

# **Adult and Community Learning Service Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Guidelines and Procedures Including Prevent Duty**

**“The Adult and Community Learning Service is committed to safeguarding and to the welfare of learners. We expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment”.**

## **1. Position statement**

Adult and Community Learning puts the learner at the centre of service delivery. The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework through which:

- All learners are protected and enabled to thrive and achieve,
- All staff and volunteers are clear about their responsibilities and what procedures to follow

We aim to have a whole service approach to:

- promoting a safe learning environment and a safe open culture,
- ensuring that all learners, staff, volunteers and visitors feel safe and secure,
- assuring everyone that their welfare is a high priority.

This is achieved by being proactive and vigilant, by acknowledging that ‘it could happen here,’ and by ensuring that all safeguarding procedures are fully implemented.

The Service believes that it is unacceptable for a learner to experience harm or abuse of any kind and we accept our responsibility to safeguard all learners. We recognise that:

- the welfare of all learners is paramount,
- all learners, regardless of their race, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, religious belief or identity have a right to equal protection from harm and abuse,
- working together with learners and other agencies is essential in promoting a safe learning environment.

We therefore seek to safeguard all learners by:

- valuing, respecting and listening to learners,
- adopting safeguarding procedures through Service guidelines and the staff code of conduct,
- adopting safe recruitment procedures,
- sharing information about concerns with colleagues and agencies as necessary,
- undertaking risk assessments in relation to specific activities, groups of learners or individuals, wherever these are appropriate,
- involving learners as appropriate.

The Service acts in compliance with the local Safeguarding Adults Board’s (SAB) legal framework for: The Care Act 2014 and The Human Rights Act 1998 as well as The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

The Service will review this policy and our practice annually through our self-assessment process.

## **2. The scope of the policy**

The Service considers that it is very important that children, young people and adults who are defined as 'vulnerable' in legislation are supported and protected. We recognise that we have duties under legislation and County Council policies to respond, refer and record abuse or possible abuse of children, young people and adults. However, the Service goes beyond its statutory obligations by aiming to have fully inclusive and integrated safe practices that apply to all learners and staff.

As a County Council service we adhere to the legal definition of a vulnerable adult as being a *'a person who is 18 years of age or over, and who is or may be in need of community care services by reasons of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him/herself, or unable to protect him/herself against significant harm or serious exploitation'*.

The Service has adopted the broad definition of a vulnerable adult used by Ofsted and NIACE, which also includes:

- people detained in custody,
- people under probation orders,
- people whose particular circumstances make them vulnerable,
- people whose circumstances make them vulnerable at a particular time.

In summary, the Service's position is that it is important to recognise that certain groups of people are particularly vulnerable and are defined in law as such. However, by having fully inclusive and integrated 'safe' practices that apply to all learners and staff, and by creating a safe environment, we aim to ensure that no one is left out.

The Service has designated officers with responsibility for safeguarding who ensures that all appropriate procedures are followed.

## **3. Safer recruitment policy**

The Service adheres to the County Council's recruitment and selection procedures and all staff who may be involved in the process attend corporate training which puts an emphasis on anti-discriminatory practice.

Corporate procedures include:

- standard job description, person specification, shortlisting and interview formats and a standard 'scoring' system,
- standard application forms and no use of CVs,
- evidence of identity, qualifications etc checked at interview,
- standard reference pro forma.

The Service has, in addition, introduced processes to enhance corporate procedures and ensure that safeguarding is prioritised in the recruitment and selection process. We:

- refer to safeguarding responsibilities on job specifications,
- include safeguarding criteria on person specifications,
- include a summary of our safeguarding policy in applicant information packs,
- put a safeguarding statement in job advertisements,
- check gaps or issues on application forms with candidates,

- test attitudes to safeguarding through interview questions,
- for 'regulated' activity' posts, probe motives for wanting to work with children or vulnerable adults at interview,
- discuss criminal convictions history with a candidate who has one,
- insist on two references and scrutinise these thoroughly.

#### **4. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance**

Enhanced DBS clearance is required on all staff in accordance with statutory requirements. Enhanced DBS clearance is required on all staff who may have unsupervised contact with children or vulnerable adults, ie:

- all tutors
- all programme managers
- all Development Workers
- all volunteers

Enhanced DBS clearance with a check against the barred list is required on staff who carry out regulated activity with children or vulnerable adults. This is usually therefore only required for those who work in children's centres or schools. Tutors working with learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are not required to undergo the barred list check as they are not required to carry out regulated activity. Where regulated activity is required in relation to an individual learner, the learner must be accompanied to their class by a carer.

