



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Updated: 15/06/2025

Introduction

This policy describes the aims and measure UK2Learn has put in place to protect the safety and welfare of children.

Further guidance can be found for host family members in the Host Family Handbook and further guidance for students can be found in the Student Handbook.

Definitions

“Child Protection”, is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare to protect specific children, who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm. “Safeguarding”, is the protection of children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of children’s health/development and ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care. Working together to safeguard children, definitions provided by HM Government 2018.

Policy aims

The aim of the policy is to promote good practice, providing young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of UK2Learn and to allow staff, parents, agents and host families to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

UK2Learn aims to build and protect relationships of trust between the students and the adults working on and participating in all aspects of the service that UK2Learn provides

UK2Learn staff, parents, agents and host families will be provided with a copy of this policy and it will also be available on the UK2Learn website: www.uk2learn.com/policies

This policy will relate to all relevant points contained in the latest version(s) of government guidance: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/954314/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2020_-_Update_-_January_2021.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942454/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_inter_agency_guidance.pdf

UK2Learn’s Safeguarding and Child Protection Statement

UK2Learn is committed to the welfare and safety of children. All children, whatever their age, culture, ability, gender, disability, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity should be able to participate in a fun and safe environment. UK2Learn will take all reasonable steps to protect children from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings.

All suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately. All UK2Learn employees and volunteers who work with children will be recruited with regard to their suitability for that responsibility, and will be provided with guidance and/or training in good practice and child protection procedures, in accordance with all pertinent regulation, including the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (SVGA) 2006 and ISA Registration & Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS).

Working in partnership with parents and children is essential for the protection of children and all staff share in the responsibility to protect students from harm, remain vigilant in identifying safeguarding and child protection issues and to follow policies and procedures relating to safeguarding and child protection.

UK2Learn will do the following:

- Ensure a safe environment is provided for students
- Treat all students with care and respect according to their needs and without discrimination of any kind
- Provide host families with a copy of this policy along with a copy of the Host Family Handbook
- Provide staff and host family members with adequate safeguarding training
- Work closely with all agencies and bodies concerned with the protection and welfare of children and any school or college attended by the student to ensure that all allegations of abuse are dealt with justly and promptly
- Be alert to signs of abuse within UK2Learn, the host family environment or within the school or college attended by the student
- Ensure that all UK2Learn personnel, and personnel offering outsourced services, who come into direct contact with students in our care, are recruited using safe recruitment practices and are formally screened through the completion of an Enhanced DBS check
- Ensure UK2Learn office staff record any allegations/concerns and refer them to the Safeguarding Officer. Where appropriate, concerns will be reported to the relevant Children's Services Duty team or Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) in the local area
- Circulate regular safeguarding and child protection updates to all staff and partners (where possible) to ensure that the most current and comprehensive information is made available to them

Safeguarding Training

It is a requirement that all UK2Learn staff members and host families must complete appropriate safeguarding training to a basic level. Safeguarding training will be offered to UK2Learn staff members when they join the company and to host families before the host their first student. Safeguarding training for both UK2Learn staff members and host families must be renewed every 3 years.

Types of abuse and neglect

Physical Abuse

Where adults physically hurt or injure a young person, e.g., hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, suffocating and drowning. Giving young people alcohol or inappropriate drugs would also constitute child abuse.

This category of abuse can also include when a parent/guardian reports non-existent symptoms or illness deliberately causes ill health in a young person they are looking after. This is called Munchausen's syndrome by proxy.

In a sports' situation, physical abuse may occur when the nature and intensity of training disregard the capacity of the child's immature and growing body.

Emotional Abuse

The persistent emotional ill treatment of a young person, likely to cause severe and lasting adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve telling a young person they are useless, worthless, unloved and inadequate or valued in terms of only meeting the needs of another person. It may feature expectations of young people that are not appropriate to their age or development. It may cause a young person to be frightened or in danger by being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted which may make the young person frightened or withdrawn.

Ill treatment of children, whatever form it takes, will always feature a degree of emotional abuse. Emotional abuse in sport may occur when the young person is constantly criticised, given negative feedback, expected to perform at levels that are above their capability. Other forms of emotional abuse could take the form of name calling and bullying.

Bullying may come from another young person or an adult. Bullying is defined as deliberate hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. There are three main types of bullying.

It may be physical (e.g., hitting, kicking, slapping), verbal (e.g., racist or homophobic remarks, name calling, graffiti, threats, abusive text, email or chat room messages), emotional (e.g., tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating, ignoring, isolating from the group), or sexual (e.g., unwanted physical contact or abusive comments).

