies are clear, together with the lines of accountability. Staff understand what is expected of them and others. Agencies recognise their responsibilities to each other, act upon them and accept collective responsibility for safeguarding arrangements.

5. Definitions

The following definitions apply throughout the Safeguarding policy and associated procedures:

Child or Children: The Children Act 2004 defines a child as a person under eighteen for most purposes.

Vulnerable Adult or Adults: The Office of the Public Guardian (OPG 2013) defines a vulnerable adult as a person aged 18 or over who has a condition of the following type:

- a substantial learning or physical disability
- a physical or mental illness or mental disorder, chronic or otherwise, including addiction to alcohol or drugs
- a significant reduction in physical or mental capacity.

5.1 Types of abuse and neglect

Abuse: A form of maltreatment of a child or vulnerable adult. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or vulnerable adult by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or child or children.

Physical Abuse: Physical abuse may take many forms e.g. hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating. It may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child or vulnerable adult. This unusual and potentially dangerous form of abuse is now described as fabricated or induced illness.

Emotional Abuse: Emotional abuse is persistent emotional ill treatment causing severe and persistent effects on the child or vulnerable adult's emotional development and may involve:

- Conveying the message that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person
- Not giving the child or vulnerable adult opportunities to express their views
- Deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate
- Interactions that are beyond a child or vulnerable adults developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing from participating in normal social interaction
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- Serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children or vulnerable adults to feel frightened or in danger
- Exploitation or corruption of children or vulnerable adults
- Some level of emotional abuse is involved in most types of ill treatment, although emotional abuse may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse: Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. These activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) and non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. This may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children or vulnerable adults in looking at, or being involved in the production of sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect: Neglect involves the persistent failure to meet basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of the child or vulnerable adult's health and development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to; provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child or vulnerable adults emotional needs.

There are also specific issues which we expect our staff to be aware of, these include:

- Child sexual exploitation
- Forced marriage
- Domestic violence
- Female genital mutilation
- Radicalisation
- Self harm
- Bullying/cyberbullying
- Drugs
- Faith abuse
- Gangs and youth violence
- Violence against women and girls
- Sexting
- Honour Based Violence
- Trafficking

6. Responsibilities

All members of Skill Step Training community, including staff, employers, learners, contract staff, and work experience providers are responsible for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

6.1 All staff

All staff that come into contact with children and vulnerable adults in their everyday work has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. Staff will be trained to understand their responsibilities and be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect and extremism and radicalisation so that they are able to identify cases of children/vulnerable adults who may be in need of help or protection.

Staff working at Skill Step Training are advised to maintain an attitude of ‘it could happen here’ where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult, staff members should always act in the interest of the child or vulnerable adult.

Failure to comply with these responsibilities will be seen as a serious matter which may lead to disciplinary action.

Staff are expected to:

- attend safeguarding training as required (every 3 years)
- familiarise themselves with the Safeguarding policy and associated procedures
- safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults
- alert the Designated Safeguarding Officers if they have concerns about a child or vulnerable adult

6.2 Designated Safeguarding Officers

The Designated Safeguarding Officer is Katie Hodgson (Managing Director). They have a specific responsibility for championing the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people registered with Skill Step Training.

The Designated Person will:

- Act as the first point of contact with regards to all safeguarding matters.
- Attend up-dated training every two years.
- Provide support and training for staff and volunteers.
- Ensure that Skill Step Training actions are in line with the relevant local authority.
- Support staff to make effective referrals to the Children and Families Services and any other agencies where there are concerns about the welfare of a child.
- Keep copies of all referrals to Children and Families Services and any other agencies related to safeguarding children.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers receive information on safeguarding policies and procedures from the point of induction.
- Ensure that any staff with specific responsibility for safeguarding children receive the appropriate training to undertake this role.
- Manage and keep secure all safeguarding records.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers understand and are aware of the Skill Step Training's reporting and recording procedures and are clear about what to do if they have a concern about a child.

