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| **Name of Policy** | ACL Safeguarding and Prevent Policy |
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| Amendments: Details of the main changes that have been made to the key document and the reason for these. |
| 1. Updates from KCSIE 2023 including:  * Online checks for safer recruitment * Increased emphasis on online safety including DSL role in monitoring and filtering of web sites. Appropriate filtering and monitoring on ACL devices and networks * Update the missing from education and safeguarding details to ensure prolonged periods are added. * Throughout Remove Peer on peer and replace with learner on learner |
| 1. Single ACL Safeguarding and Prevent Policy that is more accessible and comprehensive. |
| 1. Updated guidance for Safer Recruitment in ECC |
| 1. Updated guidance on Whistleblowing policy |
| 1. LADO Contact details included 11.12.23 |

# Policy Aims and Intention:

* To create an environment that promotes well-being and ensures personal safety and security for adults with care and support needs (previously referred to as ‘vulnerable’ learners)
* To ensure safeguarding by following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained to a high standard, follow correct guidance and are supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to concerns in response to current legislation and guidance.
* To actively engage with other partners including the police by complying with legislation and statutory duties around Prevent.
* To ensure that staff are trained in Prevent and recognising factors that can make people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

**Audience**: All staff, volunteers, employers, partners, learners and other members of the public. The term learner also refers to apprentices throughout.

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# The Policy

This policy operates at all Adult Community Learning Centres across Essex and applies to all staff, volunteers, learners, partners, and visitors to ACL provision including subcontractors, whether on ACL premises or those of partner organisations. For the purpose of this document the use of the term learner is inclusive of apprentices.

ACL is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all its learners not just those at risk of abuse or neglect.

Compliance with the Prevent duty will reflect existing good practice on safeguarding. For example, it will ensure susceptibility to radicalisation is incorporated into safeguarding training, policies and risk assessments. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales-accessible#Education>

**Children and young people**. This term is used to mean those under the age of 18 years old. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

* protecting children from maltreatment
* preventing impairment of children’s mental or physical health
* ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
* taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2023
* The definition of child protection can be described 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.
* Undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully’. (The Children Act 2004)

KCSIE *September 2023,* gives definitions and additional advice and guidance relating to specific wider areas of abuse which are: Children missing from education, Children and the court system, Children with family members in prison, Child sexual exploitation, County Lines, Serious Violence and Gang Involvement, Domestic abuse, Homelessness, So called ‘honour-based violence, FGM, Radicalisation, Child on child abuse.

ACL has contact with children and young people through activities such as apprenticeships and Family Learning. This policy ensures that these children and young people are also protected in accordance with KCSIE 2023. Staff working with children are required to read Part One, and any concern regarding a child will be referred to the safeguarding lead for ACL. In the case of a young apprentice the Safeguarding team will be contacted. In the event of an emergency, the appropriate emergency service would be contacted. ACL recognises that children and young people may be at greater risk of abuse due to their age and staff are expected to give additional consideration to this.

**Adults**. An adult is defined as being over 18. An adult at risk of abuse or neglect and may require safeguarding is any person over 18 who:

* has needs for care and support (whether or not these are currently being met); and
* is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
* a result of those care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect. (Care Act 2014)

An adult at risk may be:

* An older person who is frail due to ill health, physical disability, or cognitive impairment
* A person who has a learning disability
* A person who has a physical disability and/or a sensory impairment
* A person with a mental health need ie dementia or a personality disorder
* A person with a long-term illness
* A person who misuses substances or alcohol to the extent it affects their capability to manage day to day living
* A carer, where the person meets the definition.

Safeguarding means protecting a person’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of mental or physical abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult’s wellbeing is promoted. This includes, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances. *(Care and support statutory guidance – GOV.UK)*

Safeguarding is not limited to incidents that happen in our centres, harm can take a variety of forms within or outside of family groups and all staff need to take this into consideration.

# Management of Safeguarding

The service has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) with overall responsibility, a Senior Safeguarding Officer, and a Safeguarding Officer. There are also two other members of staff who has Designated Safeguarding Officer training to ensure cover at all times. All staff have responsibilities for ensuring processes are implemented.

