

Forming Connections Safeguarding Policy.



Last reviewed: 29/09/2025

Next review due: 29/09/2026

Policy owner: Education Director

Applies to: All staff, contractors, volunteers, learners, and partners

1. Policy Statement

At **Forming Connections**, safeguarding is at the heart of our mission to build a world where everyone, children and adults alike can feel safe, seen, and supported in the spaces where they live, learn, and work.

We recognise that feeling safe is the foundation for meaningful relationships, learning, and wellbeing. We are committed to creating environments where all participants can thrive, free from harm, abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

This policy sets out our commitment to safeguarding children, young people, and vulnerable adults, and outlines how we will respond to concerns and fulfil our legal responsibilities.

2. Our Safeguarding Principles

Guided by our core values:

1. **Safety First:** We prioritise physical, emotional, and relational safety.
2. **Whole-Person Understanding:** We see beyond behaviour to underlying needs.
3. **Empowerment Through Knowledge:** We equip adults to notice, understand, and respond effectively.
4. **Relational Integrity:** We model trust, respect, and co-regulation in all interactions.
5. **Sustainable Inclusion:** We create cultures of deep belonging and systemic safety.
6. **Embodied Practice:** We live the wellbeing values we teach.

3. Legal Framework

This policy has been developed in accordance with UK legislation and guidance, including:

- *Children Act 1989 & 2004*
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)*
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)*
- *Education Act 2002*
- *Data Protection Act 2018 / UK GDPR*
- *Care Act 2014* (safeguarding adults)
- Local Safeguarding Partnership procedures

4. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All **Forming Connections** staff, contractors, associates, volunteers, and trustees
 - Anyone engaged to deliver workshops, consultancy, or training on our behalf
 - All children, young people, and adults who engage with our services, whether in person or online
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5. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Education Director / Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**
 - Overall responsibility for safeguarding
 - Acts as the first point of contact for concerns
 - Ensures staff training and compliance
 - Liaises with relevant statutory agencies as needed
- **All staff, contractors, and volunteers**
 - Have a duty to safeguard children and adults at risk
 - Must complete safeguarding induction and relevant training
 - Must report concerns immediately and not investigate themselves

DSL Name: Brenda Keirnan

Contact: brenda@formingconnections.co.uk

6. Recognising Abuse and Harm

We recognise that abuse can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse or exploitation
- Neglect
- Bullying, harassment, or discriminatory abuse
- Domestic abuse
- Radicalisation (Prevent duty)
- Online abuse
- Self-neglect or harm

We also recognise the evolving nature of online risks and train staff to identify and respond to concerns related to harmful content, contact, conduct, and commerce, including misinformation and disinformation.

All staff are trained to be alert to signs and indicators of abuse, and to take all concerns seriously.

7. Reporting Concerns

If you have a safeguarding concern about a child, vulnerable adult, or a colleague:

1. **Listen and reassure** do not promise confidentiality.
2. **Record the facts:** use the exact words where possible.
3. **Report immediately:** to the DSL
4. **If someone is in immediate danger**, call **999**.
5. The DSL will decide next steps, including contacting the local authority or police.

All concerns will be documented, dated, and stored securely in line with data protection laws.

8. Safer Recruitment

Forming Connections is committed to safer recruitment practices to prevent unsuitable individuals from working with children and vulnerable adults.

This includes:

- Clear job descriptions and safeguarding responsibilities
 - Enhanced DBS checks where required
 - Verification of identity, qualifications, and references
 - Induction and probation procedures
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9. Training

All staff and contractors receive safeguarding induction and appropriate ongoing training relevant to their roles.

The DSL receives additional, advanced safeguarding training and updates annually.

10. Confidentiality & Data Protection

Information about safeguarding concerns will be shared **on a need-to-know basis only**, in line with UK GDPR and statutory guidance.

We will share information with relevant agencies when it is in the best interests of the individual's safety and welfare.

11. Whistleblowing

We encourage a culture where concerns about poor practice or misconduct can be raised without fear of reprisal.

We maintain a culture of openness and accountability and encourage reporting of low-level concerns to ensure early intervention and uphold professional standards.

Concerns can be raised with the DSL, Director, or through external whistleblowing channels (e.g. NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline: 0800 028 0285).

12. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are significant changes in legislation or in our organisation's activities.

All staff are required to read, understand, and adhere to the most recent version.

Approved by:

Name: Brenda Keirnan

Role: Education Director and DSL

Date: 29/09/2025