

Safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk policy and procedures

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Designated Safeguarding Lead Name:	Andy Hollinson (Interim DSL) 07392 870044

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1. Introduction

The Square Metre Group incorporates, The Square Metre Ltd and XL Skills Training Ltd.

The Square Metre Group recognises its statutory and moral duty towards safeguarding the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk from any form of abuse whilst receiving education and training. We expect all staff, volunteers and partners to endorse and practice this duty at all times. As a result, we have a zero-tolerance approach to abuse and other harmful behaviour. At The Square Metre Group, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk is everyone's responsibility, everyone who comes into contact with children, their families and carers have a role to play in safeguarding. We comply with all government policy and UK legislation such as *"Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023"*.

2. Purpose

At The Square Metre Group, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all learners, staff, volunteers, visitors, contractors and partners. Any reference in the policy to a child, young person or learner applies to all those aged under 18. Our legal duty includes the education and training of adults at risk. Any reference in the policy to an adult at risk applies to anyone aged over 18 yrs who may for a variety of reasons require community services and/or be unable to protect him or herself from significant harm or exploitation.

The Square Metre Group has developed procedures in line with, and taking account of, guidance issued by the Department for Education, Leaders in Safeguarding and other relevant bodies. We operate in line with the requirements of the local authority (Borough) safeguarding arrangements.

Whilst overall responsibility for safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults is vested in the Chief Executive Officer; The Square Metre Group has a named Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Designated Safeguarding Officers who are responsible for ensuring compliance to this policy and its procedures. The role and responsibilities and contact details of the DSL and DSO's can be found in section 4 and Appendix 13.2.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all learners and particularly children, young people and adults who may need support and all staff, volunteers, partners and families visiting and working at our centres, other external facilities, in the workplace, distance learning and subcontractors.

In order to help ensure that children, young people and adults at risk are protected from abuse, all complaints, allegations or suspicions will be taken seriously and in accordance with this policy detailed herein.

The Square Metre Group has incorporated child protection into the whole organisational approach to safeguarding and the term safeguarding is deemed to include child protection in all our policies and procedures.

It is our aim to help protect children and vulnerable adults from harm; preventative care and support will be made available to all learners as early as possible in an attempt to stop abuse from occurring. However, where a concern arises that a learner may have been abused then these procedures explain what to do about that risk.

This policy will be revised each year to ensure it is completely up to date with the most recent and relevant guidance and legislation. All staff must declare that they have read this policy by signing the safeguarding policy declaration sheet each year.

The legal framework for the role of The Square Metre Group is as follows:

The Education Act 2002 - Section 157 & 175

Requires local authorities and governing bodies of further education institutions to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk. In addition, they should have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State in considering what arrangements they may need to make.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021)

Sets out the safeguarding statutory responsibilities of schools and colleges, as well as good practice recommendations in relation to children. This covers the relevant legislation; the responsibilities of Governing Bodies and Principals; safer recruitment practices; recruitment and vetting checks; dealing with allegations of abuse or misconduct against staff or subcontractors, dealing with low-level concerns; and also, checklists, flowcharts and examples. All low-level concerns against a member of staff should be recorded in writing and investigated. The record should include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and action taken should be kept confidentially in accordance with GDPR. The name of the individual sharing their concerns should also be noted, if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible. Concerns should be analysed to identify if further actions are needed. It is recommended that information should be retained for the course of employment and not included in references unless it relates to information normally included in the reference unless it has met the threshold for referral to LADO and found to be substantiated.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015) and (2016) and (2018) and (2023)

Provides statutory guidance on the roles and responsibilities of agencies working together to safeguard children/young people. In addition, it sets out the framework for the formation of Local Safeguarding Children Boards and details the allegation management process. This includes providing a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans. Access is allowed for children's social care from the local authority and, where appropriate, from a placing local authority, for that authority to conduct, or to consider whether to conduct, a section 17 or a section 47 assessment. Safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practices of the local authority as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures set up by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). Multi-agency collaboration has been emphasized with national Child Protection Standards. Each Sector must point an LSP and DSP. Family engagement is a significant part of working together to gain the trust of parents and carers, promoting tailored support to families.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has been introduced to help employers make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children.

DFE Statutory Guidance (2014)

Provides guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004. The guidance plays an important role in embedding this



responsibility in the work of key agencies which have contact with children and young people. It reflects

the recognition that protecting children from harm cannot be separated from policies to improve children's lives as a whole.

Protection of Freedoms Act (2012) Part 5 - Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups, Criminal Records etc.

Covers the reduction in the scope of the definition of regulated activity, new services provided by the DBS, and disregarding convictions and cautions.

Mental Capacity Act (2005)

Provides a way in which people who may need help to make decisions can get that help from someone who can be trusted to act in their best interests. Mental Capacity under the Act means being able to make your own decisions. The Mental Capacity Act and its Code of Conduct contain a set of rules, procedures and guidance. The Act applies in full to those aged 18 or over, the entire Act except making Power of Attorney or Making a Will applies to 16- and 17-year-olds. The Act only applies to those under 16 in very limited circumstances and these would have to be determined by a court.

4. Duties

4.1 The Role of the Safeguarding Board

The Safeguarding Board is committed to ensuring that The Square Metre Group:

- raises awareness of issues relating to safeguarding and promotes the welfare of all
- provides a safe environment for children, young people and adults at risk monitoring trends in referrals and actions taken to support learners
- identifies those who are suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm and takes appropriate action to ensure they are kept safe
- has procedures for reporting and dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers
- operates safer recruitment procedures
- designates a member of staff with sufficient authority to take a lead role in safeguarding
- remedies any weaknesses and areas for improvement relating to safeguarding that are brought to their attention
- ensure all staff members receive appropriate regular Safeguarding (including Safer Recruitment for Managers), training on online safeguarding including online safety and Prevent training as appropriate to their role.

4.2 The Role of Staff

4.2.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is a designated member of staff with lead responsibility for safeguarding issues. The key responsibility of that member of staff is to lead on raising staff awareness concerning all issues relating to safeguarding, and to promote The Square Metre Group as a safe environment for learning and being cared for. They have received the appropriate training as required by the Local Safeguarding Children Board, and will maintain the currency of their knowledge on safeguarding issues. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible for overseeing the referral of cases of suspected abuse or allegations and the monitoring of staff training.

