

Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

This Safeguarding Policy must be read alongside the Local Authority Safeguarding Board (LSGB) policy and all Evolve Youth Academy policies and around service delivery. Ensuring that students have a safe, nurturing and secure environment is at the core of the work that Evolve Youth Academy undertakes. Our experience is that many of the students referred to us have high risk-taking behaviours, lack the knowledge and skills to help keep themselves safe or are being abused and exploited by individuals around them.

Evolve Youth Academy Safeguarding aims are:

- To ensure that appropriate measures and practice to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people.
- To ensure that our training enables all our staff to be equipped with the skills needed regarding recognising and responding to all safeguarding issues and educating those around them to do the same.
- To ensure that our programme of support is aimed at giving all students the tools to keep themselves safe and enhance their independent living skills.
- Evolve Youth Academy will work with the local authority to promote an understanding of joint and systemic working procedures, to ensuring that everyone has an understanding around specific roles and responsibilities to appropriately safeguard and develop the students we work with.

For the purposes of this policy and the work we carry out with students we support, our responsibility around safeguarding must be defined as “Jointly managing any behaviour that is displayed by a young person or towards a young person by another individual that would directly expose them or another person to harm or increase their risk of being harmed which will prevent them from reaching their full potential in life”

We will work within the guidelines outlined in the Children’s Act 2004 about, where appropriate, information sharing with other agencies, recognising this as being paramount in the protection and safeguarding of children and students in our care. We undertake this as a duty being part of a multiagency approach to ensuring children and students are safeguarded. We will take all necessary steps to ensure that those who commission the services of Evolve Youth Academy in respect to a young person have all the necessary information available to understand the full service and programme and all measures which are in place to appropriately safeguard the young person in our care.

We will ensure that all staff and volunteers are recruited, selected, trained and supported appropriately. We will be committed to ensuring they understand their role and responsibility within the safeguarding process and reporting of concerns.

We will assess all risks carefully in line with a comprehensive risk assessment completed by the young person’s Case manager and take all reasonably practicable steps to avoid, minimise or manage them as appropriate. This will be in line to ensuring risk is identified, monitored and reviewed daily.

Students will be treated with dignity and respect at all times. Evolve Youth Academy will support students who use our services to tackle behaviour that is characterised by discrimination, bullying, aggression, intimidation, verbal or physical abuse.

We will review this policy and the relevant procedures regularly in consultation with a range of our stakeholders.

1. Policy statement

Lord Laming's recommendations in relation to the death of Victoria Climbié created a completely new approach to social work and the need for multi-agency working right across the public, voluntary and private sectors. It influenced the Government to respond to these findings by issuing the Green Paper (discussion) *Every Child Matters*, identifying the five outcomes that were considered key to a child's welfare being paramount, which in turn outlined the provisions in the Children Act 2004.

This act was significant in changing the culture of safeguarding as it strengthened the provisions outlined in the Children Act 1889 and was explicate in placing a duty on all agencies, within Section 10, 11 and 12 arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children: *"All those working in the field of health have a commitment to protect children, and their participation in interagency support to Social Care Departments is essential if the interests of children are to be safeguarded"*. To safeguard and protect being everyone's responsibility and placing a duty on all agencies to ensure they work together to achieve this, with effective information sharing, record keeping and an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of who may be involved with the children and students they work with.

1.1 The document that is essential to establishing the continuity of understanding the guidance outlined in the Children Act 2004 is 'Working together document', which has been recently updated in 2010. Given that Government guidelines make it clear that the safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students – and in particular protecting them from significant harm – is a shared responsibility, which depends upon effective joint working between agencies and professionals (HM Government 2006, CQC 2009). There is a duty placed on Evolve Youth Academy to ensure that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students is **everyone's responsibility** and all staff who have direct or indirect contact with children, students and families, or who have access to information about them, have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people.

