**Skills for Work: Safeguarding Young People and Adults Policy Statement**

Reviewed 27/02/24 Suzan Mc Gladdery

Date of next Review 27/02/25

Reviewed 24/2/25 SMcG

Reviewed 29/08/25 Suzan Mc Gladdery

###### Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility, but the following Skills for Work staff have special responsibility for safeguarding young people and adults at risk of abuse or neglect.

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| **Designated Senior Person** |
| Suzan McGladdery, Skills for Work Principal |
| **Deputy Designated Senior Persons** |
| [Colin.atkins@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:Colin.atkins@bradford.gov.uk)  [Julie.hallas@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:Julie.hallas@bradford.gov.uk) |
| **Designated Person (s)** |
| [Mel.west@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:Mel.west@bradford.gov.uk)  [Samantha.mann@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:Samantha.mann@bradford.gov.uk)  [Julie.raistrick|@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:Julie.raistrick|@bradford.gov.uk)  [Sarah.tsourapa@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:Sarah.tsourapa@bradford.gov.uk)  [Mark.fox@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:Mark.fox@bradford.gov.uk) |

**Statement**

Safeguarding is at the heart of all our work with young people and adults at risk.

Skills for Work is committed to creating and maintaining a safe learning/working environment that promotes well-being and security for all its customers/learners and staff within all locations, protecting their physical and psychological well-being and safeguarding them from all forms of abuse across our training programmes:

* Apprenticeships
* Adult & Family learning

This includes protecting individuals who may be at risk of being exploited by radicalisers and subsequently drawn into terrorist-related activity as supported by our Prevent Duty Statement.

*We expect all of our staff, learners and services contracted to Skills for Work, to uphold and promote the fundamental principles of human rights and British values and exemplify these in their practice, including: democracy; the rule of law; individual liberty; mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. This statement reinforces our expectation that all staff at SFW are fully engaged in being vigilant about safeguarding, radicalisation and extremism.*

This commitment complements [Bradford Council’s](https://www.saferbradford.co.uk/) priority of supporting and safeguarding the most vulnerable adults, children and families. We are working with partners to reduce domestic violence and increase the safety of victims. Our multi-agency approach focuses on protecting vulnerable victims and their children from harm and bringing perpetrators to justice.

We will operate in ways that best safeguard the interests of young people and adults. With regard to young people still on a school roll, ultimate responsibility remains with the young person’s school and any issue regarding child protection should be referred to the school’s Designated Child Protection Officer/Named Person.

The policy applies to anyone with whom we are in contact in the course of our work, who is a child, a young person, or Adult at Risk including employed Apprentices. Where the policy or procedure refers to a ‘**young** **person’** we mean anyone who has not yet reached the age of 18 years. An **adult** **at** **risk** is someone aged 18 years or over ‘who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation’ (Department of Health, [No Secrets](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/194272/No_secrets__guidance_on_developing_and_implementing_multi-agency_policies_and_procedures_to_protect_vulnerable_adults_from_abuse.pdf), 2000).

**Apprenticeships and Adult & Family learning**

This safeguarding policy also covers all SFW Apprenticeship learners whether they are based on site or in workplace learning, covering all aspects of a learner’s programme regardless of where it takes place.

Skills for Work expect every employer as part of the recruitment process to commit themselves to familiarise with relevant government legislation and take the appropriate steps to understand what safeguarding means in practice at their organisation, in the context of the responsibilities they have for the people they employ. They must ensure that any staff working with apprentices in a position of trust are appropriate for the role and do not present any danger or threat. All people that are working with young or vulnerable people must have had an appropriate check completed with the Disclosure and Barring service. If possible, identify a person to coordinate safeguarding across an organisation.

All learners undertake Safeguarding training and are informed how to raise concerns as part of their induction; this includes explaining the reporting protocols.

All learners are given online safety training and protocols to follow, and controls are in place to ensure use of IT is appropriate to their learning.

Skills for Work ensure the employer and apprentices demonstrate their understanding of safeguarding by embedding safeguarding into the learning, this understanding is evidenced through the tripartite review process.

All employers are given Safeguarding training and are informed how to raise concerns as part of their induction; this includes explaining the reporting protocols. Safeguarding is also part of Agenda for all reviews with Skills for Work Assessor, employer and Apprenticeship throughout their programme of study.

**Prevent**

Skills for Work provides regular relevant training for staff so that they understand the obligations SFW has under Prevent Duty and how to identify changes in behaviours and manage risks and concerns.

