

STRIVE SAFEGUARDING POLICY

VERSION 25

1 SEPTEMBER 2025

Introduction

Strive Training regards the health, safety and welfare of all young people and vulnerable adults engaged in courses, and other activities, as one of its highest priorities. The company recognises and fully accepts its moral and statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults and its duty to protect staff from unfounded allegations of abuse.

This Safeguarding Policy should be read in conjunction with;

- Prevent Policy and Risk Assessment,
- Employee Handbook,
- Staff Code of Conduct,
- Learner Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing Policy

This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers and directors, paid staff, consultancy staff, agency staff, volunteers or anyone working on behalf of Strive Training.

Principles of Safeguarding

Strive Training will take all reasonable measures to ensure that any risk of harm to learners' health is minimised and will take all possible action to address concerns about the welfare of any learner in full partnership with other local agencies.

We will ensure:

- A safe environment for all learners and staff.
- Those suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm or abuse are identified and referred to the necessary agencies as appropriate.
- All learners are given information about and guidance on safeguarding, our safeguarding procedures and how to keep themselves and others safe.

We will do this by:

- Appointing and training Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) and ensuring all staff working with learners are trained in Safeguarding.
- Raising awareness of issues relating to the welfare and safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Ensuring all staff working in regulated activity read and understand 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (Part 1) and Annexe B.
- Ensuring staff recognise the signs of abuse or that an individual may be at risk of significant harm.
- Ensuring staff understand their responsibilities to safeguard children who may be living with or in the care of learners.
- Promoting a safe learning environment during both on-line and face to face lessons.
- Engaging with employers to ensure their commitment to safeguarding in the workplace.
- Working with other agencies as appropriate (e.g., Safeguarding Partners) where an individual is being, or at risk of being, significantly harmed.
- Providing a framework for reporting and dealing with concerns and disclosures.
- Embedding safeguarding in the learners' induction and curriculum.
- Establishing clear procedures for the reporting and handling of allegations of abuse against staff.
- Requiring staff to undertake mandatory safeguarding training upon employment with annual updating.

Legislative Framework

Whilst the majority of Strive Training's learners are adults, we will have due regard to the guidance relating to keeping all learners safe in education. The legislative frameworks around our policy are:

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2020 which reaffirms safeguarding as everyone's responsibility and the sharing of information between agencies.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 requires all staff to read and understand their responsibilities if engaged in 'regulated' activities with young people. This is also relevant when working with learners of all ages.

The Care Act 2014 sets out the statutory responsibility for safeguarding partners to work together to promote wellbeing and protect vulnerable adults from harm.

The Prevent Duty 2015 requires specified authorities, including education, in the exercise of their functions to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Children's Act 2004, which is fundamental to people working with children and young adults in the UK

Education Act 2002 requires that governing bodies of FE providers have a statutory duty to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people

Sexual Offences Act 2003 makes it an offence for a person over 18 (e.g. a teacher or other member of staff) to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual. This applies where the child is in full-time education and the person works in the same establishment as the child, even if s/he does not teach the child.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 sets out the type of activity in relation to children and adults at risk for which employers and individuals will be subject

Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 which changed the definition of Regulated Activity including who is eligible for a barred list check.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 is a law that protects vulnerable people over the age of 16 around decision-making. It says that: Every adult, whatever their disability, has the right to make their own decisions wherever possible. People should always support a person to make their own decisions if they can.

Online Safety Act 2023 is designed to make the internet safer by requiring online platforms to protect users from illegal and harmful content while safeguarding freedom of expression. We recognise our responsibility to ensure that all online platforms and communications used within our training environment are safe, secure, and do not expose learners or staff to illegal or harmful content. We will undertake regular risk assessments of our digital, user-to-user and interactive services to identify possible online harms, and implement proportionate measures to prevent, detect and respond to illegal content or behaviour, including self-harm, cyberbullying, or the sharing of intimate images. Furthermore, we will comply with applicable Ofcom codes of practice, and ensure that any reporting mechanisms are accessible, clear and timely. This commitment to online safety is integral to our wider safeguarding obligations.

Definitions

Safeguarding – protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults from maltreatment, preventing impairment of their physical and mental health or development and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

Child Protection – any activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Vulnerable Adult – for the purposes of this policy, an individual over the age of 18, with specific personal or situational needs, which increase their risk of suffering significant harm. Strive Training understands that any adult can become vulnerable at any time in their life and this puts them at a higher risk of abuse.

