

the root of it

Safeguarding Policy

Aims

We recognise that all members of our team play an important part in protecting any children and adults we work with.

This policy is written to reflect that in our day-to-day work all members of our team ensure that they are aware of safeguarding procedures.

This policy covers the adults and children we work with.

The governing body sets the policy and monitors the implementation of the duties for Safeguarding and Prevent at each meeting.

This policy covers staff, associates, volunteers and learners. It is available on our website and highlighted to learners and staff as part of their induction.

Designated Safeguarding & Prevent Officer

Our designated safeguarding and prevent officer is Richard Curtis, CEO and is available on 07938 329314.

It is not the role of the designated safeguarding lead to undertake an investigation into the concerns or allegation of harm. It is the role of the designated safeguarding lead to collate and clarify details of the concern or allegation and to provide this information to the Local Authority Access and Assessment Team, or Locality Team if Children's Social Care or Adult Social Care is already involved.

They are also the key point of contact for concerns relating to terrorist activities, extremism, or grooming under the Prevent Duties.

In the event that they are unavailable, then their deputy is Helen Rathborne, who is available on 07804908965.

Definitions of harm

Child or Young Person

A person under the age of 18 years.

Vulnerable Adult

A vulnerable adult is any adult over 18 who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not those needs are being met)

- as a result of those needs is unable to protect him or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

Abuse

A form of maltreatment of a child or individual. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or adult by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Discriminatory abuse

Unequal treatment, abuse, bullying, verbal intimidation or harassment of an individual based on a protected characteristic, such as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is where someone who lives with the victim:

- Cuts them off from family and friends and intentionally isolate them;
- Bully, threaten, or control them;
- Take control of their finances;
- Monitor or limit their use of technology;
- Physically and/or sexually abuse them.

Domestic abuse is not always physical violence, it can also include:

- coercive control and 'gaslighting'
- economic abuse
- online abuse
- threats and intimidation
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse

Financial or material abuse

Financial or material abuse involves theft, fraud, preventing a person from accessing their own resources, undue pressure, misuse of funds or resources of an individual, or any misrepresentation on behalf of an individual.

Modern slavery

Control, exploitation or forced involuntary actions imposed on a child or adult.

Neglect/acts of omission

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.

Organisational abuse

Organisational or institutional abuse is the mistreatment of people typically in their workplace brought about by poor or inadequate care or support, or systematic poor practice that affects the whole care setting. It occurs when the individual's wishes and needs are sacrificed for the smooth running of a group, service or organisation.

Physical abuse

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to someone. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Psychological or emotional abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of an individual such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child or adult that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving them 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 cyber bullying), causing individuals frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children or vulnerable adults. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of an individual, though it may occur alone.

Self-neglect

Self neglect is when a person being unable, or unwilling, to care for their own essential needs.

Sexual abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child, young person or adult to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the individual is aware of what is happening. The activities 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 of clothing. 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 or vulnerable adult 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 children.

Recognition of harm

The harm or possible harm of an individual or child may come to your attention in a number of possible ways;

- Information given by the adult or child, his/ her friends, a family member or close associate.
- The child's behaviour may become different from the usual, be significantly different from the behaviour of their peers, be bizarre or unusual or may involve 'acting out' a harmful situation in play.
- An injury which arouses suspicion because;
 - It does not make sense when compared with the explanation given.

- The explanations differ depending on who is giving them (e.g., differing explanations from the parent/carer and child).
- The child appears anxious and evasive when asked about the injury.
- Suspicion being raised when a number of factors occur over time, for example, the child fails to progress and thrive in contrast to his/her peers.
- Contact with individuals who pose a 'risk to children or others'. This may be someone who has been convicted of an offence listed in Schedule One of the Children and Young Person's Act 1933 (Sexual Offences Act 2003), or someone who has been identified as continuing to present a risk to children or vulnerable adults.
- The parent's behaviour before the birth of a child may indicate the likelihood of significant harm to an unborn child, for example substance misuse, or, previous children removed from their carers.

Managing a Disclosure

- Listen to what the person has to say with an open mind.
- Do not ask probing or leading questions designed to get the child to reveal more.
- Never stop someone who is freely recalling significant events.
- Make note of the discussion, taking care to record the timing, setting and people present, as well as what was said.
- Do not ask them to write a statement.
- Never promise the child or individual that what they have told you can be kept secret. Explain that you have responsibility to report what they have said to someone else.
- The Safeguarding Officer must be informed immediately.

Raising concern

If a learner, customer or member of the public has a concern they should contact the safeguarding officer, Richard Curtis, in the first instance. If they are not available, then the Deputy Safeguarding Lead should be contacted. If there is an immediate threat to life or safety, then the emergency services should be called via 999.

Safeguarding Lead	Richard Curtis	02381 120010 / safeguarding@rootofit.com
Deputy Safeguarding Lead	Helen Rathborne	02381 120010 / safeguarding@rootofit.com

If a team member has any concerns about a child or an adult they are working with, the Team Member has a duty to report those concerns. They should make their own notes immediately, so that they are fresh and uninfluenced.

