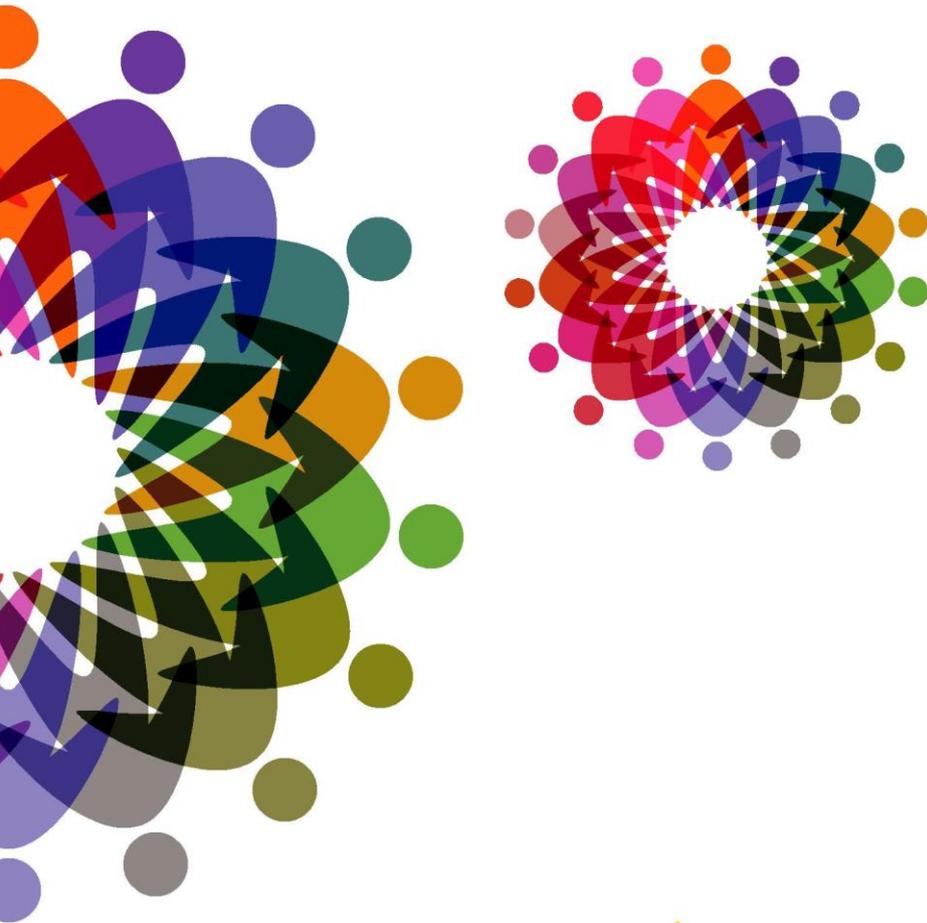


Gateshead Council *learningSkills*
Safeguarding
Policy
Revised August 2021



Date this policy was formally reviews and agreed by learningSkills	08/08/2021
Signed on behalf of learningSkills	
Signature:	<i>Nicholas Doherty</i>
Date:	08/08/2021
Date next full review is due:	08/08/2023

Introduction

Gateshead Council learningSkills strive to adopt the highest possible standards to ensure the safety and welfare of all students and staff.

It is the responsibility of everyone within learningSkills to record and report any concerns they have immediately.

Whatever your role, if you see, hear or know something that concerns you, and suspect that anyone is at risk of being harmed or abused, you must immediately report what you have seen, heard or know.

Doing nothing is not an option.

While it is not possible to ensure that students would ever come to harm, the adoption of this policy, associated guidelines and code of practice aims to facilitate the management of risk associated with the duty to protect staff and students.

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Reporting safeguarding concerns: My Concern

There are procedures in place for reporting and dealing with allegations relating to the area of safeguarding, or incidents where students have felt unsafe. All LearningSkills staff have access to our online reporting tool My Concern. The recording process is strait forward (as detailed below) and all information once saved is sent directly to the DSL and safeguarding officer via e-mail. If you feel a learner is in imminent danger contact the safeguarding team immediately.

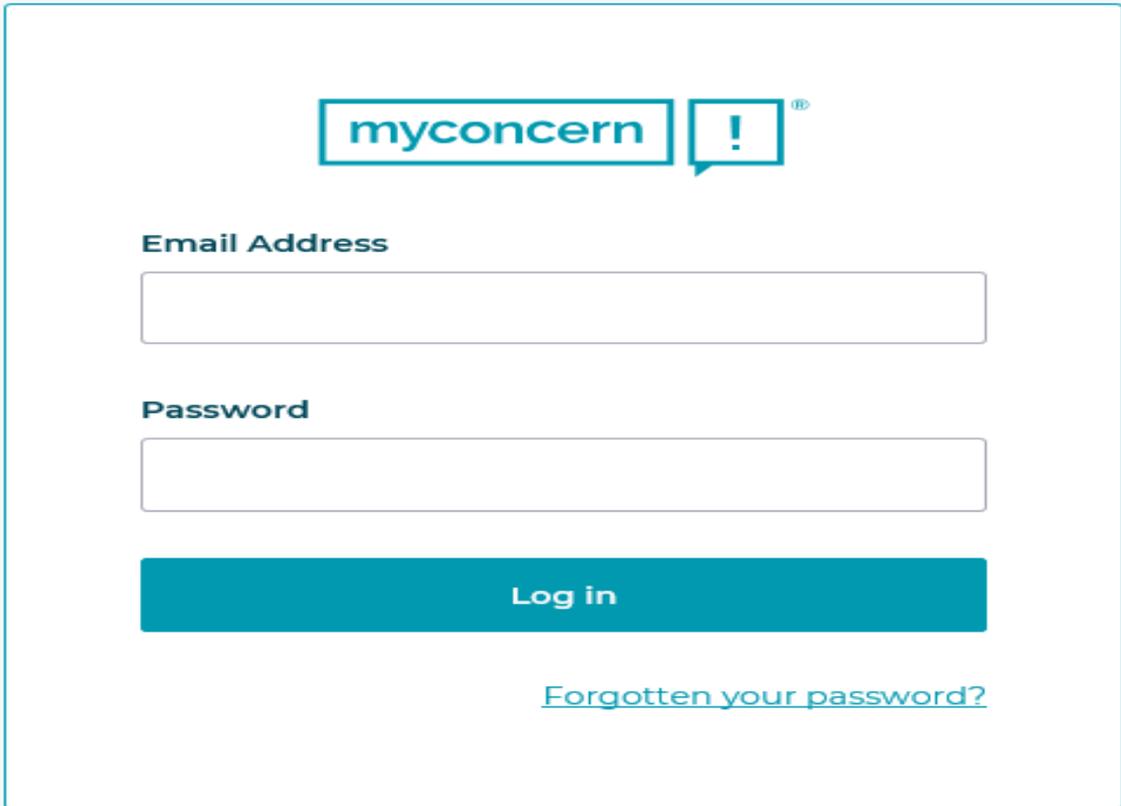
Safeguarding Team – Tel:0191 4338585 option 3

