Safeguarding Policy

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SAFEGUARDING POLICY

INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING?

Safeguarding is the process of protecting learners from abuse, neglect, exploitation, discrimination and harm, promoting their health, wellbeing and human rights, and ensuring they are able to learn in a safe and supportive environment.

For adult learners, safeguarding also includes protecting adults with care and support needs from abuse or neglect in accordance with the Care Act 2014.

OUR COMMITMENT

At Aim2Learn Ltd (A2L) we are committed to keeping all learners safe. Our prime responsibility is the welfare and wellbeing of our learners. We will work with learners, employers, external agencies and the wider community, where appropriate, to safeguard all learners and support them to achieve their full potential. All learners have the right to be treated with dignity and respect and to be protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination.

- Provide a safe, inclusive and secure learning environment for all learners.
- Provide opportunities for learners to raise concerns or disclose safeguarding issues without fear of judgement.
- Listen to learners and respond appropriately to any safeguarding concerns.
- Communicate with learners in ways that are appropriate to their individual needs and promote awareness of safeguarding, the Prevent Duty and Fundamental British Values.
- Provide additional support for learners who may be vulnerable or require reasonable adjustments.
- Ensure that anyone who comes into supervised or unsupervised contact with learners is suitable to do so.
- Ensure that appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are undertaken in accordance with current legislation and the organisation's recruitment procedures.
- Ensure that all staff and learners understand the organisation's safeguarding procedures and know who to contact if they have a concern.
- Appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and deputy (where applicable) to receive and manage safeguarding concerns.
- Act promptly and appropriately on any safeguarding concern.
- Inform funders through the relevant Contract Manager, where appropriate and in line with contractual requirements, of any safeguarding concerns and actions taken.
- Record safeguarding concerns promptly and accurately in writing as soon as reasonably practicable.

- Ensure staff maintain appropriate confidentiality. However, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where a safeguarding concern exists, and information will be shared on a need-to-know basis in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.
- Review this policy annually, or sooner where legislation or guidance changes.
- Make this policy available to all learners, staff and stakeholders.
- Ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead and relevant staff receive appropriate safeguarding and Prevent training, with regular refresher training.

Safeguarding – Prevent

This section forms part of Aim2Learn Ltd's commitment to safeguarding all learners.

Under Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, education and training providers have a statutory duty to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (the Prevent Duty).

Aim2Learn Ltd recognises that safeguarding includes protecting learners from radicalisation and extremism. We are committed to promoting equality, diversity, inclusion, respect and democratic values, while creating an environment where learners feel safe to discuss challenging issues and are encouraged to think critically.

Staff are trained to recognise indicators that a learner may be vulnerable to radicalisation and know how to report concerns in line with the organisation's safeguarding procedures. Where appropriate, referrals may be made to the local Prevent team or the Channel programme.

Protecting learners from the risk of radicalisation is one aspect of our wider safeguarding responsibilities.

Ethos

At Aim2Learn Ltd we promote a culture of respect, inclusion and equality through our values, curriculum and day-to-day practice. We actively promote the Fundamental British Values of:

- Democracy
- The Rule of Law
- Individual Liberty
- Mutual Respect
- Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

We are committed to preparing learners for life and work in modern Britain and ensuring they can study in a safe, supportive and inclusive environment.

We do not tolerate bullying, harassment, discrimination, hate incidents or abusive behaviour of any kind and will challenge inappropriate language or behaviour whenever it occurs.

Statutory Duties

Aim2Learn Ltd fulfils its safeguarding responsibilities in accordance with the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Care Act 2014

- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent Duty)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Care and Support Statutory Guidance (issued under the Care Act 2014)
- Prevent Duty Guidance: England and Wales (2023)

Definitions

Extremism is defined in the 2011 Prevent strategy as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the role of senior management to ensure the business meets its statutory duties with regard to preventing radicalisation.

The senior management will liaise with the MD and other staff about issues to do with protecting learners from radicalisation.

