Safeguarding Strategy

Acacia Training's overarching Vision

Vision

We improve peoples' lives through delivery of quality education and empower them to be able to make choices. Our vision is to make education accessible to everyone, ensure opportunities for career progression and for ourselves and our learners to make a positive contribution to modern society.

Maxims

- All decisions are made based upon the greatest impact on the learner
- We are a work family, every member contributes
- Mistakes are a learning tool – reflect, learn, move on, improve
- Consider how we can positively impact the world environmentally and socially

Objectives

- Acacia creates opportunities for learners to be successful in work and life through engagement and progression with learning programmes and work
- Acacia delivers impactful learning to develop effective skills, knowledge & behaviours by providing outstanding education.
- Acacia is a forward-thinking company that champions diversity, inclusion and effectively governs our environmental, economic and social impact

Values

- Respect each other
- Safeguard all
- Everyone has a voice

Safeguarding Strategy Mission

Our learners and our workforce are safe, aware of risks to themselves and others and supported where any risk or actual harm is identified in relation to personal & online safety, including supporting wellbeing and mental fitness.

Safeguarding Strategy Objectives

- Are committed – developing a robust culture of vigilance.

- Build resilience – raising awareness of safeguarding and child protection issues, and equipping children & young people (and adults) with the language and skills to keep themselves safe.

- Establish a safe environment – in which children & young people (and adults) can work and learn and develop within an ethos of openness and are taught to treat each other with respect, to feel safe, to have a voice and are listened to.

- Support vulnerable learners – supporting learners who have been abused, have witnessed violence towards others or may be vulnerable to abuse.

- Prevent unsuitable people – from working with children & young people by ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with our children. And to maintain an active vigilance thereafter.

- Make a positive contribution – know and understand how to ensure those around our learners and in their care are safeguarded and how to report if there are concerns.

- Promotion - Knowing that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of learners is everyone's responsibility, and the voice of the learner is evident and protecting our learners from maltreatment.

- Prevention - Preventing impairment of our learner's health or development.

- Curriculum - Offering learners a balanced curriculum enabling them to enhance their safeguarding skills and knowledge whilst understanding the risks.

- Understanding - Ensuring as a provider we have a clear understanding of our staff's knowledge and understanding and embedding safeguarding through clear systems of communication.

- CPD - Continuous Professional Development (CPD) so that safeguarding is a robust element of our provision that goes beyond compliance.

We all have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of our learners and to maintain a professional attitude of *it could happen here* where safeguarding is concerned.

Acacia Training is committed to safeguarding learners and promoting children's welfare and expects all staff, governors, volunteers and visitors to share this commitment and maintain a vigilant and safe environment. Everyone has a responsibility to **act without delay** to protect learners by reporting anything that might suggest a child (or adult) is being abused or neglected. It is our willingness to work safely and challenge inappropriate behaviours that underpins this commitment. Acacia Training seeks to work in partnership with families and other agencies to improve the outcomes for children who are vulnerable or in need.

'Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.' (Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018)

All staff are encouraged to report any concerns that they have and **not see these as insignificant.** 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 of time** 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** in accordance with this policy to allow the Designated Safeguarding Lead to build up a picture and access support for the child at the earliest opportunity.

We maintain a professional attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When there are concerns about the welfare of a learner, staff members will always act in the best interests of the learner. This policy has been developed in-conjunction with our culture of prevention, protection and support and will be linked with all our policies e.g. anti-bullying, online safety, health and safety, anti-radicalisation. We will continue to maintain an ethos where learners feel secure, are encouraged to talk, are listened to and feel safe. Learners at Acacia Training are encouraged to talk freely with any staff member at Acacia Training if they are worried or concerned about something. This would also include any learners we are responsible for under sub-contracting arrangements.

From 2021 Acacia Training do not sub-contract any provision other than a roll down contract that is near completion, no sub-contracting will take place thereafter. Any Sub-contractors would undergo annual due diligence to ensure they have the necessary policies in place and contractually are obliged to meet all the necessary requirements including staff training.