Email: safeguardinglearningskills@gateshead.gov.uk

<https://www.myconcern.education/>

Once staff have completed mandatory safeguarding induction training they will be sent a link allowing access to My Concern. A concern can be reported using the following steps:

Enter your e-mail address, you will then be invited to create a password.



myconcern 

Email Address

Password

Log in

[Forgotten your password?](#)

Once you have done this you will have accessed the welcome page

myconcern! Gateshead Council learningSkills (1001014) Nick Doherty

My Concerns Dashboards Profiles Audit Trail Resources Admin Report a Concern

Welcome to MyConcern

Your last login was on 04 February 2021 at 15:27

Safeguarding Leads

The Designated Safeguarding Leads for your School are:

- Sonya Anderson
- Nick Doherty

Recently Raised Concerns

[Concern 2021:344](#) has been raised by [Nicola Johnson](#)
At: 02/02/2021 17:18

[Concern 2021:343](#) has been raised by [Donna Watson](#)

To report a concern click on the Report a Concern red box on the top right of the page, this will open up the report a concern page. Completed all relevant information and click on submit concern.

Report a Concern

Name(s) of Pupil(s)

! Please add the Pupil(s) who are the subject of this concern and add any other Pupil(s) you want associated to it.

Concern Summary

Concern Date/Time

Location of Incident

Action taken

Attachment

 Please attach any media that is relevant to this concern.

LearningSkills Risk Assessment

Date of risk assessment:

What is the hazard?	What are the risks?	Mitigation of risk	Risk level achieved	Additional measures

Section 2

learningSkills Safeguarding Policy Statement

The LearningSkills Safeguarding Policy applies to all staff, volunteers and partners who work with children (i.e. those aged under 16), young persons (i.e. those aged 16 to 18) and 'Adults at Risk' (i.e. as defined by section 59 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and/or those persons aged over 18 who by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness are or may be unable to take care of themselves or are or may be unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation) whom Gateshead Council LearningSkills encounters through its teaching and learning activities.

This policy has been written in line with this act and is in place to ensure that:

- children, young people and 'Adults at Risk' are protected from harm and abuse
- staff and volunteers know what to do if they are worried or have concerns
- everyone is responsible for safeguarding
- students and staff feel safe

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following guidelines

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (HMG, Updated September 2021)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HMG Updated July 2018)
- What To do if You Are Worried a Child is being Abused (HMG March 2015)
- Information Sharing (HMG July 2018)
- *Prevent* Duty Guidance (HMG, Updated April 2021)
- Gateshead Council Learning & Schools Safeguarding Policy (December 2017)
- The Children Act 1989; Children Act 2004
- The Education Act 2002; Education and Inspections Act 2006

All students could potentially be at risk.

This policy should not be used to discourage learning activities and it supports the engagement of a diverse range of students.

This policy creates a framework that ensures staff, volunteers, partners and visitors protect all students and keep them safe when within the care of Gateshead Council LearningSkills.

Definition of Safeguarding [additional information can be found at Appendix 2]

In relation to children and young people, safeguarding and promoting their welfare is defined in 'Working together to safeguard children' 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

Don't hesitate – contact the Safeguarding Officer on 0191 433 8646 or email on: safeguardinglearningskills@gateshead.gov.uk

- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Safeguarding action may be needed to protect children and students from:

- neglect
- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- bullying, including online bullying and prejudice-based bullying
- racist, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse
- gender-based violence/violence against women and girls
- radicalisation and/or extremist behaviour
- child sexual exploitation and trafficking
- the impact of new technologies on sexual behaviour, for example sexting
- teenage relationship abuse
- substance misuse
- issues that may be specific to a local area or population, for example gang activity and youth violence
- domestic violence
- female genital mutilation
- forced marriage
- fabricated or induced illness
- poor parenting, particularly in relation to babies and young children
- other issues not listed here but that pose a risk to children, young people and 'Adults at Risk'.

Safeguarding is not just about protecting children, young people and/or 'Adults at Risk', from deliberate harm, neglect and failure to act. It relates to broader aspects of care and education, including:

- Children's and students' health and safety and well-being
- the use of reasonable force
- meeting the needs of children and students with medical conditions
- providing first aid
- educational visits
- intimate care and emotional well-being
- online safety and associated issues
- appropriate arrangements to ensure children's and students' security, taking into account the local context.

Responsibilities

Gateshead Council learningSkills fully recognises its responsibilities to safeguard, protect and promote the welfare of all. Gateshead Council LearningSkills will ensure that:

- A Designated Safeguarding Lead will oversee this policy and champion protection issues, raise awareness and promote the welfare of all students.
- Procedures are in place for reporting and dealing with allegations of abuse or incidents where students have felt unsafe. [For information on Reporting procedures see Appendix 7]
- Gateshead Council Legal and Corporate Services approve this policy and it is reviewed and updated regularly.
- The Designated Safeguarding Leads will receive appropriate training to assist with the above duties.
- All staff will receive appropriate training

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure Gateshead Council Learning and Skills operates a safe recruitment policy in line with Council procedures. [for further information relating to Safer Recruitment see Appendix 3]

Where services or activities are provided separately by another agency Gateshead Council learningSkills will require assurance that the agency concerned has policies and procedures in place for safeguarding all students which are compatible with this policy and procedures and there are arrangements in place to liaise with Gateshead Council learningSkills on these matters.

