

Safeguarding Policy



Policy Statement

Somerset Skills & Learning is fully committed to providing a working and learning environment that is free from abuse and harm for all its staff and learners. We actively promote a culture of vigilance across the service by:

- Clearly identifying and communicating the roles and responsibilities within the organisation for safeguarding
- Having clear procedures in place
- Guiding all our staff in safeguarding procedures
- By allocating sufficient resources to safeguarding and applying 'zero' tolerance to any form of abuse and harm
- By discussing safeguarding to all learners and alerting them to the posters in every classroom. All 18-21 year old learners receive a safer learning card and there are copies in every classroom for other learners.

Purpose

The safety of adults with safeguarding needs and children is a topic that is rarely out of the news. High cases of abuse of children and adults with safeguarding needs highlight the importance of vigilance by all professionals who work with children and adults with safeguarding needs. Newer forms of abuse such as internet grooming, the financial abuse of older people and the extreme difficulties faced by young asylum seekers, mean our policies and procedures need to be continually reviewed to keep abreast of these developments. The Children's Act defines a 'child' as a person under the age of 18.

Somerset Skills & Learning is fully committed to safeguarding all learners and staff, particularly aware of those who may be:

- Receiving a social care service
- Receiving a health service
- Living in sheltered accommodation
- Detained in custody or under a probation order
- Requiring assistance in the conduct of his or her affairs
- Receiving a service or participating in an activity targeted at older people, people with disabilities or with physical or mental health conditions

Safeguarding Designated Persons are:

Justin Speirs (Wells office) **01749 677786** (mobile) **07766 085920**

Andy Hobbs (Wellington office) **01823 663000** (mobile) **07970 835592**

Somerset Skills & Learning has established a Safeguarding steering group which will:

- Act as Champions across curriculum areas representing the whole of the service
- Co-ordinate the implementation of the policy and procedures and associated staff training/briefings
- Monitor compliance with the policy through existing procedures
- Ensure that procedures, advice and guidance work effectively and are revised as needed
- Report to the Senior Management team on matters relating to safeguarding
- Meet to review the policy annually and to implement and review new initiatives

Somerset Skills & Learning adopts the definition used in the **Children's Act 2004** and the DfES guidance document: '**Working Together to Safeguard Children**' (2006)' which focuses on safeguarding and promoting children and young people's welfare and can be summarised as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and
- Undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully

The principles for staff in identifying and responding to incidents of concern in relation to adults are the same as those for children and young people. - In most cases exactly the same process and guidance will need to be followed by the staff member.

It is expected that any sub-contractors of SS&L will ensure their staff are trained in safeguarding and relevant staff have DBS; they will have access to SS&L on-line training by request. Monitoring of safeguarding and *Prevent* addendum will be robustly carried out in regular reviews of sub-contracted delivery. It is expected that employees will also ensure the safety of their staff, SS&L will offer advice when necessary.

Safeguarding children and young people

Somerset Skills & Learning has a broad remit and a wide range of educational activities covering settings that also have broader safeguarding responsibilities e.g. Family Learning, Learning 2 Work. In all of this activity, as well as responding to immediate concerns, we

will ensure that appropriate measures and practice to safeguard and promote the welfare of children are in place and bring matters requiring attention to the relevant authorities.

All Somerset Skills & Learning staff should have a good understanding of safeguarding concerns, including potential abuse and neglect of children and young people, which may come to light in the workplace as well as in the setting we inspect. At whatever level we identify risks we will highlight them and seek to ensure that appropriate steps are taken to safeguard the children or young people concerned.

We will ensure that all Somerset Skills & Learning staff and those who undertake work on our behalf maintain a proper focus on safeguarding children and young people and that this is reflected both in sound individual practice and our internal policies and guidance. All staff, including contracted staff working with children and young people must:

- Give highest priority to children's welfare
- Recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people
- Respond appropriately to disclosure by a child, or young person, of abuse
- Respond appropriately to allegations against staff, other adults, and against themselves
- Be alert to the risks which abusers, or potential abusers, may pose
- Be aware of the importance of the role of education in promoting the welfare of children
- Contribute as necessary to all stages of Somerset Skills & Learning's safeguarding and protection processes

Somerset Skills & Learning will ensure that it fulfils its responsibilities to work jointly with others to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and, where necessary, to help bring to justice the perpetrators of crimes against children.

We will share all relevant information with the respective statutory child protection agencies (children's social care services and/or police) without delay and within agreed protocols.