**The Designated Safeguarding Lead** will ensure that either they or the Safeguarding Officer(s):

* Investigate concerns and make appropriate referrals to Social Care Direct following the SET (Southend, Essex and Thurrock) Safeguarding Adults Guidelines and the SET Child Protection procedures, advise staff, and offer support when needed. Make appropriate referral to other organisations when needed including calling the police when necessary.
* Act as a single point of contact for Prevent. The Safeguarding Lead is aware of processes for referring to the channel programme where necessary. A service Prevent and Safeguarding Implementation plan will be regularly updated.
* Ensure that sexual violence and sexual harassment is recognised and responded to and that learners can feel confident in reporting abuse, knowing that their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon.
* Undertake and update training every year and will maintain contact with the Local Authority Safeguarding Boards/partners, being aware of and following local arrangements.
* Keep and maintain a central concern log. Keep all records confidential, in line with statutory guidance and GDPR, ensuring due regard to principles which allow both sharing and withholding personal information.
* When working with partners or commissioning/sub-contracting learning, the bidders safeguarding policies and procedures will be checked before finalising contracts. Subcontractors will provide the Safeguarding Lead with an anonymised record of concerns on a monthly basis so that the effectiveness of their management of concerns can be monitored.
* Provide supervision for Designated Officers and ensure support is provided for staff distressed by any disclosure of abuse or safeguarding issues. Essex County Council counselling service may also be used.

**The ACL Safeguarding Group** supports with developing and embedding practice and procedure throughout all areas of ACL. This includes a Strategic Advisory Board member with specific responsibility for safeguarding, a member of the Essex Safeguarding Boards, and the Regional Educational Prevent Co-Ordinator.

# Method of Implementation

The Service will:

* Establish and maintain an environment where all staff are committed to adhering to the policy, adults feel safe and secure, feel able to talk and are listened to.
* Under the Prevent Duty this also includes supporting those who are at risk or being radicalised or drawn into terrorism by challenging the spread of terrorist ideology and providing early intervention designed to divert people away from terrorist activity. This does not mean we discourage our learners from having political or religious view and concerns but rather it is about supporting learners to act upon concerns in non-extremist ways.
* Ensure a culture of zero tolerance of abuse and other harmful behaviours
* Ensure that wherever possible every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and/or carers and colleagues from partner or referral agencies.
* Provide regular review opportunities for apprentices to speak to assessors about safeguarding, including identifying support needs, asking for guidance or raising any concerns.
* Recognise that learners who have learning difficulties and disabilities can be vulnerable to abuse so that staff working in any capacity with such individuals will be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse. Staff must have an awareness that behaviour, mood and injury may relate to abuse not just disability.
* Provide a clear ACL charter on acceptable behaviour which is widely publicised throughout the service and drawn to the attention of all learners at induction.
* Ensure our approach to safeguarding is learner centred and staff consider at all times what is in the best interests of the learner.
* Provide information on both Safeguarding and Prevent to learners both in the Centres and workplace via the ACL website, VLE, ACL videos, course introductions and posters, ensuring that all learners are able to recognise abusive actions and behaviours as such and understand procedures for reporting concerns. Also that they are aware of the risks of radicalisation, how to remain vigilant to extremist activity and report any concerns. Information cards for Safeguarding and Prevent are given to all learners. Learners with learning disabilities on supported programmes will have appropriate safeguarding awareness built into induction of the courses they attend; an easy read information card is provided.
* Ensure that publicity and notice boards provide clear information for safer practices and learning, such as Prevent and Safeguarding posters around the centres in areas such as the reception area, classrooms, corridors and toilets
* Ensure quality assurance in safeguarding is embedded. It is vital that ACL establishes and monitors quality; and that this is reflected in both session visits and Self-Assessment Reports (SAR).
* Not allow its centres to be used by extreme groups nor allow the display or distribution of extremist leaflets or literature from its premises.
* Monitor online safety through an internet filtering and monitoring system on ACL teaching and learning computers and laptops. Raise awareness of reporting procedures in place for staff should any learner report a site that appears to be offensive. (See Computer use policy)

# Staff Reporting Safeguarding and Prevent Concerns.

Concerns to be reported on the dedicated safeguarding number **07788 301629**.

Alternatively concerns can be reported using My Concern. MyConcern is the software programme ACL uses which enables staff to report any safeguarding concerns. At induction all staff are provided with access to My Concern. Staff recording a concern on My Concern should report it as soon as possible and share as much information and detail as possible regarding the concern.

The safeguarding phone and My Concern are monitored whilst the centres are open, outside of these hours, if a concern needs to be raised where there may be an immediate risk of harm to yourself or another person, contact the police or other support service immediately. Tel. **101** or **999**

ACL recognise that the concept of safeguarding can apply to learners and staff in a range of situations, for example, the use of texting or telephone calls to harass others, personal information such as details of whether a person has attended a particular class (especially in situations of domestic abuse) being given to inappropriate people, for example, partners/ spouses or former partners/spouses.

