



**CHILD PROTECTION  
AND  
SAFEGUARDING  
POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

# CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

## POLICY STATEMENT

Skills Group strives to maintain a transparent and open culture for all stakeholders. We believe it is everyone's responsibility to implement and promote this policy throughout the organisation and expect all staff and learners to share this commitment.

Our policy is set out to show our commitment to promote and implement Child Protection and Safeguarding when training learners. Our policy is available to all stakeholders and is published on our website.

This policy applies to all staff at Skills Group Training Centres, including senior managers and the board of directors, paid staff, learners, contractors, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of Skills Group UK Limited.

The purpose of this policy:

- To show how we will protect and prevent abuse of children, young people and vulnerable adults (Learners) who receive Skills Group's services. This includes the children of adults who use our services;
- To provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection.

Skills Group believes that a child, young person or vulnerable adult should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

Skills Group is committed to ensuring all learners attending the teaching and learning environment at Skills Group's premises are safeguarded against any potential risk of harm during their time with us.

Skills Group fully accepts its responsibilities in ensuring learners have access to appropriate support as set out by Government from time to time and by working in conjunction with Plymouth Safeguarding Children's Board.

Skills Group is also committed to ensuring that all employers of children, young people or vulnerable adults engaged in an apprenticeship or work experience programme are able to access appropriate and relevant support and training on all issues relating to children, young people and vulnerable adults.

***For the avoidance of doubt, a child is defined by law as a person under the age of 18 years old.***

***A vulnerable young person is someone aged 16-18 who may have learning difficulties or disabilities or otherwise be vulnerable (if they are experiencing family/relationship breakdown, homelessness, drug or alcohol misuse) and could be exploited or harmed.***

***A vulnerable adult normally means a person aged 18 years or over (normally up to the age of 25) as someone who is, or may be in need of community care services and who is therefore unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.***

## DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

Child abuse consists of anything which individuals, institutions or processes do, or fail to do, which directly or indirectly harms children or damages their prospects of safe and healthy development into adulthood – National Commission of Enquiry into the Prevention of Child Abuse.

## CATEGORIES OF ABUSE

- **Physical abuse:** A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.
- **Sexual abuse:** Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

- **Neglect:** The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:
  - Provide adequate food, clothing or shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
  - Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
  - Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
  - Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

- **Emotional abuse:** The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children.

These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capacity, as well as overprotection and limitation or exploration and learning, or preventing the child

participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

***Definitions taken from Plymouth Safeguarding Child Board Inter-Agency Training***

**THE MAIN AREAS COVERED BY THIS POLICY**

- The raising of awareness of safeguarding, child protection and all associated issues
- Equipping children, young people and vulnerable adults with the skills and knowledge to keep them safe, healthy and able to enjoy and achieve during their time with Skills Group
- Ensure that Skills Group's Employment Procedures give the highest priority to checking the suitability of staff
- The implementation of structures and procedures that identify, report and effectively deal with suspected cases or concerns of abuse
- The provision of support for children, young people and vulnerable adults for whom concerns have been raised or who have been abused, in relation to their agreed Child Protection Plan
- A successful reporting and recording system for all work carried out in relation to safeguarding and child protection matters
- Establishing a safe and nurturing environment where children, young people and vulnerable adults are encouraged to learn and achieve

By the nature of the work that is undertaken at Skills Group, staff are in close and daily contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults, building up a rapport with them and are therefore in a good position to be faced with outward signs of abuse or concerns as to the wellbeing of the child, young person or vulnerable adult.

**LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults, namely:

- Children Act 1989
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice; 0 to 25 years – Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities; HM Government 2014
- Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers; HM Government 2015

- Working together to safeguard children: a guide to inter-agency working to promote the welfare of children; HM Government 2015

This policy should be read alongside our policies and procedures on:

- Health and Safety
- Equality and Diversity
- Disclosure and Barring Checks
- Acceptable Use of IT Systems
- Prevent Policy and Procedure

## **AWARENESS AND PREVENTION**

### **We recognise that:**

- The welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm and abuse
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- Working in partnership with children, young people, vulnerable adults, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare

Safeguarding is about doing everything possible to minimise the risk of harm to children, young people and vulnerable adults.

- **Universal safeguarding** – working to keep children, young people and vulnerable adults safe and create safe environments for all
- **Targeted safeguarding** – some groups of children, young people and vulnerable adults are more at risk than others, and it is important to target policies and services to these groups, to help keep them safe from harm. This group includes children, young people and vulnerable adults with additional needs or a child in need as defined by the Local Safeguarding Children Board Policies and Procedures
- **Responsive safeguarding** – unfortunately, no matter what we do, there will always be some children, young people or vulnerable adults who suffer harm. We need to respond quickly and appropriately when this happens in a child focused and objective manner to support them and deal with those who harm them. Children, young people and vulnerable adults in this group are in need of protection.

We are aware that because of the day to day contact with the learners, Skills Group staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of harm. We, therefore, work hard to:

- Establish and maintain an environment where learners feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to;
- Ensure learners know that there are adults whom they can approach if they are worried. This is supported by the Additional Learning Needs support staff who operate within Skills Group;

- Ensure all employers offering work experience or apprenticeship placements are vetted with regard to health and safety, equality and diversity and safeguarding issues;
- Ensure all staff have current standard and enhanced (appropriate to their role) DBS checks.

