

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

The ReConnect Programme

Version: Autumn Term 2025

Next Review Due: Autumn Term 2026

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Chris Sodey

Deputy DSL(s): Naomi Hamer

Online Safety Lead: Chris Sodey

DSL Contact Number: 07599 035520

DSL Email: admin@reconnect1-1.com

1. Policy Statement

ReConnect is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people. We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to provide a safe, supportive environment where children can learn, develop, and thrive. Safeguarding is at the heart of everything we do.

We believe that all learners, regardless of age, ability, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation, or background, have an equal right to protection from harm.

We work in partnership with learners, parents, carers, and external agencies to promote a culture of vigilance, early intervention, and appropriate response.

2. Legal Framework and Statutory Guidance

This policy has been developed in line with the following statutory and non-statutory guidance:

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2025** – Statutory guidance for schools and colleges
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)** – Statutory multi-agency guidance
- **Children Acts 1989 and 2004**

- **Education Act 2002 (Section 175)**
 - **The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent Duty)**
 - **The Sexual Offences Act 2003**
 - **The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003**
 - **The Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019**
 - **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006**
 - **What to Do If You're Worried a Child Is Being Abused (2015)**
 - **Human Rights Act 1998, Equality Act 2010, Data Protection Act 2018 (UK GDPR)**
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3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All ReConnect staff, volunteers, governors, and contractors
 - All learners and families engaged in our provision
 - All activity delivered on-site and off-site (including online delivery)
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4. Aims of This Policy

- To safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people
- To ensure staff are alert to signs of abuse and neglect
- To provide a clear procedure for identifying and reporting concerns
- To embed safe recruitment, training, and supervision processes

- To meet statutory safeguarding duties as outlined in KCSiE 2025
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5. Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Chris Sodey

Responsible for oversight of safeguarding concerns, referrals to external agencies, staff training, policy review, and the maintenance of secure records.

Deputy DSL(s): [Insert names]

Trained to the same level as the DSL and able to act in their absence.

Online Safety Lead: Chris Sodey

Oversees filtering, monitoring, digital safeguarding, and online learning safety.

All Staff and Volunteers

Have a duty to:

- Read and understand *Part 1* of KCSiE 2025
 - Know how to recognise, report, and record concerns
 - Undertake regular safeguarding and Prevent training
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6. Recognising Abuse

Staff must be aware of the four categories of abuse:

- **Physical abuse**
- **Emotional abuse**
- **Sexual abuse**

- **Neglect**

Other safeguarding concerns include:

- **Child-on-child abuse**, including harmful sexual behaviour
- **Upskirting** (a criminal offence under the Voyeurism Act)
- **Online abuse and cyberbullying**
- **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and County Lines**
- **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**
- **Radicalisation and extremism (Prevent Duty)**
- **FGM** (Female Genital Mutilation)
- **Mental health and suicidal ideation**
- **Domestic abuse**

All staff must be vigilant for both physical and behavioural signs and know how to act on concerns.

7. Priority Safeguarding Issues (KCSiE 2025)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is a criminal offence. Teachers and health/social care professionals have a legal duty to report known cases in under-18s directly to the police. Suspicion of FGM must be escalated to the DSL.

Child-on-Child Abuse

Abuse between learners is taken seriously and never dismissed as “banter” or “part of growing up.” Staff will follow internal safeguarding procedures and support both victim and alleged perpetrator. All incidents are logged and referred where appropriate.

Upskirting

Defined as taking a photo or video under someone's clothing without consent, for sexual gratification or to cause distress. It is a criminal offence and will be dealt with as such.

Prevent Duty and Channel

ReConnect staff are trained to identify signs of radicalisation. The DSL is responsible for referring to the Channel Panel where appropriate. Staff complete Prevent awareness training as part of induction and CPD.

8. Safer Recruitment and Employment

We follow *Part 3* of KCSiE 2025 for safer recruitment:

- Enhanced DBS checks and barred list checks for all staff and volunteers
- At least two verified references
- Identity, qualification, and right to work checks
- A robust Single Central Record (SCR) is maintained
- Ongoing suitability monitoring

Disqualification under the Childcare Act is checked where applicable.

9. Staff Induction, Training and CPD

All staff:

- Receive safeguarding induction on their first day
- Complete Level 2 safeguarding training within 3 months
- Complete Prevent, FGM, and Online Safety training
- Undertake annual safeguarding updates
- Are regularly briefed on changes to KCSiE and practice

The DSL and Deputies:

- Are trained to Level 3/4 safeguarding standards
 - Refresh their training every 2 years
 - Log all training and CPD centrally
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10. Online Safety and Digital Safeguarding

Online safety is embedded in our provision and curriculum. We:

- Use filters and monitoring tools to protect learners
- Educate learners about cyber risks, grooming, and digital consent
- Supervise online sessions and digital communications
- Ensure all digital tools and platforms are GDPR-compliant

Staff are prohibited from using personal devices to contact learners.

11. Responding to Concerns or Disclosures

If a child discloses abuse:

- **Listen**, **reassure**, and **record** what they say – using their words
- **Do not** promise confidentiality
- **Do not** question the child beyond clarifying
- **Immediately** inform the DSL or Deputy DSL
- Complete a written record and submit to the DSL securely

The DSL will decide on the appropriate next steps, including referral to Children's Services or the police.

12. Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers

All allegations must be reported to the DSL immediately.

If the concern is about the DSL, report to the Deputy or Governing Body Lead.

The DSL will refer to the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** within 24 hours. All allegations are taken seriously and managed in line with *Part 4* of KCSiE 2025.

13. Whistleblowing

ReConnect encourages a culture of openness. Staff who have concerns about the behaviour of another adult towards children should report it directly to the DSL or the Director. Where staff feel unable to raise concerns internally, they can contact the **NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline** on **0800 028 0285**.

14. Off-Site Visits and Risk Assessments

All off-site activities, including residentials, are subject to:

- Pre-visit planning and risk assessment
 - Safeguarding approval from DSL or senior leadership
 - Appropriate staff:learner ratios
 - Parental/carers consent
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15. Record Keeping and Confidentiality

Safeguarding records are:

- Logged using secure systems
 - Stored in line with UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018
 - Separate from academic files
 - Accessed only by the DSL and authorised staff
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16. Policy Review and Monitoring

This policy is reviewed annually by the DSL and senior leadership.
It will also be reviewed following:

- Changes in legislation (e.g. new KCSiE guidance)
 - Serious safeguarding incidents
 - Changes in safeguarding structures or partners
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Safeguarding Contact Summary

Role	Name	Contact
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Chris Sodey	07599 035520
Deputy DSL	Naomi Hamer	07599 035520
Online Safety Lead	Chris Sodey	07599 035520
LADO (Local Authority)	Suffolk County Council	0300 1232044
MASH (Children's Services)	Suffolk County Council	0345 6061499