Designated Safeguarding Team

Gateshead Council learningSkills managers undertake the role of ensuring students are safeguarded and are the Designated Safeguarding Team. The team consists of the Principal learningSkills Manager as the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Safeguarding Officer and the management team act as Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads.

The nominated senior manager within Gateshead Council learningSkills who will be the Designated Safeguarding Lead; will have overarching responsibility for safeguarding within Gateshead Council learningSkills, ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented within the operations of Gateshead Council learningSkills.

Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Team:

The Designated Safeguarding team are the first point of contact for all staff and volunteers to go to for advice if they are concerned about children, young persons and/or 'Adults at Risk';

Have a higher level of safeguarding training and knowledge than the rest of the staff;

They are responsible for ensuring that the areas safeguarding policy is kept up to date and reviewed every 2 years;

They ensure that they comply with safe recruitment procedures for new staff members and their induction;

Don't hesitate – contact the Safeguarding Officer on 0191 433 8646 or email on: safeguardinglearningskills@gateshead.gov.uk

They assess information from staff regarding concerns about children, young people and/or 'Adults at Risk', make decisions about whether staff concerns are enough to notify Children's or Adults Social Work Services or whether other courses of action are more appropriate;

They ensure that concerns are logged and stored securely;

They have responsibility to ensure that the organisation's safeguarding policy and related policies and procedures are followed and regularly updated;

They are responsible for promoting a safe environment for children, young people and/or 'Adults at Risk';

They ensure that staff are appropriately vetted utilising statutory requirements before appointing staff

They know the contact details of relevant statutory agencies e.g. Young Person Referral Assessment Team Police, Local Safeguarding Children Board, and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO Nicholas Leon 0191 433554) for allegations against staff.

They must ensure that staff are aware of this policy and the associated procedures, identifying any appropriate training that staff may require

They must ensure adequate staff training is provided and taken up

It is not the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Team to decide whether children, young people and/or 'Adults at Risk' have been abused or not, that is the responsibility of investigative statutory agencies such as Children's Social Work Services, Adult Social Services or the police.

However keeping children, young people and/or 'Adults at Risk' safe is everybody's business and all staff should know who to go to and how to report any concerns they may have about children, young people and/or 'Adults at Risk' being harmed or at risk of being harmed.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility within Gateshead Council learningSkills to ensure that children, young people and/or 'Adults at Risk' are safe.

Staff must ensure they have the knowledge to identify Safeguarding Issues, who to go to, and how to report any concerns they may have about children, young people and/or 'Adults at Risk' being harmed or at risk of being harmed.

All staff will

receive Safeguarding on induction

will have their Safeguarding training topped up every three years

will be kept up to date on safeguarding through LearningSkills Sharepoint safeguarding information page, 60 second update email or blogs

Staff with significant contact will be children or 'Adults at Risk' will be DBS with enhanced children and barring check, with DBS update service.

Training and Support

learningSkills work closely with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) and Work Force Development who regularly run child protection training. Staff will undertake mandatory training in this area. All staff will receive basic child protection/safeguarding training every 3 years and the Designated Leads and management team receive the appropriate level of training (safeguarding children level 3) which is renewable every two years.

Training activities will be recorded for staff who attend to ensure that all staff are current. Where a staff member has not met the training requirements, managers will be responsible for ascertaining the reason why, ensuring compliance is met at the earliest opportunity. Failure to meet the training requirements of learningSkills may result in disciplinary action being taken against the employee/s responsible in accordance with the learningSkills disciplinary procedure.

Where necessary, staff will receive supplementary training to ensure that they are able to fully implement this policy.

New members of staff receive a thorough safeguarding induction and safeguarding training, or where they can show that they have completed the same standard of training recently, then they would be exempt though they would still be expected to be trained in the reporting methodology and expectations of learningSkills.

Regular safeguarding updates are available to ensure that any updates or developments are disseminated to staff, so they remain current. Staff will also have access to the LSCB website.

Training will include, but will not be restricted to:

Abuse

Basic Child Protection Procedures & Adults at Risk

Bullying

De-escalation Techniques

Grooming

E-Safety

Prevent, Radicalisation & British Values

Risk Assessment

Training will be updated at least every three years and every two years for designated leads.

Prevention

We will ensure that all students are aware of our safeguarding procedure and receive a copy of our 'The Knowledge' Booklet that outlines safeguarding contact numbers. Students will all receive a thorough induction that explores safeguarding, including what they can do to report occurrences.

All staff will receive a thorough induction and training relating to safeguarding in relation to preventative action, roles and responsibilities as well as reporting mechanisms.

Risk Assessments

Where appropriate Risk Assessments will be completed and approved/signed off by the Principal of learningSkills. Students and staff need to be involved in the risk assessment process and this should be reviewed at the start of every session. Students must be informed of any potential risks.

Risk Assessments may include:

Where it is known that a student has a difficulty or disability that might impact on their learning A Risk Assessments should be completed on the venue, activity and the students. Such Risk Assessments will be held with the course/class register.

A Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) must also be produced where a students is identified as having a difficulty or disability that might impact on their egress in cases of emergency, ensuring that means of escape in case of fire and associated fire safety measures provided for all people who may be in a building are both adequate and reasonable, taking into account the circumstances of each particular case.

Gateshead Council uses EVOLVE to record visits and trips. The Visit Coordinator will be responsible for completing the required Risk Assessment. All visits and trips must be uploaded no later than 4 weeks prior to a visit taking place. This will ensure that appropriate risk assessments and relevant documentation has been collated and recorded. Separate training for staff who use EVOLVE will be given.

