

Safeguarding Policy: Child Protection; Cornerstone Vocational Training.

1.0 Introduction

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004; the Education Act 2002 and 2011, and in line with government publications: "Working Together to Safeguard Children" 2018, updated 2020, Revised Safeguarding Statutory Guidance 2 "Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families" 2000, "What to do if You Are Worried a Child is Being Abused" 2003. The guidance reflects '**Keeping Children Safe in Education**' 2021.

The company takes seriously its responsibility under section 175 of the Education Act 2011 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements within our organisation to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering harm or maybe at risk of harm or neglect.

We recognise that all adults, including all staff, have a full and active part to play in protecting our learners from harm, and that the child's welfare is our paramount concern.

This policy also seeks to make the professional responsibilities clear to all staff to ensure that statutory and other duties are met in accordance with LSCB requirements and procedures.

All staff believe that our Centre's should provide a caring, positive safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.

The aims of this policy are:

- To support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
- To provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and feel confident, and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties, believing they will be effectively listened to.
- To ensure confidentiality unless the sharing of information is for the purpose of promoting the welfare of the child and protect their safety.
- To raise awareness of all delivery and non-delivery staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure we, Cornerstone Vocational Training (CVT), contribute to assessments of need and support packages for those children.
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
- To develop a structured procedure within the company, which will be followed by all staff members, in cases of suspected abuse.
- To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police and Social Care.
- To ensure that all staff working within our Centre who have substantial access to children have been recruited as per safer recruitment procedures, by a trained member of staff, and have been checked as to their suitability, including verification of their identity, qualifications, and a satisfactory Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) according to relevant, up to date guidance from the department of education (DfE), and a central record is kept for audit.

2.0 Safe Centre, Safe Staff

We will ensure that:

All members of staff and Managers understand and fulfil their responsibilities, namely to ensure that:

- there is a Child Protection policy
- it operates safer recruitment procedures
- the Company has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff
- the Company has procedures for referral to the DBS if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns of would have had if they had not resigned (through Company referencing system)
- A senior manager has been trained as senior designated leads for company
- Managers have undertaken safeguarding lead training.
- the designated person undertakes interagency training and training updated every 2 years
- any weaknesses in Child Protection, identified through case review, are remedied immediately
- Child Protection policies and procedures are reviewed annually
- The child protection policy is available on the CVT website
- Enhanced DBS checks are in place for all staff

The CPDP who is involved in recruitment and at least one other member of the Senior Management Team will also complete Safer Recruitment Training to be renewed every 5 years

All members of staff are provided with child protection awareness information at induction, including in their Company handbook so that they know who to discuss a concern with.

All members of staff continue to expand their understanding of domestic abuse and the impact it has on children and know how to respond to a learner who discloses abuse, neglect or exploitation, including controlling and coercive behaviour, through delivery of the induction or level 1 training and as detailed in the staff handbook

All parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures through publication of the company's Child Protection Policy.

We will ensure that child protection type concerns or allegations against adults working in our centre are referred to the LADO for advice, and that any member of staff found not suitable to work with children will be notified to the Independent Safeguarding Authority for consideration for barring, following resignation, dismissal, or when we cease to use their service as a result of a substantiated allegation, even in the case of a volunteer

Our procedures will be regularly reviewed and up-dated.

The name of the designated members of staff for Child Protection, will be clearly advertised in the Centre and website.

All new members of staff will be given a copy of our Safeguarding - child protection policy, with the CPDPs' names clearly displayed, as part of their induction into their Centre.

Parents/carers are made aware of this policy and their entitlement to have a copy of it via the company website

3.0 Responsibilities

The designated CPDOs/DSLs are responsible for:

- Referring a child if there are concerns about possible abuse to IFB, Careline, Police and LCSB, and acting as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns. Referrals should be made in writing, following a telephone call to Careline.
 1. Liverpool - Careline Children's Service - 0151 233 3700 (Phone lines are open 24/7.)
 2. Sefton - 0345 140 0845 between 8am and 6pm (minicom 0151 934 4013)
 3. Wirral - Wirral Integrated Front Door on 0151 606 2008 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday. Outside of these hours call 0151 677 6557.
 4. Warrington - Children's Safeguarding/Social Work Team on 01925 443322 - Outside of office hours ring us on 01925 444400
- Keeping written records of concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.
- Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from learner records, until the child's 25th birthday, and are copied on to the child's next school or college.
- Ensuring that an indication of the existence of the additional file in above is marked on the learner records.
- Liaising with other agencies and professionals.
- Ensuring that either they or the staff member attend case conferences, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings and contribute to assessments wherever requested and practicable, and provide a report which has been shared with the parents.
- Ensuring that any learner currently with a child protection plan who is absent in the educational setting without explanation for two days is referred to their key worker's Social Care Team.
- Organising child protection induction, and update training every 3 years, for all Cornerstone staff.
- Providing an annual report for the Senior Management Team, detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by the CPDO, and by all staff; number and type of incidents/cases, and number of children on the child protection register.