The Service holds a central record of DBS cleared staff and volunteers. This central list shows the recruitment and vetting checks relating to staff identity and criminal records.

In addition, the Service undertakes professional and character reference checks on previous employment history.

We are committed to adhering to any requirements for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and follow the guidance of the County Council whose Human Resources section processes DBS and other clearances in accordance with statutory requirements.

#### **5. What to do if you Notice Abuse (see appendix 1 & 2 for common indicators of abuse)**

5.1 You may become aware of potential abuse in two main ways:

5.2 You may observe signs in a learner that lead you to suspect that they have been physically, emotionally, or sexually abused, or suffer severe neglect, or are becoming radicalised; or in addition in the case of a vulnerable adult, they may be experiencing financial, discriminatory or institutional abuse.

5.3 The tables below (appendix 1 & 2) give examples that may indicate that an individual is being abused. In addition to these a person may be being abused by virtue of their race, gender, age, disability or sexual orientation which would indicate discriminatory abuse. Similarly, any of the examples listed may be an indication of institutional abuse if the individual is in receipt of organised care.

The learners themselves may disclose to you that they have been abused.

5.4 If a learner discloses to you that they (or indeed another child/young person or vulnerable adult) have been, or are being abused/radicalised

#### DO

- Do listen very carefully to what they tell you.
- Do take what is said seriously and accept what you are told.
- Do stay calm and reassure the learner that they have done the right thing in talking to you.
- Do write down as soon as you can exactly what you have been told.
- Do tell them that you must pass this information on but that only those that need to know will be told. Tell them to whom you will report the matter.

#### DO NOT

- Do not panic.
- Do not promise to keep things secret. You have a duty to refer a child/young person or vulnerable adult who is at risk.
- Do not lie or say that everything will be fine now that they have told.
- Do not criticise the abuser, especially if it is a parent/carer
- Do not ask lots of detailed or leading questions such as: 'What did he do next?' Instead, ask open questions such as: 'Anything else to tell me?', 'Yes', or 'And...?'. Do not press for answers the learner is unwilling to give.

It is important that the person to whom disclosure is made does not investigate or question the person concerned except to clarify what they have heard. This is particularly important in cases of sexual abuse.

5.5 It is very important to record, as accurately as possible, what was said to you when you received the disclosure of abuse. Clearly all written records should be handled confidentially.

5.6 *If a child/young person or vulnerable adult discloses to you that they or another child have been abused/radicalised, or if you suspect from what you observe that they are being abused, you MUST REPORT THIS.*

## 5. Safeguarding children – procedure

The Service follows the County Council's procedures for safeguarding children.

1. If you have concerns or suspect abuse or neglect, you should report your concern or ask advice by contacting:
  - Janet Dawson on 07557005984 or Richard Heath on 07557005985 during office hours, or
2. The Safeguarding Children Emergency Duty Team on 01926 414144
3. In urgent situations call the police on 999 immediately
4. Confidentiality must be maintained and information shared strictly on a need to know basis.

## **6. Safeguarding vulnerable adults – procedure**

The Service follows the County Council's procedures for safeguarding vulnerable adults. The procedure for reporting abuse or suspected abuse is as follows:

1. Ensure the person is safeguarded from immediate harm.
2. Be mindful about alerting the alleged perpetrator. This may give them the opportunity to further intimidate or conceal evidence.
3. Contact Janet Dawson on 07557005984 or Richard Heath on 07557005985 the Adult Social Care team on 01926 412080. You must inform Janet Dawson on 01926 738990 or Richard Heath on 01926 738992, that the referral has been made.
4. In urgent situations call the police on 999 immediately.
5. Confidentiality must be maintained, and information shared strictly on a need to know basis.