ACL is aware that safeguarding includes behaviour/ incidents that occur outside of our centres. Adults/young people can be put at risk of harm through a variety of actions: inadequate observation of policies and procedures and failures to act, for example a reluctance to investigate allegations, whether proven or unsubstantiated and whether relating to incidences taking place within ACL provision (including outreach centres) or disclosure or abuse taking place at home, in residential accommodation, day centres, etc. For ACL this could translate as inadequate reporting and monitoring procedures.

Child on child abuse is taken seriously. Allegations made about this to be investigated and dealt with through the safeguarding procedures and both parties not just the victims supported. It must be understood that abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as banter.

In the event of a disclosure being made staff will:

* Respond calmly; listen to what is said without showing either disbelief or shock.
* Withhold judgement and accept what is said.
* Make notes, if this isn’t possible at the time as soon as possible after the disclosure using the persons own words.
* Keep the original notes in the event of being needed in court.
* Not promise confidentiality. Inform the person it will be necessary to talk to someone else and explain who, but also ask them what they would like to happen.
* Not ask leading questions; ask questions which will encourage them to talk openly.
* Not carry out a full investigation; this to be done by trained professionals.

Concerns about data protection must not prevent staff and other professionals sharing information and working together to obtain a full picture in order to support the child/adult concerned.

# Children

Any member of staff or volunteer with suspicions or if told of an incident of abuse or neglect of a child or young person, whether at home, school, at our organisation or elsewhere must report this to the Safeguarding Lead who may need to make an immediate referral to Childrens Social Care/Police.

Issues that will be taken into account are:

* The child’s wishes and feelings
* The parent’s right to know (unless this would place the child or someone else in danger, or would interfere with a criminal investigation)
* The impact of telling the parent
* The current assessment of the risk to the child and the source of that risk
* Any risk management plans that currently exist.

Children/young people can be put at risk of harm through a variety of actions: inadequate observation of policies and procedures and failures to act, for example a reluctance to investigate allegations, whether proven or unsubstantiated and whether relating to incidences taking place within ACL provision (including outreach centres) or disclosure or abuse taking place at home, in residential accommodation, day centres, etc. For ACL this could translate as inadequate reporting and monitoring procedures

Child on child abuse must be taken seriously and the ACL Charter referred to. Allegations made about this must be investigated and dealt with through the safeguarding procedures and victims supported. It must be understood that abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as banter.

Concerns and disclosures should be reported immediately via MyConcern or by calling the safeguarding phone (see above). If you think the concern is urgent or if you are unsure, it is safeguarding or need to discuss please contact the Safeguarding Lead/Officer or one of the designated Officers.

**Ways that allegations might be made against another child/young person**

* A child or parent/carer might make a direct allegation against another child or young person
* A child or parent/carer might express discomfort with the behaviour of another child or young person that falls short of a specific allegation.
* Another child, member of staff or volunteer may directly observe behaviour from one child/young person towards another that gives cause for concern
* The organisation may be informed by a parent or by the police or another statutory authority that a child or young person is the subject of an investigation
* A child or young person may volunteer information that he/she has harmed another child or is at risk of doing so or have committed an offence against or related to a child.

If it is behaviour that could be described as child abuse and has led to the victim possibly suffering significant harm, then it must be dealt with under child protection procedures. This should include all incidents of sexual assault and all but the most minor incidents of physical abuse.

**Ways that abuse might be brought to your attention**

* A child might make a direct disclosure about him or herself
* A child might make a direct disclosure about another child
* A child might offer information that is worrying but not a direct disclosure
* A member of staff might be concerned about a children’s appearance or behaviour or about the behaviours of a parent or carer towards a child
* A parent or carer might make a disclosure about abuse that a child is suffering or at risk of suffering
* A parent might offer information about a child that is worrying but not a direct disclosure

**Talking to a child who has told you that he/she or another child is being abused**

* Respond calmly; listen to what is said without showing either disbelief or shock
* Don’t judge, accept what is said
* Jot down some notes, if this isn’t possible at the time as soon as you can, be as accurate as you can, use the child’s own words
* Keep the original notes as they can sometimes be needed in court
* Reassure the child that telling someone about it was the right thing to do.
* Tell him/her that you now have to do what you can to keep him/her (or the child who is the subject of the allegation) safe.
* Let the child know what you are going to do next and who else needs to know about it, do not promise confidentiality.
* Let the child tell his or her whole story. Don’t try to investigate or quiz the child, but make sure that you are clear as to what he/she is saying.
* Ask the child what he/she would like to happen as a result of what he/she has said, but don’t make or infer promises you can’t keep.
* It is not your job to investigate; this can only be done by trained professionals
* Concerns about data protection must not prevent staff and other professionals sharing information and working together to obtain a full picture in order to support the child.

