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##### Safeguarding our Learners and Staff

Policies, Procedures, Guidance and Documentation Relating to Safeguarding Learners

Should you require any further information please contact the designated safeguarding officer James Hart or one of the deputy safeguarding officers Nicola Williams/ Steve Martin

James Hart (Director)

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**Safeguarding Children Policy**

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| Policy Statement |

All children and young people have a right to fulfil their potential. They are entitled to:

* Have their basic needs met
* Be as physically and mentally healthy as possible
* Gain the maximum benefit possible from good quality educational provision
* Live and exist in safe environments free from harm
* Experience emotional well-being
* Become competent in looking after themselves, to manage and cope with everyday living with the support of others
* Have as positive an image of themselves as is possible, along with a secure sense of identity irrespective of whether they have different or individual needs
* Develop interpersonal skills and confidence

Education & Skills is committed to helping learners achieve their full potential and in doing so will take an active part in the support of learners, their families and other children connected to or associated with the Company.

The company acknowledges that this can only be done by:

* All staff, visitors and learners accepting their responsibility no matter what their status, role or professional qualifications;
* Effective communication and information sharing across the Company , and necessary with external agencies;
* All staff made up to date with developments as identified by national and local initiatives, guidance and protocols
* Regular staff training on child protection and safeguarding issues in line with new legislation and local authority requirements.

This policy and related procedures follow the guidance provided in “Working Together to Safeguard Children” (Updated Feb 24), the “Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and Their Families” (2000), the “Children Act” (1989 and 2004), ‘Keeping Children safe in Education (September 2024) Guidance has also been taken from ‘The Childcare Act’ (2006 and 2016) due to the nature of the training delivered within Early Years environments.

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| Purpose and Objectives |

It is the Company policy to ensure that guidelines, procedures, training and personal support are in place so that staff and learners can confidently identify and respond appropriately to concerns relating to the safety of children.

It will ensure that designated personnel will be available to assist staff who identify concerns and that all concerns will be treated seriously.

No matter what the source of the information, the company will adopt the following procedure to ensure consistency. The procedure will consist of three steps:

* Information gathering
* Analysis
* Action

It will ensure that all concerns about children are recorded accurately and where possible in the language given by the source of the concern. It will be stored securely and in line with the Company archiving policy.

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| Coverage and Scope |

This policy applies to the support of children and young people up to their 18th birthday as defined by the Children Act 1989 (and 2004). For those young people reaching their 18th birthday who need continuing services and support, this can be extended to their 25th birthday.

In the context of working in Further Education, where the majority of individuals are over the age of 16, it is important to recognise that whilst the law allows consensual sexual activity at the age of 16, if the child requires help and support the lawful nature of the activity does not stop intervention. Examples of this may be:

* Children who despite their legal age are vulnerable because of disability;
* Children in relationships with much older individuals or individuals in a position of authority and trust
* Children who may be at risk of sexual abuse or exploitation;
* Children who are parents;
* Children whose emotional needs mean they are unlikely to be able to protect themselves despite their legal age.

**Promotion of this policy**

This policy is shared with all new staff during their induction process and all updates to this policy are shared amongst the team. This policy is located in the resources section on OneFile, and is accessible to all tutors, IQA’s, EQA’s, centre managers, learners and employers. Safeguarding is discussed with learners at all reviews, and staff are referred to this policy if they require any additional information.

This is a controlled document. Whilst this document may be printed, the electronic version posted on OneFile is the controlled copy. Any printed copies of this document are not controlled.

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### Definitions

**Physical Abuse: -** This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

**Emotional Abuse: -** This is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child that can cause severe long lasting effects on a young person’s emotional development. It may involve, for instance, conveying to a young person that they are worthless, unloved and inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child’s developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child in participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It might involve serious bullying causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

**Sexual Abuse: -** This involves forcing or enticing a young person to take part in sexual activities/ child sexual exploitation, including prostitution/ human trafficking, whether or not the young person is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities such as involving young people in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or encouraging young people to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

**Neglect: -** This is the persistent failure to meet a young person’s basic physical and/or psychological needs which is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born neglect is failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a young person from physical or emotional harm or danger, failing to ensure adequate supervision, including the use of inadequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It can also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a young person’s basic emotional needs.

