



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Introduction / Statement of Intent

Simply Learning Tuition aims to ensure that any children and young people we work with are protected and kept safe from harm while they are with tutors and staff from our organisation. In order to achieve this we will ensure our tutors and staff are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised. Our policy applies to all staff and tutors working within the organisation and is intended to complement current Wandsworth Borough Council policy.

Definitions

What is 'Safeguarding'?

Children and young people can only be safeguarded properly if everyone involved with them work effectively together. It is therefore everyone's responsibility to safeguard a child or young person and promote his/her welfare.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- undertaking that role so to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

Child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm. (Working Together to Safeguard Children, Chapter 1, p. 34-35)

'Safeguarding' includes all children and it is EVERYONE's responsibility to safeguarding children and young people. We all have a safeguarding responsibility, whether you work directly or indirectly with children and young people or with adults who are parents or carers of children and young people.

What is child abuse?

Child abuse is harm done to a child or young person (anyone under the age of 18) either by a family member, someone else known to them or a stranger. Children can be abused in their own home, in another person's home, in a community setting or in an institution, such as a children's home or educational setting. The abuser may be an adult or another child or children.

Through the use of digital technology, children and young people can unfortunately now also be at risk of being abusing ‘within the safety of their homes’ by strangers. The days of predators having to move into the street, befriend the family, build up trust, is decreasing due to the prevalence and access that the digital world can offer.

Types of Abuse

There are four main types of abuse: emotional, neglect, physical and sexual. Abuse that takes place and is initiated through the use of digital technology is usually of a sexual nature, but can also be either physical or mental/emotional abuse. Where abuse happens through the Internet, digital or mobile technology it should not be seen or responded to any different than any other form of abuse. Although the concept of ‘e-Safety’ might be new to some people, it act inflicted upon a child or young person is abusive and should be responded to accordingly.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the 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 maltreatment of another. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Smothering a child’s development through over-protection can also be a form of abuse. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone. Domestic violence, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may expose children to emotional abuse.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child’s 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 and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is the deliberate physical injury to a child, or the wilful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering. This may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, confinement to a room or cot, or inappropriately giving drugs to control behaviour.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at or the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Grooming / predation

Grooming or predation can be defined as 'befriending a child by building a strong, trusting bond', and is most often used to refer to an act of lowering a perceived inhibitory attitude of a child regarding sexual behaviour with an adult. The 'groomer' is sometimes referred to as a 'chicken hawk'. Typically the grooming process involves showing pornography to the child to give the impression that sexual acts are normal, common or part of being 'grown-up'.

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 s15(2) provides a clear offence, ... after having met or communicated with a child on at least two earlier occasions, to meet, or travel to meet, the child with the intention of sexually abusing him or her on that occasion or later. A crime may be committed even without a meeting actually taking place and without the child even being involved in the meeting (for example, if a police officer has taken over the contact and pretends to be that child). Nurturing Internet friendships is not restricted to children, and there is frequent use of online chat, usually with the hope of real-life contact. (www.esafety.pbwiki.com)

It must be recognised that e-safety is not a technological issue and is not limited to settings where children have access to technology. Likewise, responsibility for e-safety must not be delegated to technical colleagues or those with a responsibility for ICT, but must be firmly embedded within safeguarding policies, practices and responsibilities. (Becta, Safeguarding children in a digital world Developing an LSCB e-safety strategy, 2008)

Reporting Abuse

Simply Learning Tuition understands that in addition to making a referral (a written report) to Wandsworth Council, Child Protection issues concerning tutors, children and young people must always be referred to the child protection agencies (i.e. social work and/or police) for appropriate investigation.