- ensuring that staff, parents/carers of children, young people and adults at risk are aware of the safeguarding policy and whistleblowing procedures
- liaising with other agencies as necessary including Local Safeguarding Boards and Regional Prevent Co-ordinators

- liaising with secondary schools sending learners to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for them
- ensuring there is a liaison with employers and training organisations providing learners with placements to ensure proper safeguarding arrangements are in place
- ensuring that all staff receive training about safeguarding matters and the procedures
- providing termly reports to the Safeguarding Board
- reporting any flaws in procedure to the Safeguarding Board as soon as possible
- recording rigorous reports and/or statements
- storing all information and recording in a secure manner and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 (GDPR).
- dealing with individual cases, including attending case conferences and review meetings as appropriate
- having received training in safeguarding issues, prevent and inter-agency working, as required by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board, and will receive refresher course training at least every 2 years.

In the absence of the DSL, a Deputy DSL will carry out the same responsibilities. In the absence of both of these, the Director of Human Resources or CEO will carry out their responsibilities.

4.2.2 All staff

The CEO, members of the Board, members of the Senior Management Team and all staff will receive training to familiarise them with safeguarding issues and the policy and procedures, with refresher training at L2 (L3 for DSLs) at least every two years. Changes to statutory guidance are disseminated to staff as required throughout the year.

5. Definitions and Concepts

5.1 Child

Within the context of this policy, a "child" is defined as anyone under the age of 18 (the Children Act 1989, Education Act 2002). Further, the additional duties regarding support, protection and safeguarding also extends to learners within the 14 to 16 age range from local schools.

5.2 Adult at Risk

It is recognised within this policy that any adult may be vulnerable or become a victim of abuse. Specifically, an "adult at risk" is defined as any person who is 18 years of age or over and has a reduced capacity to give consent (as defined within the Mental Capacity Act 2005) to the disclosure of abuse allegations or suspicions. As defined by the Law Commission (1995) we use the following indicators to identify an adult who is, or may become "at risk" whilst they are registered with us: -

The individual:

- is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness;
- is or may be unable to take care of himself or herself;
- is unable to protect himself or herself against significant harm or serious exploitation

Whilst not definitive, the main categories of people covered by the definition of "adult at risk" include those who:

- have a learning disability
- have a physical or sensory impairment
- have a mental illness including dementia
- are old and frail

- v. are detained in custody or under a probation order
- vi. are considered vulnerable and who may experience abuse due to problems with alcohol or drugs (or be vulnerable due to other circumstances such as being an asylum seeker)

5.3 Children in Need of Protection and Early Help

Some children and young people are in need because they are suffering or likely to suffer “significant harm”. Where local authorities believe a young person is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, they have a duty to make enquiries to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a young person, this can be done through contacting the local authority Early Help Team to share concerns and ensure the early identification of needs within families.

5.4 Children in Need

Children and young people who are defined as being “in need” under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 are those whose vulnerability is such that they are unlikely to reach or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health and development will be significantly impaired, without the provision of service(s). A child with a disability is a child in need.

5.5 Children Looked After and Previously Looked After

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. We will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keeping looked after children safe. The appropriate staff will have the information they need in relation to a child’s looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They will also have information about the child’s care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The designated teacher/person for looked after children will ensure that the designated safeguarding coordinator will have details of the child’s social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.

5.6 Significant Harm

The concept of significant harm is the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention into family life in the best interests of the child or young person and gives local authorities a duty to make enquiries as to whether to take action (Section 47, Children Act 1989) to safeguard or promote the welfare of a young person who is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. The Act also gives powers to the police to take emergency action to protect a young person from significant harm.

5.7 Abuse

“Abuse” relates to the mistreatment of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons, and may consist of single or repeated acts. Incidents of abuse can be either to one person or more than one person at a time. Abuse and/or harmful behaviours can be either deliberate or the result of negligence, ignorance, lack of training, knowledge or understanding. Somebody may abuse or neglect an individual by inflicting harm or by failing to prevent harm. Staff should reassure victims of abuse that they are being taken seriously and will be supported.

Within the context of this policy abuse and harmful behaviours are defined through six main categories:

- i. **Physical:** this may involve hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, misuse of medication, inflicting inappropriate physical sanctions, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child, young person or vulnerable adult including fabricating the symptoms of, or deliberately causing the individual ill-health (DfE 2014, DoH 2000).
- ii. **Emotional/Psychological:** this is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child, young person or vulnerable adult such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development. This may involve the imposition of age or developmentally inappropriate expectations resulting in fear, exploitation or corruption. This may also include

interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve conveying that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. Threats of harm or abandonment; humiliation; blaming; intimidation; coercion; harassment; verbal abuse, bullying (including cyberbullying) and being prevented from receiving services or support are all forms of emotional abuse (DoH 2000). Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

- iii. **Sexual:** such as rape, sexual assault or sexual acts occurring through force or enticement and which a child, young person or vulnerable adult could not have consented to, or to which they were pressurised into consenting. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g., rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may include non-contact activities such as involving the child, young person or vulnerable adult in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material, watching sexual activities or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. (DoH 2000).
- iv. **Neglect or Acts of Omission:** this includes the persistent failure to meet a child, young person or vulnerable adult's basic physical and/or psycho-social needs, and which are likely to result in a serious impairment of the individual's health or development. This may include failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, or educational services and/or neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child, young person or vulnerable adult's basic emotional need (DoH 2000).
- v. **Financial or Material:** this may include theft, fraud, and exploitation, pressure in connection with money or material possessions. This may also include loss of jewellery or personal property, loss of money from a wallet or purse (DoH 2000).
- vi. **Discriminatory:** this may include abuse, bullying and harassment based on the individual's age, sex, disability, religion, race or sexual orientation (DoH 2000)
- vii. **Specific issues and further information:** specific advice should also be sought in relation to specific situations including forced marriage, the effects of domestic violence on young people, female genital mutilation, children and young people who sexually abuse or who are exploited and those affected by drug and alcohol abuse in families.
- viii. **Abuse of trust:** under the Sexual Offenders Act 2003 it is an offence for a person over 18 to have a sexual relationship with a young person under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that young person, even if the relationship is consensual. This includes teaching and a range of support staff within educational establishments.
- ix. **Radicalisation:** The process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism (Prevent Strategy.Gov.uk)
- x. **Online Abuse:** any type of abuse that happens on the web, whether through social networks, playing games online or using mobile phones. Refer to E-safety policy.
- xi. **Child sexual exploitation:** This is a type of abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status.
- xii. **Female genital mutilation and So-Called Honour Based Abuse:** FGM is the total or partial removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. Where a child is under 18, it is mandatory that cases of FGM must be reported to the police. Failure to report can result in disciplinary sanctions. The reporting procedure can be found in this [document](#). So-Called Honour based abuse can also include forced marriage and breast ironing. All cases of So-called Honour based abuse in children must be reported.
- xiii. **Domestic abuse:** witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse; Teenagers can suffer domestic abuse in their relationships. Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, which provides advice and guidance and can be called free of charge in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247

