

**Wiltshire
Equine
Assisted
Learning**



**Wick Yard,
Bath Road,
Farleigh Wick,
Bradford on Avon,
Wiltshire,
BA15 2PU**

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Wiltshire Equine Assisted Learning (WEAL) fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding child and young people protection.

Policy agreed (date): 7th September 2023.

Policy published (including on website) (date): 7th September 2023.

Next review (date): 7th September 2024

Key Safeguarding Personnel

Role: Proprietor

Hannah Lindsay.

07888678239.

hannah@wiltshireequineassistedlearning.co.uk

Named Safeguarding Lead

Hannah Lindsay.

07888678239

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Deputy Safeguarding Lead

Sam Park

07816587839

sam@wiltshireequineassistedlearning.co.uk

Children's Social Care referrals:

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH):

Out of hours:

0300 456 0108

0300 456 0100

If you believe a learner is at immediate risk of significant harm or injury, you must call the police on 999.

Introduction

WEAL is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our learners. We will fulfil our local and national responsibilities as laid out in the following key documents:

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022) (statutory for Alternative Provision Schools)

The procedures of the Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership (SVPP)

Information sharing - Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (2018) 2022

- Alternative Provision - Statutory guidance 2013

The aim of this policy is to ensure:

*all our learners are safe and protected from harm.

*safeguarding procedures are in place to help learners to feel safe and learn to stay safe.

- adults in the organisation's community are aware of the expected behaviours and the organisation's legal responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and child protection.

Scope

Safeguarding children is defined as:

ensuring that children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care acting to enable all children to have the best life chances preventing impairment of children's mental or physical health or development and protecting children from maltreatment.

Safeguarding adults means protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

Safeguarding covers a range of measures that includes child protection procedures.

It encompasses a preventative approach to keeping children and vulnerable adults safe that incorporates learner health and safety; behaviour management and preventing bullying; supporting learners with medical conditions; personal, health, social economic education; providing first aid and site security.

Consequently, this policy is consistent with all other policies adopted by the proprietor and should be read alongside the following policies relevant to the safety and welfare of our learners:

- Behaviour policy
- Staff Behaviour Policy
 - Health and Safety
 - Equality Statement
 - Whistleblowing policy

This policy applies to all staff in our organisation.

For the purposes of this policy:

*Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the organisation full time or part time, in a paid or regular voluntary capacity.

*A volunteer is a person who performs an activity that involves spending time, unpaid with our organisation (except for approved expenses).

*Parent refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

Any safeguarding concerns or disclosures of abuse relating to a learner at our provision or outside of operating hours are within the scope of this policy.

Expectations

WEAL Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

All staff

- are familiar with this safeguarding policy and have an opportunity to contribute to its review.
- are alert to signs and indicators of possible abuse.
- are able to record and report concerns as set out in this policy.
- are able to deal with a disclosure of abuse from a learner.
- are involved in the implementation of individual education programmes, integrated support plans child in need plans, interagency child protection plans as required.

In addition,

all staff have read and understood Part 1 of the latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).

Staff working directly with children have also read Annex B of KCSiE, Staff not working directly with children should read Annex A (a condensed version of parver 2022)

Directors

As key strategic decision makers and vision setters for the organisation, the proprietor/trustees will make sure that our policies and procedures are in line with national and local safeguarding requirements.

Proprietor/trustees will work with the senior leaders to make sure the following safeguarding essentials are in place.

Staff Behaviour Policy (for safer working practice)

Safeguarding Lead / Deputy

Safeguarding Lead training

KCSIE Part 1

Looked After Children (LAC)

Online safety training for staff

Preventing Radicalisation

Staff training

Whistleblowing

Learner voice

Children Missing out on education and

Children Missing Education (CME)

Concerns about staff conduct

Dealing with a learner at immediate risk

Early help

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Honour based abuse

Child on child abuse

Reporting abuse /SVPP procedures

SEND and safeguarding

Allegations management

Our board of directors are responsible for liaising with the local authority Designated Officer for Allegations (DOfA and other partner agencies in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against the Director.

The Director and the Named Safeguarding Lead to complete an annual safeguarding audit return to the local authority.

Safer Recruitment

Our board of directors monitor the organisation's safer recruitment practice.

All staff are subject to safer recruitment processes and checks and we follow the guidance set out in Part 3 of KCSIE.

At WEAL, we scrutinise all applications for paid or voluntary posts. We undertake interviews and make appropriate checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). We maintain a single central record (SCR) of the essential checks as set out in KCSiE, that have been carried out and certificates obtained. The SCR applies to:

all staff (including teacher trainees on salaried routes) who work at the organisation.

Staff Behaviour Policy (for safer working practice)

WEAL is committed to positive academic, social and emotional outcomes for our learners underpinned September 2022 by a strong safeguarding ethos. We are equally committed to the protection and welfare of our staff. who are expected to adhere to the highest standards of professional behaviour.

