

Company Policy: Safeguarding and Child Protection

Policy Title: Safeguarding and Child Protection

Company Name: Access SEN Education and Consultancy Ltd

Policy Owner: Director

Policy Number: SCP-001-V3

Effective Date: 01/09/2025

Review Date: September 2027

Applies To: All employees, associates, contractors, and volunteers

Approved By: Kerry Rigby *Director*

1. Introduction

Access SEN Education and Consultancy Ltd is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable adults. We believe that all individuals, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion, belief, or sexual orientation, have the right to protection from harm, abuse, and exploitation.

We are committed to working in partnership with clients, schools, local authorities, and families to promote a safe and supportive environment.

2. Purpose of This Policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Outline Access SEN's responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and child protection
- Establish a clear procedure for responding to concerns or disclosures
- Ensure staff and associates understand how to recognise and respond to safeguarding issues

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees, associates, contractors, and volunteers of Access SEN Education and Consultancy Ltd
- All services delivered by the company, whether online, in person, in schools, or in community settings

4. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the following statutory guidance and legislation:

- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- The Education Act 2002
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales
- KCSIE 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Alternative Provision statutory guidance
- Children Missing Education statutory guidance
- Prevent Duty Guidance
- Information Sharing Advice for Safeguarding Practitioners
- DfE guidance on out-of-school settings
- Keeping Children Safe in Education's guidance concerning safer recruitment and DBS checks
- Relevant local safeguarding partnership procedures

5. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Name: Kerry Rigby

Role: Director and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

kerry.rigby@accessSENconsultancy.com 07522 153 714

The DSL is responsible for:

- Ensuring this policy is implemented and reviewed
- Acting as the main point of contact for safeguarding concerns
- Liaising with external agencies when appropriate
- Ensuring all staff and associates receive appropriate safeguarding awareness training

Deputy DSL(s)

Name: Lauren Gregory

Role: Director & Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

lauren.gregory@accessSENconsultancy.com 07711055427

The DDSL is responsible for:

- Acting as the second point of contact for safeguarding concerns
- Liaising with external agencies when appropriate
- Managing and actioning safeguarding concerns in the absence of the DSL.

If either safeguarding lead is not available, concerns will be escalated to the relevant agency e.g. LADO, Police.

6. Definitions of Abuse

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused by adults or by other children.

The main categories of abuse are:

6.1 Physical Abuse

Physical abuse involves deliberately causing physical harm to a child. This can include:

- Hitting, slapping, punching, kicking, shaking, throwing
- Poisoning or giving a child harmful substances
- Burning or scalding
- Fabricating or inducing illness
- Restraining a child inappropriately

6.2 Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child which severely affects their emotional development. This may include:

- Constant criticism, rejection, or humiliation
- Threatening, shouting at, or intimidating a child
- Preventing a child from expressing their views or silencing them
- Age- or developmentally inappropriate expectations
- Exposing a child to domestic abuse or other forms of trauma

6.3 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This includes:

- Physical sexual acts (e.g. touching, penetration)
- Non-contact activities such as:
 - Involving children in looking at or producing sexual images
 - Encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways

- Grooming a child in person or online for sexual exploitation

Sexualised behaviours are not simply 'normal' or 'sexual abuse' but rather exist on a continuum.

6.4. Neglect

Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or emotional needs. It is the most common form of child abuse. It includes:

- Failing to provide adequate food, clothing, or shelter
- Not protecting a child from physical or emotional harm or danger
- Failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- Ignoring a child's emotional needs or leaving them unsupervised

6.5 Child-on-Child Abuse (also known as peer-on-peer abuse)

Children can abuse other children. This abuse can take many forms, such as:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying)
- Physical violence or threats
- Sexual violence or sexual harassment
- Sexting or sharing explicit images
- Coercive or controlling behaviour in relationships

All forms of child-on-child abuse are serious and must be responded to under safeguarding procedures.

6.6 Child exploitation

Including:

- child sexual exploitation
- criminal exploitation
- county lines
- trafficking
- grooming
- coercion
- online exploitation

6.7 Serious violence

Staff should understand that indicators may include:

- unexplained injuries
- changes in behaviour
- unexplained possessions/money
- associations with potentially harmful individuals
- weapon carrying
- involvement in gangs
- increased absence or disengagement

7. Recognising Signs of Abuse

All staff, associates, and contractors working for Access SEN Education and Consultancy Ltd are required to complete safeguarding training appropriate to their role. This training will ensure they are able to recognise the signs and indicators of abuse and know how to respond appropriately.

Working with a vulnerable population, staff must take into consideration:

- communication difficulties
- limited ability to disclose abuse
- reliance on adults/carers
- difficulties understanding consent and boundaries
- increased vulnerability to grooming and exploitation
- social isolation
- difficulty recognising unsafe relationships
- behavioural or emotional changes that may indicate abuse
- communication through behaviour rather than verbal disclosure

Staff must remain vigilant at all times and report any concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), in accordance with Section 8 of this policy.