- Ensure that the Safeguarding Policy is regularly reviewed and up-dated.
- Keep up to date with changes in local policy and procedures and are aware of any guidance issued by the DfE concerning Safeguarding.

7. Safer Recruitment of Staff

Skill Step Training ensures that their staff are fit to work in a training provider setting with children and vulnerable adults. It also reserves the right to refuse to employ staff whom it has a reasonable belief may pose a risk to its learners.

Skill Step Training has systems in place to prevent unsuitable people from working with children or vulnerable adults and to promote safe practice. These systems apply to all new staff and require the following checks to be made prior to appointment:

- a minimum of two references, satisfactory to Skill Step Training, one of which should be from a previous employer
- documentary evidence checks of identify, nationality, residency and “right to work” status
- enhanced DBS (Disclosure & barring service) check with barred list information*
- documentary evidence of qualifications
- satisfactory completion of the probationary period
- where subcontractors are delivering courses on behalf of Skill Step Training the provider must provide written assurance that all relevant staff will be DBS checked

In accordance with the Regulations, records of all checks carried out are kept in a single central record.

*If a DBS check is delayed for any reason the staff member will not be subject to lone working with learners aged under 18. They must always have a member of staff present who is fully DBS checked until the point they receive a full DBS check.

8. Working with other agencies

Skill Step Training has developed effective links with other relevant agencies, for example, the Local Authority, Children's Social Care, Channel, and co-operates as required with any enquiries regarding child protection issues.

9. Staff Development and Training

Skill Step Training's Safeguarding policy, procedure and accompanying guidance will be issued to all new staff as part of their induction. All staff will be supported to recognise warning signs and symptoms in relation to specific safeguarding issues and will receive training or briefings on for example, Guns and Gangs, Forced Marriage, Female Genital Mutilation, Domestic Abuse, Child Sexual Exploitation, Trafficking and Preventing Violent Extremism through mandatory Safeguarding Level 1 training and update briefings with a refresher every 3 years.

10. Safer Recruitment of Learners

Skill Step Training ensure that its learners are suitable to study in a training provider setting. It also reserves the right to refuse entry to any applicants whom it has a reasonable belief may pose a risk to learners. To ensure this is addressed appropriately Skill Step Training will:

- Help to facilitate DBS checks for learners going in to relevant industries (education, working with vulnerable adults, charities, healthcare etc)
- Attend case conferences at all feeder schools & colleges (if required)
- Complete relevant risk assessments of ex-offenders

11. What to do if you suspect someone is being abused

All staff, volunteers and others working in direct contact with a learner must be alert to the signs of abuse. Anyone who suspects that abuse is taking place inside or outside of Skill Step Training's setting, or to whom a learner discloses issues

relating to safeguarding, should contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately.

Staff who are not Designated Safeguarding Officers, but who are approached with concerns about a child or vulnerable adult, must bring the concerns raised to the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately.

All staff to whom a learner discloses issues that may be related to safeguarding must keep written records of concerns. Such records must be kept securely, separate from the main learner files and in locked locations.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer will develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with any enquires regarding child or vulnerable adult protection matters, including attendance at case conferences.

12. Allegations of abuse against members of staff

Allegations of abuse, or concerns raised against members of staff, will always be treated seriously. The allegations need to be applied with common sense and judgement. All cases must be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Officer who will follow the Safeguarding Procedure in the same way as for other safeguarding allegations. The Designated Safeguarding Officer will take the appropriate steps to ensure the safety of the child or vulnerable adult, and any others who may be at risk.

If the allegation or concern is against the Designated Safeguarding Officer, it should be reported to the Executive Director (EM). Where there is a complaint against a member of staff, the EM will be informed and involved. This may result in possibly criminal (police) investigations and/or a child/vulnerable adult's protection investigation, carried out by Social Services.

