

Safeguarding Policy and Procedures for Step Up Tutoring

Effective Date: 21st October 2024

Last Reviewed: 24th February 2025

1. Introduction

At Step Up Tutoring (“we”, “us”, or “our”), the safeguarding and welfare of children and young people is paramount. This policy outlines our commitment to ensuring a safe environment for students and protecting them from harm, abuse, and neglect. This safeguarding policy applies to all employees, contractors, volunteers, and anyone involved with the company who may come into contact with students.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure that all students participating in our services are protected from harm.
 - Establish clear procedures for identifying and responding to safeguarding concerns.
 - Provide guidelines for the safe recruitment of tutors and other staff.
 - Create a culture of safety, respect, and vigilance.
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3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees, contractors, and volunteers working with Step Up Tutoring.
 - All students engaged with our tutoring services, including online and in-person sessions.
 - Parents, guardians, and caregivers, ensuring they understand our safeguarding practices.
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4. Legal Framework

This policy is aligned with relevant UK legislation and guidance, including:

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
 - Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
 - Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)
 - The Education Act 2002
 - The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
 - The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
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5. Definition of Safeguarding

Safeguarding is defined as protecting children from abuse and neglect, ensuring their health and development are not impaired, and providing a safe environment for them to grow and learn. Safeguarding also involves taking action to promote the welfare of children when concerns arise.

6. Types of Abuse

All staff should be aware of the following types of abuse:

- **Physical Abuse:** The use of physical force that may cause injury or harm.
 - **Emotional Abuse:** Persistent emotional maltreatment, which may affect a child's emotional development.
 - **Sexual Abuse:** Forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.
 - **Neglect:** The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical, emotional, or psychological needs.
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7. Responsibilities

All Tutors

All tutors are responsible for:

- Promoting the welfare and safety of students at all times.
- Following the procedures laid out in this policy immediately when they identify or suspect any safeguarding concerns.
- Maintaining professional boundaries and ensuring that relationships with students are appropriate.

- Completing required safeguarding training as directed by Step Up Tutoring.
- Having read and signed the “Promoting Good Practices” document.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is responsible for:

- Overseeing the implementation of safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Providing advice and support to staff regarding safeguarding concerns.
- Acting as the main point of contact for external agencies such as local authorities and social services.
- Ensuring that safeguarding issues are addressed in a timely and appropriate manner.

DSL Contact Information:

Name: Sam Foster

Email: safeguarding@stepuptutoring.co

Phone: +44 7421062838

8. Reporting Concerns

If a member of staff or a contractor suspects that a student is at risk of harm they must take the following steps:

1. **Listen:** Make sure that if the child is disclosing sensitive information that you listen without judgement. You must avoid promising confidentiality as we may need to tell the appropriate authorities, however you should reassure the individual.
2. **Record:** Document the concern in writing via the [Safeguarding Concerns Form](#), completing it as the instructions direct.
3. **Report:** Contact the DSL immediately to report the concern. If the DSL is unavailable, report the concern to a senior member of staff.
4. **Follow-Up:** Work with the DSL to provide any additional information as needed. Do not attempt to investigate the concern independently.

In the absence of the DSL, contact one of the directors, the local safeguarding/child welfare authorities, or the NSPCC at 0808 800 5000 or [nspcc.org.uk](https://www.nspcc.org.uk).

In cases where a student is in immediate danger, staff should contact emergency services by calling 999.

9. Online Safety

With an increasing focus on online tutoring, we recognise the importance of ensuring the safety of students in virtual environments. Staff and tutors must where possible:

- Use secure, approved platforms for online tutoring sessions.
- Ensure that both students and tutors are in appropriate environments during online sessions (e.g., no private tutoring from bedrooms).
- Adhere to data protection laws and company policies regarding the use of digital tools and student information.

Parents or guardians should be informed of the platform used and provided with login details where applicable.