Our tutors' responsibility

We recognise that because of their day-to-day contact with children, Simply Learning Tuition staff and tutors are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. We will therefore:

- Seek to establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that they can approach their tutor if they are worried.
- We will follow the advice of Wandsworth Borough Council and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Children, Schools and Families to:

- Ensure we have a designated member of staff to be responsible for child protection matters. (The Director of Simply Learning Tuition will carry ultimate responsibility for child protection matters). The dedicated member of staff to contact is Nathaniel McCullagh 0207 228 2646, office hours or 0791 255 1289 out of hours.
- Ensure we have a nominated member of the senior management team to oversee child protection matters. This will also be Nathaniel McCullagh.
- Ensure every member of staff and every tutor knows the name of the designated person responsible for child protection and their role. (A copy of the Child Protection Policy will be sent to all staff and tutors along with practical guidelines).
- Ensure all staff and tutors understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated person responsible for child protection.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on Simply Learning Tuition and its staff for child protection. (A paragraph setting out Simply Learning Tuition's obligations relating to Child Protection will be included in documentation for parents).
- Co-operate as required with relevant agencies regarding child protection matters.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer. In the event of an allegation against a member of staff or tutor, the Director of Simply Learning Tuition may suspend that member of staff or tutor pending an initial investigation. Where the allegation is of a serious nature, then the matter will be reported to the appropriate authorities and Simply Learning Tuition will co-operate fully in any investigation. (If the allegation is against the Director staff should report their concerns directly to Wandsworth Council – see contact details on back page of this document.)

It is vitally important that any disclosure made in confidence is recorded factually as soon as possible; this is whether or not the matter is taken to another authority.

An accurate account should be made of:

- Date and time of what has occurred and the time the disclosure was made
- Names of people who were involved
- What was said or done by whom
- Any action taken by the group to gather information and refer on
- Any further action, e.g. suspension of a worker or volunteer
- Where relevant, reasons why there is no referral to a statutory agency
- Names of person reporting and to whom reported

Confidentiality

- We recognise that matters related to Child Protection are of a confidential nature. The designated member of staff will therefore share detailed information about a child with other staff members/tutors on a need to know basis only.
- All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other relevant agencies where necessary to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child that they will keep certain information secret.

Guidance on how to respond to a person disclosing abuse

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The tuition/ activities provided by Simply Learning Tuition may be an important stabilising element in the lives of children at risk as it provides a regular, secure and predictable experience. It is accepted that children suffering from abuse may have challenging behaviour or be defiant, or they may be withdrawn.

The ethos of the tutorial should promote a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.

We will ensure that children know when behaviour is unacceptable, but making the pupils aware that they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.

DO:

- Do treat any allegations extremely seriously and act at all times towards the child as if you believe what they are saying.
- Do tell the child they are right to tell you.
- Do reassure them that they are not to blame.
- Do be honest about your own position, who you have to tell and why.
- Do tell the child what you are doing and when, and keep them up to date with what is happening.
- Do take further action – you may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse – tell your nominated person immediately.
- Do write down everything said and what was done.

DON'T:

- Don't make promises you can't keep.
- Don't interrogate the child – it is not your job to carry out an investigation – this will be up to the police and social services, who have experience in this.
- Don't cast doubt on what the child has told you, don't interrupt or change the subject.
- Don't say anything that makes the child feel responsible for the abuse.

- Don't do nothing – make sure you tell your nominated Safeguarding Children person immediately – they will know how to follow this up and where to go for further advise.

We will liaise where appropriate with other agencies that support children, including their Schools, teachers, Social Care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, education welfare, educational psychology and other professionals available to us.

Safer Recruitment

Selection

- All applicants to our organisation will complete an application form.
- Short listed applicants will be asked to attend an interview.
- Short listed applicants will be asked to provide references and these will always be taken up prior to confirmation of an appointment.
- All successful applicants appointed into “academic tutor” positions will be Criminal Record Background Disclosure checked at Enhanced level.

Screening

The successful applicant will be asked to agree to an enhanced CRB disclosure. We will use SwiftCheck: a company registered as an umbrella company with the Criminal Records Bureau. All staff and tutors are required to undergo an enhanced CRB check prior to employment. Previous employer references are also taken up as part of the recruitment procedure.