4.0 Supporting Children

- We recognise that a child who is abused or witness's violence may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame themselves, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self - worth.
- We recognise that the Company may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.
- We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to be aggressive or withdrawn.

The Company will support all children by:

- Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness, through the curriculum as well as our relationships, whilst not condoning aggression or bullying.
- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within our Centres.

- Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
- Notifying Social Care as soon as there is a significant concern.

5.0 Confidentiality

- We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.
- The Centre Manager / Safeguarding Leads will disclose any information about a child to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.
- All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing and that all staff are aware that Data protection and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purpose of keeping children safe.
- We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to Social Care with their parents/carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation.

6.0 Supporting Staff

We recognise that staff working for Cornerstone who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.

We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with:

- Brendan Bell (Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer)
- Terri Smith (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer)

and to seek further support as appropriate. CVT have nominated two members of staff, so one nominee can be supported by the other, if they felt any anxieties through working on delicate safeguarding matters.

If staff feel that they require further support Cornerstone may assist through signposting to the company HR consultants, who can provide a counselling support service.

7.0 Allegations against staff

- All company staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults.
- All Staff should be aware of Cornerstone's own Behaviour Management policy.
- Guidance about conduct and safe practice will be given at induction.
- We understand that a learner may make an allegation against a member of staff.
- If such an allegation is made, or information is received which suggests that a person may be unsuitable to work with children, the member of staff receiving the allegation or aware of the information, will immediately inform the Safeguarding Lead.
- The Safeguarding Lead on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within **one day** (24 hours).

- If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Safeguarding lead, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Managing Director who will consult as above.
- The company will follow the company procedures for managing allegations against staff. Under no circumstances will we send a child home, pending such an investigation, unless this advice is given exceptionally, as a result of a consultation with the LADO.
- Suspension of the member of staff, excluding the Managing Director, against whom an allegation has been made, needs careful consideration, and the Managing Director will seek the advice of the LADO and Personnel Consultant in making this decision.
- In the event of an allegation against the Managing Director, the decision to suspend will be made by the Operations Manager with advice as above.

8.0 Whistle-blowing

- We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.
- All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of child protection, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues. If it becomes necessary to consult outside the company, they should speak in the first instance, to the LADO following the Whistleblowing Policy.

9.0 Physical Intervention

- We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, when a child is endangering him/herself or others, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person or themselves.
- Such events should be recorded and signed by a witness.
- We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

10.0 Anti-Bullying

- Our company policy on anti-bullying is set out in a separate document and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. This includes all forms e.g. cyber, racist, homophobic and gender related bullying. We keep a record of known bullying incidents. All staff are aware that children with SEND and / or differences/perceived differences are more susceptible to being bullied / victims of child abuse. We keep a record of bullying incidents.

11.0 Racist Incidents

Our policy on racist incidents is detailed within our behaviour policy and acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures or referral to Channel under extreme behaviours. We keep a record of racist incidents.

12.0 Prevent Guidance

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of the CPDO role. The CPDO will:

- Undertake Channel training and any further training offered by the LSCB
- assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. The CPDO are able to demonstrate a general understanding of the risks affecting children and young people in the area and a specific understanding of how to identify individual children who may be at risk of radicalisation through the Channel General Awareness training.
- If the CPDO suspects a child to be at risk of radicalisation they will follow the Channel guidance and log concerns with the LADO.

13.0 Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

- Child sexual exploitation (CSE) involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities.
- Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.
- Protecting children from CSE will be seen as part of the CPDO role. The CPDO will:
- Undertake CSE training as offered by the LSCB
- Assess the risk of a child being exploited and if the CPDO suspects a child to be at risk follow the normal safeguarding route of referral including informing CADT and CSE Officer.

14.0 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.

Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources

15.0 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM.

Indicators

There is a range of potential indicators that a girl may be at risk of FGM. Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, including prolonged absence from school, behaviour change from a holiday abroad, bladder or menstrual problems, finding it difficult to sit still mentioning something that someone did to then, isolation.

If concerns are raised to the DOCP should activate local safeguarding procedures.

Mandatory reporting commences in October 2015 these procedures will remain when dealing with concerns regarding the potential for FGM to take place. Where a teacher discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl who is aged under 18, there will be a statutory duty upon that individual to report it to the police.

16.0 Missing Children

We will monitor unauthorised absence, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions. We will report such absences without delay to the appropriate agencies in line with legislative and local authority requirements and agreements.

17.0 E-Safety

CVT believes that the use of information and communication technologies bring great benefits. We recognise that there are e-safety issues that need to be planned for accordingly that will help to ensure appropriate, effective and safer use of electronic communications.

1. CVT has a separate e-safety policy which should be considered in line with this policy.
2. Chat rooms and social networking sites are increasingly the source of inappropriate and harmful behaviour and children are not allowed to access these sites whilst in CVT centres.

Sexting

Sexting is defined as the production and/or sharing of sexual photos and videos of and by young people who are under the age of 18. It includes nude or nearly nude images and/or sexual acts. It is also referred to as 'youth produced sexual imagery'.

We at CVT look upon Sexting as a very serious incident and will follow the procedure below:

It will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately.