Child/Young Person – anyone under the age of 18.

Significant Harm – The Children's Act introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interest of the children. Some children may be in need of help because they are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

Types of Abuse

The following are recognised as types of abuse, although any act which harms a child, young person or vulnerable adult should also be considered:

Physical Abuse - may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning or suffocating. It may be done deliberately or recklessly, or be the result of a deliberate failure to prevent an injury occurring

Neglect - the persistent or severe failure to meet a child's, young person's or vulnerable adult's physical and/or psychological needs, which may result in serious impairment of their health or development

Sexual Abuse involves a child, young person or vulnerable adult being forced or coerced into participating in or watching sexual activity of any kind. Any apparent consent or awareness is irrelevant

Emotional Abuse – persistent emotional ill treatment or rejection; includes abusive or offensive electronic communications. This causes severe and adverse effects on behaviour and emotional development, resulting in low self-esteem. Some degree of emotional abuse is present in all forms of abuse.

Financial Abuse - in intimate or parental relationships is a way of controlling a person's ability to acquire, use, and maintain their own money and financial resources

Extremism and Radicalisation – Extremism is defined as “vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs; and/or calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.” Radicalisation is defined as “the way in which a person comes to support terrorism and encourages other people to believe in views that support terrorism”

Child Sexual Exploitation - Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

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

Peer-on-peer Abuse - Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as peer on peer abuse and can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals.

Domestic Abuse - 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.

Forced Marriage – describes a marriage in which one or both of the parties are married without their consent or against their will. Different from an arranged marriage, in which both parties' consent

Female Genital Mutilation - all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for nonmedical reasons. FGM is illegal in England and Wales under the FGM Act 2003

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 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.

Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and all staff involved in the delivery and support of training and education at Strive have a role to play. All staff employed and engaged by Strive Training will undergo safeguarding training at induction, advanced training (as appropriate) and will take part in the annual CPD programme where safeguarding updates/refreshers will be programmed.

The Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) are:

John Stapleton

Email - jstapleton@strivetraining.co.uk
Phone Number- 07908 400230

Kim Franks

Email- kfranks@strivetraining.co.uk
Phone number- 07944 163 101

Designated safeguarding email address: safeguarding@strivetraining.co.uk

The DSL's have responsibility for:

- Ensuring the organisation's policies reflect prevailing legal and contractual requirements.
- Full compliance of the legislative duties.
- Managing the referral of cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant agencies.
- Providing advice and support to staff who have made referrals to other agencies.
- Keeping detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals.
- Referring concerns around Prevent directly to the counter-terrorism police.
- Maintaining a proper record of any child protection referral, complaint or allegation.
- Attending case conferences and review meetings if required and as appropriate.
- Communication of the policy and arrangements to all relevant parties including but not limited to children, young people and vulnerable adults, their parents and families, staff and apprentice employers.
- Engaging with local authorities and other agencies as appropriate.
- Ensuring that staff receive safeguarding training appropriate to their roles and update this annually.

- Safety of all learners, including when a young person or vulnerable adult is absent or missing, without explanation.
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff.

Safeguarding Process

- All safeguarding concerns should be raised directly to the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL's) in the first instance. The DSL's are available during all working hours as well as out of hours.
- Raising a concern can be done through a direct phone call or through a dedicated, confidential email address (contact details of DSL's can be found below).
- The DSL's will review the safeguarding concern raised and will advise on the next steps necessary to address the concern, which will be dependent on the nature of the concern raised. For example, the DSL's may decide to monitor the situation or signpost the learner to a support agency.
- One of the two DSL's will be appointed as the investigation officer to investigate and follow up the concern. We have both male and female DSL's to be able to respond to different sensitivities and this will be factored in when appointing an investigation officer.
- The DSL will speak to the staff member who raised the concern to understand the broader context of the issue that was raised. The DSL's will then together determine the next steps based on the nature of the concern. This could include speaking to the individual concerned (subject of the safeguarding concern raised).
- The DSL's would then agree on the next appropriate steps to be taken on how best to address the concern. This could include contacting external agencies for referrals or further support/advice.
- When a learner is funded by a funding partner as part of a subcontract, we will establish clear communication channels with the partner at the start of the partnership. This will include who is the direct point of contact in the event of a safeguarding concern raised. The process to report a safeguarding concern would be agreed which could include an initial phone call to the designated point of contact or a confidential email outlining the concern. Regular meetings would be held with our funding partners' safeguarding team to review safeguarding items and updates of their learners. Partner funders will be informed of any safeguarding concerns relating to their learners and will be updated throughout the process on the progress of any investigations, until it is closed off.
- All safeguarding concerns are recorded by the DSL's on a safeguarding log.
- Each safeguarding item logged is reviewed and updated until a conclusion has been reached when the item is closed off on the log.

