

Safeguarding Policy

Welcome Skills Limited fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding. The designated person who is responsible for Safeguarding is Waseem Sherwani wsherwani@welcomeskills.com. He can be contacted 24/7 on 0790416324. The deputy designated Safeguarding lead is Carol Greenham. She can be contacted on 07719 645800.

Our policy applies to all learners of whatever age, staff and volunteers working in the organisation. There are four main elements to our policy:

- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with our learners.
- Raising awareness of safeguarding issues and equipping our learners with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Establishing a safe environment in which our learners can learn and develop.

We recognise that because of the day-to-day contact with our learners, WS staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. WS will therefore:

- establish and maintain an environment where our learners feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to;
- ensure our learners know that there are adults in the organisation whom they can approach if they are worried;
- include opportunities in the curriculum for our learners to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

We will follow the procedures set out by the Area Child Protection Committee or Local Safeguarding Children Board and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education and Skills to:

- ensure we have a designated senior person for safeguarding who has received appropriate training and support for this role;
- ensure every member of staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) knows the name of the designated senior person responsible for safeguarding and their role;
- ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for safeguarding;
- notify social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a child/young person who is on the child protection register;
- develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding safeguarding matters including attendance at case conferences;
- keep written records of concerns about our learners, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.

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It is important that learners are protected from abuse. All complaints, allegations or suspicions must be taken seriously. This procedure must be followed whenever an allegation is made that a learner has been abused or when there is a suspicion that a learner has been abused.

Promises of confidentiality cannot be given as situations of child prosecution will need to be shared. The matter may develop in such a way that these cannot be honoured. If you suspect that a learner is going to discuss abuse, either towards themselves or another young person, establish ground rules concerning confidentiality. This information may have to be shared with a team leader or nominated person for child protection. The Children and Young Persons Directorate will have to be contacted in order to discuss appropriate action.

Note: It is important to convey that the Children and Young Persons Directorate will need to assess the situation and would want to work with the young person in determining what could/should happen next. They would wish to respect the young person's wishes and feelings provided no one is at immediate risk of harm. If the learner is fully aware of what could happen, they can:

- choose whether they want to speak now or have time to think about it;
- be as informed as possible regarding the implications of passing on this Information.

If the complainant is the learner him/herself, questions should be kept to the minimum necessary to understand what is being alleged. Leading questions must be avoided as the use of leading questions can cause problems for the subsequent investigation and any court proceedings. A full record shall be made as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation and any other relevant information including:

- The date
- The time
- The place where the disclosure of information took place
- The place where the alleged abuse happened
- Your name and the names of others present
- The name of the complainant and, where different, the name of the child who has allegedly been abused
- The nature of the alleged abuse
- A description of any injuries observed
- The account which has been given of the allegation

Some learners with learning difficulties may need specialist workers with skills in working with such learners, e.g. in the way their physical/mental condition might mask possible abuse. Particular attention may have to be given to learners with speech impediments as these can make communication difficult. As a general rule, disabled learners are more vulnerable than other learners.

The nominated member of staff with responsibility for child protection is the Director OF Curriculum Development.

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Responding to an allegation

Any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse must be reported to the nominated member of staff with responsibility for child protection as soon as possible and in any event within 2 hours. If this is not possible, a member of the Senior Management Team must be notified. The nominated member of staff must immediately discuss the matter with Social Services to determine whether it is a child protection matter. (NB: The Children and Young Persons Directorate is responsible for coordinating action in child abuse cases, including liaison with police).

If it is agreed to be a child protection matter, a written record of the date and time of the report shall be made and the report must include the name and position of the person to whom the matter is reported. The telephone report must be confirmed in writing to the local authority Children and Young Persons Directorate within 24 hours. If the consent has not been gained from the young person/parent, the nominated member of staff should discuss with the Children and Young Persons Directorate what action would be taken to inform the parents of the child and a note of that conversation should be made.

Allegations about a member of staff

Any suspicions, allegations or actual abuse of a learner by a member of staff must be reported to the Director of Curriculum Development as soon as possible. If within 2 hours of the initial concern arising it has not been possible to contact the Director, the matter must be reported to another Director.

On being notified of any such matter, the Director of Curriculum Development shall:

- initiate an investigation of this incident in line with the disciplinary procedure;
- take such steps as he/she considers necessary to ensure the safety of the learner in question and any other learner who might be at risk;
- report the matter to the local Safeguarding Children's Service in accordance with the procedure set out previously;
- ensure that a report of the matter as set out in above is completed by the person who reported the original concern.

If the Director of Curriculum Development is the subject of the allegation or complaint, the matter must be reported to a member of the Board of Directors.