Staff engaged in Off Site and Lone Working arrangements must be familiar with the Lone Working Policy and adhere to its requirements. The Lone Working Policy is based on a thorough appraisal of the risks and how to mitigate them. [Further information relating to Lone Working is provided at Appendix 4]

Ensuring the Safety of learners

Delivery occurs in many venues. It should not be assumed that fire evacuation and first aid policies are the same in every venue. All staff should always make themselves and the students aware at the beginning of every session;

First Aid - who is first aid qualified and where the first aid box is located

- The Fire evacuation procedures
- What to do in the event of a fire
- Leave by the nearest available fire exit
- Location of assembly point Location of fire extinguishers
- Inform students if there is likely to be a practice fire alarm

For all other risks, make the students aware that what they are doing is inappropriate and unacceptable.

It is important that learningSkills Designated Team are informed about any incident immediately. It is extremely important that all information is received and acted upon immediately. All incidents and complaints received relating to the health, safety and wellbeing of students and staff will be acted upon, recorded and stored for future reference.

Don't hesitate – contact the Safeguarding Officer on 0191 433 8646 or email on: safeguardinglearningskills@gateshead.gov.uk

Incidents should be recorded on an Incident Report Form as soon as reasonably practicable; forms are located electronically on the learningSkills network.

Information relating to e-safety as it relates to students is provided as Appendix 5.

Note: Further information relating to health and safety and safe working practices can be located in the Council's Health and Safety policy located on the intranet or within the Employer Handbook.

Safeguarding Information

60 second update

60 second update is a monthly newsletter developed to provide updates on Prevent and radicalisation throughout the UK with information on local incidents.

LearningSkills website

learningSkills website provides updates on safeguarding Equality & Diversity and Health & Safety and includes links to local and national current affair issues.

Sharepoint Safeguarding page

All safeguarding documents and relevant communications are saved on a designated safeguarding page that allows staff easy access to documentation and information.

External speakers/visitors and the use of our venues

If any member of staff wishes to invite an external speaker into any of the learningSkills venues, they must inform a member of the Management Team. Vulnerable students are **NEVER** left unsupervised with external visitors.

All visitors **MUST** complete the learningSkills visitor form, in line with learningSkills policy.

If an agreement is made to allow external organisations or guest speakers to use the premises, appropriate checks will be made before agreeing to the contract. Usage will be monitored and in the event of any behaviour not in-keeping with the Anti-Radicalisation Prevent Policy, we will contact the police and terminate the contract.

All visitors to Gateshead Council learningSkills sites will be required to sign in and out of the venue.

Staff must ensure that where they arrange meetings with visitors to learningSkills premises they notify reception, ensure they are available to meet the visitor/s and accompany the visitor throughout their stay.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Related policies

Further information on any issues detailed in this policy can be located in your employee handbook or looking on the Council Intranet, internet or alternatively by contacting your designated person.

- Council Disciplinary procedure
- Council Grievance Procedure
- Council Physical intervention
- Council Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Council Racist Incident Reporting Policy
- learningSkills Equality and Diversity Policy
- Council Equality Policy
- Council Health and Safety policy
- Council Fraud and Corruption Policy
- Council ICT security Policy
- Council Child protection Policy
- Council Code of Practice
- Council Anti-Bullying Strategy for Children and Young People 2011-2014
- Council Confidential Reporting Code (Whistle Blowing)
- learningSkills Behaviour Management Policy
- Gateshead Safeguarding Adults from Abuse - Policy and Procedures Revised: May 2015
- E-Safety Policy
- learningSkills Prevent and Anti-Radicalisation Policy
- learningskills sexual violence & sexual harassment policy
- Data Protection Policy
- LSCB Protocol & Procedure Page
- learningSkills code of conduct

Appendix 2: Additional Information relating to the Safeguarding of Children, Young people and ‘Adults at Risk’ and Forms of Abuse

Supporting students

Statistically children, young people and/or adults with identified needs e.g. behavioural difficulties and/or disabilities are more vulnerable to abuse. Gateshead Council learningSkills staff who work in any capacity with children, young people and/or adults with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and/or emotional and behavioural problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

Gateshead Council learningSkills recognise that students who are abused may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world as benevolent and meaningful. They may have feelings of helplessness, humiliation and some sense of self-blame.

Gateshead Council learningSkills recognise that some students adopt abusive behaviour and that these students must be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.

- Gateshead Council learningSkills will promote a positive, supportive and secure environment and will liaise with other agencies to ensure the student is valued and has an opportunity to achieve.
- The following are classified as categories of abuse:
 - Physical - can include hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, inappropriate restraint or sanction, misuse of medication or any other physical harm.
 - Neglect - is a persistent or severe failure to meet the student’s basic needs and may include ignoring medical and or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care, and or educational services.
 - Sexual - includes rape, and sexual assault or being coerced into participating in or watching sexual activity to which the students has not consented, or could not consent, or where pressure was applied to secure their consent.
 - Psychological - can include emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, harassment, isolation and/or withdrawal of services of supportive networks.
 - Discriminatory - includes racist and sexual abuse that is based upon the individual’s disability.
 - Financial - relates to the unauthorised or improper use of funds, money or resources belonging to the individual.

- Institutional - involves the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to students (processes, attitudes and behaviour that amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness or stereotyping).
- Online -Information, communication and technology, the use of technology to instigate bullying or harassment or the use of social media sites spread malicious rumours or make someone feel unsafe.
- Domestic the abuse of one partner within an intimate or family relationship. It is the repeated, random and habitual use of intimidation to control a partner.
- Modern Slavery -Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

Child Sexual Exploitation

Possible Indicators

Nationally it has been identified that the level and risk of Child Sexual Exploitation is higher than had previously been assessed. It is important for everyone working with children and young people in Gateshead to be aware of possible indicators of sexual exploitation. This list below is not exhaustive (or in any order) but contains warning signs that give an indicator that further investigation or intervention may be necessary.