- xiv. Child trafficking:** This is a type of abuse where children are recruited, moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold.
- xv Harmful Sexual Behaviour:** Children or young people develop sexual behaviours that harm themselves or others.
- xvi Child Criminal and Sexual exploitation** can take a range of forms including County lines. In some cases, this can be in the form of gifts or increased status of the perpetrator or victim. It is possible to be both a perpetrator and a victim simultaneously. Children can be exploited by adults or peers either individually or in groups. There is a range of other factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation, including, sexual identity, cognitive ability, learning difficulties, communication ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources
- xvii County Lines:** County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs across the UK. Signs include, absence, involvement in serious violence, are found in accommodation in which they have no connection and debts. Further information can be found in this Government [document](#).
- xvii Mental Health:** All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. More information and guidance in schools can be found in this guidance [document](#). Mental Health concerns should be raised with the DSO.
- xix Peer-on-Peer Abuse:** can happen both inside and outside of the Square Meter Group. All staff must recognise the indicators and signs of peer-on-peer abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports. Peer on peer abuse can include bullying, abuse in intimate relationships, sexual violence, harassment, non-consensual sharing of nudes, causing someone to engage in sexual activity, upskirting, initiation/ hazing types of violence and rituals. Staff should maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and act in the best interest of the learner.
- xx Serious Violence.** All staff should be aware of the indicators that a child is at risk of serious violence including changes in behaviour, friendship groups, absence, self-harm and declines in performance. Further advice can be found in this guidance [document](#).
- xxi Cybercrime** is criminal activity online or using computers. If concerns are raised regarding a child being involved in this type of crime a referral should be considered by the DSO to the [Cyber Choices Programme](#). Additional guidance can also be sought from the [National Cyber Security Centre](#). In cases where concerns are raised concerning online sexual abuse, this should be reported to [CEOP](#) (Child Exploitation and Online Protection command).
- xxii Homelessness:** Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Guidance for 16-17-year-olds who may be homeless or require accommodation can be found in this [document](#).
- xxiii Modern Slavery and National Referral Mechanism** includes trafficking, slavery and forced compulsory labour. Further guidance on identifying the signs of modern slavery and the national referral mechanism can be found in this [document](#).

6. Radicalisation and Acts of Terrorism- The Counter-Terrorism & Security Act (2015) & The Prevent Duty

Prevent is 1 of the 4 elements of CONTEST, the government's counter-terrorism strategy. It aims to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

The Prevent strategy:

- responds to the ideological challenge we face from terrorism and aspects of extremism, and the threat we face from those who promote these views
- provides practical help to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given appropriate advice and support
- works with a wide range of sectors (including education, criminal justice, faith, charities, online and health) where there are risks of radicalisation that we need to deal with.

The strategy covers all forms of terrorism, including far-right extremism and some aspects of non-violent extremism.

The Home Office works with local authorities, a wide range of government departments, and community organisations to deliver the Prevent strategy. The police also play a significant role in Prevent, in much the same way as they do when taking a preventative approach to other crimes. The Home Office uses a range of measures to challenge extremism in the UK, including:

- where necessary, preventing apologists for terrorism and extremism from travelling to this country
- giving guidance to local authorities and institutions to understand the threat from extremism and the statutory powers available to them to challenge extremist speakers
- funding a specialist police unit that works to remove online content that breaches terrorist legislation
- supporting community-based campaigns and activities which can effectively rebut terrorist and extremist propaganda and offer alternative views to our most vulnerable target audiences - in this context, they work with a range of civil society organisations
- supporting people who are at risk of being drawn into terrorist activity through the Channel process, which involves several agencies working together to give individuals access to services such as health and education, specialist mentoring and diversionary activities.

This Act places a duty on specified authorities including skills training, further and higher education, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (the Prevent Duty).

The Square Metre Group is committed to supporting vulnerable students through its safeguarding policies and procedures and recognises that this can support the contribution to the Prevent duty.

7. Management of processes

7.1. Dealing with disclosure of abuse and procedure for reporting concerns

A member of staff may suspect that a learner is being abused or is at risk of significant harm. A learner may disclose to a member of staff that s/he is being abused.

In these circumstances, the following procedure should be followed.

7.1.1. Significant Concerns

If a member of staff has concerns about a learner but does not believe that they are being abused or are at risk of immediate harm, the member of staff should:

- Speak to the learner about the concerns

- Speak to a Designated Safeguarding Lead who will consider and advise whether The Square Metre Group should register the concern.

7.1.2. Disclosure of Abuse

If a disclosure is made or abuse is suspected, staff should:

- Listen carefully and stay calm
- Question without pressure to be sure that what is being said is properly understood by the member of staff
- Reassure the individual concerned that s/he has done the right thing
- Explain to the individual who has disclosed that the information must be passed on but only to those who need to know about it. Say who will receive the information
- Note the main points carefully - what the individual said/did and the questions asked by the member of staff
- Make a note of the date, time and place.
- Complete a Safeguarding Incident / Concern Form

Staff must not:

- Ask leading questions or put words into the mouth of the disclosing individual
- Investigate concerns/ allegations
- Promise confidentiality

7.1.3. Reporting to Designated Staff

Staff should report concerns, suspicions or disclosures of abuse immediately to the DSL. If they are not available the report should be made to the Deputy DSL.

7.1.4. Reporting to the DSL

The designated member of staff must notify the C E O as soon as possible and always within 24 hours of a serious disclosure or suspicion being raised.

7.1.5 Contact with External Services

The DSL or CEO (deputising senior manager) must report the matter to children's social care/ adult services or the police by phone immediately, followed up by written confirmation or email within 48 hours. Where a request for service form or an early help assessment is completed and sent via email to children's social care, staff can expect a response via email within 48 hours.

A written record of the date and time of the report must be made and the document should include the name and position of the person to whom the matter is reported. The telephone contact must be confirmed in writing using the appropriate local authority form within 24 hours.

