



Safeguarding Policy & Procedure

Aims

Skills North East is committed to:

- Ensuring that the welfare of adults is paramount at all times
- Maximising people's choice, control and inclusion and protecting their human rights
- Working in partnership with others in order to safeguarding vulnerable adults
- Ensuring safe and effective working practices are in place.
- Supporting staff and learners within the organisation.

Skills North East aims to adopt the highest possible standards to ensure the safety and welfare of all learners and staff.

For the purpose of this policy and procedures, children are any persons up to the age of 18 years.

An adult at risk is a person who is over the age of 18 years who is or may be in need of advisory services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, and may be unable to take care of him or herself or unable to protect him or herself from significant harm or serious exploitation.

An adult at risk may be a person who:

- has a physical or sensory disability
- is physically frail or has a chronic illness has a mental illness or dementia
- has a learning difficulty
- misuses drugs and/or alcohol
- has social and/or emotional issues exhibits challenging behaviours

Statutory guidance and legislation differs in relation to working with these two groups (children and adults at risk). Practitioners are familiar with the differences if they are working across the age groups and take advice from the DSPO, when appropriate.

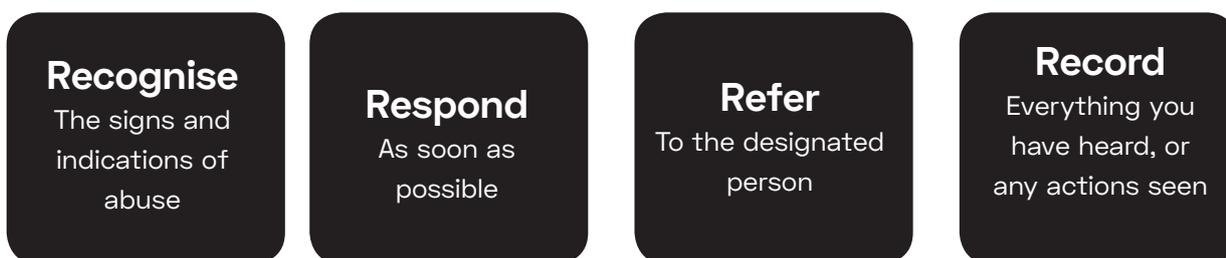
This policy applies to all staff who work with children and young people (in the context of safeguarding, a child or young person is anyone under the age of 18) and Vulnerable Adults (i.e. as defined by section 59 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and/or those persons aged over 18 who by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness are or may be unable to take care of themselves or are or may be unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation) whom **Skills North East Limited** encounters through its teaching and learning activities. This policy has been written in line with this act alongside 'Keeping children safe in education, 2016' and is in place to ensure that:

- Young people and vulnerable adults are protected from harm and abuse
- Staff know what to do if they are worried or have concerns
- Everyone is responsible for safeguarding
- Learners and staff feel safe

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following guidelines:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education; Disqualification (HMG September 2018)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HMG July 2018)
- What To do if You Are Worried a Child is being Abused (HMG March 2015)
- Information Sharing (HMG July 2018)
- The Children Act 1989; Children Act 2004
- The Education Act 2002; Education and Inspections Act 2006
- SNE operates a culture of openness and transparency and embeds the principles of the 4 Rs across all our services, ensuring that all staff, volunteers and contractors understand their responsibilities with regard to safeguarding.

The 4 Rs



The following policies demonstrate and support Skills North East’s shared commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its stakeholders:

- Bullying and Harassment
- Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing)
- Code of Conduct Disciplinary
- Grievance
- Data Protection
- Complaints
- Equality and Diversity
- Health and Safety
- IT Security and Information Policies

Lead Designated Safeguarding and Prevent Officers

Name	Role	Location	Contact Details
Donna Allison	Lead Designated Safeguarding and Prevent Officer	HQ Annitsford	0191 2504590
Sarah Thompson	Designated Safeguarding and Prevent Officer	HQ Annitsford	0191 2504590

If you have any concerns, contact the officers or use the email below.
Learners should be made aware of this email address.

SNE’s Safeguarding E-mail Address: safeguarding@sne.org.uk

For Children and Young People

Childline	0800 1111
Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP)	0870 000 3344 http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk
NSPCC Helpline	0808 800 5000 https://www.nspcc.org.uk
NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline	0800 028 0285 help@nspcc.org.uk
Internet Watch Foundation	https://www.iwf.org.uk
Social Care link for Safeguarding Concerns	https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council

The need to refer allegations or concerns about possible risk posed by staff, volunteers or contractors to the Designated Local Authority Person (formerly LADO) is a requirement, as detailed in the government guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015).

Note: *If you suspect child trafficking is taking place, the Lead DSO must be informed immediately and they will contact GEOP to implement urgent steps to protect the child/ children in question.*

Whilst the local authority and institution have primary duties in respect of safeguarding, the Secretary of State (SoS) has a general duty to promote the wellbeing of children in England under section 7 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008.