- Missing from home or care and/or absent from school
- Involvement in offending
- Drug or alcohol misuse – including “legal highs”
- Repeat STIs, pregnancies, terminations
- Poor mental health, self-harm and/or thoughts/attempts at suicide
- Unexplained gifts (money, mobile phones, clothes...)
- Changes in appearance and/or physical injuries
- Evidence of sexual bullying and/or vulnerability through the internet and/or social network sites/apps
- Estranged from their family (and previous friendship groups)
- Recruiting others into exploitative situations

Honour-based Violence

Honour-based violence (HBV) is the term used to refer to a collection of practices used predominantly to control the behaviour of women and girls within families or other social groups in order to protect supposed cultural and religious beliefs, values and social norms in the name of 'honour'. HBV incidents and crimes include specific types of offence, such as forced marriage (FM) and female genital mutilation (FGM), and acts which have long been criminalised, such as assault, rape and murder. We use HBV to refer to the full range of incidents and crimes which perpetrators carry out under the guide of maintaining or protecting perceived 'honour'.

Female Genital Mutilation

Possible Indicators Include:

- A long holiday abroad or going 'home' to visit family
- An older female relative visiting the UK
- A special visitor, relative or cutter visiting from abroad
- A special occasion or ceremony to 'become a woman' or get ready for marriage
- A female relative being cut – a sister, cousin, or an older female relative such as a mother or aunt
- Unexpected, repeated or prolonged absence
- Academic work suffering

Indicators FGM may have taken place:

A girl or woman who has had Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) may:

- Have difficulty walking, standing or sitting
- Spend longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet
- Appear withdrawn, anxious or depressed
- Have unusual behaviour often after an absence from school or college
- Be particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations
- Ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear

Vulnerability Factors

The following are typical vulnerability factors in young people prior to abuse – remember though, young people from any background of any age or gender can become victims of sexual exploitation.

- Living in a chaotic or dysfunctional household (including parental substance abuse, domestic abuse, criminality etc.)
- History of abuse
- Recent bereavement or loss
- Low self-esteem or confidence
- Gang association either through relatives, peers, intimate relationships)
- Learning disabilities
- Associating with other victims of exploitation
- Uncertainty about their sexual orientation or identity (particularly if they feel unable to disclose this to their family)
- Living in residential care or homeless or living in a hostel/B&B/Foyer
- Lack of friends of the same age group

Peer on peer sexual abuse

Learning Skills operates a zero- tolerance policy to any instances of sexual abuse. All staff and learners will be made aware of what constitutes sexual abuse through induction training materials.

Gateshead Council LearningSkills will take all allegations of sexual abuse seriously and will thoroughly investigate allegations in a timely manner. (see LearningSkills sexual violence & sexual harassment policy)

Sexual abuse or misconduct may include, but is not limited to:

- Child sexual abuse – any sexual activity, involvement, or attempt of sexual contact with a person who is a minor (under 18 years old) where consent is not or cannot be given.
- Sexual activity with another who is legally incompetent or otherwise unable to give consent.
- Physical assaults or violence, such as rape, sexual battery, abuse, molestation or any attempt to commit such acts.
- Unwanted and intentional physical conduct that is sexual in nature, such as touching, pinching, patting, brushing, massaging someone's neck or shoulders, and/or pulling against another's body or clothes.
- Material such as pornographic or sexually explicit images, posters, calendars, or objects.

LearningSkills Safeguarding Policy

Don't hesitate – contact the Safeguarding Officer on 0191 433 8646 or email on:

safeguardinglearningskills@gateshead.gov.uk

- Unwelcome and inappropriate sexual activities, advances, comments, innuendoes, bullying, jokes, gestures, electronic communications or messages (e.g. email, text, social media, voicemail), exploitation, exposure, leering, stalking or invasion of sexual privacy.
- A sexually hostile environment characterized as comments or conduct that unreasonably interferes with one's work performance or ability to do the job or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.
- Direct or implied threats that submission to sexual advances will be a condition of employment or affiliation with

Appendix 3 – A note on Safer Recruitment

Experience shows the importance of organisations that provide services to children, young people and/or 'Adults at Risk' operating recruitment and selection procedures and other human resources (HR) management processes that help deter, reject, or identify people who might abuse children, young people and/or "Adults at Risk", or are otherwise unsuited to work with them. Making safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and/or 'Adults at Risk' an integral factor in HR management is an essential part of creating safe environments for children, young people and/or 'Adults at Risk'.

Safer practice in recruitment means thinking about and including issues to do with child protection and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and/or 'Adults at Risk' at every stage of the process. It starts with the process of planning the recruitment exercise and, where the post is advertised, ensuring that the advertisement makes clear the organisation's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and/or 'Adults at Risk'. It also requires a consistent and thorough process of obtaining, collating, analysing, and evaluating information from and about applicants. Main elements of the process include:

- ensuring the job description makes reference to the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- ensuring that the person specification includes specific reference to suitability to work with children;
- obtaining and scrutinising comprehensive information from applicants, and taking up and satisfactorily resolving any discrepancies or anomalies;
- obtaining independent professional and character references that answer specific questions to help assess an applicant's a face-to-face interview that explores the candidate's suitability to work with children as well as his or her suitability for the post;
- verifying the successful applicant's identity;
- verifying that the successful applicant has any academic or vocational qualifications claimed;
- checking his or her previous employment history and experience;
- verifying that s/he has the health and physical capacity for the job;
- the mandatory DBS check (where applicable), previously List 99 and/or the Protection of Children Act (PoCA), Enhanced Disclosure via the CRB.

LearningSkills Safeguarding Policy

Don't hesitate – contact the Safeguarding Officer on 0191 433 8646 or email on:

safeguardinglearningskills@gateshead.gov.uk

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) helps employers make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with at risk groups, including children. It replaces the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA).

DBS are responsible for:

- processing requests for criminal records checks
- deciding whether it is appropriate for a person to be placed on or removed from a barred list
- placing or removing people from the DBS children's barred list and adults' barred list for England, Wales and Northern Ireland

DBS search police records and, in relevant cases, barred list information, and then issue a DBS certificate to the applicant and employer to help them make an informed recruitment decision.

