

**Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

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| **Section** | **Heading** |
| --- | --- |
| **1** | **Introduction** |
| **2** | **Statutory Framework and Legislation** |
| **3** | **Principles and Values** |
| **4** | **Related Policies and Procedures** |
| **5** | **Definition of a Child, Safeguarding and Child Protection** |
| **6** | **Roles and Responsibilities**  |
| **7** | **Definitions and recognition of types of Child Abuse, Concerns and Neglect**7.1 Abuse7.2 Physical abuse7.3 Emotional abuse7.4 Sexual abuse7.5 Neglect7.6 Physical neglect7.7 Child sexual exploitation (CSE) and Child criminal exploitation (CCE)7.8 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)7.9 Child on child abuse7.10 Sexting7.11 Social Media7.12 Prevent7.13 Mental Health7.14 Domestic abuse7.15 Children who are absent from education7.16 Children missing from education |
| **8** | **Procedures for managing concerns about a Child**8.1 What staff must immediately report8.2 What staff must do if a child is in danger or risk of significant harm8.3 No improvement in a child's situation |
| **9** | **Procedures for Abuse Allegations made against Staff****Confidentiality and sharing information**9.1 Definition of abuse allegation and initial response criteria9.2 What staff should do if they are concerned about a colleague's behaviour9.3 Allegation made against the Designated Safeguarding Lead9.4 Support for a child or a staff member |
| **10** | **Keeping Children Safe in Education – other matters**10.1 Specified place10.2 Volunteers and supervised volunteers10.3 Visitors and guest speakers10.4 Site security10.5 Extended and offsite arrangements10.6 Photography and images |
| **11** | **Vulnerable Pupils** |
| **12** | **Provision Policy regarding Physical Intervention** |
| **13** | **Communication with Parents, Mainstream School and Local Authorities** |
| **14** | **Record Keeping** |
| **15** | **Early Help Strategy** |
| **16** | **Confidentiality and Sharing Information** |
| **17** | **Safer Recruitment** |
| **18** | **Curriculum** |
| **19** | **E-Safety** |
| **20** | **Training and Support** |
| **21** | **Key Safeguarding Contacts** |
| **22** | **Appendices** |

1. **Introduction**

Adventure in Learning is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all its pupils. We believe that every child has the right to be protected from harm. It is the responsibility of every member of staff, volunteer and regular visitor to our provision to ensure that they carry out the requirements of this policy and, always work in a way that will safeguard and promote the welfare of all the pupils within the provision. This includes the responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn; receive support when needed; and we initially deal with and then report child protection concerns to the appropriate agencies.

This policy encompasses a comprehensive framework that includes definitions of safeguarding and child protection, as well as cross referencing to our other related policies such as behaviour, confidentiality, anti-bullying, safer recruitment, and health and safety. It addresses our approach to various key safeguarding issues such as preventing and responding to concerns about radicalisation and extremism, as well as the reporting of cases of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). These themes are not an exhaustive list but outline some key areas of concern that can be amended or highlighted when necessary. We have also included a specific section on our approach to physical intervention.

One of our Directors holds the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and is responsible for overseeing this policy, to ensure that we work diligently to uphold our commitment to safeguarding and child protection. This policy is reviewed on a regular basis and at least annually, to ensure that it remains current and effective in addressing evolving needs and best practice.

We recognise that staff at Adventure in Learning play a particularly important role as they are able to identify concerns early and provide help for children to prevent concerns from escalating. All staff are advised to maintain an attitude of ‘it could happen here’ where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members must always act in the best interests of the child.

All staff and regular visitors will, through training and induction, know how to recognise indicators of concern, how to respond to a disclosure from a child and how to record and report this information. We will not make promises to any child, and we will not keep secrets. Every child will know what the adult will have to do with any information they have chosen to disclose.

At all times we will work in partnership and endeavour to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers, mainstream schools and colleagues from other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children and Local Safeguarding Partners’ Procedures. Which, for our geographical area, is contained within the North and South of Tyne Safeguarding Children Procedures Manual. These procedures and relevant contact details are available through the Partnerships website.

1. **Statutory Framework and Legislation**

The statutory framework for safeguarding and child protection is a vital component in ensuring the safety and well-being of children across various domains. It encompasses a comprehensive list of legislation and guidance designed to safeguard children from harm and promote their welfare. Key elements include the Children Act 1989 and its subsequent amendments, such as the Children Act 2004, which establish the legal framework for child protection and the promotion of their best interests. Additionally, the Education Act 2002 outlines the responsibilities of educational institutions in ensuring the safety and security of their students. The policy also references essential guidance documents such as "Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)" and "Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)," which provide overarching principles and procedures for child protection practices. Furthermore, specific legislative measures are highlighted, such as the Prevent Duty for England and Wales (2015), aimed at safeguarding children from the threat of radicalisation and extremism. Provisions under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as amended by the Serious Crime Act 2015, address the prevention and prosecution of this harmful practice. Moreover, guidance on dealing with allegations of abuse against teachers and staff is outlined, emphasising the importance of robust safeguarding procedures within educational settings.