10. Safer Recruitment and Vetting Procedures

We are committed to safe recruitment practices. All employees, contractors, and volunteers who work with children will undergo the following checks:

- **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check:** All tutors working with children will be required to have an up-to-date DBS check.
 - **Identity Verification:** All staff will be required to provide proof of identity and right to work in the UK.
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11. Training

All staff, contractors, and volunteers will receive safeguarding training during their induction process and at regular intervals thereafter. Training will cover:

- The signs of abuse and neglect.
- How to respond to safeguarding concerns.
- The responsibilities and procedures outlined in this policy.

The DSL has received advanced safeguarding training appropriate to their role.

12. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

All safeguarding concerns will be handled with the utmost confidentiality. Information will only be shared with relevant individuals or authorities, in compliance with data protection laws and safeguarding procedures.

When sharing information, the following principles will be applied:

- Information is shared only with those who need to know.

- Information shared is accurate, relevant, and necessary.
 - The welfare of the student is the primary consideration when sharing information.
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13. Whistleblowing

Staff and tutors are encouraged to report any concerns they may have about the safeguarding practices within the company. We are committed to maintaining a culture of transparency and will protect whistleblowers from any form of retaliation.

Concerns should be reported to the DSL. If the concern involves the DSL, it should be reported directly to the company directors or the local authority's safeguarding team.

All whistleblowers who are making a legitimate claim are protected from retaliation as stated in the [contractors whistleblowing policy](#).

14. Recordings

Recordings may take place during online sessions with the purpose of keeping the student and tutor safe surrounding accusations. Recordings will be securely sent to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will store the videos on a secure computer, and the original video will be deleted, as well as the email containing the video file. The computer is password locked, in a secure address and all the files will be locked by a separate password. The computer is on a local network connected to private WiFi and the recordings will not be uploaded to a cloud storage service. They will only be reviewed if an investigation is launched on a tutor or a student's behaviour during an online session, and can only be accessed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Recordings will be deleted off of the computer following the time stated below.

Recordings may only take place when:

- A parent/guardian of the tutee has given permission.
- The tutor has confirmed a recording will happen with the parent/legal guardian.
- The tutor has made the parent aware of the nature and uses of the recording.

Recordings of the session can be stored for no more than 72 hours. 72 hours after the recording has finished, they must be deleted.

Any legal claims from either the tutoring party or the tutee party must be made within these 72 hours for the recordings to be available. A recording can only be kept longer than the standard 72 hours if a claim has been made about a session within the time period.

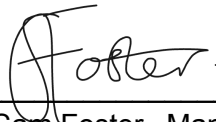
15. Allegations

At Step Up Tutoring, we take any allegations of misconduct or inappropriate behavior seriously. This section outlines the process for addressing such allegations in a fair and thorough manner:

1. **Reporting Allegations:** Any individual (student, parent, or tutor) who believes that an incident of misconduct has occurred should report the allegation promptly to the managing director at MD@stepuptutoring.co. All reports will be handled with confidentiality to the extent possible.
2. **Investigation Process:** Upon receiving an allegation, Step Up Tutoring will initiate an impartial investigation. The process will involve gathering all relevant information, interviewing involved parties, and reviewing evidence as appropriate. Investigations will be conducted in a timely manner, ensuring that all parties have an opportunity to present their side.
3. **Confidentiality and Protection:** We are committed to maintaining confidentiality throughout the investigation. Individuals making allegations in good faith will be protected from retaliation. Any retaliatory actions against a person who reports misconduct or participates in an investigation are prohibited.
4. **Outcome and Disciplinary Action:** After completing the investigation, Step Up Tutoring will determine whether the allegation is substantiated. If misconduct is confirmed, appropriate disciplinary actions will be taken, ranging from retraining or counseling to suspension or termination, depending on the severity of the issue.
5. **Appeals:** If either party is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they may appeal the decision within 2 weeks. The appeal will be reviewed by the Managing Director to ensure fairness and compliance with company policies.
6. **False Allegations:** False allegations are taken very seriously. Anyone who knowingly makes false allegations with malicious intent will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action potentially including the matter being taken to the authorities.

15. Monitoring and Review

This safeguarding policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if there are changes in legislation or guidance. Feedback from staff, students, and parents will be considered to ensure the policy remains effective.

Signed: 
Sam Foster, Managing Director