

Child & Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy

1. Statement of Intent

1.1 PEAK CONSULTANTS LTD believes that it is unacceptable for a child, young person or vulnerable adult to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of children within our training environments and those who encounter our organisation.

1.2 We recognise that:

- The welfare of the person is paramount
- All people regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Working in partnership with young people/ vulnerable adult, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

1.3 The purpose of the policy is:

- To provide protection for the young people/ vulnerable adults who come into contact with PEAK CONSULTANTS LTD
- To provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a young person/ vulnerable adult may be at risk of, or experiencing, harm.

1.4

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- Adopting child protection guidelines through procedures for staff and volunteers
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely ensure all necessary checks are made
- Sharing information regarding child protection and good practice with young people, parents, employers, staff and volunteers
- Sharing information regarding concerns with agencies that need to know and involve parents,
- Young people and vulnerable adults appropriately
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision support and training
- Training staff on the 'Prevent Duty' including 'Channel General Awareness' and 'British Values'
- Ensuring staff receive regular training and updates in regard to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'

2. Definitions

2.1 A Child or Young Person The legislation specifically refers to any person under the age of 18 years.

2.2 Vulnerable Adults A vulnerable adult is defined by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 as a person who is 18 years or over and who may be in need of community care services for reasons of mental or other disability, age or illness. It is a person who is unable to take care of themselves or to protect themselves from significant harm or serious exploitation

2.3 A vulnerable adult may be a person who:

- Has a physical or sensory disability Is physically frail or has a chronic illness
- Has a mental illness or dementia
- Has a learning disability
- Is old and frail
- Misuses drugs and/or alcohol
- Living in sheltered housing or care home
- Exhibits challenging behaviour
- Detained in custody
- Receiving payment from local authority
- Receiving healthcare

2.4 A person's vulnerability will depend on their circumstances and environment, and each case must be considered individually.

2.5 **NOTE:** A person is not classed as a vulnerable adult just because of any learning difficulty or disability. They will be defined as vulnerable adults when they receive health, social care or other services, or activities specifically for those with learning difficulties and /or disabilities.

2.6 Significant Harm

Significant harm is the threshold that provides for the intervention by other agencies.

2.7 British Values

British values are defined as "democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs". PEAK CONSULTANTS LTD are expected to encourage learners to respect other people with regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

2.8 Extremism

The government has defined extremism in the Prevent Duty as: "vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs". This also includes calls for the death of members of the British armed forces.

Values	Principles or standards of behaviours; one's judgement of what is important in life
Terrorism	Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence, damage or disruption and is intended to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made with the intention of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause
Radicalisation	The process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism
Ideology	An ideology is a set of beliefs
Citizen	A legally recognised subject or national of a state or commonwealth, either native or naturalised
Citizen Education	Enables people to learn about their rights and responsibilities and to understand how society works. It prepares them for dealing with the challenges they face in life. Through citizenship education, young people are encouraged to play an active part in the democratic process, thereby becoming more effective members of society. Effective citizenship education increases confidence, self-esteem and motivation for learning
Religion	Religion can be explained as a set of beliefs concerning the cause, nature and purpose of the universe, especially when considered as the creation of a superhuman agency or agencies, usually involving devotional and ritual observances, and often containing a moral code governing the conduct of human affairs
Belief	Indicates an acceptance that something exists or is true especially one without proof, and represents trust, faith or confidence in someone or something
Faith	Indicates strong belief in the doctrines of a religion, based on spiritual conviction rather than proof
Democracy	The term democracy is a Greek word which means 'Government by the people' and it entitles citizens of the UK (minus a few exceptions) to have the right to vote if you are aged 18 or over

3. Introduction

3.1 This policy sets out the arrangements that PEAK CONSULTANTS LTD has put in place to safeguard children (i.e. young people under 18 years old) and vulnerable adults within our learning environments. PEAK CONSULTANTS LTD's approach reflects the legislative context and takes account of relevant guidance and good practice relating to the educational sector.

3.2 The following issues and activities are within the scope of this policy:

- Every Child Matters activities involving children
- Prevent and Channel Awareness and promoting of British values.

Review frequency: Annual

Lead Officer: Office Admin

Senior Manager Responsible: Director

3.3 PEAK CONSULTANTS LTD's policy is supported by a series of operating procedures relating to the above activities. The named person with responsibility for this policy and for its regular review is Matthew Purcell, Designated Safeguarding Lead. A number of PEAK CONSULTANTS LTD's employees are available to act as contact points in case of any query.

