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| **Name of Policy / Strategy:** | Safeguarding Policy and Operating Practices | | |
| **Written by:** | Justin Speirs, Director of Curriculum & Quality | | |
| **Approved by:** | SS&L Board | **Date:** | September 2024 |
| **Implementation Date:** | September 2024 | | |
| **Review date\*:** | September 2025 | | |
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| **Associated policies, procedures & Strategies:** | * Equality & Diversity Policy * Safer Recruitment Policy * Acceptable Use Policy * Health & Safety Policy * Prevent Risk Assessment | | |
| Amendments (include date) | May 2025   * Updated DSL   September 2024   * Updated DSL and Safeguarding Officers   June 2024   * Revised policy statement * Updated links | | |

**Policy Statement**

SS&L is fully committed to providing a safe learning and working environment where all learners and staff are free from harm and abuse. A culture of vigilance is actively promoted across the organisation, including the Board of Directors, through appropriate training and clearly defined roles, responsibilities and procedures for safeguarding. SS&L recognises 'Prevent' as an intrinsic part of safeguarding.

Under the United Kingdom Government's 'Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015' a requirement was laid upon "specified authorities" including 'Training Providers', when exercising their functions, to have due regard to the need to PREVENT people from being drawn into terrorism.

The SS&L Board is fully committed to safeguarding including promoting the welfare of all learners and staff against radicalisation and extremism.

This statement reinforces the requirement for all staff at SS&L and its partners to be fully engaged about being extra vigilant regarding safeguarding, radicalisation, and extremism. The company remains committed to continuing to work in partnership with professional bodies, external agencies, and partners in our local community, to ensure that all learners are safe from harm.

All staff, learners and services contracted to SS&L are required to uphold and promote the fundamental principles of 'Human Rights and British Values' and exemplify these in their practice, including democracy; the rule of law; individual liberty; mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

**Background**

This policy has been drawn up in accordance with legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm and abuse.

SS&L's policies and procedures cover arrangements not just for meeting the welfare and safeguarding needs of children, but also the needs of vulnerable adults and young people as well as ensuring appropriate practices for staff recruitment and selection. SS&L recognise that it forms part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is described in statutory guidance [Working Together to Safeguard Children](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2).

In September 2023 the Department for Education and Skills updated the statutory guidance document [Keeping Children Safe in Education](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2). This document focuses on the safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children under the provisions of the [Children Act 2004](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents).

In accordance with the [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/6/contents/enacted), there is a statutory duty on training providers to "have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This is known as the Prevent Duty. To fulfil this duty, SS&L has a presence on Somerset's Prevent Board to receive regular updates regarding local concerns and share best practice. We also link with local and regional networks to maintain up to date CPD opportunities.

**Scope**

This Safeguarding Policy applies to:

* all SS&L staff or anyone working on behalf of or volunteering for SS&L, whether they work in a SS&L centre or off site.
* all learners, whether they are in a SS&L centre or off site at another designated venue.
* all learners, whether a child, a young person or an adult.
* all learners on work experience and work placement programmes.
* to all working arrangements, such as subcontracts with other organisations, whether the activity is carried out at a SS&L centre or off site.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

**Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) -** The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) with lead responsibility for safeguarding is **Justin Speirs, Director of Curriculum & Quality**

**The DSL is responsible for:**

* overseeing the referral of alleged harm or abuse to the relevant agencies.
* seek the appropriate advice and guidance from relevant agencies to support referrals.
* providing advice and support to staff on issues relating to safeguarding.
* maintaining records of any safeguarding referral, complaint or concern.
* ensuring all staff receive initial and follow up safeguarding.
* implementing, monitoring and reviewing SS&L's Safeguarding Policy & procedures.
* Induction of all staff.
* Implement, review and monitor SS&L's Prevent risk assessment.

**Safeguarding Officers who support the DSL and deputise in their absence** – **Karen Savill, Work-based Learning Delivery Manager and Tracey Mortimore, Adult Skills Delivery Manager** will act as Deputy DSLs. However, the responsibility for safeguarding, as set out above, will remain with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and will not be delegated. One of the Safeguarding Officers will be assigned to provide short-term cover for the DSL, should the DSL not be available and to consult on safeguarding concerns, policy and procedures.