Information released on DBS certificates can be extremely sensitive and personal. Therefore, a code of practice for recipients of DBS certificates has been developed to ensure that any information they contain is handled fairly and used properly.

Only staff who have completed Gateshead Council's recruitment and selection training will be responsible for interviewing and making decisions regarding DBS checks.

Information provided DBS to Gateshead Council learningSkills will be used to make final recruitment decisions, where appropriate, to the suitability of a potential candidate in relation to pending position/role.

All front-line staff will undergo a DBS Enhanced Check (Children), Checked for barring and the DBS update service

The Disqualification by Association requirements will be applied where appropriate.

Central Records

Gateshead Council learningSkills will maintain a central record system of staff who work with children, young people and/or 'Adults at Risk' as part of their duties. The information that is recorded, in respect of staff members, is whether the following checks have been carried out, or certificates obtained, and the date on which each check was completed/certificate obtained:

an identity check;

a barred list check;

an enhanced DBS check/certificate;

a prohibition from teaching check;

further checks on people living or working outside the UK;

a check of professional qualifications; and

a check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom.

Register with the DBS update service

Further information can be found at:

- <https://www.gatesheadsafeguarding.org.uk/article/9201/Allegations-against-staff-and-volunteers> For Gateshead Council guidance for allegations against staff and DBS check guidance.
- www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service/about
- www.safenetwork.org.uk/getting_started/Pages/Why_does_safeguarding_matter.aspx

Appendix 4 – Information relating to Lone Working

Lone working - where staff will be working separately from others outside normal hours of work, in venues without close or direct supervision, or on site assessing, they must ensure the following:

- They have a contact number for a person who can be contacted in case of an emergency and a contact number at the venue and that this is recorded on the register.
- Their direct line manager is aware of the delivery.
- Staff and students are aware of the safest way to leave the building to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all parties.
- A risk assessment is completed in the register. Staff must inform managers if the risk is identified as high.
- If there is an immediate risk of violence removes self and others who may be at risk.
- Contact the emergency contact number from the register.
- If this is not practical or the issue is serious contact emergency services on 999.

Further Information is available in Gateshead Council Lone Working Policy.

Appendix 5 - Online Safety

We wish to promote the use of technology by students whilst ensuring students protecting themselves and others from cyber bullying, harassment, identity theft and scams.

Students are responsible for using Gateshead ICT systems and mobile devices in accordance with the Gateshead Learning Skills Acceptable Use Agreement/Code of Conduct. Students must accept the Acceptable Use Agreement/Code of Conduct as a condition of using the Gateshead learningSkills network.

LearningSkills Safeguarding Policy

Don't hesitate – contact the Safeguarding Officer on 0191 433 8646 or email on:

safeguardinglearningskills@gateshead.gov.uk

Gateshead Council learningSkills recognise that students must have as many opportunities as possible to extend their knowledge and broaden their skills whilst using ICT within teaching and learning, it is expected that:

All students will be lawful, efficient, economical and ethical in their use of the Council's ICT resources, which are provided to create, preserve, transmit and apply knowledge through teaching, research, creative works and other forms of learning. ICT facilities are provided to enrich the curriculum, but it is important students are aware that:

- It is illegal to use any ICT resources to harass, menace, defame, libel, or discriminate against any other students or person within or beyond the Council.
- Users must respect and protect their privacy and that of others.
- Users are not permitted to use ICT resources to access, store or transmit pornographic material of any sort or transmit
- Users are not permitted to use ICT resources to access, store or transmit extremist content of any sort, including materials designed to radicalise vulnerable people.
- Materials should not be used to infringe copyright law. The law permits copying and/or printing only with permission of the copyright owner, with a few limited exceptions.
- Everyone uses ICT resources in an appropriate way which is not likely to corrupt, damage or destroy data, software or hardware, either belonging to the Council or to anyone else.
- Everyone must be aware when using ICT resources to ensure that health, safety and well-being is protected at all times and that no-one is pleased in any situation where they feel unsafe or threatened.
- Gateshead Council learningSkills reserve the right to remove or restrict access to any material should it be felt that there has been misconduct.

Students are expected to seek help and follow procedures where they are worried or concerned, or where they believe an e-safety incident has taken place involving them or another member of the wider community. Students must act safely and responsibly at all times when using the internet and/or mobile technologies.

Students should familiarise themselves the safeguarding systems detailed within the Safeguarding Policy and summarised in the Students Induction. Staff will take part in safeguarding and e-safety training using online learning materials.

The use of Gateshead IT facilities is subject to the Acceptable Use Policy and UK law. Access may be removed and/or disciplinary measures taken if misuse occurs.

Appendix 6 - Online Safety for learningSkills Staff

In handling incidents, all learningSkills staff will:

- Take all reasonable precaution to ensure online safety
- Report any suspected online risk of infringement to the Safeguarding Officer or Designated Safeguarding Lead within learningSkills
- Refer any concern around staff misuse to their line manager who will report this to

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- If the concern is about the Principal, staff will notify the Safeguarding Officer who may then decide to notify the LADO (Lead Authority's Designated Officer).

Online Safety for staff working in schools*

All learningSkills staff working in schools will:

- Support the school in promoting online safety
- Report any suspected misuse or problem to the Safeguarding Lead within each school and Safeguarding Officer within learningSkills
- Maintain an awareness of current online safety issues and guidance
- Model safe, responsible and professional behaviours in their own use of technology

***Working in schools is defined as: those staff who spend any time working with children and young people as part of their day to day roles and responsibilities in a school/academy.**

Expected Conduct and Incident Management

learningSkills staff:

- be vigilant in the supervision of internet usage at all times, as far as is reasonable, and use common-sense strategies in learning resource areas where children, young people and adults have flexible access
- take reasonable, professional precautions when working with learners, previewing websites before use; using age-appropriate search engines where more open Internet searching is required.

Social Networking

- learningSkills staff are instructed not to run social network spaces for student use on a personal basis
- Use of any learningSkills approved social networking will adhere to Council policy.

