

Safeguarding Policy

The Elephant Group will act to safeguard the welfare of beneficiaries, clients and employees throughout their engagement with The Elephant Group, including compliance with relevant legislation and good practice.

All members of The Elephant Group including employees, officers, consultants and volunteers are expected to follow The Elephant Group's Safeguarding Policy at all times.

This Safeguarding Policy applies, as appropriate, to both in-person and digital activities.

If you have any queries or concerns, please contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer promptly. If a beneficiary, client or employee contacts you about any disclosure, please contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately.

The details of The Elephant Group's Designated Safeguarding Lead are as follows:

- Matt Jones, Executive Chair
- Phone: 07795 297260
- Email: m.jones@theelephantgroup.org

2. Definitions

2.1 Vulnerable children and young people

Both children and young people are considered to be 'vulnerable people'. The definition of a child is someone who has not yet reached the minimum school leaving age. In England and Wales, a child can leave school on the last Friday in June if they are or will be 16 before the start of the next school year. The definition of a young person is any person who is not a child but has not yet reached the age of 18, or who is still enrolled at their college or sixth form.

2.2 Vulnerable adults

An adult at risk refers to any adult aged 18 or over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation. An adult at risk may therefore be a person who:

- is elderly and physically disabled due to ill health or cognitive impairment;
- has a learning disability;
- has a physical disability and / or a sensory impairment;
- has mental health needs including Dementia or a personality disorder;
- has a long-term illness / condition;
- misuses substances or alcohol;
- is unable to demonstrate the capacity to make a decision relating to their safety and is in need of care and support.

2.3 Abuse

The definition of abuse includes:

- infliction of physical, psychological, emotional or verbal pain or injury;
- acts of neglect or an omission to act;
- bullying and cyber bullying, including any type of abuse that happens on the web, through social networks or mobile phones
- persuading a vulnerable person to take part in sexual activities either through physical contact or online interaction;
- persuading a vulnerable person to enter into a financial transaction to which they have not consented or cannot consent.

A full list of categories and sub-categories that you should be aware of can be found in the DFE's [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020](#).

3. Safeguarding Policy

We recognise that:

- the welfare of any vulnerable person is paramount;
- all vulnerable people have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse, regardless of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity;
- working in partnership with vulnerable people, their parents, carers and agencies is essential in promoting their welfare.

The purpose of the policy is:

- to provide protection for any vulnerable person who receives The Elephant Group's services;
- to provide employees and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a vulnerable person may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm;
- this policy applies to all full-time employees, part-time employees, freelancers, volunteers, agency staff or anyone working on behalf of The Elephant Group's.

We will seek to safeguard vulnerable people by:

- valuing, listening to and respecting them;
- adopting safeguarding procedures and a code of conduct for employees;
- recruiting employees and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made;
- sharing information about safeguarding and good practice;
- sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents, carers and agencies appropriately;
- providing effective management for employees through supervision, support and training;

4. General Principles

Each employee, freelancer, volunteer, agency staff or other relevant person will:

- promptly complete an application for an enhanced disclosure DBS check and provide

necessary ID verification and will upon request, provide the DBS certificate to The Elephant Group;

- inform The Elephant Group of any relevant police record or other factors, including any changes in circumstances, which may mean that they are unsuitable to work for or otherwise represent The Elephant Group;
- maintain a strictly professional relationship with pupils;
- remember that all interactions between themselves and pupils must be such that no reasonable person could observe an interaction and construe its nature as abusive.

5. Safeguarding Disclosures

If a beneficiary approaches you with a disclosure of abuse, then proceed with caution:

- remember that the needs of the beneficiary take priority and it is your professional duty of care to act in their interest;
- before the beneficiary goes into detail you must explain the consequences of them disclosing information to you and the action that you will take - assure them that you will offer support, but let them know that you are required to pass on information to relevant agencies;
- try to avoid a situation where you are alone with a beneficiary for the disclosure, although it may be possible that a beneficiary may be unwilling to make disclosures of this nature in anything but a one-to-one situation;
- ask the beneficiary if they would like another person to be present, for example, another colleague or a friend;
- if you are unsure about how you should proceed then ask the beneficiary to wait while you consult this document before you begin;
- keep calm and listen to the beneficiary;
- allow the beneficiary to speak without interruption and accept what is said;
- do not attempt to investigate the allegation and ask questions only for clarification;
- do not make judgment or offer an opinion;
- do not make physical contact at any time, even if the intent is to console or reassure them;
- once the conversation has finished and the beneficiary has left you should note down the key details of the disclosure so you can refer back to them at a later point;
- even if the allegation concerns a situation that is not related to The Elephant Group, please refer the case to us as we are experienced in dealing with these matters.

6. Safeguarding Code of Conduct

When acting in any capacity on behalf of The Elephant Group, individuals commit to respecting, promoting, upholding and protecting, always, the rights of the child as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

This code of conduct has been put into place to reduce the likelihood of participants coming to harm, and to protect staff, volunteers and Ambassadors from allegations of harm against children and young people. Anyone found to be in breach of our Code of Conduct will be subject to disciplinary action which may include dismissal or termination of other arrangement with us.

We reserve the right to report any individual who is suspected of harming a participant to the relevant authorities. Individuals interacting directly with children and young adults on TAF's programmes are required to adhere to the Foundation's safeguarding code of conduct below:

Prioritise the safety and wellbeing of the child and vulnerable adult always:

- if you feel anyone is behaving inappropriately around participants, you have a duty to report your concern immediately through the Foundation's Safeguarding Procedure;
- remember that abuse can be committed peer on peer and all concerns should be reported;
- remember they are children first, and contributors or participants second;
- respect a participant's background, culture and traditions and be mindful of any behaviour that may offend his/her beliefs;
- listen to and respect participants always; don't patronise them;
- avoid favouritism, and treat participants fairly and without prejudice or discrimination;
- do not permit abusive activities amongst and/or directed towards participants (e.g. bullying, ridiculing, name calling, exclusion, racism, sexism, homophobia, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance).

Always act within professional boundaries:

- avoid physical contact with participants e.g. hugging. Always be mindful of how your conduct could be perceived;
- if delivering groups sessions, avoid one-to-one interactions with participants. If this is unavoidable, keep the interaction as professional and transparent as possible, for example:
 - remain in an open space;
 - let somebody else know where you will be working and who with;
 - never be alone with a participant in a room with the door shut;
 - if working one to one with students as part of a mentoring programme, ensure that all contact is made via the specified platform;.
- do not use inappropriate language in the presence of beneficiaries;
- when emailing students directly, the team@theelephantgroup.org email must be copied in at all times;
- record any instances or suspicions of inappropriate behaviour and report them to The Elephant Group;
- ensure all contact with participants is essential to the programme you are working on;
- never give out your personal contact details, and do not 'friend' or 'follow' participants you are working with on social networking sites;
- do not smoke or be under the influence of alcohol in the presence of beneficiaries;
- do not consume alcohol or drugs when responsible for running an activity or programme. When attending events where young people are present e.g. celebration dinners, alcohol should only be consumed in moderation and should not impact on your behaviour or your ability to act within professional boundaries;
- do not agree to meet a participant outside of your professional capacity;
- never lose sight of the fact that you are with children - behave appropriately and use

appropriate language always and challenge inappropriate language used by participants;

- do not accept or give personal gifts to a participant;