In sport bullying may arise when a parent or coach pushes the young person too hard to succeed, or a rival athlete or official uses bullying behaviour.

Neglect occurs when an adult fails to meet the young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, to an extent that is likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development. For example, failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect from physical harm or danger, or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

Refusal to give love, affection and attention can also be a form of neglect.

Neglect in sport could occur when a coach does not keep the young person safe, or exposing them to undue cold/heat or unnecessary risk of injury.

Sexual Abuse occurs when adults (male and female) use children to meet their own sexual needs. Siblings and family members can be the abuser. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse and fondling. Showing young people pornography or talking to them in a sexually explicit manner are also forms of sexual abuse.

Further types and definitions can be found on the UK government website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Policy Principles

UK2Learn understands 'Safeguarding' to be a recognised multi-agency pro-active process for promoting the welfare of children and protecting those at risk of harm or potential abuse.

Child protection is part of the safeguarding process. It focuses on protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This includes child protection procedures which detail how to respond to concerns about a child. Children under 18 have an entitlement to be protected from harm and to be properly cared for by the adults who work with them. A child/young person is defined as a person under the age of 18 (Children's Act 1989 and 2004)

UK2Learn is committed to devising and implementing policies so that everyone accepts their responsibilities to safeguard children from harm and abuse. This means to follow procedures to protect children and report any concerns about their welfare to appropriate authorities.

Everyone who participates in UK2Learn is entitled to do so in an enjoyable and safe environment. UK2Learn has a moral and legal obligation to ensure that, when given responsibility for young people, UK2Learn staff, parents, agents and host families provide them with the highest possible standard of care and have a duty to safeguard all our students.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, UK2Learn requires all staff and host family members to make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

Actions to be followed if you have a concern

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in UK2Learn in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities so that they can then make inquiries and take necessary action to protect the young person. This applies BOTH to allegations/suspensions of abuse occurring within UK2Learn and to allegations/suspensions that abuse is taking place elsewhere.

This section of the policy explains how to respond to allegations/suspensions.

Receiving Evidence of Possible Abuse

We may become aware of possible abuse in various ways. We may see it happening, we may suspect it happening because of signs such as those listed in section 3 of this document, it may be reported to us by someone else or directly by the young person affected.

In the last of these cases, it is particularly important to respond appropriately. If a young person says or indicates that they are being abused, you should:

- Stay calm so as not to frighten the young person
- Reassure the child that they are not to blame and that it was right to tell
- Listen to the child, showing that you are taking them seriously
- Keep questions to a minimum so that there is a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. The law is very strict and child abuse cases have been dismissed where it is felt that the child has been led or words and ideas have been suggested during questioning. Only ask questions to clarify
- Inform the child that you have to inform other people about what they have told you. Tell the child this is to help stop the abuse continuing.

- Safety of the child is paramount. If the child needs urgent medical attention call an ambulance, inform the doctors of the concern and ensure they are made aware that this is a child protection issue
- Record all information
- Report the incident to the principal
- The principal /employer should act in accordance with all pertinent regulation, including the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (SVGA) 2006 and ISA Registration & VBS

In all cases if you are not sure what to do you can gain help from UK2Learn's director and Designated Safeguarding Lead, Alex Mackie on 07917820033 or amackie@uk2learn.com

Recording Information

To ensure that information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern. In recording you should confine yourself to the facts and distinguish what is your personal knowledge and what others have told you. Do not include your own opinions.

Information should include the following:

- The child's name, age and date of birth
- The child's home address and telephone number
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their concern or someone else's
- The nature of the allegation, including dates, times and any other relevant information
- A description of any visible bruising or injury, location, size, etc. Also, any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes
- Details of witnesses to the incidents
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising/injuries occurred
- Have the parents been contacted? If so, what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record detail

Reporting the Concern

All suspicions and allegations **MUST** be reported appropriately. It is recognised that strong emotions can be aroused particularly in cases where sexual abuse is suspected or where there is misplaced loyalty to a colleague. It is important to understand these feelings but not allow them to interfere with your judgement about any action to take.

The organisation expects its members and staff to discuss any concerns they may have about the welfare of a child immediately with the person in charge and subsequently to check that appropriate action has been taken.