ESFA's role therefore, is to provide assurance to the SoS, in meeting her general duty, that the right organisations are taking action to keep all pupils and students safe.

Skills North East must inform ESFA if we are subject of an investigation by the local authority or the police relating to funded learners. In such circumstances the Chief Executive of Skills North East (or senior designated safeguarding lead) to email enquiries.EFA@education.gov.uk

ESFA will need to know the name of the institution, the nature of the incident and confirmation that it is or is scheduled to be investigated by the local authority and/or the police. If a referral has been made to the Disclosure and Barring Service Skills North East are required to inform the ESFA.

Definition of Safeguarding

In relation to children and young people, safeguarding and promoting their welfare is defined in 'Working together to safeguard children' as:

- Protecting young people from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of young people's health or development
- Taking action to enable all young people to have the best outcomes

The policy is put in place to safeguard against abuse which may be:

Neglect - a lack of care, for example insufficient food, medication not given, lack of access for personal hygiene

Physical abuse - the use of force resulting in pain or injury, for example by hitting, shaking or burning or by female genital mutilation

Sexual abuse - the involvement in sexual activity which is unwanted or not understood or with a minor. This could be forced marriage, child sexual exploitation, harassment, teasing or innuendo.

Emotional abuse - behaviour which has a harmful effect on emotional health and development, for example insults, threats, humiliation, all kinds of hate crime, bullying (including cyber bullying) and includes unreasonable exertion of influence over an individual.

Financial abuse - use of a person’s income or assets without their informed consent, for example taking money or possessions, fraud

Discriminatory - abuse motivated by discriminatory attitudes, for example towards race, religion, culture, gender, disability, sexual orientation

Institutional - accepted working practices or procedures of a service have an abusive effect on some or all users of that service, for example lack of privacy or supervision, lack of choice and consideration

Extremism - vocal or active opposition to the British values of “democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs”.

Sexual Exploitation - occurs when a child or young person, or another person, receives “something” (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of the child/young person performing sexual activities, or another person performing sexual activities on the child/young person.

Grooming, including online grooming - occurs when someone builds an emotional connection with another person to gain their trust for the purposes of future sexual abuse or other exploitation.

Modern Slavery - Examples include: forced labour, debt bondage, sexual or criminal exploitation, domestic servitude and trafficking. Under the Modern Slavery Act 2015, we are required to ensure we do not have any aspect of modern slavery within our own organisation and within our supply chain, as such, we have to issue a statement, published on our website, which clearly reflects the actions we have taken to prevent and ensure this.

These procedures apply to online abuse including engaging in abuse through social media. They apply to e-safety and the acceptable use of technology using fixed and mobile devices to connect to the internet, whether supplied by Skills North East or the learner and whether using Skills North East internet or accessing the public Wi-Fi.

Some key legislation behind this is: **Human Rights Act 1988, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, Children Acts 1989 and 2004, The Equality Act 2010, The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012**

Abuse is the violation of an individual’s human rights by another individual or individuals and/ or the undue exercise of influence or power over a vulnerable person, taking into account the capacity of that person to make their own decisions about the choices available to them

Abusers can be:

- Relations or friends
- Members of staff
- Other learners
- Members of the public
- Learners themselves (self harm)

Safeguarding is not just about protecting children, young people and/or vulnerable adults, from deliberate harm, neglect and failure to act. It relates to broader aspects of care and education, including:

- Learners health and safety and well-being
- The use of reasonable force
- Meeting the needs of learners with medical conditions
- Providing first aid
- Intimate care and emotional well-being
- Online safety and associated issues
- Appropriate arrangements to ensure learners security, taking into account the local context

Expectations

All staff will:

- Be familiar with this safeguarding policy
- Be subject to Safer Recruitment processes and checks, whether they are new staff, or Associates
- Be alert to signs and indicators of possible abuse
- Record concerns and contact one of the Designated Safeguarding team
- Deal with a disclosure of abuse from a learner by informing one of the Designated Safeguarding team immediately, and providing a written account using the Safeguarding Investigation Form
- All staff will receive safeguarding training at intervals of no more than three years. The designated safeguarding team will be trained in their role and undertake more regular and specialist safeguarding training/updates annually.

Responsibilities

Skills North East fully recognises its responsibilities to safeguard, protect and promote the welfare of all. Skills North East will ensure that:

- A Designated Safeguarding Lead will oversee this policy and champion protection issues,

- raise awareness and promote the welfare of all students
- Procedures are in place for reporting and dealing with allegations of abuse or incidents where learners have felt unsafe
- The Designated Safeguarding Leads will receive appropriate training to assist with the above duties
- All staff will receive appropriate training

Designated Safeguarding Team

Skills North East managers undertake the role of ensuring learners are safeguarded, and are the Designated Safeguarding Team. The team consists of the Quality Director and Operations Manager.

Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Team:

- The Designated Safeguarding team are the first point of contact for all staff and associates to go to for advice if they are concerned about young people and/or vulnerable adults
- Have a higher level of safeguarding training and knowledge than the rest of the staff and this is updated every year
- They are responsible for ensuring that the safeguarding policy is kept up to date and reviewed every year
- They operate a safer recruitment procedure and ensures that appropriate checks are carried out on all new staff and associates
- They assess information from staff regarding concerns about young people and/or vulnerable adults, make decisions about whether staff concerns are sufficient enough to notify Children's or Adults Social Work Services or whether other courses of action are more appropriate
- They ensure that concerns are logged and stored securely
- They have responsibility to ensure that the organisation's safeguarding policy and related policies and procedures are followed and regularly updated
- They are responsible for promoting a safe environment for young people and/or vulnerable

adults

- They know the contact details of relevant statutory agencies e.g. Young Person Referral Assessment Team Police, Local Safeguarding Children Board, and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for allegations against staff
- They must ensure that staff are aware of this policy and the associated procedures, identifying any appropriate training that staff may require
- Staff and associates are trained in Safeguarding and Prevent Duty responsibilities
- Skills North East has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff/ associates
- Information will be dealt with in a confidential manner. Staff will be informed of relevant details on a need to know basis when the Designated Safeguarding Lead feels their having knowledge of a situation is relevant and appropriate. A written record will be made of what information has been shared with whom, when and why
- Safeguarding records will be stored securely in a central place. Access to these records by staff other than by the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be restricted
- Skills North East will not disclose to a parent, other relative or carer any information held on a child or vulnerable adult if this would put the child or vulnerable adult at risk of significant harm.

It is not the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Team to decide whether young people and/or vulnerable adults have been abused or not, that is the responsibility of investigative statutory agencies such as Children's Social Work Services, Adult Social Services or the police.

However, keeping young people and/or vulnerable adults safe is everybody's business and all staff should know who to go to and how to report any concerns they may have about children, young people and/or vulnerable adults being harmed or at risk of being harmed.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility within Skills North East to ensure that young people and/or vulnerable adults are safe.

Staff must ensure they have the knowledge to identify Safeguarding Issues, who to go to, and how to report any concerns they may have about young people and/or vulnerable adults being harmed or at risk of being harmed.

All staff will

- Receive Safeguarding on induction
- Will have their Safeguarding training topped up every three years
- Will be kept up to date on safeguarding through email or blogs
- All staff are responsible for complying with Skills North East DBS requirements (enhanced

checks reviewed every 3 years) and Data Protection requirements and familiarising themselves with implementing safeguarding procedures.

Reporting abuse

If you suspect abuse:

- If someone discloses something, listen and be sympathetic. Do not be judgemental or make any promises that you might not be able to keep, particularly do not promise not to tell. You cannot keep this kind of information confidential
- Do not ask leading questions or start to investigate
- Report the disclosure, allegation or concern to a Designated Safeguarding Officer without delay
- If after consultation the Safeguarding Officer decides not to alert Social Services, they must document the reasons and identify the action to be taken instead
- If you feel that you are not able to share information with a designated person within Skills North East, as you believe that they are implicated or colluding with the alleged abuse, you should, in the first instance, follow Skills North East's 'Whistleblowing Policy'

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An accurate record, using the Skills North East Safeguarding Investigation form should be made at the time giving details of the allegation or grounds for suspecting abuse has occurred, including:

- Date and time of the incident
- Details of what you observed
- What the learner has said about the abuse and how it occurred, or what has been reported to you. Use the actual words, rather than paraphrasing what has been said
- The appearance and behaviour of the learner
- Any injuries observed

When a Safeguarding Alert has been made, Social Services will decide whether the alert should be accepted as a safeguarding referral. If the decision is not to accept the alert you will be informed of the decision and the reason:

- Considering all the information available, the designated person will decide on the next steps, which may include taking no further action or continuing to monitor the situation.
- Where the designated person decides that further action is necessary, this may include:
 - Seeking further advice from Social Services
 - Seeking further advice from another agency working with the vulnerable adult
 - Reporting the matter to the police if a crime is suspected

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- Seeking further advice from another agency working with the vulnerable adult
- Reporting the matter to the police if a crime is suspected

Confidentiality

Confidentiality and trust should be maintained as far as possible, but staff must act on the basis that the safety of the vulnerable adult is the overriding concern. The degree of confidentiality will be governed by the need to protect the vulnerable adult and any other adult

who may be vulnerable to the same abuse. The vulnerable adult should be informed at the earliest possible stage of the disclosure that the information will be passed on.

