

Safeguarding Policy

London Borough of Tower Hamlets
Idea Store Learning

October 2023

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| Approved By | Date |
| ISL – SLT | Oct 2023 |
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1. Purpose

This policy is for all Idea Store Learning staff and volunteers.

It outlines what Idea Store Learning requires from staff to ensure that all our staff, learners and visitors are safe.

We expect all staff to act upon any allegation or concern regardless of how small or trivial it may seem.

Idea Store Learning is committed to raising staff awareness of all aspects of safeguarding, preventing abuse where possible and ensuring that robust procedures are in place for dealing with safeguarding incidents.

The organisation will not tolerate abuse in any form, and it is committed to promoting wellbeing, preventing harm and responding effectively if concerns are raised.

All Idea Store Learning staff have collective responsibility to:

- Protect children or at-risk adults from abuse, neglect and bullying
- Protect children or at-risk adults from extremism and radicalisation
- Protect children or at-risk adults from violence, and sexual and criminal exploitation
- Respect any confidentiality
- Report any abuse discovered or suspected

2. Scope

This policy and its accompanying procedures apply to adults and young people who are deemed to be at risk and are learners at Idea Store Learning. However, Idea Store Learning takes its duty of care seriously with regards to all staff and learners and all concerns will be recorded and reported appropriately.

Idea Store Learning will ensure robust procedures are in place to identify, deal with or report any form of abuse and provide a safe environment for all. This includes preventative measures such as regular training for all staff on Safeguarding and Prevent.

We will act on all reports of alleged abuse or harm whether they are recent or reported to have taken place in the past.

All staff have a duty to report concerns and they must act upon this information immediately. Doing nothing is not an option as the priority is always to make sure all learners and staff are safe and protected.

Senior managers are responsible for making sure that all staff understand the Safeguarding policy and procedures and know how to act if they are worried or concerned about a learner.

3. Who are we safeguarding?

We have a legal duty to safeguard all children and adults at risk. Safeguarding children relates to any child, under the age of 18, who has suffered from, or may be at risk of, physical injury, neglect and emotional or sexual abuse.

Safeguarding adults at risk relates to anyone over the age of 18 years who may be defined as a 'vulnerable adult'. Adults accessing learning through Idea Store Learning are not necessarily 'vulnerable'. However, we have a moral duty to safeguard the wellbeing of all our learners, especially those who are or may be '*in need of community care services by reason of disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself against significant harm or exploitation*'. (Department of Health 2000).

Learners are encouraged to inform Idea Store Learning if they are vulnerable or at risk, but they are not obliged to. Vulnerability is difficult to judge. Staff should always assume that any adult learner they deal with might be vulnerable or disadvantaged and treat them accordingly.

While it is important to recognise that certain groups of people are legally defined as vulnerable, we seek to ensure that our policies and procedures are fully inclusive and integrated “safer” practices apply to all staff and learners. Idea Store Learning aims to create a safe environment for all and to ensure that no one is left out.

4. Links to other policies

This policy is written in the context of Tower Hamlets Council’s [Safeguarding Adults Procedure \(2021\)](#) and the [Safeguarding Adults Board Strategy 2019-24](#).

This policy should also be read alongside Idea Store Learning’s *E-safety Policy* and *Safeguarding (including Prevent and E-Safety)* guidance for staff (version 2 Sept 2019).

This policy is also linked to national legislation:

- [The Health and Care Act 2022](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education](#) – updated September 2023
- [Prevent Duty guidance: for further education institutions in England and Wales](#) – updated 2023
- [The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012](#)
- [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#)
- [The Children’s Act 2004](#)
- [No Secrets: guidance on protecting vulnerable adults in care](#) - updated January 2015
- [Data Protection Act 2018](#)

5. What is abuse?

The Department of Health (No Secrets, 2000), defines abuse as ‘*A violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by another person or persons*’ and recognises the following forms of abuse:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual harassment, abuse, and exploitation
- Emotional/psychological abuse
- Neglect
- Discriminatory abuse including harassment
- Financial or material abuse
- Organisational/institutional abuse

Staff should also be aware of wider safeguarding issues and forms of abuse including:

- Bullying including online bullying and prejudice-based bullying
- Self-harm
- Racist, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse
- Honour based violence (HBV) encompassing crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage and practices such as breast ironing and modern slavery.
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Homelessness

At-risk people can potentially be abused by anyone including relatives, friends, professional staff, other learner and service users, neighbours, care workers, volunteers, and complete strangers.