Role of the MD

It is the role of the MD to:

- ensure that the business and its staff respond to preventing radicalisation on a day-to-day basis,
- ensure that the business' curriculum addresses the issues involved in radicalisation
- ensure that staff conduct is consistent with preventing radicalisation

Role of Designated Safeguarding Lead

It is the role of the designated safeguarding lead to:

- ensure that staff all trained and understand the issues of safeguarding, prevent and radicalisation, are able to recognise the signs of vulnerability or radicalisation and know how to refer their concerns
- support Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads, ensure they have necessary training and knowledge to complete the job effectively
- lead on complex cases where there is a multi-agency approach, making referrals to appropriate agencies with regard to concerns about radicalisation
- liaise with partners, including the local authority and the police

- ensure policies and procedures are up to date, compliant with legislation and effectively implemented

Designated Safeguarding Lead – Katie Charnley

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead – Chris Giblin

Contact Details for DSL and Deputy DSL are: safeguarding@aim2learn.org

Role of Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

It is the role of the deputy safeguarding leads to:

- act as the primary and immediate point of contact for all staff and learners when reporting safeguarding concerns
- provide cover for the Designated Safeguarding Lead when required
- support staff with advice and guidance on safeguarding matters
- promote a safeguarding culture
- complete all documentation correctly and in a timely manner, storing data securely

Role of staff and volunteers

It is the role of staff to understand the issues of radicalisation, are able to recognise the signs of vulnerability or radicalisation and know how to refer their concerns.

Curriculum/Work Programme

We are committed to ensuring that our learners are offered a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to prepare them for life in modern Britain. We encourage our learners to be inquisitive. Learners who are open to new experiences and are tolerant of others.

Internet Safety

The internet provides learners and young people with access to a wide-range of content, some of which is harmful. Extremists use the internet, including social media, to share their messages. The filtering systems used in our IT equipment blocks inappropriate content, including extremist content.

We also filter out social media, such as Facebook. Searches and web addresses are monitored and the ICT technicians will alert senior staff where there are concerns and prevent further access when new sites that are unblocked are found.

Where staff, volunteers, learners or visitors find unblocked extremist content they must report it to a senior member of staff.

We are aware that learners and young people have access to unfiltered internet when using their mobile phones and staff are alert to the need for vigilance when learners are using their phones.

Learners and staff know how to report internet content that is inappropriate or of concern.

Whistleblowing

To provide both staff and learners with a confidential route to report areas of concern A2L have in place a Whistleblowing policy. The procedures in place to ensure any concerns are dealt with equitably and in a suitable timeframe.

Staff/Volunteer Training

Staff and volunteers will be given training to help them understand the issues of radicalisation, are able to recognise the signs of vulnerability or radicalisation and know how to refer their concerns. This information also forms part of induction safeguarding training. Staff are updated as necessary in weekly safeguarding briefings.

Safer Recruitment

We ensure that the staff and volunteers we appoint at A2L are suitable, our recruitment procedures are rigorous and we follow the statutory guidance.

Visitors

Visitors who are invited to speak to learners will be informed about our Prevent policy and relevant vetting checks are undertaken. We undertake due diligence to ensure that visiting speakers are appropriate. Speakers will be supervised at all times and will not be allowed to speak to learners without a member of staff being present.

Staff and volunteers must not invite speakers into A2L without first obtaining permission from the MD.

'No platform for extremists'

A2L does not accept bookings from individuals or organisations that are extremist in their views.

Signs of vulnerability

There are no known definitive indicators that a young person is vulnerable to radicalisation, but there are number of signs that together increase the risk. Signs of vulnerability include:

- underachievement
- being in possession of extremist literature
- poverty
- social exclusion
- traumatic events
- global or national events
- religious conversion
- change in behaviour
- extremist influences
- conflict with family over lifestyle
- confused identify
- victim or witness to race or hate crimes
- rejection by peers, family, social groups or faith

Recognising Extremism

Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:

- showing sympathy for extremist causes
- glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures
- making remarks or comments about being at extremist events
- evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups
- out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (but there are also very powerful narratives, programmes and networks that young people can come across online so involvement with particular groups may not be apparent.)
- secretive behaviour
- online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles
- intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality
- graffiti, art work or writing that displays extremist themes
- attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views
- advocating violence towards others

Referral Process

Staff, volunteers and visitors to A2L must refer all concerns about learners and young people who show signs of vulnerability or radicalisation must be passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead using the usual methods for reporting other safeguarding concerns.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored by the senior management at least annually by receiving a report from the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Allegation against a member of staff

If an allegation is made against a member of the staff team, The Safeguarding Team will be informed immediately or as reasonably practical but at least within 14 days of the allegation being made.

This may result in the disciplinary procedure being followed.

