

AEEDER Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy

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1. Background

ASEEDER is committed to ensuring that all children and vulnerable adults are safeguarded and protected from abuse and exploitation. All staff members, contractors and third parties acting on behalf of ASEEDER have a responsibility to support the welfare, care and protection of children and vulnerable adults.

This policy applies to all individuals representing ASEEDER and outlines responsibilities to report any concerns relating to:

- a) the inappropriate disclosure or sharing of information that may place a child or vulnerable adult at risk;
- b) actual or suspected abuse or neglect, whether disclosed directly or identified through materials, conversations or observations.

All allegations or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and addressed promptly in accordance with the procedures set out in this policy.

This policy sets out ASEEDER's safeguarding expectations and is reviewed annually, or earlier where required due to legislative or regulatory changes.

2. Definitions

Safeguarding refers to the measures taken to ensure that children and vulnerable adults engaging with ASEEDER programmes, qualifications or activities are protected from harm and that abuse is prevented wherever possible.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children includes:

- a) protecting children from maltreatment;
- b) preventing impairment of physical or mental health or development;
- c) ensuring safe and effective care; and
- d) enabling children to achieve positive outcomes.

A **child** is defined as any person under the age of 18. All children have the right to protection from harm regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

A **vulnerable adult** is a person aged 18 or over who may be unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation due to disability, illness, age, mental health conditions, or substance misuse.

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Abuse is a form of maltreatment that may involve harm or neglect, including failure to act to prevent harm. Abuse may occur in family, institutional or community settings and may be perpetrated by adults or other children. Forms of abuse include, but are not limited to:

- a) Physical abuse
- b) Emotional or psychological abuse
- c) Sexual abuse
- d) Neglect

Additional forms of abuse relevant to vulnerable adults include:

- a) Financial or material abuse
- b) Discrimination or harassment
- c) Institutional abuse

Prevent Duty: ASEEDER recognises its responsibility under the Prevent Duty to reduce the risk of individuals being drawn into extremism or terrorism. Staff should remain alert to signs of vulnerability to radicalisation and follow appropriate safeguarding procedures where concerns arise.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

All ASEEDER staff and related parties are required to understand and comply with this policy.

ASEEDER staff may encounter learner information through registration, assessment, moderation, training or related activities. Where concerns arise from learner materials or interactions, ASEEDER has a duty to take appropriate safeguarding action.

All communication involving learner information must be appropriately authorised. Identifiable personal data must not be disclosed unless the identity and authority of the requester have been verified. ASEEDER will normally communicate about individual learners only with registered centres for legitimate purposes such as registration, assessment or certification.

ASEEDER will ensure that:

- a) this policy remains current and compliant with applicable legislation;
- b) reasonable measures are taken to ensure staff and contractors are suitable to work with children and vulnerable adults;

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- c) appropriate referrals are made where individuals are deemed unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults.
- d) ASEEDER will nominate a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) to manage safeguarding concerns. Where the DSO is unavailable or conflicted, concerns should be escalated to the Head of Centre.

4. Reporting procedure

a) Allegations or concerns

Any allegation or suspicion of abuse must be recorded using the *ASEEDER Safeguarding Incident Form* and submitted to epq@seedasdan.org. Allegations will be investigated in accordance with this policy and ASEEDER's disciplinary procedures. The reporting individual will be informed that the concern has been escalated but not of the outcome.

b) Disclosure: Where a child or vulnerable adult makes a disclosure, staff must:

- explain that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed;
- remain calm and listen without interruption;
- reassure the individual that they have done the right thing;
- avoid leading or investigative questions;
- avoid making judgments or criticisms;
- explain next steps and who the information will be shared with on a need-to-know basis.

5. Code of Behavior

The welfare of children and vulnerable adults must always take priority. All individuals must be treated with dignity, respect and fairness. Staff and contractors must avoid:

- a) sharing identifiable information without authorisation;
- b) distributing images of learners without consent;
- c) being alone with a child or vulnerable adult where avoidable;
- d) engaging in behaviour that could be misinterpreted or cause discomfort;
- e) inappropriate language or behaviour;

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- f) unreported safeguarding concerns;
- g) promising confidentiality to a child or vulnerable adult.

Centre Visits: Contact with learners during centre visits must be supervised by centre staff. ASEEDER staff and contractors should not place themselves in situations where they are alone with a learner. Where this occurs, they should remove themselves from the situation immediately.

6. Work experience

ASEEDER may host work experience students at its premises. Where one-to-one supervision is unavoidable, staff must take reasonable steps to safeguard the student, including:

- avoiding enclosed spaces;
- informing colleagues of their location and activity;
- recording online meetings and retaining communications where appropriate.

Physical Contact: Physical contact should be avoided unless strictly necessary and appropriate. Any contact must be minimal, professional and, where possible, observed by another adult.

Contact Outside of Work: All communication with students must be conducted through official ASEEDER channels and authorised staff.

7. Training and Dissemination

This policy will be provided to all staff and contractors whose role may involve contact with children or vulnerable adults. It will form part of staff induction and contractual documentation where relevant. Safeguarding training will be provided on an annual basis to all relevant staff and made available to internal working groups as appropriate.

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