

Blue Sky Mentoring

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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1. Statement of intent/ policy statement

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Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and it is the duty of Blue Sky Mentoring to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people.

Our core principle is that we aim to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all young people, regardless of age, ability, race, culture, religion, gender identity or sexual identity. All of our young people have equal rights to support and protection.

We recognise that many of the young people we work with will be additionally vulnerable as a result of their level of dependency, their previous experiences, their communication needs, or other factors.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and directors of our organisation, all of whom have received safeguarding training and are familiar with the contents of this policy.

This policy will be updated annually to reflect any changes to law and guidance or best practice.

2. Aim/ purpose of the policy

The aim of this policy is to ensure Blue Sky Mentoring promotes the welfare of all young people and vulnerable adults in its care.

For the purpose of this policy, safeguarding is defined as:

- Protecting young people and vulnerable adults from maltreatment
- Preventing the impairment of young people and vulnerable adults health or development
- Actively promoting positive outcomes for all young people and vulnerable adults

A young-person centred approach is fundamental to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of any person within our care. There are a number of threats to this, including: sexual, physical and emotional abuse; neglect; exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups; trafficking; online abuse; sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation.

Anyone working with young people should actively listen to them, take their views seriously, and work with them and any carers collaboratively when deciding how to support their

needs. Appropriate support should be in place for any young people who struggle to communicate effectively.

Young people who engage in Blue Sky Mentoring's services may also be engaged by a wide range of other universal and targeted services. In reflection of this, Blue Sky Mentoring will work together with parents, carers, and other professionals to ensure that young people and vulnerable adults receive the best support for them.

3. Scope

The policy applies to anyone working on behalf of Blue Sky Mentoring, including directors, senior managers, paid coaches, volunteers, micro-providers, and students.

4. Legal Content

This policy includes legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect young people and vulnerable adults in England.

This policy takes account of:

- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Information Sharing: A Guide for People Working with Children, Young People and Families 2005
- Statutory Guidance: Working Together to Safeguard Children 2020
- Local Authority policies relating to Safe Recruitment
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Prevent Strategy 2011, 2015
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Phil Saunders

The designated safeguarding lead takes lead responsibility for safeguarding in Blue Sky Mentoring. Their duties include:

- Ensuring policies regarding the protection of young people are known, understood and used appropriately by staff
- Working with the directors to ensure that this safeguarding policy is reviewed annually, and procedures are reviewed regularly
- Acting as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff regarding safeguarding matters
- Acting as a point of contact with safeguarding partners
- Making and managing referrals to social care, the police, or other agencies
- Taking part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings
- Liaising with the “case manager” and the designated officer(s) at the local authority if allegations are made against staff
- Making staff aware of training courses and the latest local safeguarding arrangements available through the local safeguarding partner arrangements

Deputy designated safeguarding leads are trained to the same level as the DSL and support the DSL with safeguarding matters on a day-to-day basis.

It is the responsibility of all micro-providers and staff members working within Blue Sky Mentoring to ensure they are aware and trained in safeguarding for young people and vulnerable adults, with the support of the DSL.

6. Systems and Procedures

Recruitment and Staffing Procedures

Eclipse-Coaching Recruitment and Selection Policy outlines procedures for safer recruitment

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which will be adhered to.

- Applications for staff and volunteer positions are exempt from the 1974 Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (above), and therefore applicants have to declare previous convictions.
- All applicants are checked by the Disclosure and Barring Service. Applicants are informed of the need to carry out checks before posts can be confirmed.
- If an applicant is rejected because of information which has been disclosed in the checks, they have a right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- References are checked and gaps in employment history are explored
- The 1999 Protection of Children Act is adhered to regarding any person who is dismissed from employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal, for reasons of child protection concern
- At induction, new staff are taken through all the procedures concerning safeguarding, so that if an incident arises, all staff know how to react
- All staff will have the NHS safeguarding app
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/safeguarding/nhs-england-safeguarding-app/>

Within Blue Sky Mentoring the Safeguarding Officer will be a member of the Senior Management Team. It is currently Phil Sanders. However, all Directors and members of the Steering Group are trained in the safeguarding policy with opportunities for continued professional development.

Good Practice in Blue Sky Mentoring Sessions

Staff and volunteers are required to ensure that all sessions adhere to the principles of good practice regarding Health and Safety in line with Blue Sky Mentoring policy / guidance available within the Delivery policies.