6. Protecting children and vulnerable adults from radicalisation and extremism

Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on educational establishments to have “*due regard to the needs to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism*”.

Recognising extremism - early indicators may include:

- showing sympathy for extremist causes
- glorifying violence
- evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- advocating messages similar to illegal organisations
- out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships
- secretive behaviour

The Prevent Duty: Idea Store Learning has a statutory duty to safeguard learners to keep them both safe and within the law and commits to:

- promoting values including mutual respect for those with different faiths and beliefs, the rule of law, democracy, and individual liberties to enhance social cohesion
- encouraging open debate
- embedding this aspect of safeguarding within all policies and curriculum plans
- challenging extremism
- providing training and informing staff of new developments

“Safeguarding vulnerable people from radicalisation is no different from safeguarding them from other forms of harm.” (The Prevent Strategy, Home Office 2011)

7. Safer Recruitment of Staff

Tower Hamlets Council is responsible for ensuring that Idea Store Learning follows safer recruitment procedures and has policies in place. This includes carrying out Disclosure Barring checks on all staff working with learners upon recruitment and then every three years. All staff must be checked even if they have already been checked by a previous employer.

8. Roles, responsibilities, and expectations

Idea Store Learning will:

- Ensure all staff and volunteers working with learners are DBS checked and where necessary.
- Provide regular up-to-date training and briefings for staff on safeguarding adults and children and Prevent.
- Ensure safeguarding policies and procedures are up to date and accessible to learners, staff and providers.
- Promote a culture of value and respect for all within a supportive learning environment
- As part of the Prevent Duty 2015, work with the council’s Prevent Team and the Safeguarding Adults Panel to help protect individuals from radicalisation
- Ensure policies are in place for e-learning safety
- Provide a designated person at Idea Store Learning to whom staff and learners can take any complaints or concerns.

Idea Store Learning staff will:

- Agree to a DBS check before employment is confirmed
- Always show respect for learners and colleagues
- Promote the welfare of learners

- Understand the power and influence of their positions, particularly with more vulnerable learners, and not abuse it
- Undertake relevant training in safeguarding, Prevent and e-safety
- Be vigilant and able to spot signs of harm, abuse and exploitation
- Provide a thorough induction to learners and ensure that all learners are aware of relevant policies and procedures on safeguarding, e-safety, Prevent, bullying and equality and provide a safe learning environment
- Ensure a diverse curriculum that is sensitive to difference
- Deal with complaints of abuse, harassment and bullying promptly, sensitively, confidentially and in accordance with ISL procedures

Idea Store Learning learners are expected to:

- Promote a supportive and positive learning environment by challenging and reporting behaviour that appears to be causing distress to others
- Support an open, safe, and constructive learning environment in which diversity is valued
- Respect other people's rights to safety
- Not hurt or abuse or threaten to hurt or abuse others
- Use ICT appropriately and in line with the e-safety policy

9. When abuse, neglect, exploitation or radicalisation is suspected

All learners and staff have the right to be protected from abuse or harm and to learn and work in a safe and healthy environment. All staff must act promptly if they have any concern or suspicion about a learner who is at risk of being abused, neglected or exploited. If a member of staff suspects anything, they should immediately inform their line manager. Even if they have only heard rumours of abuse or have a suspicion but do not have firm evidence, they should still contact their manager to raise a concern.

Managers will advise on next steps. If there is a safeguarding issue which needs to be investigated appropriately, they will advise the member of staff to complete a safeguarding reporting form (Appendix 1) which must be sent to the Designated Safeguarding Officer. Staff must not try to investigate any potential abuse on their own, they are not equipped or qualified to do so.