The Staff Behaviour Policy sets out staff behaviours that should be avoided, as well as those that constitute safe practice, and supports our commitment to safeguarding children.

Teaching staff are additionally expected to act within the guidance of the 'personal and professional conduct section of the Teachers' Standards.

Visitors

Scheduled visitors in a professional role (eg fire officer) are asked to provide evidence of their role and employment details (usually an identity badge) upon arrival at the setting.

If the visit is unscheduled and the visitor is unknown to the setting, we will contact the relevant organisation to verify the individual's identity, if necessary.

Curriculum - teaching about safeguarding

Our learners access a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development, and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

We provide opportunities for learners to develop skills, concepts, attitudes and knowledge that promote their safety and well-being. The curriculum specifically includes the following objectives:

Developing learner self-esteem and communication skills.

Developing strategies for self-protection including online safety.

Developing a sense of the boundaries between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour in adults and within peer relationships (positive relationships and consent)

Early help

At WEAL, all our staff can identify children who may benefit from early help as a problem emerges and discuss this with the Named Safeguarding Lead / Deputy Safeguarding Lead

The Safeguarding Lead uses:

- The Digital Assessment and Referral Tool as appropriate as part of a holistic assessment of a child's needs.

WEAL Safeguarding and Child Protection

- The Multi-Agency Thresholds for Safeguarding Children on the SVPP website about suitable action to take when a child has been identified as making inadequate progress or having an unmet need.

Identifying the signs

All staff know how to recognise and are alert to the signs of neglect and abuse. Definitions of abuse set out in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused - Advice for practitioners' (2015) and

'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2022) along with notes from Safeguarding training, are important, reference documents for all staff. Every member of staff is provided with a copy of Part 1 of KCSiE which they are required to read, and which also includes supporting guidance about several specific safeguarding issues. Staff who work directly with children are also required to read Annex A of KCSiE (Sept 2021).

Responding to concerns/disclosures of abuse

Flowcharts provided by the SVPP that set out the required procedure for staff to follow when they have a safeguarding concern about a child are displayed in the staffroom and adult cloakrooms for easy reference.

Staff adhere to the organisation's safeguarding training requirements when concerned about abuse or when responding to a disclosure of abuse. Staff understand that they must NOT ..

- take photographs of any injuries.

- postpone or delay the opportunity for the learner to talk.

- try to investigate the allegation

try to investigate the learners speaking or ask the learner to write an account

- promise confidentiality eg say they will keep 'the secret'. approach or inform the alleged abuser.

All staff

Will record any concern or disclosure by a learner of abuse or neglect and report this to the Safeguarding Lead / Deputy Safeguarding Lead using the standard form.

It is the responsibility of each adult in the setting/s to ensure that the Safeguarding Lead / Deputy Safeguarding Lead receives the record of concern without delay.

In the absence of the Safeguarding Lead / Deputy Safeguarding Lead, staff members know to speak directly to the MASH.

In some circumstances, the Safeguarding Lead / Deputy Safeguarding Lead or member of staff seeks advice by ringing the MASH for advice.

The Safeguarding Lead is always available during setting hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

The voice of the learners is central to our safeguarding practice and learners are encouraged to express and have their views given due weight in all matters affecting them.

Missing children and children missing education

Staff report immediately to the Safeguarding Lead / Deputy Safeguarding Lead, if they know of any child who may be;

Missing - whereabouts unknown or

Missing education - (compulsory school age (5-16) with no registered education place and not electively home educated)

The designated teacher for LAC and care leavers discusses any unauthorised/unexplained absence of

Looked After Children with Virtual School when required

The Safeguarding Lead shares any unauthorised/unexplained absence of children who have an allocated social worker within 24 hours.

Children who do not attend education regularly can be at increased risk of abuse and neglect. Where there is unauthorised/unexplained absence, and after reasonable attempts have been made to contact the family without success, the Safeguarding Lead follows the SVPP procedure and consults/refers to the MASH team as appropriate.

There are no known welfare concerns about a child, we follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and report concerns to the child's main registered school base/Education Welfare Service.

Learners with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Learners with additional needs face an increased risk of abuse and neglect.

Staff take extra care to understand learners with additional needs and never assume the behaviour normal or unimportant. without further exploration.

Staff understand that additional challenges can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in learners with SEND, including communication barriers. Staff recognise that learners with SEND are also at a higher risk of peer group isolation and can be disproportionately affected by bullying. To address those additional challenges, pastoral support is provided as appropriate for learners with SEND and they are also encouraged to discuss their concerns.