Any member of staff or volunteer with suspicions or if told of an incident of abuse or neglect of a child or young person, whether at home, school, at our organisation or elsewhere must report this to the Safeguarding Lead who may need to make an immediate referral to Childrens Social Care/Police.

Issues that will be taken into account are:

* The child’s wishes and feelings
* The parent’s right to know (unless this would place the child or someone else in danger, or would interfere with a criminal investigation)
* The impact of telling the parent
* The current assessment of the risk to the child and the source of that risk
* Any risk management plans that currently exist.

**Child in need of support and early help**

Sometimes concerns about a child may not be about abuse. Staff and volunteers may be concerned that a child or family need some help in making sure all of a child’s needs are met or to address a particular problem. Therefore, it is vital that all staff and volunteers are aware of the need to provide support as soon as a problem emerges, at any time in a child’s life. The following steps should be taken if you think that a child or young person might benefit from early help service.

* Record the indicators that suggest that the child or young person might benefit from early help provision.
* Make a brief record of your conversations and report them to the safeguarding team so that a way forward can be planned.
* A member of the safeguarding team will make arrangements to discuss this as a possibility with the most appropriate person in the family. Sometimes this may involve several discussions.

Staff and volunteers must remember that they are acting in a position of trust, they may be seen as role models by children and young people and must therefore act in an appropriate manner at all times.

## **Role of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**

The role of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) was introduced within the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' guidance in 2006.  LADOs give advice and guidance on how concerns or allegations about adults working with children should be investigated. The LADO should be contacted if you have concerns or receive a complaint or allegation that a worker/volunteer has:

* behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
* possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
* behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; or
* behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

They can be contacted by phone on 03330 139 797orby e-mail: [lado@essex.gov.uk](mailto:lado@essex.gov.uk). ​

If a concern is raised outside of office hours, and an immediate referral to Social Care is required, this should be made to Essex Social care on 0845 606 1212.  The LADO should then be informed at the first available opportunity.

# Reporting Flowchart – See Appendix A

# Learners reporting a concern

Safeguarding is only effective when we all take responsibility for looking out for each other.

If a learner has concerns, or someone has disclosed abuse to you, speak to your tutor, a member of staff or contact the ACL Safeguarding team direct on **07788 301629**.

This telephone number is monitored during centre opening hours. [Alternatively complete the online form by clicking here.](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fessex-self.achieveservice.com%2Fservice%2FAdult_Community_Learning___Learner_safeguarding%3Faccept%3Dyes%26consentMessageIds%255b%255d%3D4&data=05%7C01%7C%7Ccd318132315442f9f83f08db9756dddb%7Ca8b4324f155c4215a0f17ed8cc9a992f%7C0%7C0%7C638270171560396687%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=rCGtiAY3A5gVRdWd1n45h2mDkw%2B5Gc%2F%2FCEqKO5zkeGo%3D&reserved=0)

# Safer Recruitment

ACL recruits to vacancies through the ECC Recruitment process. At least one member of the interview panel needs to have completed Safer Recruitment Training either through the guidance on the ECC Intranet or via appropriate external training.

Compliance and Safeguarding checks are an important part of the recruitment process. They help us to:

* Comply with the law and Care Quality Commission, Ofsted and Department for Education requirements by ensuring that prospective staff have permission to work and remain in the UK and have not been barred from carrying out the job – e.g. for regulated posts or roles working with vulnerable groups
* Check that the potential recruit is suitably qualified or skilled for the job
* Assess their ability to undertake the duties of the role.

The Compliance Team:

* Conduct compliance and safeguarding checks on our behalf
* Work in partnership with the Safer Recruitment team to ensure that Safer Recruitment practices are followed.

The level of checks required will depend on the role being recruited to and will need to be factored into recruitment lead times.

For staff moving internally, checks take place if there is any change to screening requirements.

If there is no change and satisfactory checks have already been received, there will be no requirement to repeat the screening process. If however, the new role requires an enhanced level of checks, these will need to be carried out before the candidate can start.

Line managers are responsible for ensuring the correct level of check is carried out.

As part of compliance ECC carries out an online check of social media, as recommended within KCSIE guidance published in 2022 and again in 2023.

**Single Central Register**

ACL maintains a single central record of checks. ACL ensures DBS checks and other appropriate checks on all ACL staff and volunteers. Staff who have an enhanced check will register for the DBS Update service. Basic checks are repeated every 3 years.

Volunteers who are inactive for 6 months within ACL are required to undertake a new check before recommencing with their voluntary work.