10. When a learner makes a disclosure

If a learner reports abuse to a member of staff, they must:

- Take it seriously and listen calmly
- Make sure the person is safe (this may mean withdrawal from class)
- Ensure their own safety
- Establish what the person wishes to do
- Protect any evidence as necessary
- Explain that the disclosure must be reported
- Report it to their line manager and designated Idea Store Learning Safeguarding Officer immediately
- Call an ambulance if urgent medical help is needed
- Call the police if there is an immediate danger, anyone is at further risk or if the alleged offender may escape arrest

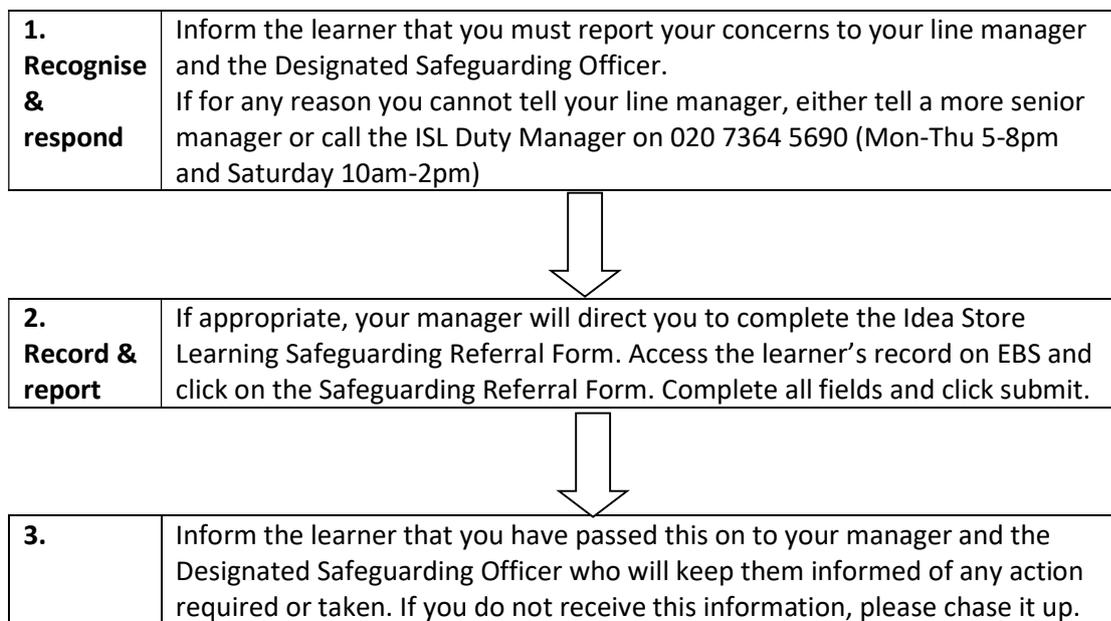
Staff must not:

- Ignore a concern or a disclosure
- Put themselves or others at risk
- Make judgements or apportion blame
- Ask for more than the basic details

- Promise to keep a secret
- Discuss the situation with anyone other than their line manager and/or appropriate authorities
- Confront or question the alleged perpetrator of the abuse

11. The procedure for reporting suspected abuse: recognise, respond, record, report.

Concerns about allegations or suspicions of the abuse or potential abuse of a vulnerable person should be reported to line managers and the Idea Store Learning Designated Safeguarding Officer. All staff must undertake the following action:



If there is an immediate danger and speaking to a manager or the Designated Safeguarding Officer would cause a delay and put a person at risk, **staff must call 999 immediately to report it to the police.**

If for any other reason you are unable to contact your Idea Store Learning manager or the Safeguarding Officer, and you are concerned that a child or vulnerable adult are at risk or experiencing significant harm, the Tower Hamlets Council Safeguarding contacts are:

- **Child concerns (including Prevent)** 020 7364 5006
- **Adults: Tower Hamlets Connect Helpline** 0300 303 6070
- **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub out of hours (5pm onwards)** 020 7364 4079

12. Confidentiality

All conversations regarding an individual must always be held in private. Confidentiality and trust should be maintained as far as possible, but staff must act on the basis that the safety of the individual is the main concern. The degree of confidentiality will be governed by the need to protect the individual.