Skills for Work have clear procedures in place so that any concerns raised by the individual or member of staff can immediately be brought to specialist attention and provide a contact for any further information regarding the Prevent Duty.

Skills for Work will ensure all learners are able to express views in non-extremist ways and create an environment that encourages respectful free speech and are resilient to extreme narratives.

Employers are expected to demonstrate a commitment to the principles that underpin the Prevent Duty as part of the recruitment process and seek specialist support if any concerns are raised.

**British Values**

Skills for Work promotes British values throughout an apprentice’s/learners programme. SFW will provide dedicated study materials which defines and explores British values and how they influence our society.

Create opportunities for apprentices/learners to apply their learning to relevant situations and contexts.

Encourage apprentices/learners to respect each other and their differences, including with regard to protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010.

Skills for Work expect employers to Demonstrate a commitment to British values and adhere to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

**Skills for Work is committed to the principles and practices of child protection and safeguarding adults:**

* The needs and interests of customers/learners, particularly young customers/learners and adult customers/learners at risk are paramount.
* All people working under the auspices of Skills for Work carry a responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and adults.

**Skills for Work will act in ways that promote the development of good practice by: -**

* Undertaking effective and thorough risk assessment across our provision to inform our safeguarding policy and plans**.**
* Preventing abuse and safe recruitment policies and the development of safe and secure environments for learning with appropriate supervision and support for staff.
* Creating supportive environments, which enable young people and adults to be able to speak out.
* Protecting young people and adults from abuse by ensuring appropriate policies, practices and procedures are in place.
* Ensuring that all employees have access to an appropriate level of information, instruction and training to ensure that safeguarding policies, practices and procedures are used and understood by all employees.
* Supporting young people and adults who may have been abused and supporting those working with them.
* Working with the Bradford Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB), the Bradford District Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) and the police.
* Where Skills for Work sub-contracts to outside organisations, Skills for Work is responsible for ensuring that those working closely with or supervising young or adult customers/learners are DBS checked.

This Policy Statement and associated procedures will be reviewed on an annual basis (next review December 2022) by Skills for Work’s Senior Management Team and be amended in accordance with legislative changes, changes to locally agreed multi-agency procedures and best practice.

**Relevant Legislation**

The legislation and guidance relevant to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk includes the following: Keeping Children Safe in Education [2021](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1021914/KCSIE_2021_September_guidance.pdf), The Children and Social Work Act ([2017](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/16/contents/enacted)), The Children Act [1989](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents) and [2004](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents), Working together to safeguard children ([2015](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942454/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_inter_agency_guidance.pdf)), No Secrets (2000), The Crime and Disorder Act ([1998](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/37/contents)), The Health and Social Care Act ([2008](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/14/contents)) the Care Act ([2014](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted)) and the Prevent Duty ([2015](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance)), Mental Capacity Act [2005](file:///\\bradford.gov.uk\datavault\CYP\ES\EES%20Team\Skills%20For%20Work\Year%202025-2026\Managers\Colin\Policies\kisgoryr1\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\JYR6XCA4\Mental%20Capacity%20Act%202005%20(legislation.gov.uk)) , Sexual Offences Act [2003](file:///\\bradford.gov.uk\datavault\CYP\ES\EES%20Team\Skills%20For%20Work\Year%202025-2026\Managers\Colin\Policies\kisgoryr1\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\JYR6XCA4\Sexual%20Offences%20Act%202003%20(legislation.gov.uk)), Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act [2006](file:///\\bradford.gov.uk\datavault\CYP\ES\EES%20Team\Skills%20For%20Work\Year%202025-2026\Managers\Colin\Policies\kisgoryr1\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\JYR6XCA4\Safeguarding%20Vulnerable%20Groups%20Act%202006%20(legislation.gov.uk)).

In the safeguarding of adults and young people, Skills for Work is guided by the principles set out in The Care Act 2014 and aim to demonstrate and promote these principles in our work:

* **Empowerment** – People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent
* **Prevention** – It is better to take action before harm occurs.
* **Proportionality** – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
* **Protection** – Support and representation for those in greatest need.
* **Partnership** – Local solutions through services working with their communities.
* **Communities** have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
* **Accountability** – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

Everyone within the organisation should understand what to do, and where to go locally to get help, support and advice. It is vital that everyone within the organisation is vigilant on behalf of those unable to protect themselves, including:

* Knowing about different types of abuse and neglect and their signs
* Supporting adults and young people to keep safe
* Knowing who to tell about suspected abuse or neglect and
* Supporting adults and young people to think and weigh up the risks and benefits of different options when exercising choice and control.

