

## WEA SAFEGUARDING POLICY (England)

### Introduction

The WEA Safeguarding Policy operates across the WEA in England and Scotland. There are some differences in the Safeguarding legislative framework between England and Scotland, but the aim of the WEA is to implement a unified approach to safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk across the areas in which we operate. However, to ensure clarity in the use of different terminology and legislation, we provide two policy documents: WEA Safeguarding Policy (England) and WEA Safeguarding Policy (Scotland). The following policy applies to England.

### Policy Summary:

The WEA is committed to:

- Promoting and protecting the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and adults, including staff engaged in the range of its activities.

- Preventing abuse wherever possible and ensuring that robust procedures are in place for dealing with safeguarding concerns, allegations of abuse or disclosures.

- Protecting children, young people and adults at risk.



## 2. Definitions

### 2.1 Scope of learning provision:

The WEA is an adult (aged 19+) learning provider with a wide scope of provision which includes adults who may be considered “at risk” or “vulnerable”. However, the WEA may also be engaged in activities or project work within community centres, children’s centres or schools which directly or indirectly involve children or young adults. Therefore, this policy encompasses all age groups that are directly or indirectly involved in the WEA’s learning activities.

### 2.2 Child:

A child is anyone under the age of 18.

### 2.3 Adult:

An adult is anyone aged 18 or over.

### 2.4 Abuse (vulnerable or “at risk” adults):

Abuse is defined as “a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by another person or persons”. It may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological. It may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of the person subjected to it”. (Department of Health: “No secrets, Section 2; amended by the Care Act 2014).

### 2.5 Child Abuse:

Keeping Children Safe in Education (updated September 2024) defines abuse as “a form of maltreatment”. This may involve “inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm.”



### 3. Scope and Responsibilities

#### 3.1 Responsibility of all staff:

All salaried and hourly paid staff, senior leaders, students, members, volunteers and trustees are responsible for creating an environment that promotes well-being and ensures personal safety. They will act promptly in accordance with the safeguarding policy and inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer or the WEA National Safeguarding lead, of any issues of suspected or reported abuse of children, young people or adults.

#### 3.2 Trustees and Senior Leaders:

Trustees and Senior Leaders will receive appropriate training on safeguarding and will know their responsibilities and legislative requirements with respect to the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults. They will comply with the “Strategy for









ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately”. (HM Government: Information sharing. July 2018).

A member of staff who receives a disclosure or has a concern should explain clearly to the person about what to expect next and how information could be shared with others who need to know. It is important to seek their agreement, except when to do so would put the child, adult or others at increased risk of significant harm. A degree of professional judgement is involved. There must be a legitimate purpose for sharing information with the overriding consideration being the individual’s safety and welfare. Information sharing will be based on “The Seven Golden Rules to Sharing Information” (HM Government: Information sharing. May 2024) and will be “necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure”.

[DfE non statutory information sharing advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services for children, young people, parents and carers \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

There is a statutory or professional duty to share relevant information in circumstances where children need to be safeguarded. The appropriate Safeguarding Designate, in association with the WEA National Safeguarding Lead, will decide whether to refer a case to the relevant Local Authority Adult Board or Children’s Social Care. The WEA applies the same policy in situations where an adult is at risk of abuse or neglect.

## **8. Whistleblowing**

All staff will be made aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or action of colleagues. The Whistleblowing policy provides guidance to all those who work within the organisation who think they need to “blow the whistle” on alleged bad practice. This may involve the disclosure of information by an employee or worker which relates to some danger, fraud or other illegal or unethical conduct connected with the workplace.

## **9. Management of Safeguarding Allegations against Staff/Volunteers**

A Safeguarding allegation against a member of staff or volunteer is defined as any information that indicates that the member of staff/volunteer is behaving in a way that demonstrates unsuitability for working with children, young people or adults in their present position, or in any capacity. In relation to working with the WEA, this includes:

- Behaviour that has harmed or may have harmed an adult or child.

- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to an adult or child.

- Behaviour towards an adult or child that indicates that they may pose a risk of harm to other adults or children.

- Use/possession of sexual material relating to children.

- Use of sexually explicit images depicting violence against human beings (including possession of such images)



Sexual behaviour involving a vulnerable adult or child.  
Inappropriate professional behaviour including initiating or seeking sexual activity with students.

Harm is defined by the DBS in (ex)4 (ua2 Tw 1.5 0 T218 -1.32 Tc 0.002 Tw -6.18 -1.32M 0 TTc 0. i)





Prevent policy.  
Sexual harassment policy  
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion  
Student Confidentiality policy  
Information sharing Guidance  
Complaint Handling Procedure  
WEA student code of conduct  
WEA Student online learning agreement  
WEA online safety policy  
WEA Student computer and digital use policy  
Unacceptable student behaviour procedure  
Whistleblowing  
Disciplinary and Grievance  
Data Protection Policy  
Recruitment and Selection/DBS Procedures.  
Volunteer Complaints policy  
DBS guidance for Education Staff

**Other relevant policies and procedures**

Making Barring Referrals to the DBS (<https://www.gov.uk/>)

Strategy for dealing with Safeguarding issues in Charities. (updated 6<sup>th</sup> December 2017)

<https://www.gov.uk/.../strategy-for-dealing-with-safeguarding-issues-in-charities>

Keeping Children Safe in Education (updated September 2024)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, pLBody kET/Ar(ungo0.004 EMC E kET/Ar(50.64 Tm0078kt)2 r(50.]]