The designated member of staff should note down the detail of the discussion about action to be taken to inform the parents/carers, depending on the circumstances. The process for keeping The Square Metre Group informed of further action should also be discussed.

7.1.6 Confidential Reporting

A whistleblowing and safeguarding scheme is available to all staff employed by The Square Metre Group.

7.2. Procedure for Managing Allegations of Abuse Against Staff

The Square Metre Group is required to comply with the detailed local safeguarding children's board procedure for managing allegations against staff. These procedures apply to all staff, whether teaching, administrative, management or support, as well as to volunteers. Low-level concerns are recorded and monitored

7.2.1 Introduction

In rare instances, staff of education institutions have been found responsible for child abuse. Because of their frequent contact with children and young people, staff may have allegations of child abuse made against them. The Square Metre Group recognises that an allegation of child abuse made against a member of staff may be made for a variety of reasons and that the facts of the allegation may or may not be true. It is imperative that those dealing with an allegation maintain an open mind and those investigations are thorough and not subject to delay.

The Square Metre Group recognises that the Children Act 1989 states that the welfare of the child is the paramount concern. It is also recognised that hasty or ill-informed decisions in connection with a member of staff can irreparably damage an individual's reputation, confidence and career. Therefore, those dealing with such allegations within The Square Metre Group will do so with sensitivity and will act in a careful, measured way.

7.2.2 Receiving an allegation

A member of staff who receives an allegation about another member of staff should follow the guidelines for dealing with disclosure.

The allegation should be reported immediately to the Director of Human Resources and CEO. If the Director of Human Resources is the person against whom the allegation is made, the report should be made to the CEO. The DSL and Director of Human Resources, if the allegation is against the CEO should:

- Obtain written details of the allegation from the person who received it, which is signed and dated. The written details should be countersigned and dated by the DSL/Director of Human Resources.
- Record information about times, dates, locations and names of potential witnesses.

7.2.3 Initial assessment by the designated person

The Director of Human Resources should make an initial assessment of the allegation, consulting with the DSL and the relevant local authority's children's services safeguarding team as appropriate.

An allegation is information that indicates that a person who works with a child, young person or vulnerable adult has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child or young person.
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or young person.
- behaved towards a child or young person in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children and young people.

It is important that the Director of Human Resources does not investigate the allegation. The initial assessment should be based on the information received and is a decision whether or not the allegation warrants further investigation.

If the assessment of the allegation is that it requires to be investigated then an investigation will take place following The Square Metre Group's disciplinary policy. The local authority designated officer (LADO) will be advised and kept fully informed of progress and outcome.

7.2.4 Enquiries and investigations

Child protection enquiries by Social Services or the police are not to be confused with internal, disciplinary enquiries by The Square Metre Group may be able to use the outcome of external agency enquiries as part of its own procedures. The child protection agencies, including the police, have no power to direct The Square Metre Group to act in a particular way however, The Square Metre Group should assist the agencies with their enquiries.

The Square Metre Group will instigate its own internal enquiries regardless of any formal police or social services investigations but will ensure that this will not prejudice the investigation. Any internal enquiries shall conform with the existing staff disciplinary procedures.

If there is an investigation by an external agency, for example, the police, the DSL and/or Director of Human Resources should normally be involved in, and contribute to, the interagency strategy discussions. The DSL and CEO are responsible for ensuring that The Square Metre Group gives every assistance with the agency's enquiries.

He/she will ensure that appropriate confidentiality is maintained in connection with the enquiries, in the interests of the member of staff about whom the allegation is made. The DSL (or Director of Human Resources) shall advise the member of staff that he/she should consult with a representative, for example, a trade union.

The Director of Human Resources will consult with Social Services, the police or the Children's Integrated Services Safeguarding Team, particularly in relation to timing and content of the information to be provided, and shall:

- inform the learner or parent/carer making the allegation that the investigation is taking place and what the likely process will involve.
- ensure that the parents/carers of the learner making the allegation have been informed verbally and in writing that the allegation has been made and what the likely process will involve.
- inform the member of staff against whom the allegation was made of the fact that the investigation is taking place and what the likely process will involve.
- inform the member of staff making the allegation that the investigation is taking place and what the likely process will involve.
- inform The Square Metre Group Safeguarding Board of the allegation and the investigation.

The Director of Human Resources shall keep a written record of the action taken in connection with the allegation.

7.2.5 Suspension

Suspension should not be automatic. In respect of staff, other than the CEO or senior post holders, suspension can only be carried out by the nominated member of the senior management team. In respect of senior post holders, suspension can only be carried out by the CEO.

Suspension may be considered at any stage of the investigation. It is a neutral, not a disciplinary action and shall be on full pay. Consideration should be given to alternatives: e.g., paid leave of absence; agreement to refrain from attending work; change of, or withdrawal from, specified duties.

Suspension should only occur for a good reason. For example:

- where a learner is at risk.
- where the allegations are potentially sufficiently serious to justify dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct.
- where necessary for the good and efficient conduct of the investigation.

If a suspension is being considered, this will be conducted following the existing The Square Metre Group disciplinary procedures.

7.2.6 The disciplinary investigation

The disciplinary investigation will be conducted following the existing The Square Metre Group disciplinary procedures.

7.2.7 Allegations without foundation

False allegations may be indicative of problems of abuse elsewhere. A record should be kept.

In consultation with the DSL, the CEO shall:

- inform the member of staff against whom the allegation is made orally and in writing that no further disciplinary or child protection action will be taken. Consideration should be given to offering counselling and support to rebuild the member of staff's confidence. Inform the parents/carers of those involved that the allegation has been made and of the outcome.
- where the allegation was made by a learner other than the alleged victim, consideration to be given to informing the parents/carers of that learner.
- prepare a report outlining the allegation and giving reasons for the conclusion that it had no foundation and confirming that the above action had been taken.
- in some circumstances, consider the broader disclosure of details of the outcome of the investigations, for example, if the matter is of general importance, has become common knowledge or the subject of general gossip. There is a need to provide accurate details for public information.

7.3 Records

It is important that documents relating to an investigation are retained in a secure place, together with a written record of the outcome and, if disciplinary action is taken, details retained on the member of staff's personal and confidential file. Where the allegation is found to be without foundation, a record of the allegation, investigation and outcome should be retained.

If a member of staff is dismissed or resigns before the disciplinary process is completed, he/she should be informed about The Square Metre Group Training's statutory duty to notify the Disclosure and Barring Service.