## **SUPPORT FOR LEARNERS WHO MAY HAVE SUFFERED HARM**

We are aware that children, young people or vulnerable adults who are significantly harmed or at risk of significant harm or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame.

The Training Centre may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children, young people or vulnerable adults at risk. When at the Training Centre their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. Skills Group will endeavour to support such children, young people or vulnerable adults through:

- Access to appropriate sessions on the Personal Development Programme
- Access to support from the Additional Learning Needs Support Team
- Supporting the appropriate assessment of their needs
- Skills Group ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives learners a sense of being valued
- Skills Group Code of Conduct Policy. Skills Group will ensure that learners know that some behaviour is unacceptable and will also ensure that targeted help is given to learners in managing their conduct
- Skills Group's Equality and Diversity Policy is also aimed at protecting vulnerable learners who may have been victims of abuse
- Liaison with other agencies that support the learners such as Children's and Family Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, Youth Offending Team, Careers South West, The Zone and Supported Housing Associations.

## **WE SEEK TO KEEP CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS SAFE BY**

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- Appointing a Designated Lead Safeguarding Officer (DLSO) for children, young people and vulnerable adults, deputies and a lead board member for safeguarding and child protection
- Adopting child protection and safeguarding practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Developing and implementing an effective IT and e-safety policy and related procedures, ensuring this is monitored and have strong filters on IT equipment and clear rules on accessing inappropriate information including uses of websites, social networks, exchanging views.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures

- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Recording and storing information professionally and securely, and sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, young people, vulnerable adults, their families, staff and volunteers via leaflets, posters, one-to-one discussions
- Using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, vulnerable adults, parents, families and carers appropriately and where it is safe to do so
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, vulnerable adults, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance

## **TRAINING STAFF TO IMPLEMENT POLICY**

The Policy is reviewed annually, and as and any changes to legislation are required. Dissemination and discussion of the Policy is covered in new staff Induction and regular mandatory staff training, updating and raising awareness are provided to all staff annually.

## **SKILLS GROUP SAFEGUARDING TEAM DETAILS**

### Designated Lead Safeguarding Officer (DLSO)

Name Debra Rowan  
 Phone 01752 332442  
 Email [drowan@skillsgroupuk.com](mailto:drowan@skillsgroupuk.com)

### Deputy Lead Safeguarding Officer

Name Mandy Kerlake  
 Phone 01752 332442  
 Email [mkerlake@skillsgroupuk.com](mailto:mkerlake@skillsgroupuk.com)

### Safeguarding Officer

Name Beth Jacques  
 Phone 07507514145  
 Email [bjacques@skillsgroupuk.com](mailto:bjacques@skillsgroupuk.com)

### Health and Safety Representative

Name Steve Mason  
 Phone 01752 332442  
 Email [smason@skillsgroupuk.com](mailto:smason@skillsgroupuk.com)

## PROCESS FOR RAISING, RECORDING AND INVESTIGATING CONCERNS

### Health and Safety

### Safeguarding

### Prevent – Channel

### Complaints



Health and Safety risks may be identified through; H&S vetting's, reported by learners or identified by any staff member visiting the work place

Safeguarding risks may be observed on or off the job, disclosed by learners, identified through initial assessment and reviewing Additional Learning Needs processes

Prevent risks may be reported by Trainers, Assessors or Coordinators or disclosed by learners

Complaints may come from learners, employers or parents and may include Health and Safety, Safeguarding or welfare

**This list is not exhaustive**



All incidents, concerns or complaints must be reported to Designated Lead Safeguarding Officer



DSO will complete Incident Report and carry out investigation or identify the person responsible for dealing with the incident or complaint



In the case of Safeguarding Incidents, learners will be added to the At Risk Register  
All reporting and recording documents are securely kept by DLSO



Incident Reports, Action Plans and Risk Register to be updated on a regular basis, and on receipt of any information that needs to be shared



Safeguarding Team meet on a monthly basis to monitor progress across all incidents raised, monitor At Risk Register and identify when incidents have been fully managed to satisfactory outcome and closed

## **ADDITIONAL SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE**

Skills Group will work closely with many organisations including Plymouth Safeguarding Children Board in relation to any safeguarding issues, which may arise with learners attending the Skills Group sites.

The local contact details for Plymouth are:

### **Plymouth Safeguarding Children Board**

Midland House  
Notte Street  
PLYMOUTH PL1 2EJ  
Telephone: 01752 307535  
Email: [PSCB@Plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:PSCB@Plymouth.gov.uk)

### **Devon Safeguarding Children Board**

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)  
County Hall  
EXETER EX2 4QU  
Telephone: 0345 144 1071  
Email: [mashsecure@devon.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:mashsecure@devon.gcsx.gov.uk)

### **Torbay Safeguarding Children Board**

Union House  
Union Street  
TORQUAY TQ1 3YA  
Telephone: 01803 2081000  
Email: [torbay.safeguardinghub@torbay.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:torbay.safeguardinghub@torbay.gcsx.gov.uk)

### **Cornwall Safeguarding Children Board**

Multi-Agency Referral Unit (MARU)  
County Hall  
TRURO TR1 3AY  
Telephone: 0300 123 1116  
Email: [safeguardingboards@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:safeguardingboards@cornwall.gov.uk)

### **Other Agencies available for advice/guidance:**

Child Exploitation and Online Protection [www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)

NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000