Private Social Networking Use

learningSkills staff will ensure that:

- They are not online friends with any vulnerable young person under the age of 19.
- They are not online friends with any vulnerable adult aged 19+ who uses the learningSkills service.
- They do not engage in online discussion on personal matters relating to members of the learning community
- Personal opinions are not attributed to the service or local authority and personal opinions do not compromise the professional role of the staff member, nor bring the service or local authority into disrepute.

Appendix 7 – Dealing with disclosure, suspicion of abuse and/or allegations

Disclosure and Confidentiality

Any child, young person and/or adult who wishes to disclose must be informed that the member of staff has a professional responsibility to share the relevant information about the protection of the students with other professionals.

If a child, young person and/or adult confides in a member of staff and asks for the information to be kept secret, the member of staff has a responsibility and duty of care to share the information with a Designated Person.

This needs to be done with care and sensitivity and the child, young person and/or adult needs to be reassured that the matter will only be discussed with people who need to know. Where this occurs, staff will ensure confidentiality protocols are adhered to and information is shared appropriately.

If in any doubt about confidentiality, staff will seek advice from learningSkills Designated Person, a Senior Manager or from the Council's Information Rights Officer on 0191 433 2192.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard all students.

Dealing with suspicions or allegations of abuse

Concerns for the safety and wellbeing of all students could arise in a variety of ways and in a range of different settings. It is essential to act quickly and professionally in all cases of suspected abuse or incidents where students have stated that they feel unsafe.

Any allegation against a member of staff, another student or a volunteer must be reported immediately to the Gateshead Council learningSkills Designated Person.

Ignoring abuse is not an option - if at any time you think that a student is being abused or is at risk of abuse you must report your concerns immediately.

If you come across a situation where you think a student is at risk of abuse you must not ignore the information. Do not assume that others know what you know. You must inform Gateshead Council learningSkills Designated Person immediately. Remember that all students have human rights. You have a duty of care to ensure the rights and needs of the students.

If an allegation of abuse is made you should:

- Ensure that you outline that the issue may need to be shared and that you cannot offer confidentiality
- allow the person to speak freely
- not trivialise the issue being discussed
- not make any suggestions or prompts
- reassure the person they have done the right thing in disclosing the information

- only ask questions to clarify the situation, do not probe or interrogate so as to investigate the allegations
- ascertain the wishes of the alleged victim/witness about what they want to do or what they would like to happen
- let them know the information disclosed cannot be kept secret and that the information will have to be discussed with other people on a need to know basis. This is especially the case if a crime has been or may have been committed. They should be told with whom the information will be shared and that their views and wishes will be taken into account
- record any views, wishes or concerns expressed by the person
- report concerns immediately to a LearningSkills Designated Person

Disclosure by Staff - Whistleblowing (Confidential Reporting Code)

Gateshead Council has effective systems in place to ensure that its employees provide the best levels of service and act appropriately.

The confidential reporting code is designed to give employees the chance to draw attention to concerns about wrong or unacceptable practice. It is not about telling tales on colleagues but aims to ensure that work is carried out honestly and well.

All concerns will be recorded and investigated promptly. Concerns will, so far as is possible, remain confidential and those raising them will be treated fairly by the Council. For further information please refer to 'Confidential Reporting Code' on page 10.34 of the Council employee handbook or the information can be located on the Council intranet.

The official name for whistleblowing is 'making a disclosure in the public interest'; however it is much more commonly called 'blowing the whistle' or 'whistleblowing'. It means that if you believe there is a wrongdoing in your workplace (e.g. somebody may be committing a criminal offence) you can report this by following the correct processes, and your employment rights are protected.

Whistleblowing Do nothing

Employees are often the first to realise that there may be something seriously wrong within the Council. However, they may not express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or to the Council. They may also fear harassment or victimisation. In these circumstances' employees may feel that it is easier to ignore the concern rather than report it.

This policy has been written to take account of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which protects workers making disclosures about certain matters of concern, where those disclosures are made in accordance with the Act's provisions.

For further information relating to this policy, please refer to The Whistleblowing Policy for Employees, located on the Council intranet.

<https://www.gatesheadsafeguarding.org.uk/article/9200/Multi-agency-whistle-blowing-guidance>

Appendix 8 - Safeguarding Reporting Process

There are procedures in place for reporting and dealing with allegations relating to the area of safeguarding, or incidents where students have felt unsafe. This procedure compliments the safeguarding policy. Always ensure you have access to and are familiar with the reporting process for My Concern detailed in section 1

Preserving Evidence and Reporting an Incident

In most circumstances when preserving evidence, you may not need to do anything except record the events that have given rise for concern. However, there may be occasions when it is important to follow certain rules:

- Ensure written records (notes, letters, bank statements, medication records etc.) are kept in a safe place.
- Make a written record of messages (e.g. answerphone) to ensure they are not lost. Include the date and time and sign them.
- In cases of physical or sexual assault encourage the person not to wash, bathe or shower where you think they might need a medical examination.
- Try and ensure that others around do not interfere with any items that may be important for the police.
- If there is any suspicion that there may be forensic evidence, inform the police and preserve the evidence. The person may not tell you all the facts on the initial disclosure - do all you can to anticipate what may be needed as evidence and do all you can to preserve it.
- It is important that you write down why you are concerned about a person as simply and clearly as you can, and as soon as you can after an event. In some cases, this will mean writing in a person's records or notes, in others it might be on a separate record sheet. All original notes must be retained.
- It is important that you record all relevant information including what you saw, what you heard, and why you acted as you did.
- Sign and date your records and make sure they are kept in a safe place.
- Record any physical signs or injuries using a body map; make sure you sign and date it.
- Write down what is said to you, who said it including their relationship to the child, young person or Adult at Risk or role and how they can be contacted, if appropriate. Include any questions you have asked, make sure you sign and date it.
- Include any details about what the person wants to be done at this stage