**Operational Safeguarding Lead – Tracey Smith, Finance & Resource Manager** will lead on all operational functions relating to safeguarding.

**The Operational Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:**

* implementing, monitoring and reviewing SS&L's Safer Recruitment Policy & procedures.
* implementing, monitoring and reviewing SS&L's Health & Safety Policy & procedures.
* implementing, monitoring and reviewing SS&L's IT Usage Policy & procedures.
* Work with the DSL to implement, review and monitor the company's Prevent risk assessment.

**Board of Directors - The Board of Directors** will agree and approve SS&L’s Safeguarding Policy and supporting procedures, while providing leadership and scrutiny to ensure the safety of all learners and staff.

**The CEO and Director of Curriculum & Quality** will ensure safeguarding is appropriately resourced to ensure the safety of learners and staff. They will also manage any complaints made against staff.

**Line Managers - Line managers** will manage the implementation of safeguarding procedures in their area and ensure that safeguarding is a standing agenda item in all team meetings.

**All Staff -** All staff are responsible for:

* complying with SS&L's Safeguarding Policy and procedures, including training requirements.
* promoting a safe learning environment.
* immediately referring any issues or concerns to the DSL and/or Deputy DSL.

**Reporting a Safeguarding Concern**

**Learners Raising a Concern**

Learners can raise a concern by:

* speaking with their tutor or another member of staff.
* contacting the Designated Safeguarding Lead directly or Safeguarding Officer.

**Staff or Partners Raising a Concern**

Staff or partners can raise a concern by:

* speaking with their line manager or contract manager.
* contacting the Designated Safeguarding Lead directly or one of the Safeguarding Officers.

**Contact Details for Reporting a Concern**

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**In an emergency situation, always call 999 in the first instance**

**If an act of abuse or neglect of a vulnerable adult, young person or child is identified or suspected then the SS&L staff member should:**

* Stop everything else and concentrate on what you are observing or being told.
* Check that the environment is appropriate and that you are safeguarding yourself.
* Ensure the person's (and any others') immediate safety.
* Do not promise confidentiality or agree to keep something secret.
* Do not investigate yourself and avoid asking leading questions.
* Obtain the necessary information to make an informed referral.
* Refer the matter to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or Deputy DSL (as above).
* Ensure that the concern has been received by the DSL or Deputy DSL.
* Inform your line manager.

**Training and Development**

**All Staff**

Safeguarding and Prevent training are mandatory for all staff, including all tutors and assessors engaged with SS&L learners via subcontracting or partnership arrangements. Comprehensive on-line training programmes for Safeguarding and Prevent are required to be undertaken by all staff every 3 years. Safeguarding updates are delivered annually to all staff**.** Staff are required to read all safeguarding communications and updates such as those sent out through 'Pass it on' and email.

**Designated Safeguarding Lead Training**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Safeguarding Officers are required to undertake nationally recognised Level 3 Designated Safeguarding Lead training every 2 years.

**Business Support Manager**

The Business Support Manager is required to undertake nationally recognised Safer Recruitment training every 3 years.

**Apprenticeships & Study Programmes**

Employers have a duty to comply with UK legislation and their statutory responsibilities. There is an expectation that employers should take responsibilityfor learners' welfare in the workplace and to seek appropriate advice when they feel a learner may be at risk outside of work.

SS&L appreciate that for some organisations this can be a complicated and confusing area and therefore will provide support to the employer to:

* familiarise themselves with relevant legislation.
* understand what safeguarding means in practice, in the context of their responsibilities.
* demonstrate a commitment to the principles of the Prevent Duty.
* demonstrate a commitment to British Values and adhere to the Equality Act 2010.
* ensure learners are aware of their policies, including their IT policy.
* have an appointed person to coordinate safeguarding across their organisation.

SS&L will ensure that both the employer and the learner are aware of the processes for reporting any safeguarding concerns, as outlined in this policy.

**Subcontractors**

By subcontractor, SS&L refers to organisations that are contracted to deliver on the behalf of SS&L. In these cases, it is a requirement that any sub-contractors of SS&L will:

* ensure their staff are trained in safeguarding and Prevent.
* ensure relevant staff have DBS.
* have access to SS&L on-line training on request.

Monitoring of safeguarding and the Prevent agenda will be robustly carried out in regular reviews of sub-contracted delivery.