## **7. Other safeguarding issues – procedure**

The procedure for reporting a safeguarding concern which falls outside our statutory duty is as follows:

1. If the concern relates to an adult experiencing domestic violence you should contact Janet Dawson on 07557 005984 or Richard Heath on 07557005985 to discuss the concern.
2. If Janet Dawson or Richard Heath are not available, you should use your judgment about the seriousness of the issue. It is usually inappropriate to take action, and the intervention of an outsider can put a vulnerable person at greater risk. The most appropriate action to support a learner who is experiencing domestic abuse is to give him/her information about local support services.
3. If it is an emergency situation you should contact Janet Dawson on 07557 005984 or Richard Heath on 07557 005985 for advice.
4. If the victim of domestic violence is under 18 you must follow the Safeguarding Children reporting procedure above.
5. If the concern relates to e-safety it must be referred to Richard Heath on 01926738992 Richard will provide advice or take action, with reference to the other designated officer if necessary.
6. In relation to any other concern, you must contact your line manager and a decision will be made as to whether any action needs to be taken, in consultation with the designated officer.
7. The designated officer will make a prompt assessment of the issue and if necessary refer the issue to the appropriate agency.
8. Concerns that a child, young person or vulnerable adult might be at risk of significant harm will be made to the County Council's Department of Children and Young People's Services, the County Council Adult Social Care Service, the police or, in cases of radicalisation, to the Channel Scheme as appropriate.
9. If a referral is not necessary the designated officer will advise on the appropriate course of action.
10. The designated officer will monitor the situation if necessary and ensure that support is in place for the learner.

11. In respect of safeguarding individuals from radicalisation, the Service works to the Prevent element of the Government's Counter Terrorism Strategy, and where deemed appropriate, seeks external support for learners through referrals to the Channel Programme. This programme aims to work with the individual to address their specific vulnerabilities, prevent them becoming further radicalised and possibly entering the criminal justice system because of their actions. It is recognised that radicalisation can occur to an individual from any section of society and is not particular to any racial, ethnic or social group. It is further recognised that in many instances the process of radicalisation is essentially one of grooming by others.
12. Confidentiality must be maintained and information shared strictly on a need-to-know basis.
13. The Designated Officer will record all referrals and issues raised for reference purposes on a safeguarding log.

## **8. Equality and Diversity**

The Service places high value on promoting equality and diversity and being proactive with regards to anti-discriminatory practice: We are committed to:

- working with learners in an open and honest way,
- providing support and adjustments if a learner has a disability or impairment,
- offering learners flexible ways of learning,
- providing learning that celebrates differences,
- providing learning that values all cultures, races and religions,
- making sure that classes and courses do not stereotype any person or group,
- encouraging learners to have confidence and pride in themselves and respect for others,
- tackling any abuse, bullying, harassment or discrimination,
- tackling behaviour, language or comments that are racist, sexist, homophobic or offensive to people with a disability or learning difficulty,
- tackle behaviour that may put vulnerable adults or young people at risk, whether physically, sexually, emotionally or financially.
- tackling negative behaviour such as abuse, bullying, harassment, discrimination and inappropriate behaviour, comments or language,
- tackling obstacles that stop individuals taking part,

## **9. Anti-bullying policy**

The Service's procedures for tackling abusive behaviour, bullying, harassment and discrimination are as follows:

- Listen to the person who has been abused, harassed, bullied or discriminated against,
- Listen to the person accused of the negative behaviour,
- Depending on how serious the behaviour is, if the person accused of the negative behaviour is a learner, we will give one or more warnings. If the abusive behaviour, harassment or bullying continues or is of a serious nature, we may ask the person responsible to leave the class permanently.
- Depending on how serious the behaviour is, if the person accused of the negative behaviour is a member of staff, we may address the behaviour through the disciplinary process.

## 10. Promotion of the safeguarding policy to learners & learner feedback

The Service promotes its safeguarding policy to learners in the following ways:

- in publicity
- in learner surveys
- in induction information and the Welcome to Learning Booklet

### **Our responsibilities**

- Provide a safe and healthy environment for community or online classes
- Risk assess learning activities
- Make sure staff and learners use safe working practices
- Check that learners feel safe on their course and at the venue
- Respond to any concerns learners have about safety
- Record and follow up accidents, incidents or near misses

### **Learners' responsibilities:**

- Act in a safe way
- Be aware of the health and safety of yourself and others
- Tell a member of staff about anything you think is a hazard
- Follow health and safety procedures
- Follow instructions and use tools and equipment safely
- Report any accident, incident or near miss to your tutor or another member of staff.