The individual should be informed at the earliest possible stage of the disclosure that the information will be passed on to a manager and the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Idea Store Learning complies with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018, which allows for disclosure (or withholding) of personal data without consent where there is a good reason to do so and this is necessary to protect the vital interests of an at-risk individual.

Information will be dealt with in a confidential manner. Staff must not discuss the case with anyone other than those involved in the case. The Designated Safeguarding Officer will only inform other staff if it is important that they know about the situation.

13. What happens next?

Please refer to the process map (Appendix 2). The Designated Safeguarding Officer will consider all the information available and decide on the next steps, which may include taking no further action. Where it is decided that further action is necessary, this may be to:

- Seek further advice from Adult Social Care or Children's Services as appropriate
- Make a referral to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
- Report the matter to the police if a crime is suspected

Where it is deemed that there are no safeguarding concerns and/or no further action is required, managers may advise staff on potential signposting to further advice, guidance and support that the learner can access.

Where a member of staff's concerns appears not to have been taken seriously or a line manager is allegedly involved in the abuse, it is appropriate to take them to a more senior manager. All those making a complaint or allegation or expressing concern, whether they be staff, service users, carers or members of the public, should be reassured that:

- they will be taken seriously
- their comments will usually be treated confidentially but their concerns may be shared if they or others are at significant risk
- if service users, they will be given immediate protection from the risk of reprisals or intimidation
- if staff, they will be given support and afforded protection if necessary, e.g. under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998; they will be dealt with in a fair and equitable manner; and they will be kept informed of action that has been taken and its outcome.

14. Allegations against staff

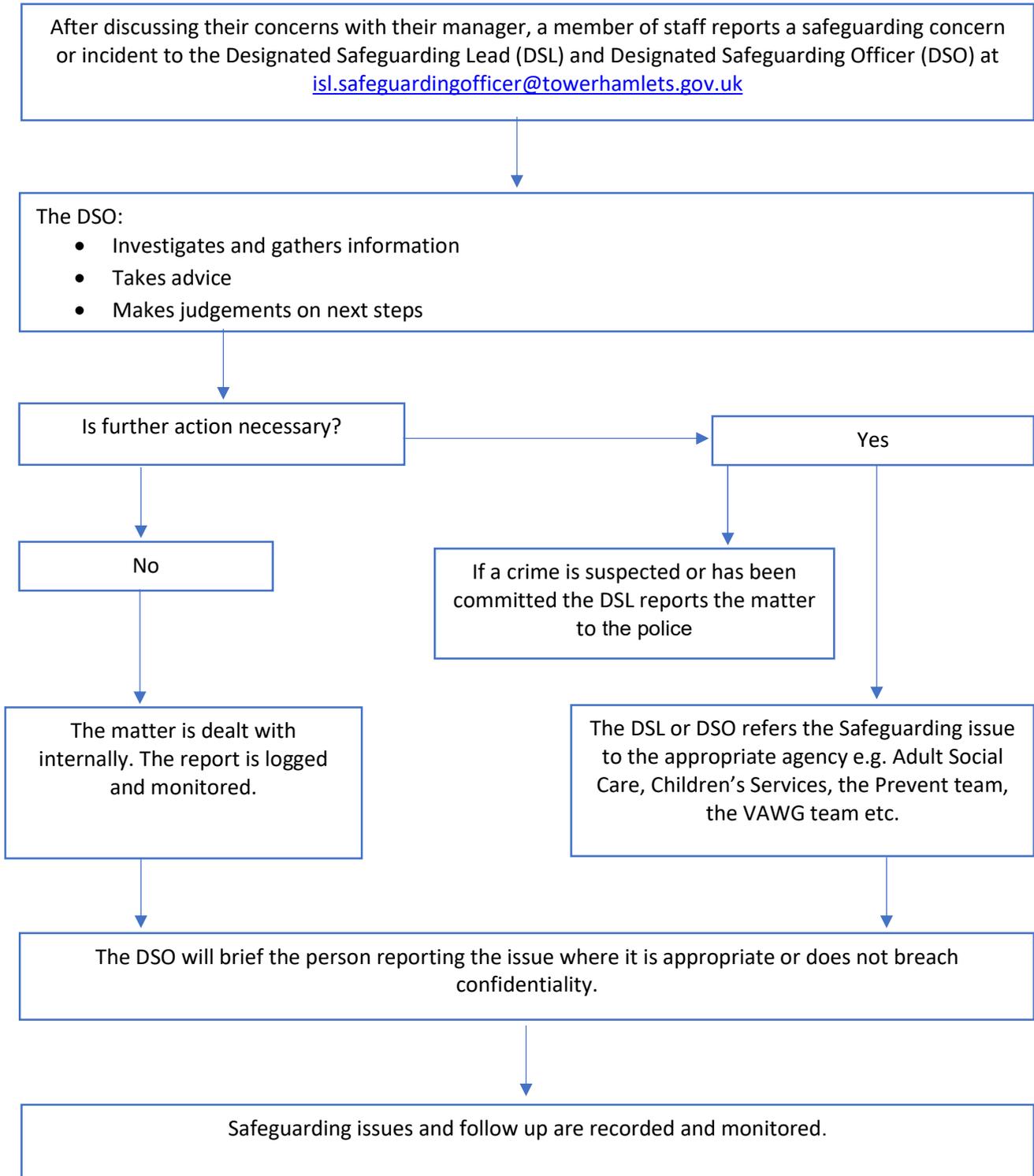
The primary concern of Idea Store Learning is to ensure the safety of the individual. Where an allegation of abuse or inappropriate behaviour is made against a member of staff, a thorough investigation will be undertaken.