<u>Introduction</u>

The aim of our strategy and any associated policies is to clarify Acacia Training role in the safeguarding and protection of children and young people and adults at risk and to promote their welfare. The purpose is to bring about better outcomes for all learners by facilitating open communication channels and clear accountability in interagency working arrangements. By implementing the strategy & policy it will help all learners achieve the below outcomes:

- o Are committed – developing a robust culture of vigilance

- o Build resilience – raising awareness of safeguarding and child protection issues, and equipping children & young people (and adults) with the language and skills to keep themselves safe

- o Establish a safe environment – in which children & young people (and adults) can work and learn and develop within an ethos of openness and are taught to treat each other with respect, to feel safe, to have a voice and are listened to

- o Support vulnerable learners – supporting learners who have been abused, have witnessed violence towards others or may be vulnerable to abuse

- o Prevent unsuitable people – from working with children & young people by ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with our children. And to maintain an active vigilance thereafter

- o Make a positive contribution – know and understand how to ensure those around our learners and in their care are safeguarded and how to report if there are concerns

This policy applies to the entire Acacia Training caseload including all young people aged 13-18 and vulnerable adults, who form part of our statutory responsibilities, specifically those young people who have a physical, sensory or learning disability. Throughout this document the generic phrase learners will be used where possible. Where the phrase "Child" or "Child Protection Procedure" applies these will also apply to Adults at risk. We recognise that any learner could potentially be a victim of abuse.
The aim is to follow the procedures set out by Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018 by:

- o Knowing that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of learners is everyone's responsibility, and the voice of the learner is evident
- o Protecting our learners from maltreatment
- o Establishing a safe environment in which our learners can learn and develop within an ethos of openness

- o Preventing impairment of our learner's health or development
- o Ensuring young people at Acacia Training grow up in circumstances consistent with the provisions of safe and effective care.
- o Offering learners a balanced curriculum including PHSE, healthy relationship education, online safety, sexting
- o Offering learners a balanced curriculum through online activities, enabling them to enhance their safeguarding skills and knowledge whilst understanding the risks.
- o Understanding that no single professional can have the full picture of a learner's needs and circumstances. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their family has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.
- o Undertaking the role so as to enable learners at Acacia Training to have best outcomes.
- o Ensuring as a provider we have a clear understanding of our staff's knowledge and understanding, and embedding safeguarding through clear systems of communication and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) so that safeguarding is a robust element of our provision.

Linked to the strategy, our safeguarding policy provides guidance to all adults working within the business, whether paid or voluntary or directly employed by Acacia Training or a third party.

- o This strategy and associated policies are available on sharepoint, mentor system & within the resources section on our eportfolio and is available on request from Hayley Marriott, hayleym@acaciatraining.co.uk
- o We also inform learners about this policy when they enroll in learning.
- o This policy will be reviewed in full by the Board on an annual basis or sooner should legislation/guidance change.
- o This policy sets out how Acacia Training discharges its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of learners. Our policy applies to all staff; paid and unpaid
- o The policy is provided to all staff (including freelance, temporary staff and volunteers) at induction, alongside our Staff code of conduct. In addition, all staff are provided with Part One & Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018.
- o All new staff receive a safeguarding induction with the Safeguarding Lead and all staff have to complete the necessary mandatory training

The revised interagency guidance is based on:

1. Keeping Children Safe in Education – updated 18/01/2021 (post EU exit) Link
2. Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years Education and Skills Settings – updated 02/09/2019 Link
3. Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges – updated 17/05/2018 Link
4. Prevent Duty Guidance – updated 12/05/2021 Link
5. Work-based learning National Guidance – DfE – Prevent

6. CONTEST Strategy (Prevent) [Link]
7. Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 [Link]
8. Equality Act 2010 [Link]
9. Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 [Link]
10. Vetting and Barring Scheme Guidance [Link]
11. Education Act 2011 [Link]
12. Every Child Matters 2004 updated 2007 [Link]
13. Children Act 2004 [Link]
14. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 [Link]
15. Human Rights Act 2010 [Link]
16. GDPR Regulations 2018 [Link]
17. The Care Act 2014 [Link]
18. Modern Slavery Act 2015 [Link]

All staff working with learners must be able to identify when someone may be likely to suffer significant harm through abuse or neglect and how to act upon concerns by referring them to Children's or adults Social Care. In addition all staff must ensure that learners are supported with e- safety and are aware of threats surrounding this.

For children or young people only:
We will work closely with Staffordshire local safeguarding children's board who will help and support us in instances relating to abuse. For anyone wanting to contact the local safeguarding children's board, the contact details are: 01782 235100, this is the Stoke on Trent Safeguarding board, it is worth noting that all regions will have their own local numbers.

https://www.staffsscb.org.uk/Aboutus/What-is-the-SSCB.aspx

All agencies and their staff should be aware of internal arrangements consistent with the child and vulnerable adult's protection procedures (Section B), and the roles of key staff within the organisation.

