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Applicability:	This Operating Policy is applicable across all Apprenticeship delivery.
Summary:	This Operating Policy details the controls required for the management of documents and records that form part of Northern Apprenticeships compliance and quality procedure.

DOCUMENT CONTROL

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1 INTRODUCTION

The welfare of a child and vulnerable adult is paramount. Abuse is a term to describe ways in which children and vulnerable adults are harmed, usually by adults and often by people they know and trust. It refers to the damage done to a child or vulnerable adult's physical or mental health. New forms of abuse such as internet grooming, financial abuse of older people and the extreme difficulties faced by young asylum seekers, mean our policies and procedures need to be continually reviewed to keep abreast of these developments.

Abuse can occur within or outside the family including a place of learning or training. Safeguarding, if it is to have an impact, must become the responsibility of everyone. All employees, directors, partners and other stakeholders have a responsibility to actively make the environment a safe and secure place for all.

2 OBJECTIVE

Northern Apprenticeships is fully committed to providing a working and learning environment that is free from abuse and harm. It will strive to maintain a safe culture within all of its work and learning environments by: clearly identifying and communicating the roles and responsibilities within the organisation for safeguarding; having clear audited procedures in place; training staff in safeguarding procedures and by allocating sufficient resources to safeguarding; applying a zero tolerance to any form of abuse and harm. This policy is also designed to protect the staff of Northern Apprenticeships against false allegations.

All children and vulnerable adults whatever age, culture, disability, gender, ethnic origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse. All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

Northern Apprenticeships will clearly identify their Designated Persons (DP), their location and contact details in formats that are easily accessible to all staff and learners. There will be a deputy in case of sickness, annual leave or in the event of an allegation made against the DP.

3 RESPONSIBILITIES

We believe that it is everyone's responsibility to remain vigilant and to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are provided with a safe and secure environment.

Staff dealing with children and vulnerable adults will be trained in how to recognise and respond to a situation where abuse is reported and how to report this or any concerns. They should try to consider and act on the 5 Rs:

Recognition;

- Response;
- Reporting;
- Recording;
- Referral.

Recognition - signs and indicators of abuse may just cause concern, but it could be a direct disclosure from someone. A direct disclosure may be made to anyone within the organisation who is trusted by the individual.

Response – Appropriate response is vital. No report should ever be ignored. At this point the response is just to listen, stay calm, and not show shock or outrage at what is being disclosed. You may need to ask some questions, but these should never lead or probe, just gather enough information to ascertain if there is immediate danger or harm. Do not make any promises as to what will happen and be clear that everything will be treated in confidence, but must be passed on to the appropriate DP.

Reporting – Immediately report your concerns or information to the DP. Once the report has been made, the responsibility will lie with the DP. You are within your rights to check that appropriate action has been taken, but confidentiality may mean that the DP may not be able to share this information with you. If for any reason you feel that the matter has not been taken forward, you can make a referral directly to the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

Recording – You should record precisely what has been alleged, using the key words and phrases used by the individual. You can also record your own observations of the individual, as well as your interpretation of the facts. This record should be passed on in person to the DP, who will store it securely, where it is only accessible to those staff with safeguarding responsibilities.

Referral - The DP should gather enough information to make a referral, if appropriate by talking to the appropriate people outside the organisation.

Whistle blowing - People are encouraged to speak up about any concerns they may have. They will be protected by the Company's whistle blowing policy, provided that it is made in good faith.

3.1 Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities are as follows:

Senior Management Team –

- Allocate required resources and time to provide adequate safeguarding measures; Provide leadership in ensuring the safety of children and vulnerable adults;
- Review and approve policy annually;
- Review systems and procedures annually and as and when required
- Put in place a comprehensive training programme to ensure all staff have a competent understanding of safeguarding that is relevant to their role;
- Ensure all staff have been thoroughly vetted prior to undertaking duties;
- Audit and review each areas performance against safeguarding procedures;
- Review and update safeguarding procedures;
- Make sure sub-contractors arrangements for safeguarding are comprehensive;
- Audit and review all sub-contractor's performance against safeguarding procedures.

Designated Person –

- Manage the application of safeguarding procedures in their centre;
- Act as the focal point for safeguarding in their centre;
- Ensure all staff are competent to undertake their safeguarding duties;
- Clearly communicate the safeguarding policy to all staff;
- Liaise with partner agencies as required, including Local Safeguarding Children Board

- Ensure publicity and organisational position statement are supplied to relevant sites with up to date information on contact details;
- DP will, where necessary, inform relevant agencies of concerns over safeguarding issues as relevant to their role.

Employees –

- Ensure that all staff are aware of any children and vulnerable adults within their group or caseload;
- Comply with policy and procedures;
- Promote a safe learning environment;
- Ensure all learners and employers are aware of the safeguarding policy;
- Report any concerns to DP immediately.

Staff CPD –

- Staff will need to undertake the Designated Lead L3 as necessary;
- Staff will attend regular training updates either internally or externally as deemed necessary by the DP;
- Staff will keep a record of their CPD affecting safeguarding issues.

Staff Support –

- It is recognised that some disclosures might be upsetting and harrowing for some staff. Northern Apprenticeships will offer appropriate support and assistance as necessary to staff involved with safeguarding issues.

Supply Chain/Associate Partners –

- All subcontractors will have a robust safeguarding policy, with a DP reporting to senior management, who give appropriate time and resources to safeguarding. They will also have an organisation position statement, and ensure that:
 - o Safeguarding is included in learner inductions;
 - o Regular reviews are carried out which confirm that the learner feels safe in the learning environment. When this is not the case, they must have a system in place to ensure that action is taken immediately and reported;
 - o Staff training records that reflect induction and regular training updates, confirming up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding;
 - o There is a clear reporting line to Northern Apprenticeships;
 - o Records are made available for monitoring at review meetings. Where there is non-compliance, learners may be removed for safety reasons.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR MONITORING THIS POLICY –

- Monitoring of this policy is by the Designated Person. They will share best practice and report to the SMT.
- Any changes will be communicated to all learners on program and employees.

4 POLICY

4.1 Guidance

4.1.1 Good Practice

- Work in an open environment, where possible, avoiding private or unobserved situations, encourage open communication;
- Treat all children and vulnerable adults equally with respect and dignity;
- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance;
- Be aware of the effect your words or actions may have.

4.1.2 Practices to be avoided

- Spending excessive amounts of time alone with children and vulnerable adults away from others;
- Straying from the specified task or assignment;
- Being unnecessarily inquisitive;
- Saying anything that may make a child or vulnerable adult feel uncomfortable, or that could be interpreted as aggressive, hostile or impatient;
- Being drawn into personal conversations;
- Sitting or standing too close;
- Meeting other than at the prearranged venue;
- Exchanging personal details;
- Making contact via social internet contact sites.

4.1.3 Practices never to be sanctioned. You should never:

- Allow allegations made by a child or vulnerable adult to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon;
- Promise a child or vulnerable adult that their confidences will be kept secret;
- Allow children or vulnerable adults to use inappropriate language unchallenged;
- Reduce a child or vulnerable adult to tears as a form of control;
- Allow or engage in any form of touching or make suggestive comments to a child or vulnerable adult.

5 DEFINITIONS

Document Definitions	
Term	Definition
DP	Designated person

6 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Document title	Reference
Learning and Assessment Policy & Strategy	PL00004