**Types of Abuse Explained**

**Young Person Abuse or Neglect**

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a young person. Somebody may abuse or neglect a young person by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse means a young person’s rights and needs are not being met as defined in The Children’s Act 2004 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child ([1989](https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/)). Young people may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. Abuse may occur through the actions of an adult or adults, or another young person or persons.

Where a young person is disabled, injuries or behavioural symptoms may mistakenly be attributed to his/her disability rather than the abuse. Similarly, where a young person is black or from a minority ethnic group, aggressive behaviour, emotional and behavioural problems and educational difficulties may be wrongly attributed to racial stereotypes, rather than abuse. Cultural and religious beliefs should not be used to justify hurting a young person. Safeguards for all young people are the same regardless of disability or ethnicity.

**The Care Act 2014 provides a definition and framework for Safeguarding Adults**

Safeguarding means protecting an adult’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult’s wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.

The Care Act 2014 defines the following areas of abuse and neglect; they are not exhaustive but are a guide to behaviour that may lead to a safeguarding enquiry. They can also be taken to include the abuse of young persons.

This includes:

**Physical abuse**

The physical mistreatment of one person by another which may or may not result in physical injury, this may include slapping, burning, punching, unreasonable confinement, and pinching, force-feeding, misuse of medication, shaking, inappropriate moving and handling. In regard to a young person, physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces or causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is called Induced Fabrication Illness by a Carer (formerly known as Munchausen’s by proxy).

**Signs and indicators**

Over or under use of medication, burns in unusual places; hands, soles of feet, sudden incontinence, bruising at various healing stages, bite marks, disclosure, bruising in the shape of objects, unexplained injuries or those that go untreated, reluctance to uncover parts of the body. The young person appearing well, despite protestation by the adult carer.

**Sexual abuse and sexual exploitation**

Any form of sexual activity that the adult or young person does not want and or has not considered, a sexual relationship instigated by those in a position of trust, rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, exploitation by way of sexual photography, reward or money, sexually explicit emails/text messages and encouraging young people to behave sexually inappropriately, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, inappropriate behaviour in Internet chat rooms, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult or young person has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

**Signs and indicators**

Signs of being abused may include recoiling from physical contact, genital discharge, fear of males or female, inappropriate sexual behaviour in presence of others, bruising to thighs, disclosure, and pregnancy. Abusers may take longer with personal care tasks, use offensive language, work alone with clients, or show favouritism to clients.

**Financial or material abuse of vulnerable adults**

Financial or material abuse – including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult’s financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits

**Signs and indicators**

This may include not allowing a person to access to their money, not spending allocated allowance on the individual, denying access to their money, theft from the individual, theft of property, misuse of benefits. There may be an over protection of money, money not available, forged signatures, disclosure, inability to pay bills, lack of money after payments of benefits or other, unexplained withdrawals. An abuser may be evasive when discussing finances, goods purchased may be in the possession of the abuser, there may be an over keenness in participating in activities involving individuals’ money

**Psychological and/or Emotional abuse**

This abuse may involve the use of intimidation, indifference, hostility, rejection, threats of harm or abandonment, humiliation, verbal abuse such as shouting, swearing or the use of discriminatory and or oppressive language. A deprivation of contact, blaming, controlling, coercion, harassment, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks. There may be a restriction of freedom, access to personal hygiene restricted, name calling, threat to withdraw care or support, threat of institutional care, use of bribes or threats or choice being neglected

**Signs and indicators**

Stress and or anxiety in response to certain people, disclosure, compulsive behaviour, reduction in skills and concentration, lack of trust, lack of self-esteem, someone may be frightened of other individuals, there may be changes in sleep patterns, there may be severe adverse effects on the young person’s emotional development.

**Neglect and acts of omission**

Behaviour by carers that results in the persistent or severe failure to meet the physical and or psychological needs of an individual in their care. This may include ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health-care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating, wilful failure to intervene or failing to consider the implications of non-intervention in behaviours which are dangerous to them or others, failure to use agreed risk management procedures, inadequate care in residential setting, withholding affection or communication, denying access to services,

**Signs and indicators**

There may be disclosure. Someone being abused may have low self-esteem, deterioration, depression, isolation, continence problems, sleep disturbances, pressure ulcers. There may be seemingly uncertain attitude and cold detachment from a carer, denying individuals request, lack of consideration to the individual’s request, denying others access to the individual health care professionals

**Self-neglect and self-harm**

This covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one’s personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding, cutting, alcohol or drug abuse and eating disorders.