Regulated Activity (Adults)

The definition of regulated activity links directly to the services provided to an individual. You are in a regulated activity if you are:

* Providing health care
* Providing personal care
* Providing social work
* Providing assistance with cash, bills or shopping
* Providing assistance in the conduct of a person’s own affairs
* Driving a vehicle to convey an adult because of their age, illness or disability

While statutory education is automatically classed as a regulated activity because of the age of the children, adult learning is not, unless the programme is set up specifically for certain vulnerable groups such as Mental Health or the provision for adults with Learning Disabilities. ACL takes a proportionate approach and will carry out DBS checks at an appropriate level on all staff as there may at any time be a 16-18-year-old and/or an adult who is vulnerable enrol in a class or attend a centre.

# Staff Induction and Training

ACL staff undertake Safeguarding Training and Prevent Training as part of their induction to the service and this is recorded on the Single Central Register. This includes online safety training.

On-line Safety training is mandatory for teaching staff, and all staff can access this through the VLE. A workbook is available for volunteers to complete.

All staff will be kept informed about safeguarding responsibilities and procedures through induction, briefings, ACL newsletters, awareness training and access to information and policy documents through the Staff Portal and VLE.

All staff will be made aware of ACL’s duties and expectations around Prevent and radicalisation and have sufficient training to understand factors which make learners vulnerable to extremist ideas and know what action to take.

All staff are required to undertake annual Safeguarding and Prevent refresher training.

A regular Safeguarding and Prevent newsletter is published, and important updates included within staff newsletters to ensure currency of knowledge. For example local risk of extremist activity is covered in the staff newsletter which staff in turn share with learners.

The safeguarding team carry out formal training sessions with staff as well as drop in visits to team meetings to answer questions and update on current activity.

# Learner Induction

All learners have access to the ACL Safeguarding video and this forms a part of their induction to ACL.

Learner induction includes how to study and work safely online. Learners are required to agree to a Acceptable User Policy when logging on to the ACL Teaching and Learning Network.

# Learner Welfare Forms

Carried out to protect any identified adults with care and support needs where appropriate.

All learners are given the opportunity to complete a Welfare/Safeguarding Risk assessment at the start of their course. This information will be held securely and made available to relevant staff only when needed.

Adults may become vulnerable at any time during their course, and managers will complete a welfare form with them immediately whenever this vulnerability is disclosed or becomes apparent. This may include learners in receipt of, or may be in need of, community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who are or may be unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect themself against significant harm or exploitation.

When judging if a person is vulnerable the emphasis should always be on the person’s rights, dignity and individuality; people should not be labelled unnecessarily.

Staff will be trained and supported in recognising signs and levels of vulnerability and when a welfare form needs to be completed. This will include understanding the limits of the support they can give and where and when they may need to refer to specialist help.

Where a learner has a RA and is felt to be vulnerable their attendance must be monitored in line with the Attendance Policy, and they must be contacted as soon as is possible in the case of non-attendance. Welfare Forms will be monitored by the Safeguarding team.

# Employer/Stakeholder Induction

Employers are made aware of safeguarding responsibilities, are given an information leaflet explaining Prevent and complete a training workbook. Within the Employer workbook they are informed on how to report a safeguarding issue and who the Safeguarding team members are. All staff will be made aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or action of colleagues.

# Whistleblowing

ACL operates under the [ECC Whistleblowing Policy.](https://intranet.essex.gov.uk/Documents/Whistle-blowing%20Policy.pdf)

Whistle-blowing happens when an employee or someone we work with raises a concern of suspected wrongdoing or danger in relation to our service provision. This can include, but is not limited to, bribery, fraud or other criminal activity, miscarriages of justice, health and safety risks, damage to the environment, any breach of legal or professional obligations and concerns that someone is covering up these types of wrongdoing.

It is important that any such concerns employees are reported and properly dealt with. ACL encourages all individuals to raise any concerns that they may have about the professional conduct of others. By reporting concerns at an early stage, steps can be taken to safeguard the interests of all employees and prevent fraud, corruption and abuse before it escalates.

The whistleblowing policy should not be used in relation to concerns over personal matters such as individual terms and conditions of employment, working relationships or other personal issues in the workplace. These matters will be handled using the ECC resolution approach set out in the resolution standards and grievance policy.

# Guidance for Visitors and External Speakers

Anyone inviting a visitor or external speaker to an ACL Essex event must follow the guidance given in the ACL Visitor and External Speaker Policy.

Line Managers have overall responsibility for visitors who enter the areas they manage. It is a management responsibility to ensure that this procedure is fully complied with and that any problems have been adequately resolved at the earliest opportunity and before visitors are permitted to proceed with their intended activity.