Dealing with Allegations or Concerns from Young People or Vulnerable Adults

Where a young person or vulnerable adult makes a disclosure to a member of staff, staff should:

- Offer reassurance to the young person / vulnerable adult without leading (as mentioned below)
- Listen to the young person / vulnerable adult
- Explain to the young person or vulnerable adult the action that will be taken next
- Where necessary, use visual resources to support

Responding to Suspicions of Abuse

In line with the Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board Procedures and Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership Policies, staff:

- **Recognise, Respond, Report, Record and Refer**
- It is acknowledged that abuse of young people and vulnerable adults can take many different forms; physical, emotional, sexual and neglect. If a young person shows signs and symptoms of 'failure to thrive' or neglect, staff make the appropriate referrals.
- Staff should deal with young people or vulnerable adults in these circumstances with sensitivity. Moreover, staff must take great care not to influence the outcome of any suspicion or concern either in the way that they speak to young people, or in the questions they ask
- If staff members are unsure how to proceed, or indeed whether they should proceed, they must speak to their team manager or the Safeguarding Officer. There should be no delay, as this might threaten the welfare of a young person.
- In an emergency and in the case of no manager being available, an immediate contact should be made to Somerset Direct. Following this, the Team Manager or Safeguarding Officer should be informed as soon as possible.

Radicalisation and Prevent

A Prevent Risk Assessment and Action Plan will be written, shared with all staff and reviewed annually by the Safeguarding Officer as part of the annual review of risk assessments.

This risk assessment should include actions taken to minimize radicalization, awareness of what to do in the event of concerns regarding radicalization, and the course of action to be taken in the event of a terror attack.

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In the event of a staff member becoming concerned regarding the risk of young people or vulnerable adults becoming radicalized, staff should report this to their line manager or to the Safeguarding Officer in the first instance.

The Safeguarding Officer would then contact Avon and Somerset Police's Regional Prevent Team:

- Phone: 0117 945 5536
- Email: channelsw@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk

Female Genital Mutilation

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland all forms of FGM are illegal under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, and in Scotland it is illegal under the Prohibition of FGM (Scotland) Act 2005.

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal and a form of abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. FGM is carried out on females of any age, from babies to teenagers to women.

Our staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators, including concerns expressed by girls about going on a long holiday during the summer break. If staff are concerned that a young person may be at risk of FGM or who has suffered FGM, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead. At Blue Sky Mentoring we are aware that professionals are under legal duty to report to the police where they discover that FGM has been carried out on a child under 18.

In such circumstances, any Blue Sky Mentoring member of staff will personally report the matter to the police as well as informing the designated safeguarding lead.

Recording Suspicions of Abuse and Disclosures

Examples of possible indicators of abuse or radicalization that staff should be aware of include:

- Any significant changes in the young person's or vulnerable adult's behaviour or appearance which are cause for concern
- Remarks made by the young person, vulnerable adult or his / her carers or friends

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- Indications that the family is under extreme stress. In these cases, it would be acceptable to discuss this initially with the young person's parent / carer, unless doing so may place the young person at further risk.

Again, guidance is found in the Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board
<https://ssab.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/>

Team Managers should be consulted / informed about these matters as soon as possible.

In all cases staff should consider whether a record may need to be made. If this is the case, then the following is recorded as soon as possible after the incident or conversation:

- The young person's or vulnerable adult's name
- The young person's or vulnerable adult's address
- Any notes to indicate why the adult is considered vulnerable (i.e. not capable of making a complaint themselves).
- The age of the young person or vulnerable adult
- The date and time of the observation or the disclosure
- An objective record of the observation or disclosure
- The exact words spoken by the young person or vulnerable adult
- The name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time
- The names of any other person present at the time

If the conversation is undertaken on the telephone the same procedure applies, and if necessary becomes a referral with immediate action.

Concerns are recorded and reported immediately. Once completed this information is signed and dated by the staff member and shared with the relevant team manager or Safeguarding Officer on the same day.

Allegations against staff

Whistle blowing if you have concerns about a colleague:

It is important that all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about a colleague's practice. All such concerns should be reported to the Directors, Phil Saunders, unless the complaint is about this individual, in which case concern should be reported to the LADO.

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Staff may also report their concerns directly to social care teams or the police if they believe direct reporting is necessary to secure action.

Blue Sky Mentoring's whistleblowing policy allows staff to raise concerns or make allegations and for an appropriate enquiry to take place.

The same guidance from the Somerset Safeguarding Adults in Somerset is followed when investigating an allegation that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a young person / vulnerable adult by:

- Behaving in a way that has harmed or may have harmed them.
- Possibly committing a criminal offence against or relating to them.
- Behaving in a way that indicates that they may pose a risk to them. This involves using similar disclosure and recording procedures just as if it were an allegation of abuse by any other person.