This policy underscores the significance of adhering to North and South of Tyne Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCP) Procedures Manual, which delineate the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders in safeguarding children. It also directs schools or alternative provisions to relevant SCP requirements and procedures for each local authority in our region, ensuring compliance with local safeguarding protocols and facilitating effective collaboration between agencies involved in child protection.

Overall, the statutory framework outlined in the policy underscores a commitment to prioritising the safety, security, and well-being of children within educational environments.

1. **Principles and Values**

Adventure in Learning is guided by the following principles and values in our approach to safeguarding and child protection:

* The welfare and safety of children is paramount.
* Every child has the right to be protected from harm and abuse.
* Safeguarding is a collective responsibility, and we promote a culture of vigilance and awareness.
* We respect the rights, dignity, and diversity of all children and families.
1. **Related policies and Procedures**

Whilst this Policy and procedures is the over-riding document in respect to our organisations approach to safeguarding and child protection, it is linked to the following related policies:

* Behaviour Policy
* Confidentiality Policy
* Anti-Bullying Policy
* Safer Recruitment Policy
* Physical Intervention Policy.
* Health and Safety Policy
* Equality Policy
* Whistleblowing Policy
* Prevent Policy
* Administration of Medicines Policy
* Internet and Social Media Policy
* Personal, Social, Health and Economic Policy
* Relationships and Sex Education Policy

As well as our own policies and procedures, and as highlighted above, we will utilise the online North and South of Tyne Safeguarding Children Procedures Manual as a reference when making specific referrals to the relevant services in our geographical catchment area, as this includes up to date contact details and child concern/referral processes and safeguarding policies.

1. **Definition of a child, Safeguarding and Child Protection**

 **A child** includes everyone under the age of 18.

Safeguarding encompasses measures to protect and promote the welfare of children, ensuring they are kept safe from harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Child protection involves specific actions taken to prevent and respond to instances where a child may be at risk of or has experienced harm or abuse.

1. **Roles and responsibilities**

Safeguarding is the responsibility of every member of staff at Adventure in Learning. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible for ensuring that all safeguarding concerns are responded to appropriately and that procedures are followed. The DSL will also be supported by a designated Deputy DSL. All staff, including volunteers, are aware of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and child protection, and receive regular training on these issues.

We also recognise that mainstream school and the child's parents and carers have a vital role to play in safeguarding children and young people. We will encourage an open and supportive partnership between our organisation, the mainstream school and parents/carers, and aim to involve them in all aspects of our approach to safeguarding and child protection.

The DSL is responsible for managing safeguarding and child protection referrals and concerns in partnership with the mainstream school, including making decisions about whether to refer a concern to the local authority and/or other agencies. They will ensure that all concerns are followed up and recorded appropriately. The DSL will ensure that all staff are aware of the provision’s safeguarding policy and procedures, and that they receive regular training to support them in their role. The DSL will also be the main point of contact with external agencies, including the local authority and the police.

1. **Definitions and recognition of types of child abuse, concerns and neglect**

***7.1 Abuse:***
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. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

***7.2 Physical abuse:***
This involves physical injury to a child, including deliberate poisoning, where there is definite knowledge or a reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented. Typical signs of Physical Abuse are:

* Bruises and abrasions – especially about the face, head, genitals or other parts of the body where they would not be expected to occur given the age of the child. Some types of bruising are particularly characteristic of non-accidental injury, especially when the child’s explanation does not match the nature of injury, or when it appears frequently
* Slap marks – these may be visible on cheeks or buttocks
* Twin bruises on either side of the mouth or cheeks – can be caused by pinching or grabbing, sometimes to make a child eat or to stop a child from speaking
* Grip marks on arms or trunk – gripping bruises on arm or trunk can be associated with shaking a child. Shaking can cause one of the most serious injuries to a child; i.e. a brain haemorrhage, as the brain hits the inside of the skull. X-rays and other tests are required to fully diagnose the effects of shaking. Grip marks can also be indicative of sexual abuse
* Black eyes – are most commonly caused by an object, such as a fist, coming into contact with the eye socket. N.B. A heavy bang on the nose, however, can cause bruising to spread around the eye but a doctor will be able to tell if this has occurred
* Damage to the mouth – e.g. bruised/cut lip or torn skin where the upper lips join the mouth;
* Bite marks
* Fractures
* Poisoning or other misuse of drugs – e.g. overuse of sedatives
* Burns and/or scalds – a round, red burn on tender, non-protruding parts, like a mouth; inside arms and on the genitals will almost certainly have been deliberately inflicted. Any burns that appear to be cigarette burns should be cause for concern. An experienced person will notice skin splashes caused when a child accidentally knocks over a hot cup of tea. In contrast, a child who has been deliberately ‘dipped’ in a hot bath will not have splash marks.