### **Abuse is a serious issue**

We will respond and support you if you tell us that you have been harmed, on your course or elsewhere. If you have been hurt or abused in any way or if you are afraid you will be hurt or abused, tell your tutor or another member of staff in confidence. We will help you if you want to take action and will treat the matter confidentially.

**The NIACE poster 'Safer Practice, Safer Learning'** is on display in all venues where there are discrete programmes for learners with learning difficulties or disabilities.

### **Learner Feedback**

The service includes a question on safeguarding on the Learner End of Course Evaluation Form and learner surveys.

## 11. E-safety policy

In relation to the safety of learners who are using ICT, our key objectives are to:

- develop robust and resilient e-safety guidelines and systems. We aim to ensure consistency across the organisation and communicate these guidelines to all, including partners, everywhere our learners learn;
- provide clear messages about working safely online. We aim to educate our learners and empower them to make informed choices by displaying e-safety advice in all classrooms where there is ICT and by embedding e-safety messages in the curriculum wherever appropriate;
- equip staff with skills to confidently support learners to work online through staff development and on-line courses if appropriate;

- make the lines of responsibility for safeguarding online clear to all;
- provide clear messages about the use of mobile phones;
- ensure that our infrastructure supports e-safety.

The e-safety guidelines in the course files state:

- Be sure who you are dealing with online - people may not be who they say they are!
- Do not share personal information about yourself or others online (including home address, phone number, bank and financial data).
- Be aware that any photos, videos or information you put on the internet can be seen by others.
- If you find any unpleasant or unsuitable material or messages, or anything that makes you feel uncomfortable when you see it on the internet, please report it straight away to your tutor.
- Please treat your username and password like your toothbrush – don't share it or try to use any other person's username and password.
- Information on the internet may not be accurate. Be careful - it could be a deliberate attempt to mislead you.
- The Service has guidelines on the acceptable use of computers. These are very important for your own and other people's safety and security. It is essential that you read our guidelines on acceptable use of computers before you use a computer on your course.
- If you are unhappy or concerned about anything, please report it to your tutor or a member of staff at the centre where you attend your course.

### **Acceptable use guidelines**

The Service has guidelines on *Acceptable use of Computer and Acceptable Internet Use*. Our aim is to ensure that there is no risk to learners' safety and security, or that of other users and the ICT systems. Agreement to this is a requirement before use of equipment. (A poster is on display in every classroom with ICT or a copy can be made available by the tutor).

If learners are concerned about anything, they are advised to report the issue to their tutor or the Venue Manager where they attend the course.

## **12. Staff induction**

Guidance on the Service's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures is included in the Staff Induction Pack and safeguarding is highlighted as a priority. All new staff are also required to complete Education and Training Foundation's Safeguarding and Prevent online learning module .

## **13. Staff training**

The Service puts considerable value on staff development and has a Service Lead who is responsible for implementing an annual staff development plan which includes safeguarding training.

Staff training requirements are:

- All staff in the service are required to complete an online Education and Training Foundation module for Safeguarding and Prevent.

#### **14. Code of Conduct for staff**

The County Council's Code of Conduct includes very clear guidance regarding our expectations of staff in relation to safeguarding (not an exhaustive list)

- Keeping you safe
- Working in the community (this section gives specific guidance on staff behaviour with regards to young people and vulnerable adults)
- Working with other employees
- Working safely
- Whistleblowing - As an employee it is important that you feel secure and confident in drawing attention to wrong doing or departures from laid down standards. To assist employees on this, a County Council Whistleblowing Policy has been developed.

#### **15. Health and Safety**

All employees must play their part in achieving the highest possible standards of health and safety and rigorously comply with all aspects of the County Council's Health and Safety Policy as it highlights the Council's vision for health and safety and everyone's role in achieving this. As an employee, you have legal duties as well. You must:

- Follow the training you have received when using any work items provided
- Always use safety/protective equipment that is supplied
- Take reasonable care of your own and other people's health and safety who may be affected by what you do.
- Co-operate with your line manager on health and safety.
- Inform your line manager of any health and safety risks.