7.4 Confidentiality

The Square Metre Group will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. The Education Act 2011 introduced reporting restrictions preventing the publication of any material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who has been accused by, or on behalf of, a learner from the same school or college (where that identification would identify the teacher as the subject of the allegation). The reporting restrictions will apply until the point that the accused person is charged with an offence, or until the Secretary of State or the General Teaching Council for Wales publishes information about an investigation or decision in a disciplinary case arising from the allegation. The reporting restrictions will also cease to apply if the individual to whom the restrictions apply effectively waives their right to anonymity by going public themselves or by giving their written consent for another to do so or if a judge lifts restrictions in response to a request to do so.

8. Safer recruitment and selection procedures

The Square Metre Group has in place robust recruitment procedures which ensure that care is taken to protect young or vulnerable learners. The procedures apply to all staff and volunteers and they are reviewed regularly to take account of the following principles:

- The post or role will be clearly defined.
- The key selection criteria for the post or role will be identified.
- Vacancies will be advertised widely in such a way as to ensure a diversity of applicants.

- Requirement of documentary evidence of academic and vocational qualifications.
- All personnel are required to hold an acceptable Enhanced DBS Criminal Record Check as a condition of employment.
- Obtaining professional and character references.
- Verification of previous employment history including the explanation of any gaps

9. Teaching Learners about Safeguarding

The Square Metre Group will teach learners about safeguarding, including online risks, through teaching and learning opportunities as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.

10. Dissemination

The DSL will ensure this policy is known and used appropriately:

- the policy will be reviewed every two years
- the procedures and implementation will be updated and reviewed regularly
- the policy will be available publicly and parents will be made aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of The Square Metre Group Training
- Link with the local LSCB to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding
- Should learners leave The Square Metre Group Training, if appropriate; their child protection file will be copied for any new college or training provider as soon as possible but transferred separately from the main learner file.

11. Links to other policies

This policy has links to the following policies and procedures:

- Staff Disciplinary Policy and Procedures
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Whistle Blowing

12. Monitoring compliance with and the effectiveness of policy documents

12.1 Process for monitoring compliance and effectiveness of dealing with disclosure of abuse and procedure for reporting concerns

Termly: The safeguarding board will receive a report on safeguarding incidents and reports.

Termly: The senior management team will receive a report from the safeguarding board on safeguarding incidents and reports.

Annually: The DSL and safeguarding board will review the safeguarding policy and produce a report that will be presented to the SMT and CEO.

12.2 Process for monitoring compliance and effectiveness of dealing with allegations against a member of staff

Where an allegation has been made against a member of staff, the DSL and safeguarding board including the CEO and Director of Human Resources, at the conclusion of the investigation and any disciplinary procedures, consider whether any matters are arising from it that could lead to the



improvement of the procedures and/or policies. Consideration should also be given to the training needs of staff

13 Appendices

Appendix 13.1 – Safeguarding Statement

Appendix 13.2 – Designated Safeguarding

Team Appendix 13.3 – Safeguarding Referral Form

Appendix 13.4 – Safeguarding Flowchart

Appendix 13.5 – Protocol for reporting missing learners

Appendix 13.6 – Safeguarding away from the Group Premises

Appendix 13.7– Safeguarding Guidelines for Work placements

Appendix 13.8 – Safeguarding Declaration

Appendix 13.9 – Additional Expert and Professional Guidance

Appendix 14- Safeguarding Statement

APPENDIX 13.1 – SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

The Square Metre Group is committed to protecting young people and adults at risk from harm.

As a Safe Organisation:

We ensure that all our employees are aware of their responsibilities to safeguarding children and adults at risk.

We do this by:

- Adopting safer recruitment practices of staff to work with young people and adults at risk.
- Clear expectations of staff about personal conduct and responsibility to promote the wellbeing of young people and adults at risk at all times.
- Good induction systems and ongoing training/updates for staff on safeguarding young people and adults at risk.
- Ensuring all staff have access to information and guidance on procedures for child protection and protection of adults at risk.
- A team of named managers trained to provide access to specialist advice on child protection and the protection of adults at risk.
- Sound data protection, information sharing and referral procedures.
- The promotion of a culture of safeguarding throughout the company.
- Listening to the concerns of young people and vulnerable adults with an open mind.
- Clear procedures for investigating allegations of harm to young people or adults at risk by persons in positions of trust within the company, including independent advice and referral to the police as necessary.
- Regular reporting of safeguarding incidents to the Senior Management Team.
- A clear and accessible complaints procedure where there are concerns to be raised.

APPENDIX 13.2 - DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING TEAM WITH EFFECT FROM JULY 2018

THE SAFEGUARDING BOARD

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

(Acting DSL) Andy Hollinson - 07392 870044 – CEO – The Square Metre Group

DEPUTY DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING OFFICERS

Helen Hart 07849 830548 – The Square Metre Group

DESIGNATED SENIOR PERSON (DSP)

Andy Hollinson - 07392 870044 – CEO – The Square Metre Group

DEPUTY DESIGNATED SENIOR PERSON (DDSP)

Debbie Barber – 07743 094568

INDEPENDENT ADVISER SCRUTINY AND CHALLENGE

Dr Daniel Logan Grant. Leaders in Safeguarding 07843049271

APPENDIX 13.3 - SAFEGUARDING REFERRAL FORM

Significant Event Record Form

Incident Record (tick as appropriate)

Notifiable Event ☐

Major Incident ☐

Name of young person.....Date.....

Address.....

Date of Birth.....

Form Completed by

The items below are known as notifiable events – In the first instance, your line manager needs to be informed. The line manager will then inform the relevant senior manager or director.

Notifiable Events: Please Tick Appropriate Box(es)

Absconding	☐	Safeguarding / Disclosure	☐
Restraint	☐	Injury to Person	☐
Police Called	☐	Damage to Property	☐
Bullying / Harassment	☐	Other	☐
Criminal Offence	☐		

If **other** please state what

Does this event/incident relate to known behaviour?

Date of event/incident.....Time of event/incident.....

Details of the event/incident

Where did this event take place?
What triggered this event?
Was this a new trigger to those already known about? Yes/No

Name of staff members involved:
Name of Learners involved:
Name of witnesses:

What support was in place to meet the needs of the learner(s) involved prior to the event taking place?

What happened prior to the incident taking place?
What happened during the incident?
Were there any de-escalation techniques used? Yes/No
If Yes please explain:

How did the incident end?

Signed Staff member completing form.....Date.....

Name of staff member (capitals).....