***7.3 Emotional abuse:***
Emotional abuse is defined as the severe and adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment – this category should be used where it is the main or sole form of abuse. The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and

adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the 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. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing 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, although it may occur alone.

***7.4 Sexual abuse****:*
The involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent, or that violate the social taboos of family roles; forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. Typical signs of Sexual Abuse are:

* Detailed sexual knowledge inappropriate to the age of the child
* Behaviour that is excessively affectionate or sexual towards other children or adults
* Attempts to inform, by making a disclosure about the sexual abuse - often by the initial sharing of limited information with an adult. It is also very characteristic of such children that they have an excessive pre-occupation with secrecy and try to bind the adults to secrecy or confidentiality
* Fear of medical examinations
* Fear of being alone – this applies to friends/family/neighbours/baby-sitters etc.
* Sudden loss of appetite, compulsive eating, anorexia nervosa or bulimia nervosa
* Excessive masturbation is especially worrying when it takes place in public
* Promiscuity
* Sexual approaches or assaults – on other children or adults
* Urinary tract infections (UTI) and/or sexually transmitted disease (STD) are cause for immediate concern in young children, or in adolescents if his/her partner cannot be identified
* Bruising to the buttocks, lower abdomen, thighs and genital/rectal areas. Bruises may be confined to grip marks where a child has been held so that sexual abuse can take place
* Discomfort or pain particularly in the genital or anal areas; · Drawing of pornographic or sexually explicit images.

They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of sexual images, watching 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 also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

***7.5 Neglect***:

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 because 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. However, typical signs of Physical Neglect are:

* Underweight – a child may be frequently hungry or preoccupied with food, or in the habit of stealing food or procuring food. There is a particular cause for concern where a persistently underweight child gains weight when away from home, for example, when in hospital or on a trip. Some children also lose weight or fail to gain weight during school holidays when school lunches are not available, and this is a cause for concern
* Inadequately clad – a distinction needs to be made between situations where children are inadequately clad, dirty or smelly because they come from homes where neatness and cleanliness are unimportant, and those where the lack of care is preventing the child from thriving.

***7.6 Physical neglect:***

This type of harm involves the making of a judgement about the seriousness of the degree of neglect. Much parenting falls short of the ideal but it may be appropriate to involve safeguarding procedures in the case of neglect where the child’s development is being adversely affected.

In addition to these types of abuse and neglect, members of staff will also be alert to following specific safeguarding issues:

***7.7 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE***

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual, and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online.

Children or young people may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol. They may also be groomed online. Some indicators of children being sexually or criminally exploited are:

-Regularly missing school or education or not taking part in education;

- Significant decline in performance

-Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions;

-Associating with other young people involved in exploitation;

-Having older boyfriends or girlfriends;

-Suffering from sexually transmitted infections;

- signs of self-harm

-Mood swings or changes in emotional wellbeing;

-Drug and alcohol misuse and displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour.

-signs of assault or unexplained injuries.

Legal position for a child under 13

A child under the age of 13 is not legally capable of consenting to sex (it is statutory rape) or any other type of sexual touching. Sexual activity with a child under 16 is also an offence. It is an offence for a person to have a sexual relationship with a 16 or 17 year old if that person holds a position of trust or authority in relation to the young person. Nonconsensual sex is rape, whatever the age of the victim. If the victim is incapacitated through drink or drugs, or the victim or his or her family has

been subject to violence or the threat of it, they cannot be considered to have given true consent and therefore offences may have been committed. Child sexual exploitation is therefore potentially a child protection issue for all children under the age of 18.

Where it comes to our notice that a child under the age of 13 is, or may be, sexually active, whether or not they are a pupil of this provision, this will result in an immediate referral to Children’s Services. In the case of a young person between the ages of 13 and 16, an individual risk assessment will be conducted in accordance with the child protection procedures. This will determine how and when information will be shared with parents and the investigating agencies.

County lines

County Lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line". Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

***7.8 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM):*** sometimes referred to as female circumcision, refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It has no health benefits and harms girls and women in many ways. It involves removing and damaging healthy and normal female genital tissue, and hence interferes with the natural function of girls’ and women’s bodies. FGM causes severe pain and has several immediate and long-term health consequences, including difficulties in childbirth also causing dangers to the child. It is practised by families for a variety of complex reasons but often in the belief that it is beneficial for the girl or woman. FGM is practised in 28 African countries as well as in parts of the Middle East and Asia. The practice is illegal in the UK. It has been estimated that over 20,000 girls under the age of 15 are at risk of FGM in the UK each year, and that 66,000 women in the UK are living with the consequences of FGM. The girls may be taken to their countries of origin so that FGM can be carried out during the summer holidays, allowing them time to 'heal' before they return to the programme. Some girls may have FGM performed in the UK. FGM is child abuse and a form of violence against women and girls.