Skills North East notes that the Data Protection Act 1998 allows for disclosure of personal data where this is necessary to protect the vital interests of a vulnerable adult in accordance with the Information Sharing Protocol.

Whatever happens, staff should always be open and honest with the learner if they intend to take the case further unless the assessment of risk suggests the learner is in immediate danger.

Staff Responsibilities

All Skills North East staff must implement the Skills North East Safeguarding Adults policy and procedure at all times.

Staff should never do things for a vulnerable adult that they can do for themselves. It is not normally appropriate and acceptable to restrain students except in extreme circumstances to prevent serious harm. We suggest staff call for help and support, including to the emergency services if necessary.

Learners should not be transported by a member of Skills North East staff unless in exceptional circumstances e.g. illness. Where circumstances require the transportation of a learner, another member of staff must travel in the vehicle.

Safeguarding Procedures for Children and Young People

Abuse of children and young people

If anything should arise which causes a member of staff to believe that a child or young person has been or is at risk of significant harm or abuse, it is their responsibility to report it to a Designated Safeguarding Officer. Even if staff have only heard rumours of abuse, or have a suspicion but do not have firm evidence, they should still contact the designated person to discuss their concerns.

Record it as accurately as is possible. The child or young person should not be asked any 'leading' questions, but should be allowed to disclose whatever they may want to. They

should also be made aware that the information may need to be passed on in confidence and who it will be passed on to. The report should be signed, dated and immediately given to the Designated Safeguarding Team.

Considering all the information available, the Designated Safeguarding Officer will decide on the next steps, which may include taking no further action, monitoring the situation or making a referral.

Reporting of female genital mutilation and sexting

Skills North East is aware of the mandatory reporting requirement in respect of female genital mutilation. When a member of staff discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl aged under 18, that member of staff has a statutory duty to report it to the police. When a member of staff has reasons to suspect that an act of FGM has been carried out on a learner they must discuss the situation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who may consult children's social care before a decision is made as to whether the mandatory reporting duty applies.

Skills North East is also aware that sexting is illegal, and any instances should be reported.

Responding to an allegation about a member of staff

This procedure should be used in any case in which it is alleged that a member of staff or volunteer has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a learner or may have harmed a learner
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a learner or
- Behaved in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with young people or vulnerable adults
- Although it is an uncomfortable thought, it needs to be acknowledged that there is the potential for staff to abuse.

Any member of Skills North East staff who is accused or suspected of mistreating a young person is advised to:

- Contact their union representative
- Keep records of all conversations, meetings attended, letters received and telephone calls relating to the allegation.

Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (HMG 2018)

All learners could potentially be at risk.

This policy should not be used to discourage learning activities; it supports the engagement of a diverse range of students. This policy creates a framework that ensures staff protect all learners and keep them safe when within the care of Skills North East.

It is the responsibility of everyone within Skills North East to record and report any concerns they have immediately. Whatever your role, if you see, hear or know something that concerns you, and suspect that anyone is at risk of being harmed or abused, you must report what you know immediately. Doing nothing is not an option.

While it is not possible to ensure that learners would never come to any harm, the adoption of this policy, associated guidelines and code of practice aims to facilitate the management of the risk associated with the duty to protect all students.

Other related policies, procedures and guidance documents:

- Anti Radicalisation Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Health & Safety Policy

Safer Recruitment

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure Skills North East operates a safe recruitment policy in line with company procedures.

Where services or activities are provided separately by another agency Skills North East will require assurance that the agency concerned has policies and procedures in place for safeguarding all learners which are compatible with this policy and procedure and there are arrangements in place to liaise with Skills North East on these matters.

Prevention

We will ensure that all learners are aware of our safeguarding procedure and receive a copy of our Learner Handbook that outlines safeguarding contact numbers. Learners will all receive a thorough induction that explores safeguarding, including what they can do to report occurrences.

All staff will receive a thorough induction and training relating to safeguarding in relation to preventative action, roles and responsibilities as well as reporting mechanisms.

E-Safety

Skills North East understands the importance of providing safe access to the wealth of online information and communication tools available to support teaching and learning.

Skills North East:

- Aims to provide opportunities for all learners to use internet technologies safely as part of their learning activities
- Is aware of its responsibility to educate learners and staff about potential risks of internet use and the mitigations needed to protect themselves online
- All IT equipment is provided and maintained through Skills North East
- Internet users must not use internet facilities to break the law or incite crime
- Internet Users must not gain unauthorised access or make unauthorised modifications to computer material (hacking)
- Internet Users must take all reasonable care not to distribute copyright material in breach of copyright
- Internet Users must take all reasonable care not to distribute defamatory material
- Internet Users must not display, access, use, extract, store, distribute, print, reveal or otherwise process information which contravenes the law
- Staff are issued with a work email address and must use this in any communication with students

