

Safeguarding Policy

September 2024

Updated in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), DfE, 2024

Safeguarding is action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. It also includes vulnerable adults where they are mistreated, neglected or harmed by another person who holds a position of trust. Through the work that Reach for Inclusion participate in, we work directly to deliver services to children and young people, and as part of our work we encounter children and young people who may give rise to concerns or disclose information relevant to safeguarding.

We are committed to ensuring all children and young people's welfare is safeguarded and will therefore take any concerns seriously. This policy and the procedures within it are designed to ensure we safeguard the children we encounter as part of our work. This policy applies to all staff as well as any contractors, it covers children under the age of 18 as well as vulnerable adults.

Safeguarding means:

- Protecting children from abuse and maltreatment
- Preventing harm to children's health or development
- Ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

All children and young people have the same protection regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity and some will be particularly vulnerable, for example, where they are disabled or have special educational needs. We will always seek to work inclusively and actively to combat discrimination.

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, including: The Children Act 1989, United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991, Data Protection Act 2018, Sexual Offences Act 2003, Children Act 2004, Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022, Equality Act 2010 and any other relevant government guidance on safeguarding children.

1. Reporting a safeguarding concern

A safeguarding concern is where you have concerns about a child or vulnerable adults' welfare or believe they are at risk of harm. The key Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL's) for Reach for Inclusion are:

- Jo Garner 07510 063394
- Siobhan Williams 07869 841260

Teachers, Mentors and key support workers are in a unique position to observe children and young people's behaviour over time, and often develop close and trusting relationships with them.

- If you have a safeguarding concern about a child or young person you encounter as part of your work or if a child or young person discloses directly to you, then you must act immediately and speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s).
- Inform the DSL in person and or in writing.
 - Make notes as soon as possible (within the hour, if possible) writing down exactly what was said, using the young person's own words as far as possible.
 - All notes should be timed, dated and signed, with the name printed alongside the signature.
 - Report your logged concern to Reach for Inclusion's Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible, but at the very least, **within the same day**.
- If the DSL deems that a risk is posed, they will report the concern to the young persons' key referrer; Named school / Virtual school link / SEN case worker / social worker on the same day to inform them of the risk.
- The DSL will also inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead of the school where the young person is on role in person and /or in writing on the same day.
- If your concern involves the person working with the young person, report it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- If your concern involves a Designated Safeguarding Lead, you should report your concern to an alternative Safeguarding Lead. See section 2.
- In any case, NSPCC can provide advice: help@nspcc.org.uk / [0808 800 5000](tel:08088005000).



Managing a Disclosure

If a child discloses information relating to safeguarding during a mentoring or support session, you should:

- Let them know that the information cannot be kept confidential but that you will make sure you tell someone who can help.
- Avoid asking any leading questions or offering an opinion on what has happened.
- Record what was said as soon as possible and keep this information secure. Stick to a factual account rather than what you think about it.
- Follow the procedures set out in section 1 on reporting a concern.
- Decide whether the child or young person is at risk of immediate harm and, if so, call the police
- There are keywords that, when used, should be triggers for action, regardless of intent. In the case of violent, sexual, racist or prejudiced language, the least that should happen is a record of the incident, a discussion with the child, and parents/carers/referrers informed, i.e rape, rapist, sexual assault or forced sexual activity.
- Do not force the child to repeat what he/she said in front of another person.
- Following a disclosure, the member of staff should talk immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and complete a written record. The parents/carers should be informed, unless it will place a child at further risk of significant harm.

Remember:

- Not all children may feel ready or know how to tell someone they are being abused
- Listen carefully, take it seriously and be non-judgemental
- Reassure them that they are right to tell and it is not his/her fault
- Negotiate getting help- tell them that you have to pass the concern to someone who is trained to help them
- Afterwards, make careful records of what was said and give to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as is practically possible (always within the same day)
- Maintain confidentiality, only pass information on to the DSL
- If they are in immediate danger call the police and stay with them until the police arrive



2. Whistle-blowing

- If you have concerns about a colleague within Reach for Inclusion or anyone contracted to work for Reach for Inclusion, you should share these immediately with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If the concern involves the DSL, you should contact the **NSPCC** for advice on help@nspcc.org.uk / [0808 800 5000](tel:08088005000).

3. Consent and confidentiality

Before working with a child or young person, appropriate consent will be obtained from the school, referrer, parent, carer or guardian, or the young person themselves.

Unless specifically agreed, children should remain anonymous in all correspondence and all personal data should be kept securely in line with Reach for Inclusion's Data Protection and Security Policy.

4. Training and induction

All staff and contractors will be given this safeguarding policy before working for Reach for Inclusion and will be DBS checked before carrying out work that gives them unsupervised or regular contact with young people or before gaining access to sensitive or personal data.

Designated safeguarding staff will receive designated person training.

Referees for new staff will be asked if there have been any safeguarding concerns about applicants.