Procedures for responding to specific child and young person protection concerns

Somerset Skills & Learning staff (i.e. those employed directly by Somerset Skills & Learning, or working under contract) may encounter child protection concerns. Such concerns could emerge from Somerset Skills & Learning's work, or through a concern or complaint raised with Somerset Skills & Learning.

The concern might relate to:

- What is or maybe happening (or happened in the past) to a child or young person, or
- What is happening (or happened) outside our organisation (for instance in their own family)

The concern may be brought to our attention by the child or young person themselves, alleged by others or through direct activity and observation by our staff.

The concerns may therefore be about the behaviour of a:

- Member of staff (for instance a tutor or Learning Support Worker)
- Peer (for instance another young person)
- Child or young person or adult in the community (for instance a relative or family friend)

The concern could relate to **actions** or **inaction** - for instance an insufficient response to information regarding the risk of significant harm to a child or young person.

The concern may be about a current situation or past events and may be about allegations or disclosures of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse or neglect, or a combination of one or more of these categories.

Somerset Skills & Learning staff may receive this information by one or more means such as a telephone call, a letter, an email, through observation, discussion or learner documents.

Any member of Somerset Skills & Learning staff could receive such information. In all circumstances they must respond in accordance with the following procedure.

Immediate action to take if, as a member of Somerset Skills & Learning staff, you observe abuse whilst it is taking place

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by other person or persons. Abuse may consist of single or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he is she has not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

Abuse can take a number of forms, for instance seeing an adult hit a child, observing a member of staff using inappropriate restraint on a young person or witnessing the neglect of basic care needs of a disabled child.

First, if you can stop the abuse immediately without putting the child or young person or you at undue risk, do so. Inform the perpetrator of your concerns. Advise him/her to stop the action immediately. Ask them to move themselves to an area where there is no contact with children and young people. Advise him/her that you will immediately be informing the senior manager on site or elsewhere within the organisation of what has happened.

Then:

- **If the perpetrator fails to desist** – take appropriate action to stop the abuse and call for assistance
- **If the perpetrator does desist**, and even if they leave the scene as requested, it is essential that you **stay with the child** until you can transfer them to the care of another responsible adult

Then:

- Inform the Safeguarding Designated Person for Somerset Skills & Learning of the incident

And:

- Report the incident immediately to your line manager

Take notes of what has been said, what you have actually heard or seen – if it is not possible to take notes at the time, do so immediately afterwards. Keep the notes taken at the time, without amendment, omission or addition. Whatever subsequent events occur; the notes should then be updated and signed. The notes should cover what you saw, who said what, what action you took, and the details of date, time and location and name of child and perpetrator. Do not make assumptions and only record what you have witnessed.

Immediate action to take if you receive an allegation of possible significant harm to a child or young person

If you are in direct contact with the person raising the concern, for instance through a telephone call, receipt of a complaint or as part of an interview

- **Stop other activity and focus on what you are being told, or have just seen.** Responding to suspicion of abuse takes immediate priority.
- **Do not promise confidentiality** or agree to ‘keep it a secret’. Explain clearly to the person raising the concern about what you expect will happen next. You can assure them that you will only tell those you have to tell to try to get the matter dealt with. You can and should express support and reassurance to the person giving you the information, particularly if it is a child or young person, that the matter will be dealt with quickly and appropriately.

- **Avoid asking leading questions** - Leading questions and anything likely to suggest ideas or interpretations could jeopardise subsequent investigations or criminal proceedings.

In all cases you should inform the Safeguarding Designated Person of the circumstances and the action you have taken or will be taking next.

□ Confirm your oral report, including the nature of the allegation/incident, the nature of the suspected harm or likely harm and your subsequent actions

- **Confirm your oral report**, including the nature of the allegation/incident, the nature of the suspected harm or likely harm and your subsequent actions using the Safeguarding Cause for Concern form, by email to the Safeguarding Designated Person within the next 24 hours. You should retain a copy.
- If no further action is being taken the Safeguarding Designated Person will advise you if this is the case.
- **The Safeguarding Designated Persons are the managers to whom all allegations or concerns that a member of staff may have abused a child should be reported. If the Safeguarding Designated Person is not available, report to your line manager.**

Supervision of children or young people

Some Somerset Skills & Learning organised activities may expose children to adults who have not received safeguarding checks, ie one off activities provided at organised visits/trips. In these cases children must be reminded of the care to take and staff must ensure children are **supervised** at all times.