8. Reporting a Concern

All concerns or suspicions of abuse must be reported immediately to the DSL. If a child is at immediate risk, call 999.

Reporting Procedure:

1. Listen without judgement. Do not promise confidentiality.
2. Record key information: what was said, time, date, and your response.
3. Report directly to the DSL as soon as possible.
4. The DSL will decide whether a referral to children's services or another agency is required.
5. All concerns will be recorded and securely stored.

Concerns may require the following steps:

Early help/community support - Family Help - Children's Social Care - Police/999

The DSL does not have to obtain parental consent before making a safeguarding referral where doing so could place the child at further risk.

9. Allegations Against Staff or Associates

If an allegation is made against a member of staff or associate, the DSL will:

- Refer the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- Follow statutory procedures as outlined in *KCSIE*
- Suspend or remove the individual from direct contact, if necessary, pending investigation

Low level concerns are concerns about an adult which do not meet the harm threshold but may indicate a pattern or potential professional boundary issue. This may include but is not limited to:

- inappropriate communication with a child
- excessive personal contact
- unnecessary physical contact
- favouritism
- inappropriate gifts
- contacting pupils through personal social media
- sharing personal information
- inappropriate comments
- breaching professional boundaries
- being alone with a child in circumstances that are not appropriate
- transporting a child outside agreed arrangements

These should be reported to the DSL via the safeguarding reporting form.

10. Safeguarding During Training and Consultancy

All staff working directly with children and young people for Access SEN will have an enhanced DBS check. Safeguarding responsibilities will be clearly outlined in contracts or agreements with schools or clients. No staff member or associate will work unsupervised with children unless specifically agreed with the client and proper checks are in place.

This runs alongside the safe recruitment policy, see for more details.

11. Online Safety

Staff will be aware of the current online safety issues facing young people and report these to the DSL or DDSL following the reporting procedures:

- online grooming
- cyberbullying
- sexual harassment
- sharing nudes/semi-nudes
- AI-generated sexual images/deepfakes
- online radicalisation
- gaming platforms
- social media
- inappropriate contact between staff and pupils
- personal devices
- recording sessions
- screenshots
- digital communication
- online lessons
- monitoring and filtering where applicable

12. Prevent Duty

We acknowledge our responsibility to safeguard against the risk of radicalisation. Staff will remain alert to any signs of extremist views or behaviour and report concerns to the DSL, who will follow Prevent Duty guidance.

13. Training and Awareness

All staff and associates will complete safeguarding awareness training appropriate to their role and responsibilities. Safeguarding training will be refreshed at least every two years, or sooner where there are changes to statutory guidance, legislation or organisational

requirements. Safeguarding expectations, responsibilities and procedures will be clearly communicated as part of the induction process and reflected within relevant staff and associate contracts.

14. Whistleblowing

All staff, and contractors have a responsibility to raise concerns where they believe that safeguarding practice is inadequate, a child or young person may be at risk of harm, or safeguarding procedures are not being followed. In accordance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026*, concerns should be raised without delay with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL. Where the concern relates to the DSL, it should be reported to the Director or another appropriate senior person. Staff are encouraged to raise concerns in good faith and will be supported to do so without fear of reprisal. If a concern cannot be raised internally, or an individual feels that it has not been appropriately addressed, they may seek advice from the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line on **0800 028 0285** or report the concern to the appropriate local authority safeguarding service or the police where appropriate. No individual should assume that someone else will raise a concern.

15. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Safeguarding disclosures and concerns will be shared with relevant agencies, including the Local Authority Children's Services, in accordance with statutory guidance and information-sharing requirements. All safeguarding records and information will be stored securely and treated as confidential. Information may be shared without consent where this is lawful, necessary and proportionate to safeguard a child or others. The Data Protection Act does not prevent the appropriate sharing of safeguarding information where there is a legitimate safeguarding concern.

Only information that is relevant, necessary and proportionate will be shared, and all safeguarding decisions, actions and outcomes will be clearly recorded. Records will be maintained securely and will clearly distinguish between historic and current concerns. Where a child or young person moves to another education provider, relevant child protection and safeguarding information will be transferred securely and, where necessary, shared directly with the receiving Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to support the ongoing safety and wellbeing of the child or others.

16. Loneworking in the Home and Community

Staff undertaking lone working in a student's home or within the community must follow the organisation's Lone Working Policy and all relevant risk assessments and control measures.

Staff must take reasonable steps to ensure their own safety and the safety and wellbeing of the student at all times.

Lone working arrangements will be assessed on an individual basis, taking into account the student's needs, the environment, known risks and the nature of the support being provided. Where risks are identified, appropriate control measures will be implemented and reviewed regularly.

Staff must follow agreed procedures for communication, check-ins, reporting concerns and responding to emergencies. Any changes in circumstances or new risks identified during lone working must be reported promptly and the relevant risk assessment reviewed where necessary.

17. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the DSL or sooner if there are changes in legislation, guidance, or business operations.

Signed: Kerry Rigby *Safeguarding Director/ DSL*
Access SEN Education and Consultancy Ltd
Date: 08/09/2026