If anyone has any concerns, they should UK2Learn's director and Designated Safeguarding Lead, Alex Mackie on 07917 820033 or amackie@uk2learn.com

If the nominated welfare officer is not available you should take responsibility and seek advice from the Children's Services Child Protection Team, the duty officer at your local social services department or the police. Telephone numbers can be found in your local directory.

Where there is a complaint against an employee or volunteer, there may be three types of investigation:

- Criminal in which case the police are immediately involved
- Child protection in which case the social services (and possibly) the police will be involved
- Disciplinary or misconduct in which case UK2Learn will be involved

As mentioned previously in this document UK2Learn are not child protection experts and it is not their responsibility to determine whether or not abuse has taken place. All suspicions and allegations must be shared with professional agencies that are responsible for child protection.

Children's services have a legal responsibility under The Children Act 1989 and 2004 to investigate all child protection referrals by talking to the child and family (where appropriate), gathering information from other people who know the child and making inquiries jointly with the police.

NB: If there is any doubt, you must report the incident: it may be just one of a series of other incidences which together cause concern

Any suspicion that a child has been abused by an employee or a volunteer should be reported to the Principal of UK2Learn who will take appropriate steps to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk. This will include the following:

- UK2Learn will refer the matter to Children's services department
- UK2Learn will report the matter to the de-barring service within one month of the complaint
- the parent/carer of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the Children's services department
- the chair-person/head of UK2Learn should be notified to decide who will deal with any media inquiries and implement any immediate disciplinary proceedings
- if the nominated officer is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the appropriate manager who will refer the matter to Children's services
- and may result in the committee /employer taking action with regard to the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (SVGA) 2006 and ISA Registration & VBS.

Allegations of abuse can be made sometime after the event. Where such allegation is made, you should follow the same procedures and have the matter reported to Children's services. This is because other children may be at risk from the alleged abuser. Anyone who has a previous conviction for offences related to abuse against children is automatically excluded from working with children; Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (SVGA) 2006 and ISA Registration & VBS.

The role of the DSL

A Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is the person appointed to make sure that everyone adheres to the safeguarding policies to ensure the safety of vulnerable children or young people.

A DSL has the status and authority to commit resources to safeguarding actions and issues. They're also required to support and direct staff on safeguarding issues.

The role of the DSL was specified in the Children Act 2004, stating that every organisation that works with children should have a role dedicated to safeguarding. It's a responsibility that holds both strategic duties within the organisation's frameworks and campaigns, as well as having day-to-day duties to undertake.

A DSL should undertake this type of training course every two years so that they learn updated techniques and procedures. As well as training courses, DSLs must regularly keep up-to-date with changes in safeguarding policies and governmental protocol.

The Responsibilities of a DSL includes a number of broad responsibilities that the designated safeguarding lead has to dedicate time and energy to undertake. They can be separated into three categories: referrals, training and awareness.

UK2Learn's Designated Safeguarding Lead is Alex Mackie, he can be contact on 07917820033 or amackie@uk2learn.com

Emergency plan

UK2Learn strives to create a safe and caring environment for everyone but there is always a risk of an emergency situation occurring. This could include, but is of course not limited to:

- Fire or terrorism act close by or inside the UK2Learn office "Crossways"
- Health Pandemic
- Missing student
- The death of a student or member of a host family
- School unable to accommodate student

To view UK2Learn's emergency plan in more details, you can find the specific plan on the UK2Learn website: www.uk2learn.com/policies/

Local Safeguarding Partnerships

UK2Learn's office is located in the county of Surrey and our Local Safeguarding Partnership (LSP), Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership can be contacted on 0334709100 or cspa@surreycc.gov.uk. They also have a website with lots more useful information: www.surreyscp.org.uk/

UK2Learn operates guardianship services for students in a number of different areas, the local LSPs for other areas can be found on the Child Protection Training UK website:

<https://www.childprotectionuk.co.uk/local-safeguarding-children-boards-for-england-and-wales.php>

UK2Learn's Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), manages allegations against individuals who work or volunteer with children in Surrey. If you have a concern regarding someone who works with children, please contact the LADO on 0300 123 1650 or LADO@surreycc.gov.uk.

Related policies and documents

UK2Learn has specific policies for the following Safeguarding and Child Protection areas:

- Safer recruitment policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Data protection policy and Privacy Notice
- Missing Student Policy

- Bullying, Cyberbullying & E-Safety Guidelines
- Preventing radicalisation and prevent policy

Copies of all of these policies can be found on the UK2Learn website: www.uk2learn.com/policies/

This Policy Review

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