***7.9 Child-on -child Abuse*:** Adventure in Learning has put in place safeguards to reduce the likelihood of child-on-child allegations. There is an established ethos of respect, friendship and kindness with a clear, high profile Behaviour Policy which sets out expectations and consequences for unacceptable behaviour.

Adventure in Learning seeks to educate all students on healthy relationships, however we recognise despite this we need to be alert to child-on-child abuse. It is important to recognise that children do engage in sexual play and experimenting, which is usually age appropriate. Child sexual abuse is a subject many people find very difficult to talk about. It is important not to criminalise behaviour that is a perfectly normal and healthy part of growing up. However, the idea that children can sexually abuse others is still very hard for us to accept. The presence of one or more of the following points in situations where there has been sexual activity between children should always trigger some concern:

* There is an age difference of two years or more between the children.
* One of the children is significantly more dominant than the other.
* One of the children is significantly more vulnerable than the other e.g. in terms of disability, confidence, physical strength.
* There has been some use of threats, bribes or coercion to secure compliance or to maintain secrecy.

Any child-on-child allegation must be taken seriously and the procedures outlined in section 8 below, should be followed; as well as being immediately referred to the DSL. Where a concern regarding child-on-child abuse has been disclosed to the DSL, advice and guidance will be sought from Children Social Services and where it is clear a crime has been committed or there is a risk of crime being committed, the Police will be contacted.

***7.10 Sexting*:** Adventure in Learning deems sexting (sending of provocative material including photos, videos and texts) as inappropriate and unsafe behaviour, which threatens the social, emotional and/or physical safety of students. Although sexting is typically voluntary at first, it raises many serious legal and social concerns, especially when the images spread are beyond the control of the sender. It can result in humiliation, bullying and harassment of students. Adventure in Learning has the responsibility to prevent sexting and the dissemination of inappropriate or offensive material and to educate both students and staff about both the legal and social dangers of texting. Staff should notify the DSL immediately upon becoming aware that sexting by a student is likely to have occurred. Further guidance can be found in the ‘*UKCCIS Guidance: Sexting in schools and colleges, responding to incidents and safeguarding young people (2017)’*

***7.11 Social Media*:** Staff are expected to exercise extreme caution in the use of social networking sites, to ensure that personal information is not accessible by students or parents. Parents and students must not be accepted as “friends” on any social networking platform. All staff should have read and understood the Internet and Social Media Policy. Pupils will sign an agreement regarding issues connected to social media and e-safety and contained within the Internet and Social Media Policy. All staff must maintain a professional profile on any websites or social media ensuring they not disclose the following:

* Staff should at no time post anything on their personal accounts regarding students, their parents or other staff members (but see below re: Adventure in Learning Social media accounts and website)
* Staff must be conscious at all times of the need to keep personal and professional lives separate and maintain professionalism whilst using social networking sites.
* Staff should not accept friend requests from a person believed to be a student or parent (this includes Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram and all other social networking platforms).
* Anyone posting remarks which breach confidentiality or are deemed to be of a detrimental nature to Adventure in Learning, or other employees, may be subject to disciplinary proceedings.
* Any employee, who becomes aware of social networking activity that would be deemed distasteful or not appropriate, should make the DSL r aware.

Interactive social media technology has revolutionised the way that people connect and interact. Facebook, Twitter, blogs, instant messaging, photo and video exchange sites are increasingly popular and provide an opportunity for the world to connect with children and young people. YouTube and Google provide a platform for uploading and viewing video clips, which with the mobile phones can be almost instantaneous. Students will continuously receive ongoing education through Personal, Social, Health and Economic Policy about the risks of social media in relation to keeping safe online. We will also keep staff informed through workshops and Continuous Professional Development sessions.

Adventure in Learning has social media accounts and a website which are used to share information relating specifically to activities, promotions and events. With all information that is shared and displayed, Adventure in Learning promises that:

* Information displayed should follow normal conventions of safe behaviour. There should be no postings that will compromise staff or volunteers’ own personal information boundaries and relationships.
* Make all parties aware that anything that is posted as text, photos, pictures and video clips on sites may be shared with and saved by people other than those for whom it was intended.
* There will be no images of young people on the site without prior permission. All referrers will have the opportunity to state whether they wish to allow their student to be photographed or video recorded for our social networking platforms. Consent forms will be given to complete during the pupils induction process, it is the pupil/parents right to give consent.

***7.12 Prevent .*** Children and young people can be drawn into violence, or they can be exposed to the messages of extremist groups by many means. These can include through the influence of family members or friends and/or direct contact with extremist groups and organisations or, increasingly, through the internet via social media or other websites. This can put a young person at risk of being drawn into criminal activity and has the potential to lead to the child or young person suffering significant harm.