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# Types of and Definitions of Abuses – see appendix B

# Keeping Ourselves Safe

The following guidelines aim to outline good practice, promote the personal safety of staff and volunteers and protect them from potential allegations while helping to safeguard adults and young people:

* Always seek the person’s permission before touching them.
* Avoid being left alone in a room with an individual, if this does happen make sure the door is left open, and that another staff member knows what you are doing.
* Report concerns or worries about other staff members or volunteers to the appropriate person following the safeguarding procedures.
* Record all incidents and accidents accurately on an incident report form and inform your line manager at the earliest opportunity.
* If a learner is accidentally injured as a result of a staff member or volunteers actions, seems distressed in any way, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, always report such incidents as soon as possible to your line manager and make a written report.
* If a learner appears to develop an infatuation with you don’t encourage this and report the situation to your line manager.
* Ensure consent forms are signed when taking photographs of all learners.

**In order to keep yourself safe, do not:**

* Spend time alone with individual learners in closed classrooms – please leave doors open or use public spaces.
* Give learners personal details such as home phone number, personal mobile number, private email address and home address – If you want to offer email contact, please use your ECC e-mail address or communicate through the VLE.
* Do not use WhatsApp groups to communicate with your learners and do not encourage them to set up their own class groups. ACL email addresses can be used instead for MS Teams.
* Give learners lifts in your car, however short the journey or accept lifts from learners.
* Take learners to your home or visit their homes.
* Arrange to meet learners outside an organised activity or service.
* Invite or accept invitations from learners as a friend on social networking sites such as Facebook.

If these situations are unavoidable, they should only occur with the full prior knowledge and consent of your line manager and where applicable the persons support worker or key worker.

**Never:**

* Engage in sexually proactive activities with learners.
* Encourage or allow learners to become emotionally dependent on you.
* Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
* Allow learners to use inappropriate language unchallenged or use it yourself.
* Make sexually suggestive comments about or to a learner, even in fun.
* Let any allegation made be ignored or go unrecorded.
* Do things of a personal nature for learners that they can do themselves.
* Promise to keep information secret.

# Physical contact and learners with profound and multiple learning difficulties

Touch can contribute to a multi-sensory approach and supports our learners to make sense of their environment. It is supportive and comforting and can help develop trust and build relationships between learner and staff. Touch offers meaningful communication to our learners and prevents periods of isolation and loneliness, which can manifest itself in difficult or self-stimulating behaviours.

It is acceptable to touch learners in order to:

* Function as the main form of communication or reinforce other communication, e.g. hand on shoulder while speaking.
* Give physical support and guidance.
* Give reassurance – communicate security and comfort.
* Act to give protection in a potentially dangerous or hazardous situation.
* Respond to learner’s use of physical contact for communication and making social connection.

It is not acceptable to touch learners in order to:

* Exploit or coerce the learners.
* Satisfy your own needs at the expense of the learner by forcing affection.
* Use touch to correct a learner.
* React in anger.
* Have sexual contact.

Be aware of the following:

* Physical contact being misunderstood and triggering sexual arousal – be tuned in to feedback signals from learners
* Learners may sometimes indulge in touches to intimate areas of a member of staff’s body when there is no sexual intent or understanding, if this happens withdraw from the learner or cease to touch, don’t give significant negative feedback at the time as this may reinforce the behaviour.
* Whenever possible give regard to the learner’s right to accept and withdraw from physical contact.
* Know why you are doing it and be able to explain.
* Respect the learners’ rights to withdraw if they so wish.
* If the use of physical contact is part of the learners’ objectives, then record this in their ILP
* Get to know your learners well, read signals, if you are not happy or comfortable with a situation, back away.
* Where possible have other staff present in the room

# Use of reasonable force

If circumstances mean that force may need to be used to safeguarding a person, the decision is down to the professional judgement of the staff concerned and should always depend on individual circumstances.

The term reasonable force covers a broad range of actions that require a degree of physical contact; it may be passive physical contact such as standing between learners or blocking their path or physical contact such as leading them by the arm. Reasonable means using no more force than is needed.

All staff working in the Supported Learning area will be trained in managing challenging behaviour, de-escalation skills and physical breakaway skills.

# Low Level Concerns regarding Staff /Volunteers

The term ‘low-level’ concern does not mean that it is insignificant. It may be no more than a sense of unease over a member of staffs’ behaviour that is:

* inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work.
* does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

* being over friendly with learners
* having favourites
* taking photographs of learners on their mobile phone, contrary to ACL policy
* engaging with a learner on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
* humiliating learners

All low-level concerns should be reported to a safeguarding officer, recorded, and dealt with appropriately in line with the reporting of concerns.