1. We will never view, download or share the imagery, or ask a child to share or download – this is

illegal.

2. If any staff have already viewed the imagery by accident (e.g. if a young person has showed it to them before you could ask them not to), it will be reported this to the DSL.
3. We will not delete the imagery or ask the young person to delete it.
4. We will not ask the young person(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery. This is the responsibility of the DSL.
5. We will not share information about the incident to other members of staff, the young person(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers.
6. We won't say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved.
7. We will explain to them that we need to report it and reassure them that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

Mobile phone use

It is CVT's aim to ensure that the use of mobile phones by all individuals who come into our settings is Managed effectively to make sure that the potential for misuse is minimised. This includes staff, parents, students, volunteers, visitors, and children.

It is the Manager's responsibility to tell staff and all adults that come into the setting about the need to protect children from harm. Staff are to remain vigilant and alert to any potential warning signs of the misuse of mobile phones.

18.0 Prevention

- We recognise that the company plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children by providing children with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

We will therefore:

- Work to establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
- Include regular consultation with children e.g. through safety questionnaires, participation in anti-bullying week, asking children to report whether they feel safe in our Centres
- Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the company whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- Include across the curriculum, including learning for life, opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help. In particular, this will include anti-bullying work, e-safety, road safety, FGM, CSE, and PREVENT

19.0 Health & Safety

Our Health & Safety policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both physically within our centre's environment, and for example in relation to internet use.

20.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

Our Child Protection Policy and Procedures will be monitored and evaluated by:

- Partners visits to the Company
- SLT 'drop ins' and discussions with children and staff
- Students surveys and questionnaires
- Scrutiny of Attendance data
- Scrutiny of range of risk assessments
- Review of parental concerns

This policy also links to our policies on:

Behaviour
Attendance
Whistleblowing
Anti-bullying
Health & Safety
Attendance
Allegations against staff
GDPR – Privacy policies
Keeping Children Safe in Education
E-Safety
Safer Recruitment

ADDENDUM

COVID - 19

Introduction

As Cornerstone is remaining open for vulnerable children and children of keyworkers during the current Covid-19 crisis, we are taking additional steps to safeguard our pupils, staff and parents. To do this we are acting in accordance with all NHS and Public Health England advice, as well as Department for Education guidance for schools and other provisions.

Staff, young people and children must stay at home if they are unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature to avoid spreading infection to others.

Reporting of Safeguarding Concerns

All safeguarding concerns will continue to be reported in the usual way as set out in our Safeguarding Policy. All concerns are reported into the Integrated Front door which is operating as usual.

Action to be taken if someone develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) on a Cornerstone Site

If anyone becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature in an education setting they should be sent home and advised to follow the staying at home guidance:

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance and support - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-and-support)

If a child is awaiting collection, they should be moved, if possible and if appropriate, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door. Settings should be mindful of individual children's needs – for example it would not be appropriate for younger children to be alone without adult supervision. Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible to isolate them, move them to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people.

If they need to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they should use a separate bathroom if possible. The bathroom should be cleaned and disinfected using standard cleaning products before being used by anyone else.

If they need clinical advice, they (or their teacher, parent or guardian) should go online to NHS 111 – <https://111.nhs.uk/> (or call 111 if they don't have internet access). In an emergency, call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. Do not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.

If a member of staff has helped someone who was taken unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves. They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell. In most cases, closure of the educational setting will not be needed but this will be a local decision based on various factors such as establishment size and risk of further spread. Advice will be sought from the Local Authority and Public Health England before any decision to close is taken.

If there is an urgent public health action to take, the educational setting will be contacted by the local Public Health England Health Protection Team who will undertake a risk assessment and advise on any actions or precautions that should be taken. PHE will rarely advise an educational setting to close but this may be necessary if there are so many staff being isolated that the educational setting has operational issues. Your local authority will support you to make this assessment. PHE will work with the headteacher, principal or management team, and the Local Authority Public Health team, to advise on the management of children, pupils, students or staff.

Limiting spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) in Cornerstone

Cornerstone is actively promoting the NHS and Public Health England advice to limit the spread of Covid-19 in the school. Action taken includes:

- reminding everyone on the school site of the public health advice.
- reminding staff and families to wash their hands for 20 seconds more frequently than normal – these messages are promoted in all sessions/lessons
- promoting social distancing advice
- having a cycle of regular cleaning in the Centre

Monitoring Attendance

Attendance of pupils will continue to be monitored; this is particularly important in respect of vulnerable children. The usual class register system will not be in use to support social distancing measures and other ways of recording attendance will be used. Attendance will be reported to the Department for Education every day in line with central government advice.

Advice for attending safeguarding meetings and local working arrangements

Cornerstone is following the advice published by the Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP) covering attendance at statutory meetings and visits to children's homes. Where possible audio/video conferencing is used instead of face to face attendance at meetings and visits to pupil's homes are actively discouraged. Where safeguarding concerns exist for new or existing cases these will be discussed with the Local Authority.

Cornerstone will be acting in accordance with local working arrangements advice published here:

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/working-arrangements-during-covid-19/>