Reflection and implementation of actions (Team Leaders/Managers and Directors)

What action has been taken after the incident?

Advise staff to follow up with student	Yes/No
Advise manager	Yes/No
Contact Parent/Carer	Yes/No
Contact Support Worker (details of who and which agency)	Yes/No
Referral Other	Yes/No
CAF referral	Yes/No
Safeguarding referral	Yes/No
Accident form completed	Yes/No
Review risk assessment	Yes/No
Instigate disciplinary procedure	Yes/No

Signed.....Date.....

Name of Staff member (capitals).....

What actions will be put in place to ensure this does not occur again?

Have all actions been carried out? Yes / No If no reason why and follow up date:

Return to a manager to sign off actions as complete.

Signed.....Date.....

Name of staff member (capitals).....

Follow up actions completed:

Date	Comments	Staff Name

APPENDIX 13.4 – FLOWCHART FOR DEALING WITH CONCERNS, SUSPICIONS OR DISCLOSURES OF HARM OR ABUSE

Step One

You are concerned that a child, young person or adult at risk has been abused because:

- You have seen something
- They have said they have been abused
- Somebody has told you they are concerned
- There has been an allegation against a member of staff
- There has been an anonymous allegation
- An adult has disclosed they are abusing a child or adult at risk
- An adult has disclosed they were abused as a child

Step Two

Talk to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or the Deputy if the lead is unavailable), and record your concern on the incident recording form. If the concern is about the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy refer to the CEO. (sign/date/time, include name and job role)

Step Three

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy if the Lead is unavailable), will contact Children's or Adult's Services and/or the local police if a crime has (or may have) been committed (101) or if it is an emergency (999).
- S/he should say "I want to make a child protection referral" and (if ringing social care services) ask to speak to a duty social worker. (They may be required to complete an online referral form to report this, which should be submitted on the same day).
- S/he should record, on the incident form, who was spoken to, if a referral was accepted or not (with reasons), along with any actions agreed (sign/date/time, include name and job role) and stored securely in the designated locked filing cabinet.

Notes

In cases of a concern about a member of staff or a learner, you should talk to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy if the Lead is unavailable).

The LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) or Adults Services will co-ordinate the next steps for any staff or learner in regulated activity complaints or allegations.

Anyone can 'whistle-blow' directly to the police, social services or Ofsted if they feel their concerns will not be managed appropriately by the company.

All media enquiries should be referred to the CEO.

EVERYONE should observe confidentiality with colleagues, family and friends.

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports- may indicate the need for support or the person may have been abused by someone else

APPENDIX 13.5 - PROTOCOL FOR REPORTING MISSING LEARNERS

Rationale:

This protocol is designed to provide an effective response in the event of a learner going missing.

This is an essential part of our responsibility to:

- Safeguard learners
- Ensure that there are no barriers to punctuality and attendance

Definition of Missing:

“Anyone whose whereabouts is unknown whatever the circumstances of disappearances they will be considered missing until located and their wellbeing established” (*Ref: The association of chief police officers (ACPO)*).

When discovering a missing learner: Inform your line manager should:

- Find learner contact details and contact directly if possible – locate learner and arrange safe return to the centre or home. To liaise with the DSL to identify any possible safeguarding concerns and ensure appropriate contact is made.

If this is not possible (if no contact can be made), the manager should:

- Ascertain when the learner was last seen (keep a note of any witness statements including names and course details)
- Ascertain what course the learner is on and the timetable for that day
- Establish if anyone knows where the learner intended to go
- Searches, where appropriate, of relevant areas
- Contact the parent/carer as appropriate (there should not be a long gap – parents/carers do not want to hear that their son/daughter has been missing for several hours) and give the facts:
 - When the learner was last seen
 - How we discovered he/she was missing
 - What we have done to date

If there is cause for concern and in consultation with the parent/carer:

- Report to police or relevant authority (collect and record incident number)
- Ask the parent/carer to stay in touch if they hear anything
- Maintain contact with parent/carer until the learner is found (parents/carers need to know that we are doing everything in our power to find the learner).
- Report incident to CEO.

Investigation / report records:

Identifying why a learner has gone missing can be a key part of reducing the likelihood of it happening again and safeguarding that learner. The learner needs to be spoken to about their actions and rationale and any risks they were exposed to. This conversation may reveal the need for ongoing additional support.

- When the situation has been resolved the DSL should:
- Carry out a full investigation
- Establish why the situation occurred
- Work with the course tutor and parent/carer/learner support team if appropriate to establish a safe system of supervision in the future
- Provide a written report for the learner file (be aware of confidentiality and data protection).
- Ensure that a letter is written to the parent/carer, to confirm any new arrangements, including responsibilities to be assumed by external Parties.

Information Sharing

If there is a concern about a learner's safety or well-being it may be necessary to share information with other agencies. The safety and well-being of the child must be the primary considerations when making such a decision.

Sharing of information must be in line with confidentiality, data protection and human rights legislation and guidance. Information shared will need to be carefully recorded. In most circumstances consent from a parent/carer/learner would need to be gained to share information; however, there are some circumstances in which sharing information without consent will be normally justified. These are:

- When there is evidence or reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering, or is at risk of suffering significant harm; or
- When there is evidence or reasonable cause to believe that an adult is suffering, or is at risk of suffering, serious harm; or
- To prevent, detect or support the prosecution of serious crime.

The police response

Where a missing person report is made, the police have an obligation to take action, within their powers, to safeguard the rights of individuals who may be at risk. Those under 18 will not be considered 'low risk'. Where a missing person has been identified as high or medium risk, positive action becomes an obligation at every stage of the missing person investigation.

Useful Contacts:

If you believe a learner is at immediate risk this should be reported without delay to the police service; for emergencies ring 999

APPENDIX 13.6 – SAFEGUARDING AWAY FROM THE SQUARE METRE GROUP PREMISES

Introduction

Any learner under the age of 18 is considered, in the eyes of the law, as a child and is protected by the child protection laws and guidance (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015).

Incidents of child abuse are not common but any child aged between the ages of 0 and 18 must be considered as vulnerable to abuse whether this is in the home, in school or college, in the workplace or in some other place.

Child abuse can take many forms but it is categorised under 4 main themes:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

It is important that children and young people are protected from any form of harm.

Guidance

Schools, colleges and training providers organizing work placements and other activities must ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children and young people from harm, focusing greatest emphasis on settings in which children may be most at risk, for example where children will be placed for long periods in one-to-one situations with an adult.