# Allegations involving staff/volunteers

For concerns about staff /volunteers including supply staff or if there is a suspicion or an allegation is made against a staff member contact the ACL principal ([Lisa Jarentowski](mailto:mailto@lisa.jarentowski@essex.gov.uk)) or the Designated Safeguarding Lead ([Teresa Ablewhite](mailto:teresa.ablewhite@essex.gov.uk)) immediately.

They will liaise with the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer).

If you do not feel able to share your concerns, please refer to the ECC Whistle Blowing Policy. If there is a concern raised and it is felt that it is not being acted on by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, then it can be referred directly to Children’s services / Adult Social care. Concerns regarding allegations about staff must always be addressed.

# Monitoring and Evaluating the Policy

All Line Managers will consult with and advise all staff on the implementation of this policy.

Incidents relating to this policy and its effectiveness will be evaluated by the safeguarding group and reported through the annual Self-Assessment cycle and quality improvement planning and the ACL Safeguarding Annual Report.

# Links to other ACL policies

Online Safety Policy

Computer Use Policy

Attendance Policy

Equality and Diversity Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Harassment and Bullying Policy

Visitor and External Speaker Policy

ECC Whistle Blowing Policy

ACL Charter

ECC Code of Conduct

Positive Behaviours Policy

Fitness to Learn Policy

Learning Support Policy

# APPENDIX A



# APPENDIX B

Types of and Definitions of Abuse

Abuse may be defined as exploitation of persons’ vulnerability, having a detrimental effect on their quality of life, health or welfare and removing their dignity. The Care Act 2014 recognises types of abuse as:

**Physical**– including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions.

Signs include unexplained burns, scratches, bruising or abrasions, drowsiness from misuse of medication and anxiety in the presence of abuser.

Deliberate, physical act of hurting of a child which might take a variety of different forms, including hitting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. Physical abuse can also occur outside of the family environment (including actual or threatened physical attacks, verbal assault or neglect).

**Sexual** – may include rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adults has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts.

Signs include changes in behaviour, torn, stained or bloody underclothing, difficulties in walking or sitting and sexualised behaviour.

Sexual abuse is any sexual activity with a child. You should be aware that many children and young people who are victims of sexual abuse do not recognise themselves as such. A child may not understand what is happening and may not even understand that it is wrong. Sexual abuse can have a long-term impact on mental health.

Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

**Child sexual exploitation (CSE)**

‘Exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something as a result of engaging in sexual activities. This may take many forms, from seeming ‘consensual’ relationships to serious organised crime by gangs and groups.’

It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity

(a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or

(b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. A common feature of CSE is that the child or young person does not recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and does not see himself or herself as a victim of exploitation. Perpetrators of CSE can be from within or from outside a child or young person’s family. If, any staff or volunteer is concerned a child is being sexually exploited they should contact the Safeguarding Team. follow the procedures set out in this document. [Child Abuse Concerns](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/279511/step_by_step_guide.pdf)

**Psychological/emotional** – threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation and unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.

Signs include fear, passivity, confusion, apathy, lack of eye contact, low self-esteem, disturbed sleep patterns and reluctance to talk openly.

For children emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child’s emotional development.

Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child’s developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. Emotional abuse may involve serious bullying – including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones – by a child’s peers. It may cause children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

**Financial or material**– including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult’s financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Signs include loss of jewellery and personal property, lack of money to purchase basic items, inadequate clothing, loss of money from wallet or purse.

**Neglect and acts of omission** – including ignoring medical or physical care needs, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate heating and nutrition.

Signs include dehydration, infections, malnutrition, and hypothermia.

For children neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

* provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
* protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

**Discriminatory** – including verbal and physical abuse, bullying and harassment based on the individual’s age, gender, disability, religion or belief, race or ethnicity or sexual orientation. Recognised signs may be very similar to psychological and emotional abuse.

**Domestic Violence -** Since December 2015 coercive or controlling behaviour has also been criminalised.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

**Modern slavery** – encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude.Traffickers and slave masters using whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

**Organisational** - Including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one’s own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

**Self-neglect -** This covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one’s personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding. It should be noted that self-neglect may not prompt a section 42 enquiry. An assessment should be made on a case-by-case basis. A decision on whether a response is required under safeguarding will depend on the adult’s ability to protect themselves by controlling their own behaviour. There may come a point when they are no longer able to do this, without external support.

Each type of abuse may produce tell-tale signs in the victim, although each individual may present in different ways. The most significant sign is a change in behaviour although this would only be recognisable in the case of learners or staff known to others.

**Abuse Online**

Online abuse can take place via any form of online technology in daily life, this includes learner on learner abuse, bullying, harassing, or sharing of pornography to those who do not want to receive it.

# Definitions of abuses

Definitions and further information are provided below which will give a greater understanding of the terms used.