Roles, Responsibilities and Structure

All staff delivering services in children and young people have a responsibility under the to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
Keeping Children Safe in Education – updated Sept 2022 Link

We also have an ethical and moral duty to protect those adults that could become vulnerable or who are vulnerable to abuse due to the nature of the sectors we deliver education within.

Online Safety

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation: technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm. An effective approach to online safety empowers a school or college to protect and educate the whole school or college community in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any incident where appropriate.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into three areas of risk:

• **content**: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views;

• **contact**: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults; and

• **conduct**: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying.

Remote education, virtual lessons and live streaming guidance

1. Safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus (COVID-19) Link
2. Video conferencing services: Security guidance for organisations Link
3. Video conferencing services: Using them securely Link

Action Plan and Risk Assessment

No.	Prevent Vulnerability/Risk Area	Risk Y/N	Action taken/already in place to mitigate/address risk	Owner	When	RAG
1	**LEADERSHIP/Awareness** Do the following people, if applicable, have a good understanding of their own and institutional responsibilities in relation to "Safeguarding"? • Board • Staff • Safeguarding team • Associate Staff • Sub-Contractors (currently not using sub-contractors)	Y	Board are fully aware of their obligations and have undertook appropriate annual training, including safer recruitment for those involved. Safeguarding lead is a member of the board, other members are aware and again have undertaken relevant training. All staff/associates undertake annual training on Prevent/Safeguarding/Channel/E&D. New staff complete this in the first 2 weeks of employment. Safeguarding lead meets with all new employees during induction All staff/associates are aware of the policy and is held on the company intranet (mentor), the policy is ratified at board level.. Sub-contractors (if applicable) undertake a due diligence process which includes Prevent/SG/Channel/E&D. Partner meetings are held throughout the year where Safeguarding is a standard agenda item.	VS	Ongoing	Low

				TLA observers feedback and action organisations who have missed opportunities to promote safeguarding. Committee meets as a minimum quarterly & Safeguarding is standard agenda item at Governing Board meetings. Geographical sharing of information.			
2	Partnership 1) Is there active engagement from the institution's board, SMT, managers and leaders? 2) Does the institution have an identified single point of contact (SPOC) in relation to Safeguarding?	Y	1) Yes, all managers aware of policy. Prevent/SG etc is mandatory governing meeting agenda item (held monthly). CEO/SG/Prevent lead is present at all meetings. 2) Yes, the safeguarding lead who is also Director Victoria Sylvester.	VS	Achieved	Low
3	Staff Training Do all staff have sufficient knowledge and confidence to: 1) exemplify British Values in their management, teaching and through general behaviours in the institution 2) understand the factors that make people vulnerable	Y	1) Staff receive annual training both online and face to face by a variety of experts in relevant areas (cyber-security, safeguarding, modern slavery etc). BV is reinforced throughout the year at relevant team meetings, sharing of information from Safeguarding lead. ATL has relevant policies/procedures/COP in place to ensure staff exemplify BV in their general behaviour. TLA strategy includes measuring of	VS	Achieved, ongoing	Med

	3) have sufficient training to be able to recognise this vulnerability and be aware of what action to take in response		BV/SG/Prevent etc and is monitored via observation with relevant actions put in place. 2) Staff understand via the training of factors that make people vulnerable and how/who to report to. This is reinforced on a regular basis at team meetings, updates from Safeguarding Lead. 3) Staff are fully aware of who to report to and what action to take. This is enforced at induction and reinforced throughout the year at meetings, through slack and email. 4) CPD has 3 levels – mandatory, developmental & extended. Mandatory is the minimum requirement, expectation is that the vast majority of staff will develop deeper learning to the route cause of safeguarding beyond compliance.				
4	**Welfare, pastoral and Chaplaincy support** 1) Are there adequate arrangements and resources in place provide pastoral care and support as required by the institution? 2) Does the institution have chaplaincy provision or is this support signposted locally or brought in? 3) Are their adequate monitoring arrangements to ensure that this support is effective and supports the institutions welfare and equality policies? 4) Does the chaplaincy support reflect the student demographic and need?	N/A	Not applicable for our provider as we deliver in the workplace.		N/A	N/A	N/A