Anyone who suspects a member of staff of abusing a learner must bring their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Officer. The member of staff against whom the allegation has been made should:

- Contact their union or legal representative
- Keep records of all conversations (including phone calls), emails, meetings attended or other communications relating to the allegation.

If a decision is made to pursue an allegation of abuse against a member of staff, this will be dealt with under the Council's disciplinary procedures. These procedures can be obtained from the Human Resources department.

Appendix 1: Idea Store Learning Safeguarding Procedure



Appendix 2: Idea Store Learning Safeguarding and Management Contacts

| Head of Idea Store Learning | | Faruk Miah MBE 0207 364 5096 Faruk.Miah@towerhamlets.gov.uk | |
|---|---|---|--|
| Programme Area | Programme Manager | Subjects | Line Manager/ Assistant Programme Manager |
| Community Learning - Arts and Creative Industries, Health and Fitness and Languages | Brian Birch Programme Manager 0207 364 5929 Brian.Birch@towerhamlets.gov.uk | Visual Arts Fashion | Jennifer Woolnough Assistant Programme Manager 0207 364 5088 Jennifer.Knight@towerhamlets.gov.uk |
| | | Dance Music Technical Education Enterprise Languages | Herbert Wilson-Jones Assistant Programme Manager 0207 364 5074 Herbert.WilsonJones@towerhamlets.gov.uk |
| | | Health and Fitness | Annarita Mazzilli Assistant Programme Manager 0207 364 2328 Annarita.Mazzilli@towerhamlets.gov.uk |
| Skills for Life - ESOL, English, Maths, Digital Skills, Outreach & Employability | Vacant | ESOL | Victoria Holmes Assistant Programme Manager 0207 364 5912 Victoria.Holmes@towerhamlets.gov.uk |
| | | English Maths Outreach | Nikki Chatha Assistant Programme Manager 0207 364 5056 Nikki.Chatha@towerhamlets.gov.uk |
| | | Digital Skills Employability | Nicholas Beer Assistant Programme Manager 07908 145082 Nicholas.Beer@towerhamlets.gov.uk |
| Idea Store Learning Safeguarding Team | | Faruk Miah - Designated Safeguarding Lead Victoria Holmes - Designated Safeguarding Officer ISL.Safeguarding@towerhamlets.gov.uk 020 7364 1080 | |
| Idea Store Learning Duty Manager | | Monday – Thursday 5-8pm Saturday 10am-2pm 0207 364 5690 | |