This may take the form of a "grooming" process where the vulnerabilities of a young person are exploited to form an exclusive friendship which draws the young person away from other influences that might challenge the radical ideology. The risk of radicalisation can develop over time and may relate to several factors in the child's life. Identifying the risks require practitioners to exercise their professional judgement and to seek further advice as necessary. The risk may be combined with other vulnerabilities or may be the only risk identified.

On-line content in particular social media may pose a specific risk in normalising radical views and promoting content that is shocking and extreme; children can be trusting and may not necessarily appreciate bias, which can lead to being drawn into such groups and to adopt their extremist views.

Any member of staff identifying concerns about the child or young person should report them to the DSL and document the concern in line with our procedures. For more information on our overall approach, refer to the AIL Prevent Policy.

***7.13 Mental Health:***  All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff, however, are well placed to observe children 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.  Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children’s experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.  If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following our child protection procedures and speaking to the DSL.

***7.14 Domestic Abuse:***Domestic 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 abuse.

 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 to leave the family home as a result.

If a pupil discloses that they have witnessed domestic abuse or it is suspected that they may be living in a household that is affected by family violence, this will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as a safeguarding issue.

This section should also be read alongside the **Domestic Abuse Act 2021** and the updated statutory guidance (2023).

***7.15 Children who are absent from education:***Pupils being absent from our provision for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines.

It is important our response to persistently absent pupils and children missing education supports identifying such abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children’s social care and need a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

In response to the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education the provision has an attendance policy that ensures:

1. Staff understand what to do when children do not attend regularly

2.We will ensure that pupils who are expected to attend the provision but fail to take up the place will be referred to the local authority.

***7.16 Children Missing from Education******:*** Whilst the provision will normally be commissioned by a Local Authority, mainstream school or a parent, we are aware of that Children missing from education (CME) are children of compulsory school age (5-16 years old) who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children Missing from Education (CME) relates to: -

* children of compulsory school age who are thought to have left their normal local authority area, but their destination is either unknown and/or unconfirmed
* children of compulsory school age who have arrived in a local authority area but whose parents have not sought a school place

We will make our staff aware of this issue as they could come across a child who fits these criteria or be aware of their existence via the friends or associates of current provision pupils. If this occurs, we will seek to gain relevant information that we can pass to the local authority area where the child may reside via the DSL.

This section also takes account of the DfE **Statutory Attendance Guidance (2024)**, which links attendance monitoring directly to safeguarding responsibilities.

1. **Procedures for managing concerns about a child.**

Staff at Adventure in Learning will report any concerns that they have and not see these as insignificant. Staff should not assume a colleague, or another professional will take action and must share the concern. On occasions, a referral is justified by a single incident such as an injury or disclosure of abuse. More often, however, concerns accumulate over a period and are evidenced by building up a picture of harm over time; this is particularly true in cases of emotional abuse and neglect. In these circumstances, it is crucial that staff record and pass on concerns to allow the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to build up a picture and hold discussions with the pupil(s) mainstream school to assess support for the child at the earliest opportunity. The DSL will then ensure that the concern is recorded and the action taken is in the pupil(s) individual file along with the outcome.

(See Appendix 1 for Procedures for responding to a concern flowchart).

***8.1 Staff must immediately report:***

* Any suspicion that a child is injured, marked, or bruised in a way which is not readily attributable to the normal knocks or scrapes received in play/everyday, normal activities, especially where any explanation given appears inconsistent or suspicious.
* Any behaviours which give rise to suspicions that a child may have suffered harm (e.g. worrying drawings or play, actions)
* Any concerns that a child may be suffering from inadequate care, ill treatment, or emotional maltreatment
* Any concerns that a child is presenting signs or symptoms of abuse or neglect
* Any significant changes in a child’s presentation, including non-attendance
* Any hint or disclosure of abuse from any person
* Any concerns regarding person(s) who may pose a risk to children (e.g. living in a household with children present)
* Any hint or disclosure of sexual exploitation
* That a child has witnessed domestic abuse or is in a household where domestic abuse is taking place

Children can sometimes show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to. All staff should be aware of this and remain vigilant. Staff must also consider children who might present as vulnerable.

***8.2 Responding to Disclosure:***

Disclosures or information may be received from pupils, parents or other members of the public. Adventure in Learning recognises that those who disclose such information may do so with difficulty, having chosen carefully to whom they will speak. Accordingly, all staff will handle disclosures with sensitivity. Such information cannot remain confidential, and staff will immediately communicate what they have been told to the DSL. Staff will not investigate but will, wherever possible, elicit enough information to pass on to the DSL, for an informed decision to be made regarding the next steps.

