



Safeguarding Policy

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SAFEGUARDING POLICY

INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING?

The process of protecting learners and/or vulnerable people from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables Learners to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully. (Source: Working together to safeguard Learners 2006)

OUR COMMITMENT

At Aim2Learn Ltd (A2L) we are committed to keeping learners and vulnerable people safe. Our prime responsibility is the welfare and wellbeing of the learners and service users. At A2L we will work with learners, external agencies and the community to ensure the safety of all our service users. Learners have a right to be treated with respect and to be safe from any abuse in whatever form.

- Provide a safe and secure environment for all learners/customers.
- Provide a platform where learners can speak freely about concerns
- Always listen to learners/vulnerable people/customers.
- Communicate with learners/customers in ways that are appropriate to their age, and build knowledge and awareness of key principles, such as Prevent, British values.
- Appoint a key person to any vulnerable people to provide support.
- Ensure that anyone who comes into supervised or unsupervised contact with the Learners is safe to do so.
- Ensure that no persons are left unattended with a learner who has not received a DBS check. (DBS to be carried out yearly and signed off by directors).
- Ensure that all staff and service users are clear on the procedures for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of learners in the company and who to contact in the company to express any concerns about a learner`s welfare.
- Appoint a named person/persons for staff to refer any concerns they have about a learner/customer.
- Act quickly and responsibly in any instance or concern that may come to our attention.
- Inform all Prime providers, via contract managers, where appropriate of any cause for concern. Details of steps taken to support must be included and reports to be sent as soon as concerns arise.
- Follow up any verbal referral in writing within 48 hours.

- Ensure staff abide by strict confidentiality rules and not make any comments or judgements publicly or in private.
- Commit to review this policy and update as changes occur.
- Ensure that this policy is available for all service users to view.
- Ensure that all named persons have received relevant training on safeguarding.

Safeguarding – Prevent

This section is part of our commitment to keeping Learners safe. Since the 'Education and Inspections Act 2006' educational organisations have a duty to promote community cohesion. Over the last few years, global events have led to a growth of extremist viewpoints, including advocacy of violent extremism.

A2L has an important part to play in educating young people about extremism and recognising when customers/students start to become radicalised. In March 2015, new statutory duties were placed on educational establishments by the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015) which means they must work to prevent Learners being drawn into extremism.

Safeguarding learners from all risks of harm is an important part of A2L's work and protecting them from extremism is one aspect of that.

Ethos

At A2L we ensure that through our vision, values, rules, diverse curriculum and teaching we promote acceptance and respect for all cultures, faiths and lifestyles. The senior management also ensures that this ethos is reflected and implemented effectively in A2L policy and practice and that there are effective risk assessments in place to safeguard and promote students' welfare.

We have a duty to prepare our students for life in modern Britain and to keep them safe.

Learners who attend our organisation have the right to learn in safety. We do not tolerate bullying of any kind and will challenge derogatory language and behaviour towards others.

Statutory Duties

The duty to prevent Learners and young people being radicalised is set out in the following documents.

- Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015)
- Keeping Learners Safe in Education (updated 2023)
- Prevent Duty Guidance (updated 2023)
- Working Together to Safeguard Learners (updated 2022)

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.

British Values are democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

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 understand the issues of radicalisation, are able to recognise the signs of vulnerability or radicalisation and know how to refer their concerns
- receive safeguarding concerns about learners and young people who may be vulnerable to the risk of radicalisation or are showing signs of radicalisation
- make referrals to appropriate agencies with regard to concerns about radicalisation
- liaise with partners, including the local authority and the police
- report to the governing body on these matters

Current Designated Safeguarding Leads are:

David Wightman – David.wightman@aim2learn.org

Debbie Priestley – Debbie.priestley@aim2learn.org

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. There is a confidential phone number to use, with 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 to A2L are made aware of our safeguarding and learner protection policies on arrival at the building and are given information about what to do if they are concerned about any aspect of customer/learner's welfare.

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