Safeguarding training will be provided for staff every 3 years with refreshers every year. Training will cover all relevant issues, including, abuse and neglect, child-on-child abuse, extremism and radicalisation.

A record of DBS disclosure numbers will be held in a secure digital format.



5. Reach for Inclusion Storage of Special Category Personal Data (GDPR Amendment 85)

Reach for Inclusion will keep relevant, adequate, non -excessive personal information about safeguarding concerns that are accurate and up to date for 7 years for Child Protection and Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults.

Reach for Inclusion will also keep records regarding concerns about an adult working with children or vulnerable adults for 10 years (or longer where necessary – see below).

When the retention period finishes, Reach for Inclusion's Safeguarding Lead will securely delete records in the presence of one other member of staff. Safeguarding concerns will be kept electronically in an encrypted file with access only available to the Designated Leads. Access to Safeguarding concern files will only be on a "need to know" basis. A log will be kept of who has access to the confidential files.

Information about child protection/adult safeguarding concerns and referrals are kept in a separate safeguarding file for each child/young person/vulnerable adult.

Reach for Inclusion will keep a record of concerns that were raised about a child or vulnerable adult's welfare that have not been shared with the police and/or social care.

6. Managing allegations against staff or volunteers

All allegations of abuse of children by those who work with children (whether in a paid or unpaid capacity) must be taken seriously.

The management of allegations should be seen in the wider context of safer employment practices, which has three essential elements:

- Safer recruitment and selection practices
- Safer working practices
- Management of allegations or concerns

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is involved in the management and oversight of allegations against people who work with children. This applies to allegations against paid and unpaid workers, volunteers, casual and agency workers or anyone self-employed. The LADO is involved from the initial phase of the allegation through to the conclusion of the case.



Working Together to Safeguard Children Guidance 2018 (page 60) states:

‘An allegation may relate to a person who works with children who has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children’

The regional procedure [1.14 Allegations against Staff or Volunteers](#) describes what action should be taken if the above criteria is met. (Regional Child Protection Procedures for West Midlands)

All allegations that meet the criteria must be reported to the LADO by contacting the First Point of Contact (FPOC) on 03456 789021.

7. Recording concerns about adult behaviour

Reach for Inclusion will keep clear and comprehensive records of all allegations made against adults working or volunteering with children or vulnerable adults, including; what the allegations were; how the allegations were followed up; how things were resolved; any action taken; and decisions reached about the person’s suitability to work with children and vulnerable adults.

Keeping these records will enable Reach for Inclusion to give accurate information if ever asked for it. For example: in response to future requests for a reference; if a future employer asks for clarification about information disclosed as part of a disclosing and barring check; or if allegations resurface after a period of time.

If concerns have been raised about an adult’s behaviour around children or vulnerable adults, Reach for Inclusion will keep the records in their personnel file either until they reach normal retirement age or for 10 years – whichever is longer (IRMS, 2016). Reach for Inclusion will keep records for the same amount of time regardless of whether the allegations were unfounded. However, if Reach for Inclusion finds that allegations are malicious the records will be destroyed immediately.

Information will be kept for this length of time even if the person stops working for Reach for Inclusion. In some cases, records can be kept for longer periods of time. For example, if: the records provide information about a child/ vulnerable adult’s personal history, which they might want to access at a later date; the records have been maintained for the



purposes of research; the information in the records is relevant to legal action that has been started but not finished; or the records have been archived for historical purposes (for example if the records are relevant to legal proceedings involving the organisation).

Where there are legal proceedings, Reach for Inclusion will seek legal advice about how long to retain the records.

8. Safer recruitment and selection of staff

With regard to the recruitment of staff, Reach for Inclusion follows the relevant policies and procedures in this policy and those in DfE guidance.

Reach for Inclusion is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

The successful applicant will be subject to an enhanced disclosure from the DBS.

The recruitment process is robust in seeking to establish the commitment of candidates to support Reach for Inclusion's measures to safeguard children and to deter, reject or identify people who might pose a risk to children or are otherwise unsuited to work with them.

9. Reviewing Safeguarding Policies (Including retention, storage and destruction of records)

Reach for Inclusion will review retention and storage arrangements of Child Protection and Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults records regularly to make sure it is effective and continues to comply with current legislation and guidance. This will be carried out as part of a wider review of Reach for Inclusion's safeguarding policies and procedures.

This Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed annually.

Key Contacts

Contact	Telephone	Email
First Point of Contact (FPOC)	0345 678 9021	
LADO – Ellie Jones	0345 678 9021	lado@shropshire.gov.uk
NSPCC	0808 800 5000	help@nspcc.org.uk
Shropshire Virtual School	01743 250 124	virtualschool@shropshire.gov.uk
Shropshire SEN Team	01743 254267	senteam@shropshire.gov.uk



Reach for Inclusion
Specialist SEND support



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Signed:	
Siobhan Williams	<i>S Williams</i>
Jo Garner	<i>J. Garner</i>