Staff will:

* Listen to and take seriously any disclosure or information that a child may be at risk of harm
* Try to ensure that the person disclosing does not have to speak to another member of staff
* Clarify the information
* Try to keep questions to a minimum and of an ‘open’ nature e.g. ‘Can you tell me what happened?’ rather than ‘Did x hit you?’
* Try not to show signs of shock, horror or surprise
* Not express feelings or judgments regarding any person alleged to have harmed the child
* Explain sensitively to the person that they have a responsibility to refer the information to the senior designated person
* Reassure the person that they will be taken seriously, supported and kept safe
* Listen to and take into account (wherever possible) the child’s wishes and feelings about the current situation as well as future plans
* Ask any necessary questions to determine the child’s wishes and feelings.
* Explain that only those who ‘need to know’ will be told
* Explain what will happen next and that the child will be involved as appropriate
* Ensure there is appropriate support made available

Following receipt of any information that raises concern, the DSL will consider what action to take and seek advice from Children’s Services or the mainstream school as required. All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing, ideally on the AIL safeguarding report form (appendix B), and added to the pupils record.

***8.3 What staff should do if a child is in danger or at risk of significant harm***:

Any member of staff or visitor to the provision who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that a child is at risk of significant harm or immediate danger and needs immediate protection, must record the details in writing as soon as possible, following the above guidance, and then report it immediately to the DSL who will the report the matter to the pupil(s) mainstream school. If a child is currently not attached to a mainstream school, the DSL will report the matter to the child's current supporting professional. A discussion will take place regarding who will report the matter to the Childrens Services or, in the case of a criminal offence possibly being committed, the police. If the DLS is unable to contact the mainstream school or supporting professional, the DSL should refer the matter to the relevant Safeguarding Hub or Local Authority Children Social Care Team. The relevant contact details for each agency and local authority area can be found on the North and South of Tyne Childrens Safeguarding Partnership website.

Staff should always follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy in the first instance. However, they may also share information directly with Children’s Services or relevant Safeguarding Hub, or the police if:

* The situation is an emergency and the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or the pupil(s) mainstream contact are all unavailable
* They are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil’s safety

All referrals will be made in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance and the Local Children’s Services’ procedures.

***8.4 No improvement in a child's situation***

If, following any report or referral to the relevant agencies, the child’s situation does not appear to be improving, then the staff member with concerns can press for reconsideration by raising concerns again with the DSL. Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point.

1. **Procedures for abuse allegations made against staff or volunteers**

***9.1 Definition of abuse allegation and initial response criteria***

An allegation of child abuse made against a member of staff may come from a parent, another member of staff or from a child’s disclosure.

Adventure in Learning takes seriously allegations/ complaints made against members of staff. All such complaints will be brought immediately to the attention of the DSL. These procedures are used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a member of staff (including volunteers) 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; or
* Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children.

If the complaint does not fit the above criteria, then the AIL Complaints Policy will be followed.

The DSL will:

* record the details that give cause for concern
* Contact the pupils mainstream school DSL to update them about the allegation.
* Contact the relevant Local Authority’s Designated Officer(s) (LADO) to inform them of all allegations that have come to our attention.
* Consider suspending the member of staff or withdrawing them from contact with pupils until a thorough investigation has taken place
* Cooperate fully with the process of Social Care and the Police investigations
* Support and treat with respect the member of staff whilst suspended or on other duties
* If the result of the investigation is that it was a false allegation, give the staff member the appropriate support

***9.2 What staff should do if they are concerned about a colleague’s behaviour:***

Staff will report any concerns they have about a colleague's behaviour promptly via:

* + speaking to a senior member of staff or DSL
	+ Emphasise confidentiality and protection for whistleblowers by reference to our whistle blowing policy
	+ The DSL will outline any specific procedures or forms that need to be followed when reporting concerns.

***9.3 Allegation made against the DSL***

If the allegation is made against the DSL then the most senior member of staff on duty will undertake the DSL role in this case.

***9.4 Support for child and staff member***

Additional support for both staff and children who may be affected by abuse can be found online via the North and South of Tyne Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCP) Procedures Manual. This includes contact information for local child protection services, and national helplines or support organisations specialising in child welfare and protection issues.

By providing clear guidance on dealing with disclosures of abuse, as well as access to support services and regular update training, we will ensure that our staff members are equipped to respond effectively to safeguarding and child protection concerns and prioritise the well-being of children within our provision.

1. **Keeping Children safe in Education – other matters**

***10.1 Specified place***

Our provision is a ‘specified places’ which means that the majority of staff and volunteers will be engaged in regulated activity.  A fuller explanation of regulated activity can be found in [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024.](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fpublications%2Fkeeping-children-safe-in-education--2&data=05%7C02%7Cjon.rush%40nhs.net%7C39804d1f8ebf42ffcfba08dd3ac5320f%7C37c354b285b047f5b22207b48d774ee3%7C0%7C1%7C638731340824142872%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=gpPYeyS%2FhqU71PobQNXrVee16ARY%2Fp9PVUowVIbTL%2BA%3D&reserved=0) This not only applies to staff and volunteers / visitors but also the general security of our operating base and visits or activities at other locations.

