Safeguarding Policy – Guidance to Learners

Policy

At OWNIT Academy we are committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all learners and staff. We recognize that safeguarding is an essential aspect of our work, and we take our responsibilities in this area very seriously. This policy sets out our commitment to safeguarding and outlines the procedures we have in place to ensure that all learners and staff are protected from harm. The policy covers all aspects of safeguarding, including child protection and the prevention of abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all learners and staff at OWNIT Academy including employees, volunteers, and contractors. The policy also applies to all activities that take place on our premises, as well as off-site activities that are organized by OWNIT Academy.

Policy Statement

OWNIT Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all learners and staff, and to protecting them from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. We recognize that all staff have a responsibility to report any concerns they have about the welfare of a learner, and we have a duty to take appropriate action to ensure the safety and well-being of everyone in our care.

Examples of safeguarding incidents include:

- Physical abuse, such as hitting, shaking, or slapping

- Sexual abuse, including any form of sexual contact or exploitation

- Emotional abuse, including bullying, ridicule, and threats

- Neglect, such as failing to provide food, clothing, or medical care

- Self-harm or suicide attempts

- Radicalization or extremism

The following legislation is relevant to our safeguarding policy:

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004, which places a duty on relevant agencies, including training providers, to cooperate in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- The Care Act 2014, which provides a legal framework for the protection of adults at risk of abuse or neglect.
- The Human Rights Act 1998, which requires all public bodies, including training providers, to respect and protect the human rights of all individuals.

- The Data Protection Act 2018, which governs the processing of personal data and ensures that appropriate safeguards are in place to protect the privacy of individuals.

Procedures for safeguarding

OWNIT Academy has established a number of procedures to ensure that all learners and staff are protected from harm. These procedures include:

1.   Designated Safeguarding Lead

We have appointed a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) who is responsible for managing safeguarding concerns and incidents, and for ensuring that all safeguarding procedures are followed. Our DSL will:

- Be available to provide support and advice to staff and volunteers

- Ensure that safeguarding concerns and incidents are reported to the appropriate authorities, such as the police or local authority

- Keep detailed records of all safeguarding incidents, and regularly review these records to identify any patterns or trends

- Provide regular updates to the management team on safeguarding incidents and the actions taken

- Regularly review and update the safeguarding policy and procedures.

2.   Reporting Procedures

If a staff member or volunteer witnesses or becomes aware of a safeguarding incident, they should report it immediately to the DSL.
The report can be made verbally or in writing and should include as much detail as possible about the incident, including:

- the date and time of the incident

- the location of the incident

- the names of any witnesses

- a description of the incident and any relevant circumstances.

Designated safeguarding lead must make a written record of the incident as soon as possible after it has been reported. This record should be kept confidential and stored securely.

3.   Incident Management

The DSL must take immediate action to assess the risk of harm and make an initial judgement as to whether a referral to Children's Services or the Police is necessary.
The DSL must also involve other professionals, as necessary, to ensure an appropriate response to the safeguarding concern or incident.

Examples of other professionals who may need to be involved include:

- The Police

- Children's Services

- The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

- Health professionals (e.g. GP, health visitor).

4.   Safe Recruitment

All candidates for employment or volunteering roles at [Training Provider name] will undergo a rigorous recruitment and selection process, which will include:

Identification and Verification

- All candidates must provide proof of identity and qualifications before they can be considered for a role. This may include a passport, driving license, or birth certificate.
- We will also verify the candidate's work history, including any periods of unemployment, using the information provided on their application form and through their references.

Checks on Suitability

- All candidates will be assessed for their suitability for the role they have applied for, taking into account their qualifications, experience, and any relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- If a candidate has a history of offences or criminal convictions, this will be taken into account when assessing their suitability for the role.

Barred List Checks

- All candidates will be checked against the barred list to ensure that they are not prohibited from working with children or vulnerable adults.
- If a candidate appears on the barred list, they will not be eligible for employment or volunteering roles that involve working with children or vulnerable adults.

Vetting and Referencing

- All candidates will be required to provide two satisfactory references from previous employers or, in the case of volunteering roles, from a responsible person who knows the candidate well.
- These references will be checked and evaluated as part of the recruitment process.

5.   Risk Assessments

We carry out regular risk assessments to identify and mitigate any potential safeguarding risks and to ensure that appropriate measures are in place to protect learners and staff. These include:

- **Premises:** An assessment of the physical environment in which learners, children, young people or vulnerable adults will be using. This includes checking the premises for potential hazards, such as trip hazards, poor lighting, or insufficient fire safety measures.

- **Transport:** An assessment of the mode of transport used to take learners, children, young people or vulnerable adults to and from the training provider's premises. This includes checking the vehicle for roadworthiness, as well as assessing the driver's driving history and checking for any disqualifications.

- **Equipment:** An assessment of any equipment used by learners, children, young people or vulnerable adults. This includes checking for any potential hazards, such as electrical safety, or ensuring that equipment is age-appropriate.

- **Staffing:** An assessment of the training provider's staffing arrangements, including checking the background and suitability of all staff and volunteers, and ensuring that appropriate training has been given on safeguarding issues.

- **External events or activities:** An assessment of any external events or activities, such as visits or field trips. This includes assessing the risk of harm, both in terms of the activities themselves and the environment in which they are taking place.

- **Digital technology:** An assessment of the use of digital technology, such as computers, laptops, tablets, and smartphones. This includes checking the use of internet filters and monitoring software, as well as ensuring that appropriate guidelines and procedures are in place for the safe use of technology.

By carrying out these risk assessments, the training provider can identify any potential safeguarding risks and take steps to mitigate them, thereby ensuring the safety and wellbeing of learners, children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

6.   Training and Awareness

All staff and volunteers at [Training Provider Name] will receive safeguarding training to help them understand their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding. This training will cover:
- what safeguarding is and why it is important

- the different types of abuse and neglect, and how to recognize them

- how to respond to safeguarding concerns and incidents

- the importance of maintaining confidentiality

- the role of the DSL.

This training must be updated annually, or as soon as new legislation or guidance is introduced.

All staff and volunteers are also required to sign a code of conduct, which sets out our expectations with regards to safeguarding. This code of conduct includes:

- a commitment to follow the safeguarding policy and procedures

- a commitment to report any safeguarding concerns or incidents

- a commitment to maintain confidentiality

- a commitment to attend safeguarding training.

7.   Monitoring and Review

We regularly review our safeguarding policy and procedures to ensure that they are effective and up-to-date, and that all learners and staff are protected from harm. This include:

- conducting regular audits of our safeguarding procedures
- an assessment of any lessons learned from previous incidents and any changes that need to be made to the procedures to improve our safeguarding response in the future
- and seeking feedback from learners and staff on the effectiveness of our policy.

Conclusion

OWNIT Academy takes our responsibilities in the area of safeguarding very seriously, and we are committed to ensuring that all learners and staff are protected from harm. We have a number of procedures in place to ensure that we are able to respond effectively to any safeguarding incidents and to ensure that appropriate action is taken to protect everyone in our care.

Thank you for your contribution and commitment to making our policy work.

Contact us

If you have any queries about the contents of this policy, please contact David Francis via David@ownitacademy.co.uk