



Absolute Mentoring

## **ABSOLUTE CARE AND MENTORING      CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

- **JANUARY 2024**
- **Next Review Date: September 2024**

**This policy is reviewed annually or following national or local safeguarding changes to policy and procedure throughout the academic year.**

### **Who does this policy apply to?**

The purpose of this document is to assist all staff in safeguarding and protecting children who are at risk of abuse or neglect and to promote their well-being.

It applies to all young people under eighteen placed within our service. Anyone meeting the children in our service or visiting the service must abide by this policy. Everyone working at the service as a member of staff, or volunteer, has a duty to safeguard and protect our children.

This document should be read in conjunction with the following relevant legislation that relates to the safeguarding and protection of children:

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education DfE September 2023**
- **The Children Act 1989 and 2004**
- **Education Act 2002 The Education (Health Standards) (England) Regulations 2003**
- **The Further Education (Providers of Education) (England) (Regulations) 2006**
- **The Children and Families Act 2014**
- **The Domestic Abuse Act 2021**

### **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) Specific Safeguarding Issues:**

- Abuse: physical, emotional, sexual, neglect
- Online safety
- Sharing nudes
- Extra familial harm
- Child criminal exploitation
- County lines
- Gangs and youth violence
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Children who are absent from education for prolonged periods and/or repeated occasions
- Child on child abuse
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Up skirting
- Bullying, including cyberbullying
- Teenage relationship abuse
- Preventing radicalisation
- Domestic abuse/domestic violence
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Children and the courts
- Children with family members in prison
- Homelessness
- Mental health

## **Context**

The content of this policy is applicable to all staff and the managers of Absolute Mentoring.

The directors and staff recognise the contribution it makes to safeguarding children. We recognise that all staff have an active part to play in protecting children from harm. We believe that Absolute Mentoring should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.

## **Our commitment to safeguarding and the protection of children.**

Everyone working in our service shares an objective to help keep children and young people safe by contributing to:

- providing a safe environment for children and young people to learn and develop in our setting.
- identify children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and taking appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both within our service.
- creating an approach to safeguarding through a culture of care where children are listened to, and heard, with the knowledge that their concerns and worries will be acted upon.
- Our service is committed to safeguarding and promoting the well-being of all our children. Each child's welfare is of paramount importance. We recognise that some children may be especially vulnerable to abuse and that their needs are unique to them. We recognise that children who have suffered abuse of any kind or may have suffered neglect at a previous point in their life may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. As a service we are committed to putting the child at the heart of our policies and procedures.
- We recognise that safeguarding concerns do not adhere to our service/home boundaries and that what happens at home and within the wider school environment including on social media, is as relevant as what happens within our service. Behaviour will be challenging at times and we recognise that this may impact on others either directly or indirectly. We will always take a considered and sensitive approach in order that we can support children placed with us.

## **Whistleblowing and Professional Resolution and Escalation**

- Anyone worried about a child must continue to raise the concern until they have a reason not to be worried about the child anymore.
- It is essential that our service expect good practice and professional conduct from ourselves, and others involved in the safeguarding of our children. Staff must be committed to providing a high standard of service and children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff are aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of child protection, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues.
- If there is a concern from within service regarding the owner or operators about how a safeguarding concern is being managed or a safeguarding concern raised have concerns with the way other agencies are managing a safeguarding concern, then we will follow the Cambridgeshire LSCP Professional Resolution Protocol. This allows us to open an honest approach in the best interests of the child.

- **Safeguarding complaints made by a child whilst placed with us.**

Given the small nature of our business and the provision of 121 mentoring services it is vital that the children placed understand how to make a complaint. In this instance they should be able to speak with their parents or key workers within their mainstream school. It remains vital that these lines of communication remain open on a regular basis to facilitate these opportunities for children placed with us are able to speak up and make a complaint if necessary.

- **Child Protection Procedures**

Responsible adults within our service are well placed to observe any physical, emotional or behavioural signs which indicate that a child may be suffering significant harm.

The relationships between staff, children, parents, and the public which foster respect, confidence and trust can lead to disclosures of abuse, and/or school staff being alerted to concerns. All staff will have an awareness of specific safeguarding issues.