***10.2 Volunteers and supervised volunteers***

Volunteers, will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the provision and contact with pupils. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised or be allowed to engage in regulated activity.

Supervised volunteers are Volunteers who work only in a supervised capacity and are not in regulated activity will undergo the safe recruitment checks appropriate to their role, in accordance with the provision’s risk assessment process and statutory guidance.

***10.3 Visitors and guest speakers***

The suitability of any visitor or speaker having contact with students must be risk assessed and approved before arrival. This is to not only safeguard the pupils but also protect pupils and staff against the possibility of views that could be deemed to be extremist, radicalised and against British values. The DSL will then discuss the suitability of the visitor in conjunction with a possible Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check if deemed necessary. If the visitor is unwilling to complete a DBS check, or the DBS check raises concerns, the visit will be terminated.

***10.4 Site security***

Due to the nature of our provision within local leisure centre(s), the areas outside the immediate classrooms or activity location may be shared with members of the public. This is managed via appropriate risk assessments in line with those initiated by the leisure centre. However, the provision operates on the principle that no pupils are left unsupervised at any time whilst at the provision and are escorted on arrival and departure.

***10.5 Extended and off-site arrangements***

All extended and off-site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements.  Where extended activities are provided by and managed by the provision, our own child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site, we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place (inspecting these as needed), including safer recruitment procedures, and ensure that there are arrangements in place for the provider to liaise with us on these matters where appropriate.

***10.6 Photography and images***

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent and legitimate reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or distributing images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place.

To protect students, we will:

* seek parental consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications)
* use only the student’s first name with an image
* ensure pupils are appropriately dressed
* encourage students to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.

1. **Vulnerable Pupils**

We will always ascertain the views and feelings of all children. Adventure in Learning acknowledges additional need for support and protection of children who are vulnerable. There is a particular focus on pupils who are subject to a Child Protection Plan and any incidents or concerns involving these children will be reported immediately to the allocated Social Worker. If the pupil in question is a Looked-After Child this will also be brought to the notice of the DSL.

1. **Provision Policy regarding Physical Intervention**

Our main approach will initially be via de-escalation techniques. However, we recognise that, on occasions, staff may need to use reasonable force, normally via restraint, to ensure that a pupil does not cause harm to him/herself or to another pupil or staff member. All the staff will be trained in a recognised approach via an appropriate training provider.

**13. Communication with Parents, mainstream school and local authorities; including where a child is not placed in a mainstream school\***

***\*Where a child is not currently placed with a mainstream school, our point of contact will be via the relevant inclusion officer for the placing local authority. Therefore, when this occurs the term mainstream school will refer to the relevant inclusion officer.***

Our communication with the mainstream school and parents regarding the school's responsibilities for safeguarding children is of paramount importance. In the event of a safeguarding concern that requires referral to other agencies, such as child protection services or healthcare professionals, the mainstream school and parents are informed promptly and transparently (unless, in the case of a referral that may implicate the parents as abusers, we will take advice on what specific course of action to take from either the mainstream school, police or social services). We communicate with parents openly, ensuring they understand the reasons for any necessary referrals and the steps being taken to ensure the safety and well-being of their child.

Should parents have any concerns regarding safeguarding or the welfare of their child, they are encouraged to contact our DSL or another senior member of the team. Contact information for the DSL is readily available on the provisions website. Our aim is to foster a supportive and collaborative relationship with parents, ensuring they feel confident in raising concerns and working together with us to safeguard their children.

1. **Record Keeping**

Our policy provides clear guidelines for staff on how to record both concerns and disclosures regarding safeguarding issues. When a concern arises or a disclosure is made, staff members are instructed to document the details promptly and accurately using our safeguarding spreadsheet and disclosure form (Appendix B) which serves as our designated recording tool.

By adhering to these recording guidelines and utilising our safeguarding spreadsheet, staff members can ensure that concerns and disclosures are documented consistently and comprehensively, facilitating effective communication, monitoring, and follow-up actions to safeguard the welfare of children within our care.

1. **Early Help Strategy**

Adventure in Learning is aware of the Early Help Strategy in place to support children, young people and their families. We will support young people and their families to ensure they are provided with the right support and guidance. We operate on an open-door policy in which students or their families are welcome at any time to discuss concerns as they arise. Members of staff will also attend and contribute to review meetings, progress meetings and work closely with external agencies in order to support this strategy. Furthermore, as an alternative provider, Adventure in Learning will develop close working relationships with all schools and relevant agencies to maintain high standards of this strategy for the students who attend our provision. If we feel a pupil has a particular issue and could benefit from this strategy, we would contact the mainstream school’s DSL to inform them.