The SAFEGUARDING LEAD /

DEPUTY SAFEGUARDING LEAD works to identify learners with additional communication needs and whenever possible, these learners are given the chance to express themselves to a member of staff with appropriate communication skills

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. Staff will inform the SAFEGUARDING LEAD / DEPUTY SAFEGUARDING LEAD immediately if they suspect a girl is at risk of FGM. We will report to the police any 'known cases of FGM to the police as required Child on child abuse

All learners have a right to attend education provision and learn in a safe environment.

All child on child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Staff recognise that while both boys and girls can abuse their peers, it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys instigators of such abuse.

Child on child abuse is not tolerated, passed off as "banter" or seen as "part of growing up". It is likely to include, but not limited to bullying (including cyber bullying gender based violence/sexual assaults sexting "upskirting" or any picture taken under a person's clothing without them knowing to obtain sexual gratification or cause humiliation or distress.

initiation/hazing type violence and rituals. Consequently child on child abuse is dealt with as a safeguarding issue, recorded as such and not managed through the systems set out in the organisation's behaviour policy.

Any learner who may have been victimised and/or displayed such harmful behaviours, along with any other learner affected by child on child abuse, will be supported through the organisation's pastoral system and the support will be regularly reviewed.

We minimise the risk of child on child abuse by providing:

a relevant curriculum, that helps learners to develop their understanding of acceptable behaviours, healthy relationships and keeping themselves safe.

The curriculum is updated to reflect changes in legislation established/publicised systems for learners to raise concerns with staff, knowing they will be listened to, supported and valued, and that the issues they raise will be taken seriously.

The Safeguarding Lead liaises with other professionals to develop robust risk assessments and appropriate specialist targeted work for learners who are identified as posing a potential risk to other

WEAL Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

For learners under 18 years, this is done using a Contextual Safeguarding approach to ensure assessments consider risks posed by any wider environmental factors present in a child's life.

Domestic abuse

Staff understand that domestic violence and abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass but is not limited to: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional harm.

For the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the Safeguarding Lead ensures the organisation receives up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and will ensure key staff provide emotional and practical support to the child according to their needs.

Mental health

All staff are aware that mental health problems can be an indicator that a learner has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Staff understand that abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences can have a lasting impact on learners' mental health, behaviour and education throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood.

They have a duty to observe learners day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

If staff have a mental health concern about a learner that is also a safeguarding concern using the agreed reporting mechanisms.

Preventing radicalisation

Protecting learners from the risk of radicalisation is part of organisation's wider safeguarding duties and is similar in nature to protecting learners from other forms of harm and abuse.

Staff use their judgement in identifying learners who might be at risk of radicalisation and speak to the Safeguarding Lead / Deputy Safeguarding Lead if they are concerned about a learner. The Safeguarding Lead / Deputy Safeguarding Lead will always act proportionately, and this may include making a referral to the Channel programme or to the MASH.

Serious violence

We are committed to the prevention of youth crime.

Our curriculum includes teaching conflict resolution skills and understanding risky situations to help our learners develop the social and emotional skills they need to thrive.

Staff are trained to recognise both the early warning signs that learners may be at risk of getting involved in gangs as well as indicators that a learner is involved in serious violent crime.

Off site visits

We carry out a risk assessment prior to any off-site visit and designate the specific roles and responsibilities of each adult, whether employed or volunteers.

Where there are safeguarding concerns or allegations that happen offsite, staff will follow the procedures described above and in the SVPP flowcharts as appropriate. A copy of the flowcharts is taken on off-site visits for reference.

Exceptional operating circumstances

If the organisation is required to change the way we offer our provision to children due to unforeseen circumstances eg during a pandemic lockdown, staff responsibilities to remain alert to the signs and risks of abuse to children will continue to apply. In such circumstances:

The Safeguarding Lead will:

work closely with social care and partner agencies to support learners in these circumstances and to identify children and vulnerable adults who may be at risk for the first time and/or benefit from additional support

use specific local and national guidance about safeguarding in such circumstances to inform practice and will ensure staff, learners, and families are provided with written

amended Safeguarding Lead arrangements as required (names, location and contact

temporary changes to procedures for working with learners eg online or face to face, offsite.

Timescales for such changes so that all learners, families and staff understand when such arrangements will end, and arrangements revert to those in place prior to the events leading to the need for the temporary changes.

We will ensure the curriculum we offer during such circumstances, continues to promote learners' spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development, and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life, as they may have changed as a result of the national/international events as they evolve.

Record keeping and information sharing

-The organisation liaises with partner organisations (Schools, Wiltshire Council, commissioning agencies) to ensure any safeguarding records for learners are shared on transition by the setting/organisation previously attended by the learner.

-For any learner dual-registered with another school/setting/organisation, the Safeguarding Lead liaises regularly with the Safeguarding Lead at that base to ensure information is shared in the best interests of the learner. This includes contextual safeguarding information about relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online to enable assessment and intervention to happen within these extra-familial contexts.