1.2 Evolve Youth Academy aims to ensure that no act or omission on the part of its organisation, or that of its staff, puts a child or young person inadvertently at risk; and that rigorous systems are in place to proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of students and support staff in fulfilling their obligations. This policy applies to all staff employed directly or indirectly by Evolve Youth Academy, including students, volunteers and those on temporary contracts, secondments, other flexible working arrangements or commissioned services.

2. Scope

Evolve Youth Academy supports national legislation and guidance, together with policies and procedures.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the electronic Local Safeguarding Board (LSGB) Procedures, which can be found at and pertain to all local authorities currently in contact with Evolve Youth Academy regarding placements:

<http://www.thurrocklscb.org.uk/> <http://www.chscb.org.uk/>
<http://www.newham.gov.uk/Pages/Services/Safeguarding-children-board.aspx>
<http://www.enfieldlscb.org/> <http://www.cscb-new.co.uk/>
<http://www.kcsc.org.uk/training-update/tri-borough-local-safeguarding-children-board-lscb-oct-11-%E2%80%93-mar-12>
http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/social_child_protect_lscb.htm
<http://www.liverpoolscb.org/>
<http://www.islingtonscb.org.uk/Pages/default.aspx>

These procedures are constantly updated to respond to current legislation, guidance and research.

The Children's Act 2004 places a duty on all agencies involved in working with children and young people, which would include Evolve Youth Academy to co-operate and make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all young people. Evolve Youth Academy policies around safeguarding extend to all stakeholders including those who commission the Evolve Youth Academy service to ensure that we approach all multiagency work in the best interests of the young person and to promote a higher level of safeguarding within the 16+ industry.

All staff will have a clear understanding of key legislation and their responsibility within safeguarding which is outlined in all Evolve Youth Academy policies and procedures.

This policy applies to all levels of permanent and temporary employees of Evolve Youth Academy and must be used in conjunction with all Evolve Youth Academy policies and procedures and the young person's individual risk management plans.

3. Equality & Diversity Impact Statement

This policy embraces Diversity, Dignity and Inclusion in line with Human Rights guidance. We recognise, acknowledge and value differences across all people and their backgrounds. We will treat everyone with respect, courtesy and consideration for their backgrounds. We will ensure that everyone is treated fairly and that we convey equality of opportunity in service delivery and employment practice.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Management Team

The Evolve Youth Academy Management Team will take responsibility for leading on 'Safeguarding' issues and the senior management Team should satisfy itself that:

- The roles outlined in this section are being undertaken appropriately.
- An appropriate induction, support and training programme is in place for all staff and volunteers.
- Recruitment procedures contribute to a culture, which safeguards children and young people's welfare.
- There is adequate financial support for the services and activities offered by Evolve Youth Academy for them to operate effectively and safely.

4.2 Designated Safeguarding Lead

Lewis Clarke (Operational Director) acts as the appropriate safeguarding lead for Evolve Youth Academy. All staff, volunteers, children and students are made aware of who the Designated Safeguarding Lead is and their role.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has the following responsibilities:

- To ensure that robust assessments and risk management plans are implemented and adhered to at all times by all Evolve Youth Academy staff.
- ensure that any multi-agency approach works in the best interest of the young person and focuses on safeguarding and development.
- To provide support during and after incidents involving safeguarding and referrals to Children's Services Departments or the police.
- Ensure all Evolve Youth Academy policies and procedures are adhered to at all times.
- To provide the allocated social worker with appropriate information and outcomes concerning incidents or concerns involving safeguarding children and young people.
- Seek appropriate support and training in regard to completing this role effectively and according to Evolve Youth Academy programme.