**Bullying including cyberbullying**

Behaviour by groups or individuals repeated over time that intentionally hurts another. This can be physical or emotional and can take many forms from face-to-face to cyber-bullying via text, phone or the internet.

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities.

**Domestic violence**

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 and over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

**Drugs**

In statutory guidance drugs includes alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs, medicines, new psychoactive substances (legal highs) and volatile substances.

**Fabricated or induced illness**

There are three main ways of the carer fabricating or inducing illness in a child. These include fabrication of signs and symptoms, falsification of hospital charts and medical history and induction of illness.

**Faith abuse**

The national action plan on faith abuse aims to address child abuse linked to faith or belief. This includes concepts of witchcraft and spirit possession.

**Honour based abuse**

HBA is incidents or crimes committed to protect or defend the honour of the family or community, it includes FGM and forced marriage as well as practices such as breast ironing. It often involves a wider network of family and can have multiple perpetrators.

**Forced marriage**

A forced marriage is one in which one or both spouses do not (or cannot) consent to the marriage and duress is involved.

[Forced Marriage](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/70188/forced-marriage-guidelines_English.pdf)

**Gangs and youth violence**

This includes street gangs for whom crime and violence are a core part of their identity.

**Private Fostering**

This is a fostering arrangement that is essentially made privately for the care of a child under 16 (18 if they are disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative with the intention it should last more than 28 days.

**Female genital mutilation (FGM)**

Female genital mutilation takes four forms all of which are prevalent in the UK – all of which are illegal. It involves partial or total removal of female external genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.  **If a disclosure is made that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18, this must be reported to the Police, this is a statutory duty for teachers and is mandatory.** This category includes honor based violence, forced marriage and practices such as breast ironing.

**Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)**

Refers to violence, physical, sexual or otherwise, stalking and harassment and female genital mutilation

**Radicalisation**

Radicalisation is the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism. Terrorism is the use of threat of action designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public or a section of the public for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause. Staff must make the Designated Officers aware of anyone they believe is at risk of radicalisation so they can make a Prevent referral if needed.

**Sexting**

Sexting is the exchange of self-generated sexually explicit images, through mobile picture messages or webcams over the internet.

**Trafficking**

This refers to the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion. Trafficking is about the exploitation of one person over another which includes slavery, forced labour, prostitution and the removal of organs.

<https://www.antislavery.org/slavery-today/human-trafficking/>

**Mental health**

Positive mental health is more than the absence or management of metal health problems; it is the foundation of wellbeing. Mental health problems can indicate possible other abuse is taking place or has taken place. Childhood abuse can have a lasting impact into adulthood. If staff are concerned that a mental health concern is also a safeguarding concern they should speak to the Designated safeguarding Lead or Officer.

[No Health Without Mental Health](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/213761/dh_124058.pdf)

**Hate**

Hate incidents and hate crime are acts of violence or hostility directed at people because of whom they are or who someone thinks they are.

[Hate Crime](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/law-and-courts/discrimination/hate-crime/what-are-hate-incidents-and-hate-crime/)

**Missing Children and Adults**

A missing person is defined as: “Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established and where the circumstances are out of character or the context suggests the person may be subject of crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another.” When someone is categorised as missing, the police will investigate their disappearance and try to find and safeguard them.

**Child missing from education**

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School and College staff should follow the procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of them going missing in future.

[Children Missing From Education](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/395138/Children_missing_education_Statutory_guidance_for_local_authorities.pdf)

**Child missing from home or care**

When a child goes missing or runs away, they are at risk. Safeguarding children therefore includes protecting them from this risk. Local authorities are responsible for protecting children whether they go missing from their family home or from local authority care.

[Missing From Care](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/307867/Statutory_Guidance_-_Missing_from_care__3_.pdf)

**Children with family members in prison**

Children who have a family member sent to prison are more at risk of poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health.

**County Lines**

Criminal exploitation of children or people who are vulnerable is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns.

[County Lines](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines)

**Serious Violence**

Staff must be aware of signs that vulnerable learners may have been approached by or are involved with people associated with criminal networks or gangs

[Gangs and Youth Violence](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-to-schools-and-colleges-on-gangs-and-youth-violence)

**Homelessness**

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk. . The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes in to the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property.

<https://www.crisis.org.uk/ending-homelessness/about-homelessness/>

**Upskirting**

The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as the Upskirting Act, came into force on 12 April 2019. ‘Upskirting’ is where someone takes a picture under a person’s clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim.

If you require this document in any other format, please email [jaimie.huckfield@essex.gov.uk](mailto:jaimie.huckfield@essex.gov.uk) stating the document name in full and the format you need.