-WEAL keep clear written records of all learner safeguarding and any child protection concerns using a standard recording form, with a body map, including actions taken and outcomes as appropriate

ensures all learner safeguarding and child protection records are kept securely in a locked location.

-WEAL ensures the records incorporate the wishes and views of the learner.

-The Safeguarding Lead / Deputy Safeguarding Lead acts in accordance with Information Sharing

- Department for Education (DE) (2018) and in line with the Wiltshire Council Record Keeping Guidance which includes details about file retention. Information about learners at risk of harm is shared with members of staff in keeping with the seven golden rules to sharing information in the DE guidance.

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We are committed to work in partnership with parents and carers of children (as appropriate). In most situations, we will discuss initial concerns with them. However, the Safeguarding Lead / Deputy Safeguarding Lead will not share information where there are concerns that if so doing would:

- prejudice the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime
- lead to unjustified delay in making enquiries about allegations of significant harm to a child, or escalation of concerns

colleagues and between agencies.

Staff must be confident and able to professionally disagree and challenge decision making as an entirely legitimate activity as part of our professional responsibility to promote the best safeguarding practice. Staff are encouraged to press for re-consideration if they believe a decision to act/not act in response to a concerns raised about a learner is wrong. In such cases the SVPP Case Resolution Protocol is used if necessary.

If we are on the receiving end of a professional challenge, we see this as an opportunity to reflect on our decision making.

Whistleblowing

All staff can raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the organisation's safeguarding regime.

Our whistleblowing procedures, which are reflected in staff training and our Code of Conduct, are in place for such concerns to be raised with the managing director.

If a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with the managing director or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels are open to them:

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline

Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 from 08:00 to 20:00, Monday to Friday, or email help@nspcc.org.uk.

A member of the board of directors: Sam Park

Managing allegations against adults

WEAL follows the procedure set out by the SVPP 'Allegations against adults' flowchart which is displayed in the staffroom and adult cloakrooms for easy reference.

Where someone in the organisation has a concern about the behaviour of an adult who works or volunteers at the setting, including supply staff, they must immediately consult Sam Park who will refer to the Designated Officer for Allegations (DOFA).

*Any concern or allegation against the Director will be reported to the board of Directors without informing the Director. Concerns will be recorded in all instances, including where the threshold of harm has not been met.

All staff must remember that the welfare of a learner is paramount and must not delay raising concerns by fear that any such reporting could jeopardise their colleague's career.

Any allegation of abuse will be dealt with in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the learner and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

All members of staff and volunteers have read and signed to confirm they have understood the organisation's Staff Behaviour Policy (for safer working practice).

Training Induction

The welfare of all our learners is of paramount importance. All staff including proprietor/trustees and regular volunteers are informed of our safeguarding policy and procedures including online safety, at induction.

Our induction for staff also includes:

Plan of support for individuals appropriate to the role for which they have been hired.

Confirmation of the conduct expected of staff within the organisation - our Staff Behaviour Policy

Opportunities for a new member of staff to discuss any issues or concerns about their role or responsibilities via the line management/mentor process whereby any general concerns or issue about the person's ability or suitability will be addressed.

Safeguarding training

This training is for all staff and is updated every 3 years as a minimum to ensure staff understand their role in safeguarding. Any member of staff not present at this whole team session will undertake this training requirement on their return.

All staff members receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, staff meetings) as necessary and at least annually. All staff also receive training in online safety and this is updated as necessary.

Advanced training

The Safeguarding Lead / Deputy Safeguarding Lead has additional multi agency training which is updated every two years as a minimum. The Safeguarding Lead / Deputy Safeguarding Lead also attend multi-agency courses relevant to the organisation's needs. Their knowledge and skills are refreshed at least annually eg via -bulletins or safeguarding networking events with other Safeguarding Lead / Deputy Safeguarding Leads, The Safeguarding Lead / Deputy Safeguarding Lead attend a Wiltshire MASH tour

Safer Recruitment

At least one person on any appointment panel has undertaken Safer Recruitment Training. This training is updated every five years as a minimum.

Preventing Radicalisation

All staff Undertake Prevent awareness training

Staff support

Due to the demanding, often distressing nature of child protection work, we support staff by providing an opportunity to talk through the challenges of this aspect of their role with a senior leader and to seek further support as appropriate.

Governance

As well as the organisation's safeguarding induction programme, directors are encouraged to complete face to face safeguarding and child protection training. In addition, governors may attend face training for directors provided by Wiltshire Council.

WEAL Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Monitoring and review

Directors ensure that safeguarding is an agenda item on every full director's meeting.

The Proprietor ensures that safeguarding is an agenda item for every staff meeting.

This policy is reviewed annually or earlier as required by changes to legislation or statutory guidance.

The nominated director meets the Named Safeguarding Lead every term (six times a year) to monitor the effectiveness of this policy.