#### **16. Safeguarding Learners in an online Teaching and Learning Environment.**

**Guidance for learners and guidance for staff has been produced.**

##### **Protocol for Online Teaching and Learning**

- Teachers to use neutral impersonal background and suitable location (or a standard one provided by Warwickshire)
- Only use the Warwickshire approved platforms, email address and 'phone
- Appropriate professional dress and behaviour by staff
- Safeguarding refresher training on teaching online to be completed
- Parental consent for children to take part in online sessions
- Be vigilant and refer to **appendices 1 & 2** for possible signs of abuse
- Keep in mind that lockdown may have amplified existing safeguarding issues including mental health challenges
- Staff to inform themselves of existing safeguarding issues affecting individuals in virtual classroom

- Regular reminders to learners about how to contact DSOs, other safeguarding agencies
- Regular reminders to learners of key messages about online safety outside of teaching situations
- Focussed teaching sessions about online safety/resilience
- Regular “check-ins” with learners at beginning or end of sessions

## Appendix 1 – Teaching Face-to-face

### **Possible signs of physical abuse include:**

- Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Improbable explanations for injuries
- Untreated injuries or lingering illness not attended to
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Shrinking from physical contact
- Fear of returning home or of parents being contacted
- Fear of Undressing
- Fear of medical help
- Aggression/bullying
- Over compliant behaviour or a 'watchful' attitude
- Running away
- Significant change in behaviour without explanation
- Deterioration of work
- Unexplained pattern of absence which may serve to hide bruises or other physical injuries

### **Possible signs of emotional abuse include:**

- Continual self-deprecation
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Self-harm or mutilation
- Compulsive stealing/scrounging
- Drug/solvent abuse
- 'Neurotic' behaviour – obsessive rocking, thumb-sucking, and so on
- Air of detachment – 'don't care' attitude
- Social isolation – does not join in and has few friends
- Desperate attention-seeking behaviour
- Eating problems, including overeating and lack of appetite
- Depression, withdrawal

### **Possible signs of sexual abuse include:**

- Bruises, scratches, burns or bite marks on the body
- Scratches, abrasions or persistent infections in the anal or genital regions
- Sexual awareness inappropriate to the person's age – shown, for example, in drawings, vocabulary, games and so on
- Frequent public masturbation
- Attempts to teach others about sexual activity
- Refusing to stay with certain people or to go to certain places
- Aggressiveness, anger, anxiety, tearfulness
- Withdrawal from friends
- Promiscuity, prostitution, provocative sexual behaviour
- Self-injury, self-destructive behaviour, suicide attempts
- Pregnancy – particularly in the case of young adolescents who are evasive concerning the identity of the father
- Recoiling from physical contact
- Eating disorders
- Tiredness, lethargy, listlessness
- Over-compliant behaviour
- Genital discharge/irritation
- Sleep disturbance
- Unexplained gifts of money
- Depression
- Changes in behaviour

**Possible signs of neglect include:**

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Inappropriate clothing
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at College
- Untreated medical problems
- Low self-esteem
- Poor social relationships
- Compulsive stealing or scrounging
- Constant tiredness

**Possible signs of financial abuse include:**

- Loss of jewellery and personal property
- A bill not being paid when money is entrusted to a third party
- Unexplained withdrawal of cash
- Lack of money to purchase basic items
- Misuse of benefits
- Inadequate clothing
- Theft of property
- Over protection of money or property
- Loss of money from a wallet or purse

**Possible signs of radicalisation include:**

- The individual's views become increasingly extreme regarding another section of society or government policy
- The individual becomes increasingly intolerant of more moderate views
- The individual expresses a desire/intent to take part in or support extremist activity
- They are observed downloading, viewing or sharing extremist propaganda from the web
- They become withdrawn and focused on one ideology
- The individual may change their appearance, their health may suffer (including mental health) and they may become isolated from family, friends, peers or social groups.

## Appendix 2 – Teaching Online

### **Possible signs of domestic abuse can include:**

- Being/becoming withdrawn
- Having bruises/cuts
- Clothes that seem inappropriate – eg covering up in hot weather
- Lack of money – mentioning hunger, appearing dishevelled
- Never being alone at the home end of the virtual classroom
- Appearance of unease in the presence of another family member
- Family member constantly checking on the student in the virtual classroom
- Visible distress on the part of the student – eg crying
- Visible but non-verbal student responses to teacher input on safeguarding
- Keeping microphone unmuted
- Keeping video/camera off

### **Possible online abuse can include:**

- Harrassment
- Cyber bullying
- Identify Fraud
- Image-based Abuse
- Exploitation
- Hate Crime