**Discriminatory Abuse, bullying and cyber-bullying**

Bullying may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, but the three main types are physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling) and emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group). There is increasing use of new technologies as a tool for bullying and such incidents should be taken seriously.

Discriminatory forms of abuse include forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, and religion or health status and may be the motivating factor in other forms of abuse. It can be personal, a hate crime or institutional.

**Signs and indicators**

There may be a withdrawal or rejection of culturally inappropriate services e.g. food, mixed gender groups or activities. The individual may simply agree with the abuser for an easier life, there may be disclosure, or someone may display low self-esteem. An abuser may react by saying “I treat everyone the same”, have inappropriate nick names, be uncooperative, use derogatory language, or deny someone social and cultural contact.

**Domestic abuse**

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is: 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. This includes issues of concern to black and minority ethnic (BAME) communities such as so called 'honour killings'.’ The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

* Psychological
* Sexual
* Financial
* Emotional

A new offence of coercive and controlling behaviour in intimate and familial relationships was introduced into the Serious Crime Act 2015. The offence will impose a maximum 5 years’ imprisonment, a fine or both.

**Signs and indicators**

May include many of those indicators listed under previous categories in this document, including unexplained bruising, withdrawal from activities, work or volunteering, not being in control of finances, or decision making

**Forced Marriage**

A forced marriage is one that is conducted without the full consent of both parties and where duress is a factor. Forced marriage can amount to sexual and emotional abuse and put young people or adults at risk of physical abuse. In circumstances where there are concerns that someone is at imminent risk of a forced marriage urgent referrals should be made to Children’s or Adults’ Social Care. In the case of a young person at risk of forced marriage it is likely that an initial discussion with the parent, carer or other community member may significantly increase the level of risk to the young person.

**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

FGM is a criminal offence (Prohibition of Female Circumcision Act 2003). Under the act it is an offence to arrange, procure, aid or abet female genital mutilation. Parents/carers may be liable under this act. It is also an offence to allow the procedure to be undertaken in another country. Where agencies become aware that a girl is at risk of FGM a referral should be made to Children’s Social Care

**Signs and indicators**

A relative or someone known as a 'cutter' visiting from abroad, a special occasion or ceremony takes place where a girl 'becomes a woman' or is 'prepared for marriage', a female relative, like a mother, sister or aunt has undergone FGM, a family arranges a long holiday overseas or visits a family abroad during the summer holidays, a girl has an unexpected or long absence from education, a girl struggles to keep up in education, a girl runs away – or plans to run away - from home. Signs the mutilation has occurred are: having difficulty walking, standing or sitting, spending longer in the bathroom or toilet, appearing quiet, anxious or depressed, acting differently after an absence from school or college, reluctance to go to the doctors or have routine medical examinations, asking for help – though they might not be explicit about the problem because they're scared or embarrassed.

**Modern slavery**

Encompasses slavery, human trafficking (including County Lines), and forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

**Signs and indicators**

There may be signs of physical or psychological abuse, victims may look malnourished or unkempt or appear withdrawn. Victims may rarely be allowed to travel on their own, seem under the control, influence of others, rarely interact or appear unfamiliar with their neighbourhood or where they work. They may be living in dirty, cramped or overcrowded accommodation, and / or living and working at the same address. Victims may have no identification documents, have few personal possessions and always wear the same clothes day in day out. What clothes they do wear may not be suitable for their work. People may have little opportunity to move freely and may have had their travel documents retained, e.g. passports. They may be dropped off / collected for work on a regular basis either very early or late at night. Victims may avoid eye contact, appear frightened or hesitant to talk to strangers and fear law enforcers for many reasons, such as not knowing who to trust or where to get help, fear of deportation, fear of violence to them or their family.

**Radicalisation to terrorism**

The Government through its PREVENT programme has highlighted how some young people and adults may be vulnerable to radicalisation and involvement in terrorism. This can include the exploitation of vulnerable people and involve them in extremist activity. Radicalisation can be described as a process, by which a person to an increasing extent accepts the use of undemocratic or violent means, including terrorism, in an attempt to reach a specific political/ ideological objective. Vulnerable individuals being targeted for radicalisation/recruitment into violent extremism is viewed as a safeguarding issue.

**Signs and indicators**

May include being in contact with extremist recruiters. Articulating support for violent extremist causes or leaders. Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element. Possessing violent extremist literature. Using extremist narratives to explain personal disadvantage. Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues. Joining extremist organisations. Significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour.

Reviewed Feb 24 Reviewers SMcG

Date of next review Feb 25