**Domestic Violence:** - Prolonged and/or regular exposure to domestic violence can have a serious impact on a young person’s development and emotional well-being, despite the best efforts of the parent who may be the victim, to protect the young person. Young people’s exposure to parental conflict, even where actual violence is not present can lead to serious anxiety and distress. Young people are like to show signs of stress because of domestic violence. This may result in behavioural problems, depression, and a tendency to aggression or withdrawal.

#### Bullying: Staff should also be mindful of the threat of bullying. Young people are vulnerable to bullying, which is deliberately hurtful and harmful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time from which it is difficult to defend themselves. It can take many forms but the three main types are:

***Physical*** – (For example, hitting, kicking, theft, extortion)

***Verbal*** –(For example, racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name-calling)

***Emotional*** –(For example, isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of other young people).

The damage inflicted by bullying must not be under-estimated; it can cause considerable distress, affect the young person’s health and development and cause significant harm. Therefore, staff should also report suspicions or allegations regarding bullying to their line manager who must investigate and possibly invoke the Child Protection procedures.

**FGM (Female Genital Mutilation)**

According to the NHS, FGM is ‘also known as "female circumcision" or "cutting", and by other terms such as sunna, gudniin, halalays, tahur, megrez and khitan, among others. FGM is usually carried out on young girls between infancy and the age of 15, most commonly before puberty starts. It is illegal in the UK and is child abuse. It's very painful and can seriously harm the health of women and girls. It can also cause long-term problems with sex, childbirth and mental health problems.’ <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/female-genital-mutilation-fgm/>

All staff at Education and Skills receive full training on FGM.

**Prevent Duty**

Prevent duty training is mandatory for all staff at Education and Skills. This includes information on radicalisation, extremism and the signs of this taking place with the young people we support and work with.

Prevent duty outlines how to recognise the signs of this taking place, and who to contact to prevent radicalisation. More detail can be found in the companies prevent policy.

**The wider concept of safeguarding**

All staff members working at Education and Skills must also take into consideration the wider concept of safeguarding, and understand that we must safeguard individuals from:

* Child sexual exploitation
* Child criminal exploitation
* Extremism and radicalisation
* Mutilation- Burning, tattooing, physical punishment for cultural or religious practices
* Online safety/Cyber bullying/ Grooming
* Child on child sexual violence
* Forced Marriage
* Sexual Harassment or sexting
* ‘Upskirting’ (Voyeurism)
* Domestic Violence
* Hate crime
* Modern slavery/ trafficking
* Children’s Mental health and wellbeing, and healthy relationships
* Drug spiking
* County lines

Staff are responsible for reporting any of these concerns to the designated safeguarding officer immediately, and discussions regarding any concerns are also held at each assessor monthly 121 meeting.

### Policy expectations

All members of staff working within Company in whatever role will be accountable to this policy, and have a responsibility to take seriously all concerns that come to their attention. The member of staff identifying the concern will, as a matter of professional duty, pass that concern onto the appropriate named members of staff within the related procedures.

Learners or children, who have concerns about other children or the behaviour of adults towards them, can use this policy to ensure that they are taken seriously.

Placement providers and subcontractors must be informed about this policy and deal with any concerns reported to them in line with this policy by contacting the designated member of staff.

Given the company’s commitment to ensuring the welfare of its learners and children, information will be given to staff and learners at induction and in the relevant literature, to outline that commitment. This information must emphasise:

* The legal obligations of the company and of individuals
* The importance of learner and staff concerns being taken seriously
* The need for concerns and action taken to be recorded
* The rules associated with confidentiality and disclosure
* That parents may have to be consulted unless this will cause further harm to the child
* How staff are supported in implementing the procedures

It is recognised that the Company has many diverse groups of learners eg learners with learning difficulties or those who have English as their second language, and the application of this policy will need to be sensitive to their differing needs.