4.3 All staff will:

- Adhere to all points as laid down in this document and related Evolve Youth Academy procedures and protocols
- Report any incidents or concerns regarding children or young people's well-being or safety to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or manager as appropriate.
- Use Supervision opportunities, Individual and team support sessions to actively discuss Safeguarding issues and develop the best practice as outlined in the supervision, appraisal and training policy
- Attend Mandatory Induction and other training courses and on-going training in 'Safeguarding' and Child Protection

5. What to do when you have concerns about a young person

It is Evolve Youth Academy's responsibility to ensure all staff know how to report a concern both internally and externally within the guidelines outlined in the young person's risk assessment and support plan and through Evolve Youth Academy policies and procedures. Evolve Youth Academy live updates system has been implemented so that patterns and other behaviours that may suggest a safeguarding issue are recorded and assessed by the case management team. The process also safeguards the lone worker in the event of an allegation being made by a young person and should an investigation be required. It is the responsibility of individual team members to ensure that they keep this system live at all times during their shifts.

Whenever there is cause for concern follow these steps:

- If in doubt, raise concerns with your direct manager or directly to the Safeguarding lead, involving colleagues where necessary on a need to know basis.
- Avoid acting alone except in emergencies.

- Follow Evolve Youth Academy Lone Working, Accident and incident and confidentiality procedures
- It is **not** Evolve Youth Academy role to investigate whether abuse or neglect has or has not taken place: this is the role of Children Services in completing an initial assessment and or a Section 47 Investigation under the Children's Act 1989.
- Ensure that you have the full necessary information needed for the investigation.
- Update the young person's risk assessment and support plan.
- Notify staff of any changes to the risk assessment using Evolve Youth Academy updates system

6. Concern based on disclosure by a student:

- Do not promise confidentiality but reassure the young person that the information will be passed when/where this is necessary to help them. The young person may wish to retract the disclosure. This usually reflects the anxiety they feel about the consequences of the disclosure and **should not** be taken as an indication that the original disclosure was false.
- Listen to the young person. Do not prevent a young person who wants to talk about what has happened from doing so, but do not ask leading, interrogating or probing questions. You do not need to know all of the details – remember it is not your role to investigate.
- Reassure the young person that they were right in telling you, acknowledge any distress or difficulty in disclosing and explain what will happen next and who will be informed.
- You must record factually what has been said without opinion – and where possible read back to the young person for confirmation of what they have said. It is important to remember any record you make could be used in a court of law, within criminal proceedings and therefore should reflect a factual account of what a young person has told you.

Always, as soon as is practicable, **inform** the Designated Safeguarding Lead or, if they are not available, Evolve Youth Academy deputy lead, but this should be within the same working day of the concern being raised and recorded within 24 hours of the same.

7. If allegations have been made about an Evolve Youth Academy worker:

- Ensure the immediate safety of the young person concerned - you may need to ask the worker to leave the premises, follow advice from Evolve Youth Academy Management team in line with policies and procedures
- **Always** inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- If one of these post holders is the person about whom you have concerns, discuss immediately with Evolve Youth Academy director.
- Evolve Youth Academy Whistleblowing Policy to be implemented where necessary.

8. Safeguarding Supervision

8.1 Effective supervision is important for promoting good standards of practice and to supporting individual staff members. Safeguarding children and young people's supervision should help to

ensure that practice is soundly based and consistent with LSGB and Evolve Youth Academy procedures. It should ensure that practitioners fully understand their roles, responsibilities and the scope of their professional discretion and authority. It should also help identify the training and development needs of practitioners so that each has the skills to provide an effective service.

9. Training

- Any induction training will include information on Safeguarding procedures appropriate to the role as well as clarification of the Worker's Job or Role Description. • All inductions will be completed within the first 3 months of employment
- Mandatory Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adult Training will be completed within the first 3 months of employment.
- Support sessions/supervision and Appraisals should include exploring the worker's understanding of Safeguarding policies and procedures and identify training needs.
- Staff will receive refresher training in Safeguarding on an **annual** basis (either 'in house' or via Multi-Disciplinary Training provided by the LSGB).