Written records

The nominated member of staff shall retain a copy of:

- the report
- any notes, memoranda or correspondence dealing with the matter
- any other relevant material

Copies of reports, notes etc. should be kept securely locked at all times.

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Annex 1

Definitions of abuse

A person may cause abuse or neglect by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. People may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocation, or otherwise causing physical harm.

Bullying, Cyber bullying and Emotional Abuse

Categories of Emotional abuse also include abuse through cyber bullying that can occur via the Internet, chat rooms, or social media and on both computers and smart phones.

Emotional abuse is persistent emotional ill treatment such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on a person's emotional development. It may involve conveying to people that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on people. It may involve causing people frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of learners.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of people, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involved forcing or enticing someone to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include noncontact activities such as involving people in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging learners to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet someone's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of a person's health or development. It may involve a parent failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect someone from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a person's basic emotional needs.

Significant Harm

Sometimes, a single traumatic event may constitute significant harm, e.g. violent assault, suffocation or poisoning. More often, significant harm is a compilation of significant events,

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both acute and longstanding, which interrupt, change or damage a person's physical and psychological development.

Upskirting is now a criminal offence and any offence reported.

Telephone numbers:

- Social Services (High Wycombe) 01494 811100
- Social Services (Slough) 01753 690400
- Police Child Abuse Investigation Team: 0208 246 1901

Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers

Always remember that while you are at work, you are in a position of trust and your responsibilities to the learners and the organisation must be uppermost in your mind at all times.

Never use any kind of physical punishment or chastisement such as smacking or hitting.

Do not smoke in front of any child or young person.

Do not use unprescribed drugs or be under the influence of alcohol.

Never behave in a way that frightens or demeans anyone.

Do not use any racist, sexist, discriminatory or offensive language.

Generally you should not give learners presents or personal items. If a gift were to be given, it should come from the organisation and be agreed with the named person for safeguarding and if appropriate, the learner's parent/guardian. Similarly do not accept gifts yourself other than small tokens for appropriate celebrations, which you should mention to the Director.

You should not invite a learner to your home or arrange to see them outside the set activity times.

You should not engage in any sexual activity (this would include using sexualised language) with a learner you meet through your duties or start a personal relationship with them, this would be an abuse of trust.

Exercise caution about being alone with a learner. In situations where this may be needed (for example where a learner wants to speak in private) think about ways of making this seem less secret for example by telling another worker or volunteer what you are doing and where you are, leaving a door ajar, being in earshot of others and lastly note the conversation in the log.

Physical contact should be discouraged.

Do talk explicitly to learners about their right to be kept safe from harm.

Do listen to learners and take every opportunity to raise their self-esteem.

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Do work as a team with your co-workers/volunteers. Agree with them what behaviour you expect from learners and be consistent in enforcing it.

If you have to speak to a learner about their behaviour remember you are challenging 'what they did' not 'who they are'.

Do make sure you have read and understand the safeguarding procedure and that you feel confident that you know how to recognise when a learner may be suffering harm, how to handle any disclosure and how to report any concerns.

Do seek advice and support from your colleagues or supervisors and your designated person for safeguarding.

Do be clear with anyone disclosing any matter that could concern the safety and well being of a learner that you cannot guarantee to keep this information to yourself.

Do seek opportunities for training such as that available through the Local Safeguarding Children Board

Safeguarding Statement

Welcome Skills Limited is committed to safeguarding the welfare of its learners and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

We believe every learner should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that learners we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm.

We want learners who use or have contact with this organisation to enjoy what we have to offer in safety.

We will achieve this by having an effective safeguarding procedure following National and Local guidance.

If we discover or suspect a learner is suffering harm we will notify social services or the police in order that they can be protected if necessary.

The safeguarding policy and procedures apply to all staff, volunteers and users of Welcome Skills Limited and anyone carrying out any work for us or using our premises.

We will review our safeguarding policy and procedures at least every 2 years to make sure they are still relevant and effective.

Resources

First Check: published 2002, London NSPCC

A clear step-by-step guide to the action that organisations need to take to safeguard children. Includes sample documents and a section on audit.

Working Together: a guide to inter agency arrangements to protect children.

Guidance on Safeguarding Children, also available to view or download on the DoH website in the publications section

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Working together to safeguard children; a guide to inter agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Published by the Department of Health, 30.12.1999. www.doh.gov.uk/publications

What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused
www.doh.gov.uk/safeguardingchildren/index.htm

London Child Protection Procedures
Published by the London Child Protection Committee, available on their website under library: www.londoncpc.gov.uk

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2019 September 2019
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

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