1. **Confidentiality and Sharing Information**

Adventure in Learning:

* Ensures the confidentiality of its pupils and their families.
* Ensures confidentiality so that evidence is not compromised.
* Ensures to inform all relevant Designated Safeguarding Leads in the schools which students are referred from.
* Will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity.
* Only shares information on a ‘Need to Know’ basis, and this decision is taken by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
* Keeps all Child Protection information securely.
* Ensures that all information is processed for limited purpose, is adequate, relevant and not excessive, is accurate, retained and processed in accordance with data subject’s rights.
* All child protection information is held securely in a safe place in accordance with England (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005.
* Every effort is made to prevent unauthorised access and sensitive information is not stored on laptop computers, which, by the nature of their portability, could be lost or stolen.
* Child Protection information is stored separately from the pupil’s file and the file is ‘tagged’ to indicate that separate information is held.

The Data Protection Act does not prevent staff from sharing information with relevant agencies where that information may help to protect a child and is in the child’s best interests. Adventure in Learning recognises that:

* It is essential to establish positive and effective working relationships with outside agencies.
* There is a joint responsibility on all these agencies to share information to ensure that all children are safeguarded.

We share information:

* To ensure the fullest possible picture of the child’s circumstances.
* To enable practitioners to assess the needs of the child properly.
* To co-ordinate and improve service provision to the child and family. -To protect other adults and children.

We will develop and maintain close working relationships with all schools regarding confidentiality and sharing of information for their students who are referred to Adventure in Learning.

This policy also reflects the DfE **Information Sharing Guidance (2023)**.

1. **Safer recruitment**

We take our responsibility for safer recruitment very seriously at Adventure in Learning. All staff, including volunteers, are subject to rigorous checks before they start work with us, including an enhanced DBS check, and checks against the relevant barred list(s). We also ensure that all staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training. For further information refer to our Safer Recruitment Policy

1. **Curriculum**

Our curriculum is designed to provide a safe and nurturing learning environment, where children and young people can develop their knowledge, skills, confidence, resilience and motivation. We also ensure that pupils are aware of their rights and responsibilities and know how to access support if needed.

1. **E-safety**

We recognise the importance of e-safety in safeguarding children and young people. We have a robust e-safety policy in place contained within our Internet and social media Policy, which sets out the measures we take to ensure that pupils are safe online. This includes providing appropriate filtering and monitoring systems and educating pupils about online risks and how to stay safe.

Included in this is how we manage students’ use of their own electronic devices on the site, and in particular mobile phones. Whilst we have internet access on site, this is not accessible for the pupils. The pupils will have their mobile phones stored away whilst in lessons or activities. Albeit, they are allowed to have their mobile phones with them during breaks and can utilise the internet via their own data plans, which we do not monitor. This approach is considered and discussed with the pupils / parents or carers on their induction and when they sign the form for parental consent for various issues.

Adventure in Learning complies with the DfE **Filtering & Monitoring Standards (Sept 2023)** and ensures designated staff oversight of these systems, as required by **KCSIE 2024**

1. **Training and support**

We provide regular training and support to all staff on safeguarding and child protection issues, including updates on the latest legislation and guidance. We also ensure that staff receive appropriate supervision and support, so that they are able to recognise and respond to safeguarding concerns.

1. **Key Safeguarding Contacts**

We will utilise the North and South of Tyne Children Partnership website and referral forms for the up to date contact details of relevant organisations regarding any potential advice or referrals

Reviewed - 27th August 2025

**Appendices**

Appendix A

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**Appendix B**

**Adventure in Learning Safeguarding Report Form**

Date: [Insert Date]

Reported By: [Name of Staff Member]

Position: [Job Title/Role]

Contact Information: [Phone Number/Email]

**Details of Concern**:

**Nature of Concern**- [Brief description of the safeguarding concern, including any relevant details such as behaviours observed or incidents reported.]

**Names and Ages of Individuals Concerned**- [List the names and ages of all individuals involved in the reported incident or concerning behaviour.]

**Witnesses (if any)** - [Provide the names of any witnesses to the incident or behaviour, if applicable.]

**Location/Time of Incident/Concern** - [Where did incident occur, Date of Incident/ Time of Incident].

**Details of Alleged Incident/Concern** - [Provide a detailed account of the alleged incident or concern, including any relevant context, actions observed, or statements made.]

**Actions Taken** - [Describe any actions taken by the reporting staff member in response to the concern, such as providing support to the individuals involved, separating parties if necessary, or contacting emergency services.]

**Additional Information** - [Include any additional information or observations that may be relevant to the safeguarding concern.]

**Signature of Reporting Staff Member** - [Sign/Date]

**This report form should be completed promptly and accurately whenever a safeguarding concern arises. Once completed, it should be forwarded to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for further assessment and appropriate action**