These can be considered where the placement is as follows:

- for more than one day a week
- for longer than one term per academic year
- aimed at those children who may be vulnerable e.g.: those who are aged under 16 or have special needs
- where the workplace supervisor or colleague will have substantial unsupervised access to the child, because of the nature of the business
- long-term extended work placements must include arrangements for DBS Disclosures for example when Young Apprentices are in a placement.

It is essential that the key supervisor of the learner, if not under the direct responsibility of a member of The Square Metre Group staff, is aware of their responsibilities concerning child protection.

APPENDIX 13.7 - SAFEGUARDING GUIDELINES FOR WORK PLACEMENTS.

Schools, colleges and training providers organising work placements must ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children and young people from harm.

It is essential that the key supervisor of the learner is aware of the procedures in place to ensure the safety of the young person.

Introduction

Any young person under the age of 18 is considered, in the eyes of the law, as a child and is protected by the child protection laws and guidelines (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013).

Incidents of child abuse are not common BUT any child aged between the ages of 0 and 18 must be considered as vulnerable to abuse whether this is in the home, in school or college, in the workplace or in some other place.

Child abuse can take many forms but it is categorised under 4 main themes:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

It is important that young people are protected from harm.

Procedure

1. All complaints, allegations or suspicions of abuse must be taken seriously.
2. If an allegation is made that a learner has been abused or if there is a suspicion that a student has been abused this should be reported to the student's college supervising member of staff immediately. If the learner's college supervisor is not available, please contact one of the DSL immediately.
3. Promises of confidentiality should not be given as the matter may develop in such a way that these cannot be honoured.
4. If the complainant is the learner, questions should be kept to the minimum necessary to understand what is being alleged and leading questions should be avoided. The use of leading questions can cause problems for the subsequent investigation and any following court proceedings.
5. A full record shall be made as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation and any other relevant information including:
 - the date

- the time
- the place where the alleged abuse happened
- your name and the names of others present
- the name of the complainant and, where different, the name of the student who has allegedly been abused
- the nature of the alleged abuse
- a description of any injuries observed
- the account which has been given of the allegation that should be signed and dated by the person completing the report

Please note: Some learners with learning disabilities may need different treatment to others e.g. in the way their physical/mental condition might mask possible abuse.

Apprentices

- Workplace providers will receive a copy of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedure and information relating to their responsibility for safeguarding.
- Placement Officers/Assessors will carry out all risk assessments and include safeguarding discussions as part of workplace reviews with students.
- Apprentices will receive information relating to safe practice in the workplace and safeguarding contact details.
- When dealing with a disclosure, follow referral procedure as per section 7
- Work placements will sign and return the safeguarding declaration to The Square Metre Group Training
-

APPENDIX 13.8: SAFEGUARDING DECLARATION

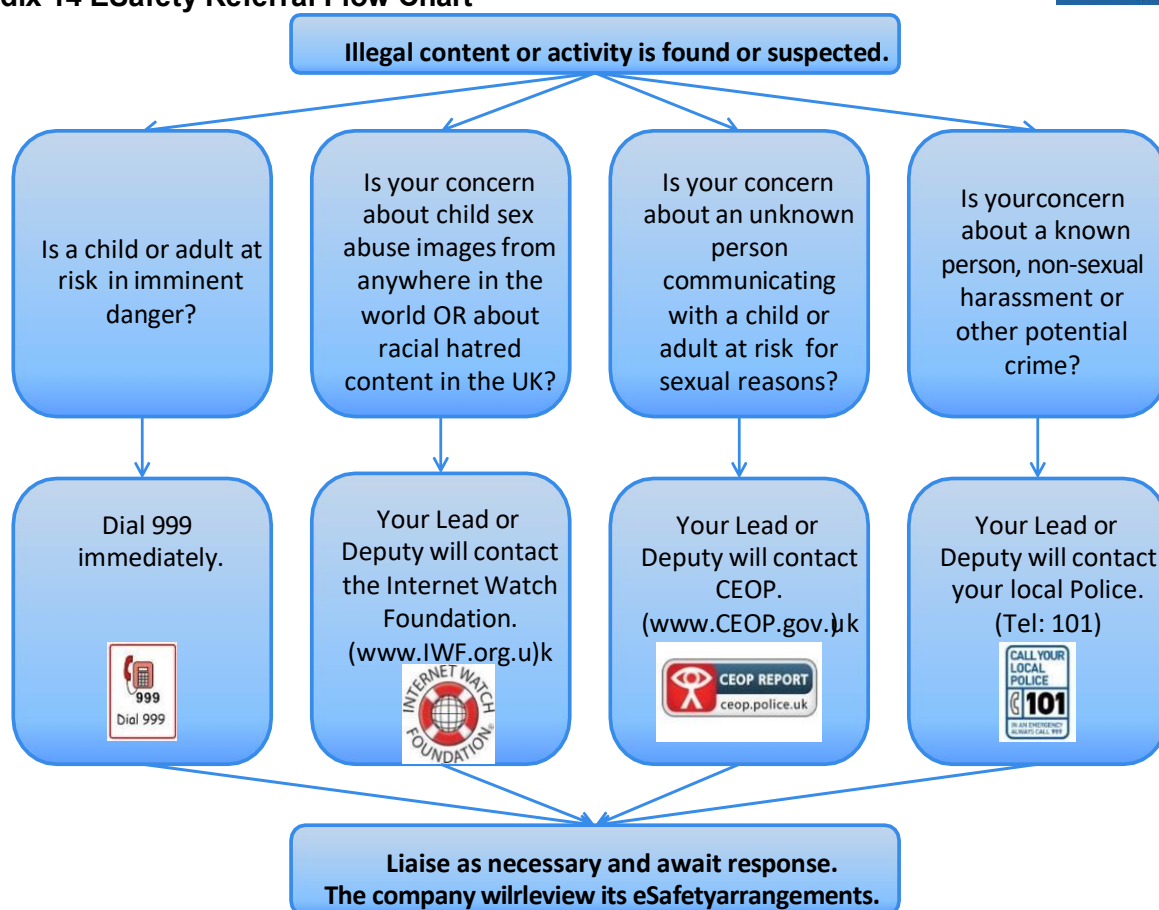
Workplace

(To be completed and returned to The Square Metre Group– copy to be retained by supervisor)