The Director or a member of the Steering Group is informed of any such allegation and manages the process, in conjunction with the Safeguarding Officer.

All allegations against staff are disclosed to the Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations Management (LADO), within one working day, through **Somerset Direct (0300 123 2224)**.

7. Implementation Methods

All staff have access to Somerset Local Safeguarding Boards website the <https://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/>

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- There is a clearly defined procedure for contacting the Local Authority through Somerset Direct (0300 123 2224). This ensures that in an emergency staff can work effectively together.
- Out of Hours the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) can be contacted on 0300 123 2327.
- If a report on a family is made to Adult's Social Care, Blue Sky Mentoring staff act within the Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board Procedures in deciding whether to inform the young person's parents / carers at the same time
- Should a member of staff be involved in an Out of Hours emergency contact, then their team manager is informed as soon as possible the following day with a full account of the incident which is then completed in writing
- Approaches to Blue Sky Mentoring staff for information from the Police or solicitors regarding families, are passed to the Director / member of the Steering Group for an initial response. Senior Managers inform the Directors about such approaches immediately.
- Staff do not give press interviews to anyone alone either by telephone, mail, or in person. In rare circumstances, if needed, staff are supported in giving interviews by their team manager or a member of the Steering Group.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is a priority. All documented concerns and allegations are kept confidential and shared only with key members of staff; such staff ensure their own record-keeping is appropriate to their level of professional responsibility.

Senior Leaders and Operation Managers are responsible for ensuring appropriate record keeping is maintained by staff.

Separate guidance is available on record keeping through our case management system.

Information which needs to be shared falls strictly under the guidance of the Blue Sky Mentoring's Confidentiality & Information Sharing policy.

Information must be shared in accordance with the Information Sharing documentation.

Staff should refer to Blue Sky Mentoring's Confidentiality & Information Sharing policy for further information.

Record Keeping relating to Safeguarding

At Blue Sky Mentoring we use our case management system Theranest to record all safeguarding concerns. The contents of any safeguarding records stored on this system are only available to staff who have a legitimate need, or right, to view them.

They contain any concerns and / or discussions about the young person, decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions.

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All notes made are electronically dated and kept in order; there is also an up-to-date chronology which reflects this process.

Mobile/Camera Phones

To ensure young people working with Blue Sky Mentoring benefit from technology and to reassure carers that procedures are in place to keep young people safe the following steps will be taken:

- Staff will not use personal cameras / phones to take pictures of young people.
- Visitors who attend sessions run by Blue Sky Mentoring will not be left unsupervised looking after young people.
- Young people will not be photographed unless prior permission has been received in writing from themselves and any carer

Internet Access/Use

The internet can provide valuable information for supporting staff development, improving quality delivery and as a learning tool for young people.

While the benefits are recognized we also have to consider possible misuse. In settings where Blue Sky Mentoring staff work which have internet access, the following applies.

To ensure Blue Sky Mentoring staff and volunteers, also young people themselves benefit from this resource and reduce inappropriate use thereby keeping young people safe the following steps will be taken:

- Staff and volunteers must first seek permission from their Team Managers to use the internet as part of the programme / session planning process
- Young people must first seek permission from the Blue Sky Mentoring staff member in charge before using the computer.
- If communal / shared computers are used, Blue Sky Mentoring staff will be responsible for regularly clearing cached history / cookies etc. to protect any personal information that may have been entered by young people.

Staff Training

The DSL ensures that all staff members understand the procedures for recording and reporting their concerns around safeguarding young people or vulnerable adults.

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Training is provided for all staff and volunteers to help them recognize young people or vulnerable adults who may be suffering, or be at risk of suffering, significant harm and to understand their own role, and that of others. This includes their responsibilities to these young people.

All staff will complete and have a minimum of safeguarding level 1 and complete a bi-annual refresher.

The Blue Sky Mentoring Safeguarding Officer will receive enhanced training matched to experience and reviewed annually.

Mandatory training will be held as part of any induction and then held every two years and focus on:

- The recognition of signs and symptoms of possible physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect
- The procedures for recording and reporting their concerns
- The correct way to record details on a young person's file
- Prevent training and a refresher on the content of the Prevent risk assessment.

8. Monitoring and Reviewing

Senior Managers are responsible for monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of all policies relating to Blue Sky Mentoring and reporting any concerns to the Directors.

Senior Managers will ensure staff are all aware of safeguarding procedures and are appropriately trained. Safeguarding will be a standing agenda item on all individual staff supervision, Team Management, Senior Leadership and Director meetings.

The Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed annually.