Appendix 9 – Further Contact Details

LearningSkills Safeguarding Policy

Don't hesitate – contact the Safeguarding Officer on 0191 433 8646 or email on:

safeguardinglearningskills@gateshead.gov.uk

- For incidents affecting adults (18+) contact Adult Social Care Direct Tel: **0191 433 7033** Outside of office hours Social Work Team contact **0191 477 0844** or Safeguarding Adults Tel: **0191 433 3361**
- For incidents affecting young people (0-18) contact the Referral and Assessment Team **0191 433 2410/433 2349/433 3417/433 2505/433 2540/433 2653**(office hours), Outside of hours Social Work Team contact **0191 477 0844** or Childline **0800 1111**.
- For incidents of Domestic Violence Contact the Safer Families Team on **0191 433 5600** or National Women's Aid **08-82000 247**.
- If you are a young person with concerns about your own safety (or one of your friends) and you do not want to talk to the police or a social worker, you can also call Childline on **0800 1111**. This is a free 24-hour number offering advice and support. You can also visit the Childline website.
- If you are worried or have concerns about the safety of a child, you cannot make a referral from this website. Members of the public can phone the council (in confidence) to report a concern on the number listed above.
- If you have been affected by any of the issues in this policy or you know someone who has please contact our Designated Person on **0191 433 8646** or email safeguardinglearningskills@gateshead.gov.uk
- Members of the public can also contact the NSPCC by text message on **88858** to report concerns about a child. This service is free and anonymous the NSPCC aim to respond within three hours. In an emergency you should always contact the Police (on **999**) and/or Children's Services. For non-emergencies you can contact Northumbria Police on **03456 043 043**.
- Or if the person is in immediate danger contact the police on 999 or Gateshead Police on **03456 043043**.
- See LS My Concern Safeguarding Reporting tool.
- To make urgent referrals outside of office hours please telephone the Emergency Duty Team on **0191 477 0844**
- Young people with concerns can also phone: **Childline: 0800 1111**.

Appendix 10 – Further Information

Her Majesty's Government

- What to Do If You Are Worried a Child is being Abused (HMG March 2015)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (HMG, Updated September 2016)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HMG Updated February 2017)
- What To do if You Are Worried a Child is being Abused (HMG March 2015)
- Information Sharing (HMG March 2015)
- *Prevent* Duty Guidance (HMG, Updated March 2016)
- Gateshead Council Learning & Schools Safeguarding Policy (December 2017)
- The Children Act 1989; Children Act 2004
- The Education Act 2002; Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Safeguarding disabled children 2009

Ofsted

- Safeguarding children and young people and young 'Adults at Risk' policy
- Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years Education and Skills Settings (September 2016)
- Inspecting e-safety in schools 2013
- Further education and Skills inspection handbook from September 2015

Gateshead

- Gateshead Safeguarding Adults from Abuse
- Safeguarding Adults Board Strategic Plan 2016 - 2019
- Dignity in Gateshead 2015
- Gateshead Council Children and Young People's Anti-Bullying Strategy 2015-2020
- Gateshead Safeguarding Adults Board Practice Guidance Note 1 Safeguarding Adults Review
- The learningSkills Safeguarding Video is accessible here [LearningSkills.eu/YouTube](https://www.learningSkills.eu/YouTube)

Further Information with Hyperlinks

Links to Safeguarding Information

[Schools, colleges and children's services](#)

[Department for Education,](#)

[Home Office,](#)

[Department for Communities and Local Government,](#)

[Department of Health,](#)

[Foreign & Commonwealth Office,](#)

[Official Solicitor and Public Trustee,](#)

[Ofsted](#)

Preventing neglect, abuse and exploitation

[Childhood neglect: training resources](#)

[Safeguarding children and young people from sexual exploitation](#)

[Safeguarding children in whom illness is fabricated or induced](#)

[The right to choose: multi-agency statutory guidance](#)

[What to do if you suspect a child is being sexually exploited](#)

[What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#)

[Working together to safeguard children](#)

Keeping children safe in education and other settings

[Keeping children safe in education](#)

[Supervision of activity with children](#)

[Protecting children from radicalisation: the prevent duty](#)

[Secure children's homes: how to place a child aged under 13](#)

Safeguarding disabled children

[Safeguarding disabled children](#)

Runaway and homeless children

[Children who run away or go missing from home or care](#)

[Provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds who may be homeless and/or require accommodation](#)

Cross-border child protection

[Cross-border child protection cases: the 1996 Hague Convention](#)

[Safeguarding children who may have been trafficked](#)

LearningSkills *Safeguarding Policy*

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Information sharing

[Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#)

Gang activity

[Safeguarding children and young people affected by gang activity](#)

Munro review

[Munro review reports](#)

Consultations

[Social work: knowledge and skills for supervisors and leaders](#)

Research and statistics

[Safeguarding children research](#)

[Social work and child protection: research priorities and questions](#)

[Statistics: children in need and child protection](#)

Aim and Objectives

Gateshead Council *Vision 2030*

learningSkills Mission - To remove barriers to learning and support local people to achieve their full potential

learningSkills Goal - Excellent Education for Everyone

learningSkills Values

- Delivers outstanding teaching and learning
- Promotes personal development and progression
- Embraces equality and values difference
- Promotes learning as a lifelong activity
- Improves health of local people through learning
- Ensures learners are safe and safeguarded
- Increases economic wellbeing and resilience
- Engages people and families from disadvantaged communities
- Supports local employers to gain the skills edge
- Attracts resources and delivers value for money
- Develops productive partnerships
- Values and protects the environment
- Employs and develops a highly skilled, creative 'can do' workforce



learningSkills Delivers

- Apprenticeship & Workforce Development
- Community & Family Learning
- Employability & Careers
- English & Maths
- Support for Schools
- Youth Skills

We are always keen to hear from anyone who wishes to contribute to the improvement of our policies and services

For further information or to discuss this policy please do not hesitate to contact **learningSkills** on 0191 433 8646.

LearningSkills *Safeguarding Policy*

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Strategic Safeguarding Aim

“To identify, promote and deliver effective safeguarding practice with our students, staff, employers and communities”

Safeguarding Objective

“To use a whole organisation approach towards safeguarding, to protect vulnerable people from harm and use our expertise as educators to create safe communities where people can develop and grow.”