Name of organisation:	
Address of organisation:	
Telephone No	
I confirm that I have read and understood the guidelines and procedures contained in the attached document. I also understand my responsibilities as the Placement Supervisor.	
Placement Supervisor Name (print)	
Placement Supervisor Signature	
I confirm that I have explained The Square Metre Group Training's Safeguarding Policy to the above-named supervisor and that they are aware of the procedures to follow if they are concerned about the welfare of a young person.	
The Square Metre Group Representative (Print name)	
The Square Metre Group Representative Signature & Date:	

APPENDIX 13.9: E-SAFETY POLICY AND PROCEDURE

- a.** All online safeguarding concerns will be dealt with in line with this policy, particularly in terms of referral and recording procedures
- b.** All members of staff will be advised of the company's IT Acceptable User Policy (AUP) policy and will agree to adhere to it.
- c.** Staff may become concerned about children, young people and adults at risk if they are:
 - accessing illegal websites or inappropriate "lifestyle" or for their age and ability
 - receiving unwanted or upsetting text or e-mail messages or images
 - being "groomed" by a responsible adult with a view to meeting the child, young person or adult at risk for their own illegal purposes including sex, drugs, radicalisation or crime
 - viewing or receiving socially unacceptable material such as inciting hatred or violence
 - sending or receiving bullying messages or posting malicious details about others
 - scamming for financial gain
 - ignoring copyright law by downloading music, videos
 - becoming secretive about where they are going or who they are meeting
 - secretive about what they are accessing on-line
 - using a phone, I pad or tablet in a closed area, away from other people
 - accessing the web or using a hand-held device for long periods and at all hours
 - constantly clearing their browsing history
 - receiving unexpected money or gifts from people they meet online
 - "sexting", sending sexually inappropriate images of themselves to others which, for under 18-year-olds, is an offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003
- d.** Staff may become concerned about a member of staff who:
 - befriends or communicates with learners who they work with; especially by their personal phone, online, by messaging and social media etc.
 - is secretive about what they are doing and who they are meeting
 - takes images of company activities with their own phone, iPad or tablet without permission of their line manager
 - does not seek parental permission for taking images of children and young people under 18 years of age
 - constantly clearing their browser history
 - is viewing adult pornography at work
 - is viewing child sexual abuse images at any time
 - is promoting discrimination, illegal acts or racial or religious hatred of any kind
 - sharing confidential or sensitive information
 - circulating or messaging any information which may be offensive

Appendix 14 ESafety Referral Flow Chart

APPENDIX 14.1: ADDITIONAL EXPERT AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDANCE

Further expert and professional guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues can be accessed via the www.gov.uk website as follows:

- child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- bullying including cyberbullying
- domestic violence
- drugs
- fabricated or induced illness
- faith abuse
- female genital mutilation (FGM)
- forced marriage
- gangs and youth violence
- gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- mental health
- private fostering
- radicalisation
- sexting
- teenage relationship abuse
- trafficking

In addition to the above, information can be found on the NSPCC website www.nspcc.org.uk

Local Safeguarding Children's Board Guidance

If we are worried that a child, young person or adult is at risk of abuse, harm or neglect, please call 999 and ask for the police. They will put you in touch with the safeguarding professionals in the area where the incident is said to have taken place.

If a member of the Safeguarding team cannot be contacted (for example out of hours) NSPCC, Childline or the local Safeguarding team in your area provide safeguarding advice and support service.

NSPCC 24 hours 7 days per week – Telephone: 0808 800 5000 www.nspcc.org.uk

Childline 24 hours 7 days per week – Telephone: 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk

Appendix 14.2: COVID-19 Addendum

This addendum applies during the period of closure / partial closure due to Covid-19 and reflects updated advice from the Government. It sets out changes to our normal Safeguarding policy in light of the Department for Education's guidance Coronavirus: safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers, and should be read in conjunction with this [document](#). Unless stated below, our normal safeguarding procedure remains in place.

We remain completely committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all learners and colleagues within the organisation. This situation remains the same despite the difficult circumstances brought about by the COVID-19 outbreak.

The Department for Education's (DfE's) definition of 'vulnerable children' includes those who:

- Have a social worker, including learners:
- With a child protection plan
- Assessed as being in need
- Looked after by the local authority
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

The Department for Health defines Vulnerable adults as

An adult at risk is any person who is aged 18 years or over and at risk of abuse or neglect because of their needs for care and or support.

As a result of the changes brought about as a result of the outbreak, the following will apply:

Designated (Deputy) Safeguarding Lead Arrangements

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead is available via telephone or through Microsoft Teams during all operational hours.

Learners with Safeguarding Concerns

Learners with Safeguarding concerns can make contact with the DSL by telephoning or via email.

Vulnerable Learners

We will continue to work with any outside agency as required to ensure the safeguarding of all learners. Contact will be maintained with any learner who has expressed concerns regarding mental health to ensure they are aware of the support available and to escalate support if required. We will continue to work with Local Safeguarding Partners during this period and raise concerns that meet the threshold for referrals.

Learners on Site

The Square Metre Group will refer to Government guidance on Education settings on how to implement social distancing and advice from Public Health England on handwashing and other measures to limit the spread of COVID-19. Learners will be registered on site and any learner not present will be contacted. In the event of an absent learner who cannot be contacted, the emergency contact will be called to ensure that the learner is safe.

Remote Learning

All staff will use Microsoft Teams/Zoom when delivering Remote Sessions for learners. We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place. All colleagues are to adhere to the Acceptable Use agreements and Online Safety Policy. Concerns should be raised when learners cannot be contacted. All Learners to supply next of kin details or an alternative emergency contact.

Welfare Concerns

All welfare concerns should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead / Deputy Safeguarding Lead and appropriate support will be provided to support the learner. Staff are reminded that they need to remain vigilant to the sign of abuse and emotional distress.

Mental Health

We will continue to direct learners to charities that can provide mental health support as required. During this time, we will make use of counselling support if needed. Agencies to support learners are provided to ensure that colleagues can provide swift support to learners who can access support services independently. Staff who provide learners with details of agency support should log this to ensure that support is monitored in case further support is needed for the learner.

Induction and Safer Recruitment

In the event of a lockdown, Government guidance for the validation of documents will be followed. This might take place through a live video link and possession of the physical document must be observed by the person completing the validation of the document. Scanned documentation will then be sent to the person completing the check. This procedure will be in place in the event of a lockdown and guidance will be checked to ensure The Square Metre Group complies with the latest advice and guidance. remote (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/covid-19-changes-to-dbs-id-checking-guidelines>).