4. APPENDIX A: Definitions and indicators of abuse (Extracted from the NSPCC 'First Check' publication)

4.1 What is abuse and neglect?

It is generally accepted that there are four main forms of abuse. The following definitions are based on those from Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government 2005 and National Assembly for Wales 2000); Protecting Children – A Shared Responsibility (Scottish Executive 1998). Co-operating to Safeguard Children (NI 2002) and the Regional ACPC Policies and Procedures (2005) have slightly different definitions.

4.2 Definitions of Abuse

1. Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. Physical abuse, as well as being a result of an act of commission can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

2. Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill – treatment 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 so far 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 ill-treatment of another. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all other types of ill-treatment or abuse, though it may occur alone.

3. Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts (oral sex). They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Boys and Girls can be sexually abused by males and/or females, by adults and by other young people. This covers people from all walks of life.

4. Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy because 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 danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of adequate 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.

It is accepted that in all forms of abuse there are elements of emotional abuse, and that some children are subjected to more than one form of abuse at any one time. These four definitions do not minimise other forms of harm.

5. Other forms of harm

Chapter 11 of Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government March 2010) and other interagency guidance draws attention to other sources of stress or harm for children and families, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, the untreated mental illness of a parent or carer, or drug or alcohol misuse.

All these areas may have a negative impact on a child's health and development and may be noticed by someone caring for a child. If it is felt that a child's well-being is adversely affected by any of these circumstances, the same procedure for reporting concerns should be followed.

For example, children who are involved in prostitution and other forms of commercial sexual exploitation should also be treated primarily as victims of abuse and their circumstances require careful assessment by the statutory agencies.

6. Recognising abuse

Recognising abuse is not easy, and it is not your responsibility to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place or if a child is at significant risk. You do, however, have a responsibility to act if you have a concern about child's welfare or safety.

The following information is not designed to turn you into an expert, but it will help you to be more alert to the possible signs of abuse

4.3 Indicators of Abuse

1. Physical abuse

Most children will collect cuts and bruises in their daily life. These are likely to be in places where there are bony parts of their body, like elbows, knees and shins. Some children, however, will have bruising which can almost only have been caused non-accidentally. An important indicator of physical abuse is where bruises or injuries are unexplained, or the explanation does not fit the injury. A delay in seeking medical treatment for a child when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern. Bruising may be noticeable on children with different skin tones or from different racial groups and specialist advice may need to be taken.

Patterns of bruising that are suggestive of physical abuse include:

- Bruising in children who are not independently mobile
- Bruising in babies
- Bruises that are seen away from bony prominences
- Bruises to the face, back, stomach, arms, buttocks, ears and hands
- Multiple bruises in clusters/ multiple bruises of a uniform shape
- Bruises that carry the imprint of an implement used, hand marks or fingertips
- Although bruising is the commonest injury in physical abuse, fatal non-accidental head injury and non-accidental fractures can occur without bruising. Any child who has unexplained signs of pain or illness should be seen promptly by a doctor.

Other physical signs of abuse may include:

- Cigarette burns
- Adult bite marks
- Broken bones
- Scalds.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate physical abuse:

- Fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- Flinching when approached or touched
- Reluctance to get changed, for example wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- Depression
- Withdrawn behaviour
- Running away from home

2. Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse can be difficult to measure, and often children who appear well cared for may be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents or carers. Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix/play with other children.

The physical signs of emotional abuse may include:

- A failure to thrive or grow, particularly if the child puts on weight in other circumstances, e.g. in hospital or away from their parents' care
- Sudden speech disorders
- Developmental delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress. Changes in behaviour which can also indicate emotional abuse include:
- Neurotic behaviour, e.g. sulking, hair twisting, rocking Being unable to play
- Fear of making mistakes
- Self-harm
- Fear of parents being approached regarding their behaviour

3. Sexual abuse

Adults who use children to meet their own sexual needs abuse both girls and boys of all ages, including infants and toddlers.

Usually, in cases of sexual abuse it is the child's behaviour which may cause you to become concerned, although physical signs can also be present. In all cases, children who talk about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important, therefore, that they are listened to and taken seriously.

The physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- Pain or itching in the genital/anal areas
- Bruising or bleeding near the genital/anal areas
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Vaginal discharge or infection
- Stomach pains/ discomfort when walking or sitting down
- Pregnancy. Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:
- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- Having nightmares
- Running away from home
- Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or developmental level
- Sexual drawings or language
- Bedwetting

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Senior Manager Responsible: Director

- Eating problems such as anorexia or over-eating
- Self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to attempted suicide
- Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about
- Substance or drug abuse
- Suddenly having an unexplained source of money
- Not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
- Acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults.