13. Reporting cased to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Skill Step Training has a statutory duty to make reports and provide relevant information to the DBS where there are grounds for believing, following an investigation, that an individual is unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults, or may have committed misconduct. The responsibility for reporting cases to the DBS lies with the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

14. Resignations

If, during the course of an investigation relating to safeguarding, an employee tenders his or her resignation, or ceases to provide their services, Skill Step Training is not prevented from following up an allegation in accordance with these procedures. Every effort will be made to reach a conclusion in cases relating to the welfare of children or vulnerable adults, including those where the person concerned refuses to co-operate with the process

15. Whistleblowing

Skill Step Training has an established Whistleblowing procedure for enabling staff to share, in confidence with a Designated Assessor, concerns they may have about instances of suspected malpractice at Skill Step Training. Malpractice can include fraud and financial irregularities, criminal offences being committed, that have been committed or that are likely to be committed, endangering the health or safety of individuals, and can also include concerns around the protection of children or vulnerable adults. The procedure is intended to provide safeguards to enable members of Skill Step Training staff to raise concerns without fear of adverse repercussions. Skill Step Training recognises that it may be difficult to express concerns about colleagues and is fully supportive of Whistleblowing for the sake of a child or vulnerable adult and will provide support and protect those who “blow the whistle”. This procedure is, accordingly, intended to provide safeguards to enable members of staff to raise concerns about malpractice in connection with Skill Step Training. The aim is to provide a rapid mechanism under which genuine concerns can be raised internally, and, if necessary, externally without fear of adverse repercussions to the individual. It is also intended to promote throughout Skill Step Training a culture of openness and a shared sense

of integrity by inviting all employees to act responsibly to uphold the reputation of Skill Step Training and maintain public confidence.

16. Support for Staff

Skill Step Training is aware that safeguarding cases can be distressing and that staff who have been involved may find it helpful to talk about their experiences, in confidence, with the Designated Safeguarding Officer or with a trained counsellor. Staff wishing to be referred for counselling should discuss with their line manager.

17. Radicalism and Extremism

Skill Step Training values the fundamental rights of freedom of speech, expression of beliefs and ideology and tolerance of others which are the core values of our democratic society. However, all rights come with responsibilities and free speech or beliefs designed to manipulate the vulnerable or which advocate harm or hatred towards others will not be tolerated. Skill Step Training seeks to protect its learners and staff from all messages and forms of violent extremism and ideologies including those linked to, but not restricted, to the following: Far Right/Neo Nazi, White Supremacist ideology, Islamist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups and extremist Animal Rights groups.

Skill Step Training is clear that exploitation and radicalisation will be viewed as a safeguarding concern and will be referred to the appropriate safeguarding agencies.

17.1 Training

Our Designated Safeguarding Officer will take a lead role in upskilling themselves and other staff members in this important area.

Our staff are trained to ensure the employers and subcontractors we work with are not linked to any extremist activity. If they suspect any activity they are not happy

with they will report this immediately to our Designated Safeguarding Officer and Prevent Lead.

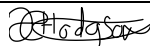
18. Online Safety

Skill Step Training has an Online Safety Policy which recognises that Online Safety is a safeguarding issue not an ICT issue. The purpose of internet use within Skill Step Training is to help raise educational standards, promote candidate achievement, and support the professional work of staff as well as enhance the management information and business administration.

The internet is an essential element in 21st century life for education, business and social interaction and Skill Step Training has a duty to provide children and young people with quality access as part of their learning experience.

It is the duty of Skill Step Training to ensure that every young person in its care is safe and this applies equally to the 'virtual' or digital world.

Skill Step Training will ensure that appropriate filtering methods are in place to ensure that learners are safe from all types of inappropriate and unacceptable materials, including terrorist and extremist material. This will be in line with the 'Prevent Duty'.

Approved by:	Katie Hodgson
Job title:	Managing Director
Signature:	
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