It is not the responsibility of the service to investigate welfare concerns or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation. All members of staff, however, have a duty to recognise concerns and maintain an open mind. Accordingly, all concerns regarding the welfare of children will be recorded and discussed with the DSL (Ben Carter) prior to any discussion with parents or with the referring school.

- **Concerns that staff must act on immediately and report:**

- any suspicion that a child is injured, marked, or bruised in a way which is not readily attributable to the expected knocks or scrapes received in play.
- any concerns that a child may be suffering from inadequate care, ill treatment, or emotional maltreatment.
- **Any** concerns that a child is presenting signs or symptoms of abuse or neglect.
- Any significant changes in a child's presentation, including non-attendance.
- **Any** hint or disclosure of abuse from any person.
- Any concerns regarding person(s) who may pose a risk to children (e.g., living in a household with children present).
- Any potential indicators of Child Exploitation, trafficking, criminal exploitation.

### **Supporting the child and partnership with parents**

Our service recognises that the child's welfare is paramount, and that good child protection and safeguarding practice and outcomes rely on a positive, open and honest working partnership with parents. Whilst we may, on a rare occasion, need to make referrals without consultation with parents, we will make every effort to maintain a positive working relationship with them whilst fulfilling our duties to protect any child.

We will also provide a secure, caring, supportive and protective relationship for the child. Children will be given a proper explanation (appropriate to age and understanding) of what action is being taken on their behalf and why. We will endeavour always to preserve the privacy, dignity and right to confidentiality of the child and parents. The DSL will determine which members of staff need to know personal information and what they need to know for the purpose of supporting and protecting the child.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Proprietor It is the responsibility of our Proprietor to ensure that everyone in the setting understands their role in safeguarding children. They are responsible for the strategic overview and to make sure that safeguarding runs through every policy and procedure that operates within the service. The proprietor will ensure that the safeguarding measures reflect the specific needs of the children in our service and consider any additional risks related to this. We do this in conjunction with supporting documentation including:

- staff to read all or parts of the Department for Education statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023.
- the service has an effective Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and procedures in place that are in accordance with local authority guidance and locally agreed inter-agency procedures.
- the service operates safer recruitment procedures and makes sure that all appropriate checks are conducted on staff and volunteers who work with children.
- Online safety policy and procedures are in place and training and support provided for staff and children to ensure that there is a good understanding of child protection issues related to electronic media. Parental engagement forms part of this.
- children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety. This may include covering relevant issues through Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education, and/or where delivered, through Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education.
- they remedy, without delay, any deficiencies or weaknesses regarding child protection arrangements and reflect on incidents, or near misses, to consider lessons learnt.
- They be responsible for consulting with the LA LADO team and /or partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Service Lead.

## **Looked After Children**

Our staff recognise that Looked After Children and Care Leavers are more vulnerable than other children, often having poorer educational outcomes. Therefore, it is important to ensure their wellbeing, safety and welfare as well as help them to reach their potential.

This includes the looked after child who is moving in or out of care. The service will also ensure that care leavers are supported with pathways suitable to them. Regular communication with the child's social worker will be included in the mentoring plan for the child.

## **Online safety**

Young people are increasingly using mobiles phones, tablets, and computers. While mobile devices are a source of fun, entertainment, communication, and education we know that some adults and young people will use these technologies to harm young people. Regular work will be completed around online safety. Further Information can be found at <https://www.internetmatters.org/>

## **Photography and Images**

Absolute Mentoring has taken the decision to not publish any photographs of the young people placed with us for any commercial purposes or uploaded to any social media. However, on occasions we will take photos of work completed, activities etc. in support of projects on which they are working. These photos may be placed in a digital document or uploaded to their weekly academic progress diary / Life story and shared with their key people.

## **Safeguarding Contacts**

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Ben Carter

Cambridgeshire Childrens Services concerns: 0345 0455203

Norfolk Childrens Services: 0344 8008020

To report a professional: [LADO@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@cambridge.gov.uk) 01223 727 967

To report back to the school: Contact SEN lead for each referring school

Police: 999

Police non-emergency: 101