Training

The successful applicant will receive induction training, which will give an overview of the organisation and ensure they know its purpose, values, services and structure. Relevant training and support will be provided on an ongoing basis and will cover information about their role and opportunities for practicing skills needed for work. Training on specific areas such as identifying and reporting abuse, and confidentiality will be given as a priority to new tutors and will be regularly reviewed.

Supervision

All tutors will have a designated supervisor who will provide regular feedback and support. Every member of staff and tutors who have worked during the year will be offered an annual review, where their performance, skills, motivation and expectations will be discussed. Annual reviews will be minuted and copies made available to the tutor.

Simply Learning Tuition will ensure that all staff involved in recruitment, training and supervision are aware of this policy and have received appropriate training and support to ensure its full implementation.

Legislation & guidance documents

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

Simply Learning Tuition will comply with the requirements of the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) (Vetting & Barring Scheme) in that:

- We will not allow anyone who is fully listed on the ISA List (as of 12th October 2009) to work/volunteer in a tutorial position within our organisation
- We will make a referral (send a written report) to Wandsworth Council if an individual harms a child or puts a child at risk of harm and as a result of this, we take the decision to remove them or they leave of their own accord, come to the end of a contract, retire or have been made redundant.
- We understand that when making a referral it should be done in the appropriate manner by using the required Wandsworth Council Referral Form:

<http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/eooqhb6lbinylsfwgt6a37wjyn444r4fx7yw65xbvtsxnau4dponqbm3kmvixmdwrqgwitweic7wdens4jlrlnrtlb/InterAgency+Referral+Form.doc>

Working Together to Safeguard Children

Working Together to Safeguard Children sets out how individuals and organisations should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/resources-and-practice/IG00060/>

London Child Protection Procedures

All Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB's) in London have signed up to use and work according to the London Child Protection Procedures, which can be accessed via the Wandsworth Safeguarding Children Board's website: -

<http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/Home/Safeguarding/Procedures/default.htm#1>

What To Do If You Are Worried a Child Is Being Abused

This document is available in full or summary version and can be accessed via the DCSF website: - <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/resources-and-practice/IG00182/>

Procedures for Dealing With Allegations Against Staff

Local procedures for dealing with allegations against staff developed and ratified by Wandsworth Safeguarding Children Board: -

<http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/eyjr4my7mcbxdaoyue5xuk7evvnwdf7u55ymhpbp3gik2zffpdc5yqzvpgeiwffi2cgspiqffzewlsftfeuz7kudesf/ALLEGATIONS+MANAGEMENT.doc>

Selecting & Recruiting Safely

Local guidance document for the selection and safer recruitment of staff developed and ratified by Wandsworth Safeguarding Children Board: -

<http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/euzmg7o6hocerfnieyqcjw75b5s3mnz3c2twzerpdilebrujst4lzp22uidpx4toey3hkmjrnnooibmmhflaydnb/Recruiting+and+Selecting+Safely++a+guide+for+VCS+%2edocupdated+210509.doc>

Policy review and signature

In order to make the policy relevant and ongoing we undertake to review it periodically in the light of good practice and new legislation.

I _____ accept and will adhere to this policy on behalf

of Simply Learning Tuition Ltd.

Signed _____

Date _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT DETAILS

Referral to Children's Services

Wandsworth Referral & Assessment Team:

Between 9am - 5pm 0208 871 6622

Outside Office hours and weekends 0208 871 6000

Completed Inter-Agency Referral forms should be sent, faxed or emailed to the below contact details

Duty Team Referral and Assessment Department
Children's Specialist Services (previously Social Services)
Welbeck House
43-51 Wandsworth High Street
London
SW18 2PU

Fax: 020 8871 6333 or

Email: childreferraldutymanager@wandsworth.gov.uk

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline - **0808 800 5000**, website www.nspcc.org.uk.

In an emergency call the Police on 999

For update to date information on Wandsworth Local Safeguarding Children's Board (WSCB)

<http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/Home/Safeguarding>