The concerns should be reported to the Safeguarding Officer as soon as is practically possible.

Team member's will need to provide information on what you have seen, what you have heard from others and what has been said to you directly.

The Safeguarding Officer will maintain their own record of these concerns, which will also form part of any future report.

They must also follow that up with a completed Safeguarding Concern Form, which must be returned to safeguarding@rootofit.com within 24 hours. This is then stored digitally with access restricted to the Safeguarding Officer's control.

If a Team Member is in doubt, anonymous advice should be sought from the Safeguarding Officer.

The Safeguarding Officer will either liaise directly, or instruct the Team Member to do so, with relevant authorities, such as child or adult Social Services or the Police in the area relevant to the learner's location. They will also ensure that the individuals concerned (or their parents/carers/guardians) are notified if necessary and it does not increase the risks involved. Actions take account of the ability to give informed consent with regards to the Mental Capacity Act 2005

Training or live events

We have a duty of care to the people attending our training or live events (either in-person or online). Facilitators should be vigilant to the potential for safeguarding incidents or other unwanted behaviour (e.g. racism or bullying), none of which are acceptable.

There should be a lead for safeguarding for all live events (in-person or virtual) and it should be clear to attendees who that person is. They should make it clear at the outset their role and make it clear that attendees should report their concerns to them. Likewise, that lead should be vigilant to the potential for incidents and take action accordingly. Safeguarding concerns should be reported as per this policy and also reported to hosts if the event or training is taking place within an organisation (e.g. delivered to service users of a charity, or pupils at a college).

If delivering online events, they should ensure they can hear attendee's audio feeds and regularly have sight of attendee's video broadcasts to ensure that there is no inappropriate non-verbal content, such as images or intimidating signals. Action should be taken immediately, such as instructing the student to stop that behaviour, expelling the user or disconnecting the online meeting for all users.

In the event our team are attending an external event, or delivering training within another organisation (e.g. delivering online training to a group of students from the same school), then the duty of care remains with the other organisation. However, this should not take away the vigilance of our staff and indeed should not stop them from acting (e.g. reporting a safeguarding concern or acting to stop bullying).

Responsibilities

All team members who work with children, young and vulnerable adults must ensure they not only understand but also act in line with this policy. This includes all staff, volunteers, agency workers and temporary staff.

Breach of this policy or unauthorised disclosure may result in disciplinary or legal action being taken.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer is responsible for monitoring and enforcing this policy in terms of safeguarding both children and adults.

Training

Any team members who are not able to evidence relevant safeguarding training will be expected to inform Headquarters, who will arrange for training to be undertaken. Due to the nature of our work, it is an expectation that all staff attend some level of safeguarding training. Non-contact staff receive generic Safeguarding, British Values and Prevent training. Contact staff (such as trainers or consultants) are obliged to attend a formal course if they are unable to evidence a recent course. They receive annual updates as part of the continuing professional development offered by the company.

Allegations against staff members / volunteers

If any member of staff or volunteer has concerns about the behaviour or conduct of another individual working within the group or organisation including:

- Behaving in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed an individual;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, an adult or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children
- Behaved towards an adult or adults in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with adults

The nature of the allegation or concern should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer for dealing with allegations within the organisation immediately.

The member of staff who has a concern or to whom an allegation or concern is reported should not question the child or investigate the matter further.

Whistle blowing protocols may apply in reporting concerns, and the separate Whistle blowing policy should be read in conjunction with this.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer for the company will report the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if it relates to a child or vulnerable adult.

Prevent Duty and British Values

We recognise our duty under Section 26 of the Counter-terrorism and Security Act 2015 in recognising extremism (both violent and non-violent) in all its forms. This includes raising concerns about grooming or interest in extremism in order to avoid people being drawn into terrorism. Please see the separate Prevent Policy.

Checks

To meet our responsibilities all of our direct delivery staff, plus all staff who have worked abroad and foreign nationals, have been vetted, their qualifications and references checked and an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check has been seen by us. This is reviewed every three years.

A person who is barred from working with children or vulnerable adults will be breaking the law if they work or volunteer, or try to work or volunteer with those groups. If we knowingly employs someone who is barred to work with those groups they will also be breaking the law. If there is an incident where a member of staff or volunteer has to be dismissed because they have harmed a child or vulnerable adult, or would have been if they had not left, the company will notify the DBS.

Confidentiality

We recognise that all matters relating to Safeguarding suitability checks are confidential.

The company will disclose any information about an employee, visitor or contractor for whom checks have been undertaken on a need to know basis only.

Information must be shared with police and Social Care where the child/young person/vulnerable adult is or may be at risk of significant harm

We ensure that individual's and/or parent's confidentiality must not be breached and that information is shared on a need to know basis.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the CEO.

November 2025