10. Concerns about a worker's behaviour

- All staff are subject to Evolve Youth Academy's Disciplinary and Grievance procedures.
- Where a staff member alleges that a child or young person is at risk due to the practice of another member of staff, their concerns must be passed on. The initial point of contact should be their line manager who will then liaise with Evolve Youth Academy's safeguarding Lead. If the allegation is found to be true, the Disciplinary Procedure will be instigated.

11. Status of this Policy

The policy was first created in 2018 by Evolve Youth Academy Senior Management Team. This policy has been equality impact assessed to ensure that it does not adversely affect staff and stakeholders.

Approved by: Evolve Youth Academy Senior management team

Review date: March 2023

Next review date: March 2024

12. Service Delivery

Evolve Youth Academy acknowledge and uphold the belief that all staff and students should have equal access to services and resources and work and live in an environment that is safe and nurturing in order to achieve full potential and best outcomes. Appendix a)

Relevant legislation:

- The Children Act 1989 (England & Wales)
- The Protection of Children Act 1999 (England & Wales) (accompanying Dept. of Health guidance available also)
- The Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 (England & Wales)
- The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 (Scotland only)

- The Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003
- The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 (Northern Ireland only)
- The Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults Act (Northern Ireland only)
- Sex Offenders Act 1997
- The Child Trafficking Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2000
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- The Children Act 2004 (England and Wales)

Sources and further reading:

- LSGB policy and procedures
- Evolve Youth Academy whistle blowing policy
- Evolve Youth Academy internet safety policy
- Evolve Youth Academy social network/media policy
- *Keeping it safe* by the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services, Tel: 02074228630, Email: mail@ncvys.org.uk, www.ncvys.org.uk
- *Working together to Safeguard Children* 2006 HM Government
- *The Framework for Assessment of Children in Need and their Families* Available from The Stationery Office bookshops **or** The Publications Centre
Tel: 0870 600 5522
- *Every Child Matters* statutory guidance documents (England) www.everychildmatters.gov.uk
- *Co-operating to safeguard children* (DHSSPS, Northern Ireland)
<http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/publications/2003/safeguard/safeguard.asp>

Appendix b) Definitions of Abuse, Neglect and Grooming

What is Abuse and Neglect?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institution or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

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.

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 ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying 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 types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not 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. 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.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may also occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs. (*Working Together 2006*, Paras 1.29 – 1.33 The above are statutory definitions for England only).

Sexual Offences Act 2003 Definitions of Sexual Abuse

Engaging in any sexual activity, inciting or encouraging a child to behave sexually, engaging in sexual activity in the presence of a child and causing a child to watch sexual activity or pornography are all offences under this Act, as is trying to arrange any of these activities. A child is defined as anyone under 16, regardless of the genders of the child or adult. Whether or not the child gave consent is irrelevant. If the child is between 13 and 16 the prosecution must show that the perpetrator did not reasonably believe the child to be over 16. Sexual activity between anyone under 18 and an adult in a "position of trust" is illegal. People who work with children within a statutory agency (school, hospital, children's home) are in a position of trust.

DfES guidance states: "Although the age of consent remains at 16, it is not intended that the law should be used to prosecute mutually agreed teenage sexual activity between two students of a similar age unless it involves abuse or exploitation." However, students can engage in abuse and this should be treated as seriously as any other form.

Sexual Offences Act 2003 Definition of Grooming

Meeting A Child Following Sexual Grooming is defined as an offence in the Sexual Offences Act 2003, Section 15. Grooming occurs when a person aged 18 or over, who has already met or communicated with a child under the age of 16 on at least two earlier occasions, meets the child again (or tries to meet them), with the intention to do anything to the child, or in respect of the child, during or after the meeting, which would be an offence under the Sexual Offences Act. It does not matter whether the grooming or the subsequent abuse is committed within British jurisdiction. Grooming communication could take place via the internet. The adult might not be guilty of grooming if they held a reasonable belief that the child was 16 or over. A youth worker giving appropriate advice within the boundaries of their role in sexual health and relationships to students does not fall under the definition of grooming.