5	**Speakers and Events** 1) Is there an effective policy/framework for managing speaker requests? 2) Is it well communicated to staff/students and complied with? 3) Is there a policy/framework for managing on site events i.e. charity events? 4) Are off site events which are supported, endorsed, funded or organised through the institution (including Students' Union if applicable) subject to policy/framework?	N/A	Not applicable for our provider as we do not hold such events, however a policy is in place should we do so in the future. All managers are aware of the policies for Freedom of Speech, including guest speakers should the need arise. All managers are aware that a risk assessment has to be undertaken and authorised by the Safeguarding Lead.	N/A	N/A	N/A
6	**Safety Online & ICT Systems** 1) Does the institution have a policy relating to the use of IT and does it contain a specific reference and inclusion of Safeguarding? 2) Does the institution employ filtering/firewall systems to prevent staff/students/visitors from accessing extremist websites and material? 3) Does this also include the use of using their own devices via Wi-Fi? 4) Does the system alert to serious and/or repeated breaches or attempted breaches of the policy?	Yes	1) Yes, there is a clear policy in relation to ICT that includes Safeguarding 2) Yes. We have an external provider, Fifteen Group, that manages all of our IT systems. Our firewall prevents access to sites and extremist material. Our site also prevents access to facebook other than those authorised for marketing purposes. 3) Visitors to the premises would have to log into our system to use the wi-fi and are therefore covered by the above firewall. 4) We use software called "mimecast" which identifies emails which would breach the policy	VS	Ongoing	Low

				and informs the Data & Systems Manager. Sonicwall prevents access to websites that breach the policy, including social media – this can be accessed but only with approval. 5) Learners can only access ICT equipment on any of our sites with supervision of a staff member. 6) We are cyber essentials accredited 7) IT is pen tested annually.			
7	**Prayer and Faith Facilities** 1) Does the institution have prayer facilities? 2) Are they good governance and management procedures in place in respect of activities and space in these facilities?	N/A		Not applicable for our provider as we deliver in the workplace. However, if facilities were needed we would be able to accommodate an area for prayer.	N/A	N/A	N/A
8	**Site Security** 1) Are there effective arrangements in place to manage access to the site by visitors and non-students/staff? 2) Is there a policy regarding the wearing of ID on site? Is it enforced? 3) Are dangerous substances kept and stored on site? 4) Is there a policy in place to manage the storage, transport, handling and audit of such substances?	Yes		1) There is a visitor's book and all visitors are seen entering or leaving the building. Recently we have installed a finger print recognition system for staff. Staff are all trained to be vigilant with regards to visitors. 2) Yes all staff have ID badges and their pictures are on the staff notice board by the front door. 3) No – only standard cleaning products which are stored in a locked cupboard in the kitchen in small quantities.	VS	Ongoing	Low

	5) Is there a policy covering the distribution (including electronic) of leaflets or other publicising material? 6) Does the institution intervene where off site activities are identified or are likely to impact upon staff and/or students i.e. leafleting, protest etc?			4) N/A 5) Yes, all material has to be approved by the relevant manager and/or CEO 6) This has not occurred, but yes we would intervene			
9	**Safeguarding Referrals** 1) Is there a Safeguarding Policy? 2) Do Safeguarding and welfare staff receive additional and ongoing training to enable the effective understanding and handling of referrals? 3) Does the institution utilise Channel as a support mechanism in cases of radicalisation and extremism? 4) Does the institution have a policy regarding referral to Channel identifying a recognised pathway and threshold for referral?	Yes		1) Yes there is safeguarding policy in place and this links with other key policies (E&D, Prevent, Modern Slavery, Complaints, ICT) 2) Yes, annually as a minimum supported by wider face to face training. 3) Yes, we have links with our Prevent lead who prevent@westmindlands.gov.uk 0121 303 3642. We also have links with the local Safeguarding boards who provide clear information on their website in relation to Prevent leads in their area. The CEO holds a list of all the FE Prevent Leads and local safeguarding Boards relevant to the learners. 4) Yes, all referrals are assessed by the CEO and referred via the CEO. This is clearly communicated to staff and they understand that they should not refer directly to external agencies themselves so as not to delay	VS	Achieved	Low