4. Neglect

Neglect can be a difficult form of abuse to recognise yet has some of the most lasting and damaging effects on children.

The physical signs of neglect may include:

- Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from others
- Constantly dirty or smelly
- Loss of weight, or constantly being underweight
- Inappropriate dress for the condition.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect may include:

- Complaining of being tired all the time.
- Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments
- Having few friends
- Mentioning their being left alone or unsupervised.

The above list is not meant to be definitive but as a guide to assist you. It is important to remember that many children and young people will exhibit some of these indicators at some time, and the presence of one or more should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring.

There may well be other reasons for changes in behaviour, such as a death or the birth of a new baby in their family. Other possible explanations may be relationship problems between their parents/carers etc. Appendix B – Contact points All staff working at PEAK CONSULTANTS LTD have undergone basic safeguarding training.

5. APPENDIX B – responding to a disclosure/allegation of abuse

5.1 In all cases where there are allegations of abuse, it is vital that these are dealt with fairly quickly and consistently. If you encounter a safeguarding incident, you should follow these basic guidelines, which are based on material produced by the NSPCC.

- Stay calm
- Listen carefully to what is said
- Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others – do not promise to keep secrets.
- Allow the child to continue at her/his own pace
- Ask questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared
 - Tell them that you will be speaking to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Matthew Purcell) who is responsible for their protection, and that they may contact the relevant Safeguarding Children Board if we feel it is necessary
 - Explain to the learner that the Safeguarding Children Board will advise us as to what we should do next

- Record in writing what was said using the learner's own words as soon as possible. Note the date, time and names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated
 - Use the Safeguarding Concern Form and the Safeguarding Concern Log for reporting any issues of concerns or abuse
- Contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Matthew Purcell) as detailed above for further advice and for onward referral as required
- DO NOT talk to other people about the incident
 - Others should only be made aware of this on a 'needs to know' basis.

5.2 There are four main strands to be considered:

- An investigation of a possible criminal offence by the police
- Involvement of local police channel coordinator and local prevent leads concerning radicalisation and extremism concerns
- Involvement of social services
- Investigation by PEAK CONSULTANTS LTD's and/or an employer and consideration of any disciplinary action on staff or learners.

5.3 Information Sharing

5.3.1 PEAK CONSULTANTS LTD's is committed to sharing information for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in line with Working Together (2013) and with respect for The Data Protection Act (1998). Any decision to break confidentiality should always be preceded by informing the learner of what is about to happen and the reason for the decision.

5.3.2 There will be no breach of confidence if the person to whom a duty of confidence is owed consents to the disclosure.

5.3.3 Staff should seek the consent from the learner if considering sharing information with other agencies. It is therefore essential that members of staff understand what is meant by the above and for that reason do not promise absolute confidentiality to the learner.

5.4 Confidentiality Statement

5.4.1 PEAK CONSULTANTS LTD's will operate on the premise that all information imparted to a member of staff will be treated in confidence. Confidentiality is a key issue in the lives of apprentices/colleagues. They may trust a member of staff with issues of a personal nature and wherever possible their confidence should be respected. Staff must become familiar with PEAK CONSULTANTS LTD's confidentiality guidelines.

5.4.2 Staff must not make promises on confidentiality they may be unable to keep.

5.4.3 Furthermore, staff should always make an apprentice/colleague fully aware of any situation where confidentiality must not be maintained as in a case of child and vulnerable adult protection. apprentice/colleagues may disclose information that is difficult for the member of staff to deal with without further advice/support. In this case the learner/colleague should be told that the situation will be discussed with another colleague with a specialty in that area, but confidentiality will be maintained if possible.

The Child & Vulnerable Adult - Safe Code for Staff and Volunteers:

Do:

- Treat all people with respect and take notice of their reactions to your tone of voice and manner.
- Always seek the parents and child's consent if he/she is very young or disabled and needs help to go to the toilet
- Remember that it is okay to touch children in a way which isn't intrusive or disturbing to he/she or to observers
- Make sure that any allegations or suspicions are recorded and acted upon.

Do not:

- Engage in rough physical games including horseplay.
- Touch a child in an intrusive or sexual manner.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even as a joke.
- Do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as going to the toilet or changing clothes.

Try to avoid:

- Spending too much time alone with a child.
- Giving a child a lift in your car.
- Taking a child to your home.

If some of these situations are unavoidable, try to get parental permission first. If this isn't possible, make sure you let parents know what has happened as soon as you can.