In summary, if an act of abuse or neglect of an adult with safeguarding needs or child is identified or suspected then the Somerset Skills & Learning staff member should:

- Stop everything else and concentrate on what you are observing or being told
- Ensure the persons (and any others) immediate safety
- Do not promise confidentiality or agree to keep something secret
- Do not investigate yourself and avoid asking leading questions
- Obtain the necessary information to make an informed referral
- Refer the matter to the Adult Safeguarding Designated Person –

Justin Speirs (Wells office) **01749 677786** (mobile) **07766 085920**

Andy Hobbs (Wellington office) **01823 663000** (mobile) **07970 835592**

- Inform your manager
- Make and keep a record of the incident and action taken
- Complete 'Cause for Concern' form and send to the Safeguarding Designated Person

Roles and Responsibilities

SMT

- Allocate required resources to provide adequate safeguarding measures
- Provide leadership in ensuring the safety of learners and staff
- Approve this policy annually or when required following changes in legislation or a case of abuse
- Manage complaints against members of staff

Safeguarding Designated Persons

- Receive and review concerns from members of staff
- Give advice and guidance on actions to be taken

- Report twice a year to SMT

Safeguarding steering group

- Take action to resolve any safeguarding issues
- Review and update safeguarding procedures, offering support where necessary
- Review policy annually

Induction

- Follow up any gaps in service
- Do not appoint without obtaining satisfactory references
- Follow safer recruitment practice
- Monitor completion of safeguarding training by all staff

Line Managers

- Manage the application of safeguarding procedures in their curriculum/course area
- Keep safeguarding on the agenda, updated and any issues addressed

All Staff

- Ensure all learners are aware of the safeguarding policy
- Comply with this policy and procedures
- Promote a safe learning environment
- Immediately refer issues/concerns to the Safeguarding Designated Persons

Out of hours

During out of hours please contact Somerset Skills & Learning designated Safeguarding persons:

Justin Speirs (mobile) **07766 085920** or Andy Hobbs (mobile) **07970 835592**

In cases of an emergency please contact **999**

PREVENT

An addendum to the Safeguarding Policy



This addendum is essential guidance for all members of the community.

The Government states that:

‘Intelligence indicates that a terrorist attack in our country is ‘highly likely’. Experience tells us that the threat comes not just from foreign nationals but also from terrorists born and bred in Britain. It is therefore vital that our counter-terrorism strategy contains a plan to prevent radicalisation and stop would-be terrorists from committing mass murder.....we will prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support. We will build on the successful multi-agency ‘Channel’ Programme, which identifies and provides support for people at risk of radicalisation’.

Prevent is a vital part of the UK’s counter-terrorism strategy, to stop people becoming terrorists or any government funding supporting terrorism. *Prevent* addresses all forms of terrorism, including Far Right extremism. Extremism in itself is not illegal but it can act as a ‘pathway’ to terrorism. *Prevent* does not aim to criminalise people for holding extreme views; instead, it seeks to stop individuals from encouraging or even committing violent activity.

Somerset Skills & Learning commit to ensure that the principles of *Prevent* are embedded within the service and are intrinsic to any sub contract or partnership arrangements and monitored appropriately. The Safeguarding Officers carry out a whole service risk assessment for *Prevent* which is brought to the attention of staff.

Staff alert all learners to the *Prevent* agenda and the posters in every classroom. All 18-21 year old learners receive a safer learning card and there are copies in every classroom for other learners.

Somerset Skills & Learning are vigilant in their supervision of the risks of *Prevent* and thoroughly investigate all venues and any outside speakers used. All sub-contractors are engaged only when managers are satisfied that Somerset Skills & Learning are not inadvertently funding extremist organisations. Somerset Skills & Learning’s e safety policy is brought to the attention of all staff and learners.

Further information for practitioners, support staff, managers and board members can be found on <http://www.preventforfeandtraining.org.uk/>

All member of the community have a role to play in *Prevent* within our organisations and communities; if you believe someone is at risk of radicalisation you can help them obtain support and *prevent* them becoming involved in terrorism by raising your concerns and making a referral to your Safeguarding Officer who will, in turn, refer them to Channel at channelsw@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk

Channel is the multi-agency, safeguarding programme that aims to provide support to people at risk of being drawn into terrorist related activity and is available across England and Wales.

As in all other safeguarding programmes which protect individuals at risk from involvement in crime, gangs and drugs, individuals need to be referred to your Safeguarding Officer:

Justin Speirs (Wells office) **01749 677786** (mobile) **07766 085920**

Andy Hobbs (Wellington office) **01823 663000** (mobile) **07970 835592**

If you become aware of inappropriate web sites with content that may include speeches calling for racial or religious violence or videos glorifying terrorists who have committed atrocities, inciting racial hatred; again, you need to report this to the Safeguarding Officer. They will, in turn, report the inappropriate content to www.direct.gov.uk/reportingonlineterrorism