			investigations as each case is treated individually.			
10	**Communications** 1) Is the institution Safeguarding Lead and their role widely known across the institution? 2) Are staff and students made aware of Safeguarding, current risks and appropriate activities in this area? 3) Are there information sharing protocols in place to facilitate information sharing with Safeguarding partners?	Yes	1) Yes, has been communicated to all staff and is regularly communicated. New staff meet the Safeguarding Lead during the first 2 weeks of their induction to ensure that they are clear on the processes and procedures. 2) Yes. Policies are communicated to learners and Safeguarding is promoted throughout the teaching/learning with a clear focus on naturally occurring opportunities to discuss prevent alongside the embedded curriculum activities. 3) Yes, we work with partners and share information via Slack & mentor (on which there is a group set up), email and regular partner events. 4) Safeguarding groups on staff and learner slack	VS	Achieved	Low
11	**Staff and Volunteers** 1) Does awareness training extend to sub-contracted staff and volunteers? 2) Is the institution vigilant to the radicalisation of staff by sub-contracted staff and volunteers?	Yes	1) Yes. All sub-contracted staff, volunteers and associates are expected to undertake the same training, policies and procedures as ATL. Safeguarding is embedded throughout the organisation and all training is provided free of charge. 2) Yes. Due diligence of all sub-contracted staff and volunteers takes place, they are checked to			

				ensure they maintain their training and relevant updates.			
12	<u>Freedom of Expression</u> 1) Does the institution have a Freedom of Speech/Expression policy? 2) Does this policy recognise and incorporate the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism? 3) Is the need to protect vulnerable individuals covered within this policy?	Yes	1) Yes there is a Freedom of Speech policy in place with a guest speaker risk assessment. 2) Yes, the policy explicitly highlights the risks. 3) Yes the need to protect vulnerable people is included in the policy.	VS	Achieved	Low
14	<u>Safe place to discuss safeguarding</u> 1) Are staff trained to facilitate discussions on safeguarding? 2) Are there opportunities available to do this i.e. do you run a programme of seminars? 3) Can external speakers be invited to discuss safeguarding?	Yes	1) As part of TLA staff are trained on how to engage discussion in relation to safeguarding and how to handle discussions should they cause debate of a negative nature. Managers are all fully aware on how to address discussions in relation to safeguarding. 2) We run standardisation meetings throughout the year where staff can discuss prevent. Any external speakers to discuss Safeguarding, are subject to authorisation from the Safeguarding lead prior to any invitation.	VS	Achieved	Low
15	<u>Policies and Procedures</u> 1) What policies need to change to incorporate Safeguarding (prevent, security & estate	Yes	1) All relevant policies have been updated where necessary to include Safeguarding, this are reviewed annually or on a needs basis should updates be required in-between times.	VS	Achieved	Low

		management, disciplinary, behaviour, room booking, external speakers)					
16	**Information Sharing** 1) Are there information sharing protocols in place with the Police and the council? 2) Do the Police know who to contact for any issues? 3) Does the provider know who to contact at the Police? 4) Do other staff members know who the Safeguarding lead is at the provider?	Yes	1) Yes there is an Information Sharing policy and procedure in place, this can be found our intranet (Yammer). 2) The police are aware that they would need to contact the Safeguarding Lead Amy Fowles (Board representative) 3) Yes, we have links with our local safeguarding boards at the local authorities who have the information in relation to who to contact within the police. 4) Yes all staff know who the Safeguarding & Prevent Lead is, how to contact them, who to contact in their absence and this is reinforced on a regular basis as reminders are sent out, posters are around the building.	VS	Achieved	Low
17	**Safeguarding Messaging** 1) How can Safeguarding be communicated better? i.e. posters, newsletters, intranet, student and staff handbooks, staff induction, internal literature	Yes	1) Continued building of learner slack channel to encourage learners to join to speed up communications and an extra route to get communications across. 2) Eportfolios distribute regular newsletters	VS	Ongoing	High

| 18 | Covid 19

1) Increased risk identified:
   - Domestic Abuse (menta/phys/sexual)
   - Loneliness
   - Mental health
   - Gambling addiction
   - Radicalisation
   - Physical health
   - Online safety | | 1) Increase awareness with staff and learners
2) We have a good number of trained MHFA's and Domestic Abuse Champions all on standby and supported
3) Free mental health training for learners and employers
4) Wellbeing map – physical and mental wellbeing bitesized courses
5) Positive Intelligence Programme
6) Learner slack channel to speed up communication | VS | Ongoing | High |

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