DSL contact information:

John Stapleton – 07908 400 230

Kim Franks – 07944 163 101

Email: safeguarding@strivetrainin.co.uk

Safe Recruitment of Staff

Strive Training operates safer recruitment and employment practices. Staff checks and critical process undertaken include:

- Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (required prior to working in 'regulated' activity with children, young people, or vulnerable adults).
- Where a conviction is recorded, the DSL will carry out a risk assessment and decide whether to confirm or reject the individual's appointment. (Anyone that is barred from working with children or vulnerable adults will NOT be appointed).
- Two employment/education references including the most recent employment.
- Evidence of identity is obtained, including the right to work in the UK.
- Qualifications are checked and verified with original certificates.
- Areas of concern in the CV will be addressed during the interview.
- Carry out an online search of shortlisted candidates. If anything is identified that could cause concern, this would be explored with the individual at the interview stage.

This information will be held on a single central record held by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Allegations made against staff

Strive Training expect all staff to behave in a professional and appropriate manner. The Staff Code of Conduct provides staff with clear guidelines on how to behave and how to avoid unfounded allegations. Breaches of this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary proceedings.

The primary concern in the event of an allegation is to ensure the safety of the young person or vulnerable adult. In all cases, action will be taken quickly, confidentially and professionally, with all parties clear that suspension is not an indicator of guilt, but a required part of a process.

In the event that a member of staff suspects any other member of staff of abusing a learner, it is their responsibility to report these concerns to the DSL (or Deputy), except when they are the person against whom the allegation is being made. In this instance the report should go to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

The DSL will contact the Local Authority and seek the advice of the Designated Officer in all situations where a member of staff has been accused of or is suspected of abuse. The DSL will also contact the DBS to advise them of any subsequent dismissals, regardless of prosecution.

Preventative measures taken in relation to Safeguarding:

- Supporting adults to safeguard themselves.
- Training and education for staff and volunteers.
- Awareness-raising.
- Providing information and advice.
- Advocacy.
- Policies and procedures.
- Community links.
- Legislation and regulation.

The Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed each year, or as required, and updates will be brought to the attention of staff.

SAFEGUARDING PROCESS AND PROCEDURE

Procedure to follow if a learner makes a disclosure:

1. Remain calm and listen.
2. Do not judge.
3. Do not ask questions or interrogate, unless you need to clarify you have understood correctly what is being said.
4. Reassure the learner that they have done the right thing by telling you.
5. Do not promise to keep secrets. Tell the learner you need to report this and get advice from someone who can help.
6. Make notes at the time or as soon as possible. Note main points carefully, including date, time, place, what learner said/showed you and any questions you may have asked.

7. Do not investigate concerns or allegations yourself but report them immediately to the DSL.
8. Find out what the learner or vulnerable adult would like to happen, but make them aware that you may have to act against their wishes (e.g. if they ask you not to disclose to anyone else)

Procedure to follow if you are concerned about a learner:

1. Tell the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as you can.
2. An early referral gives more time to offer help, before the situation becomes severe or serious.
3. When the matter is already severe or serious, early referral gives more time for others to help protect the victim.
4. Make written notes at the earliest opportunity. Record facts accurately, legibly and sign/date notes as they may be required as evidence at a future date.
5. Give the notes to the designated person as soon as possible.

What happens next?

The DSL's will make a decision on further action. They may decide simply to record the concern and monitor the situation or signpost the learner to further support. If the DSL is concerned that the learner is at risk of harm, they may refer the matter to Children's Service or Adult Services or other relevant multi-agencies. If the learner is at risk of immediate harm, then they will contact the police.

Remember - it is better to do something and be wrong than do nothing and be right.