Procedure

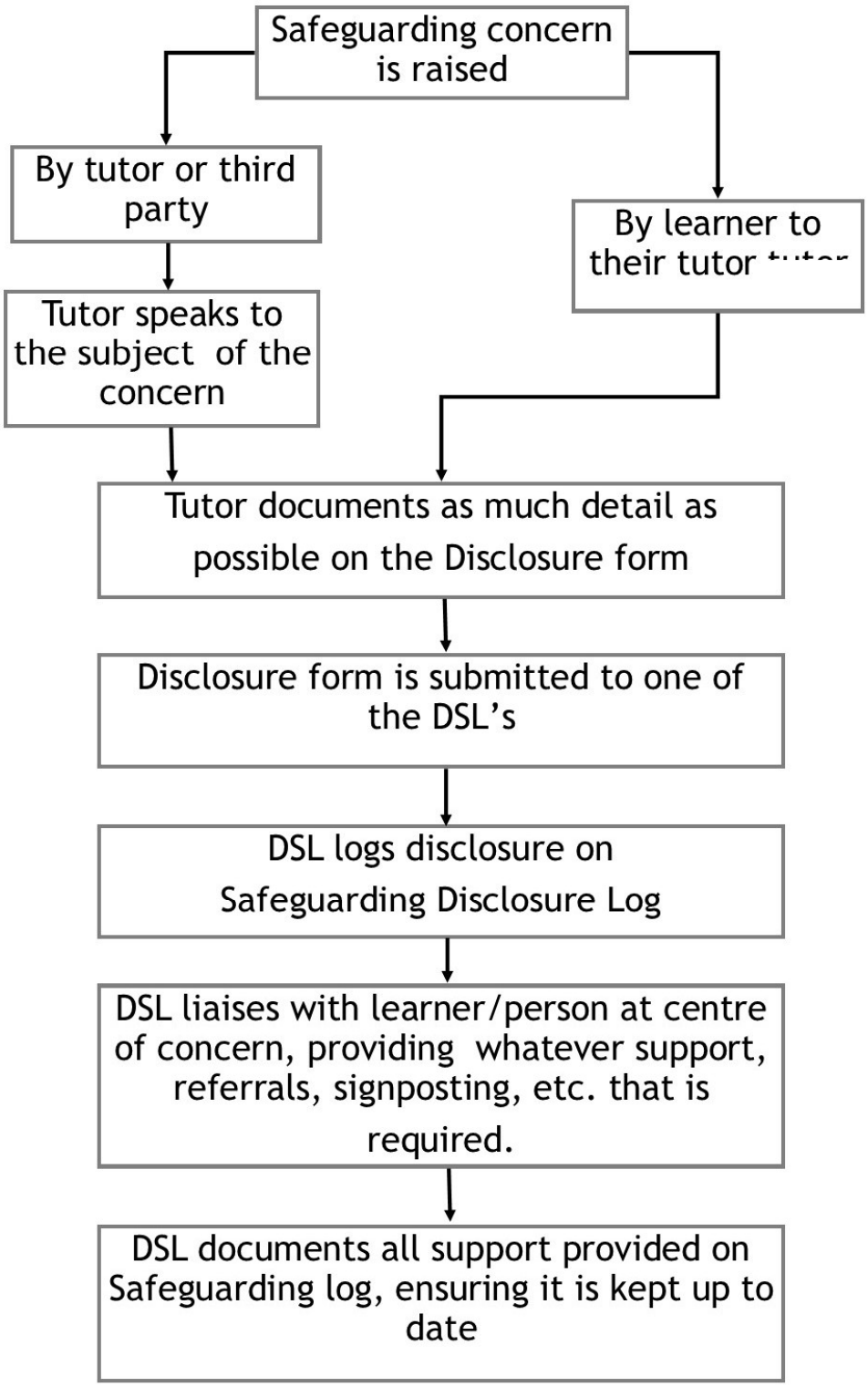
- The incident will be dealt with by the registered persons.
- A full investigation will be carried out to determine how the investigation will be handled.
- If the allegation could interfere with the normal working of the company, after due consultation with the relevant parties, the member of staff may be allocated to another group or area within the company.
- The company reserves the right to suspend any member of staff on full pay during an investigation.

- All investigations/interviews will be documented and stored within strict guidelines of confidentiality.
- Unfounded allegations will result in all rights being re-instated.
- Founded allegations will be passed onto the relevant organisations within the required time scales.
- Founded allegations will result in the termination of employment with immediate effect.

Policy Accessibility

All staff, volunteers and learners can find this policy either on the company SharePoint, or on noticeboards in each centre.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Safeguarding journey