In order to properly assess concerns and take appropriate action it will be necessary to discuss concerns with colleagues and other relevant staff within the company or other related organisations. Legislation makes it clear that it is acceptable to exchange information as long as the information is accurate, adequate, relevant, not excessive, has the necessary consents and is in line with the legal duty to prevent harm to children. This will also comply with the General Data Protection Regulations.

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| Responsibility, support and guidance |

To ensure the implementation of this policy, the following key members of staff have been identified to assist in the process of assessment and decision making.

1. The Designated Staff

* James Hart (Designated Safeguarding officer) is responsible for: supporting and assisting staff and learners who are reporting concerns about learners; liaising with and making referrals to, Children & Young People’s Departments as appropriate. The Designated officer is also responsible for the Company Anti-bullying procedures and the coordination and organisation of the Company internal learner support services.
* The Designated safeguarding officers are responsible for: supporting and assisting staff or students making referrals; receiving and processing concerns related to the behaviour of staff; vetting of staff including undertaking DBS checks; developing the Staff Code of Conduct.
* In the absence of James Hart, concerns should be reported to Steve Martin (Development Director) or Nicola Williams (Head of Quality Assurance) who deputise in his absence.

1. Head of Operations/Team leaders

* Team leaders and managers need to be aware of this policy as all or any staff can consult with them in confidence for advice about how to proceed They also need to ensure all staff have an understanding of this policy.
* Managers and Team leaders need to ensure that they check with all staff members during 121’s if they have any safeguarding concerns, and that the staff are supported to act in accordance with this policy.
* Manager and team leaders need to check safeguarding training and CPD requirements during staffing 121s, ensuring that any training needs are recorded and actioned.

1. All teaching and support staff, visitors and contractors, or other operators working on the company site are responsible for taking any concern or disclosure about the safety of young people seriously and reporting their concerns as per the attached procedures. Tutors also have a responsibility to ensure that the learners have a good understanding for how to protect themselves, how to prevent abuse and where they can go for more support and guidance. This includes being safe online and monitoring IT software/ platforms (more details are located in the Online Safety Policy).
2. All staff must have relevant training for safeguarding and Prevent as stated in their contract of employment and detailed in the CPD policy. This is to ensure that all apprentices are protected effectively by trained staff.

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| Quality and Monitoring |

It is Company policy to ensure that all staff are briefed during their induction, have access to regular training, and that designated personnel have regular contact with consultants and Local Authority Social Care Departments with to ensure that guidelines and procedures meet with nationally agreed recommendations.

The policies and procedures will be examined on an annual basis for accuracy and updated in between if required.

All staff will be notified of any changes and updates to this policy and will be required to keep an updated CPD log including safeguarding updates.

**Additional information:**

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

• Online Safety Policy

• Whistle Blowing Policy

• Bullying and Harassment Policy

• Safer Recruitment Policy

• Prevent Policy

• Modern slavery Policy

• Prevent reporting procedure

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# Child Protection Procedures

**Something happens that worries you …**

Incident or disclosure

**Report from 3rd party e.g. student other member of staff, contractor or member of the public**

Feeling, concern, gut reaction or suspicion

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Report to your Designated Person

Pass information to DSO within same working day

Or if not available or if concern is immediate

Email the DSO & DSLs and record:

Date, times location and details of concern/incident;

names, addresses dates of birth of individuals concerned and/or witnesses;

date and time of referral;

Location and content of any previous and relevant information;

Details of any immediate action eg call an ambulance.

A visitor

**You must…**

**You are…**

Pass information to the deputy DSO within same working day

Gather information within the same working day

A Tutor

A member of the support staff

A contractor other operative working on the Company site

**Keep all copies of documents safe and secure**

Please ask your line manager to whom you should report.

Designated Officer: James Hart

Deputy:

Nicola Williams / Steve Martin