



The Access Project

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures

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1. Introduction and Context

The Access Project is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

The Access Project (TAP) believes that the welfare of children within its care is paramount and that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. TAP understands that everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children.

All children have a right to protection from mistreatment, abuse, violence and exploitation. TAP will protect all children within its care from abuse equally and without regard to their gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs.

1.1. Scope

- For the purpose of this policy, children are defined as people below the age of 18.
- This policy applies to all members of TAP staff, including all permanent and temporary staff, volunteers, trustees and external service or activity providers.

1.2. Legal Framework

In the application of this policy TAP will adhere to:

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protecting of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- General Data Protection Regulations 2018
- Working together to safeguard children: a guide to interagency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; HM Government 2018.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019.



1.3 Our Policy

TAP is committed to ensuring that all children who are involved with its activities are kept safe from harm and are cared for with the utmost professionalism and integrity. This includes activities held for children at the TAP premises at The Dock, Tobacco Quay, Wapping Lane, London E1W 2SF. It also includes activities for children run or supported by TAP staff, trustees, tutors or other volunteers anywhere in the UK or worldwide. This policy also applies to all written, electronic and verbal communication with children by TAP.

TAP is committed to informing children involved in activities and their parents about this policy, and the associated procedures. This policy will be publicly available and circulated as appropriate.

This policy is applicable to all staff employed by TAP, and all trustees, tutors and other volunteers associated with TAP. TAP will also strongly encourage partners that it works with on the implementation of projects to adopt their own child protection policies if they have not done so already.

All TAP staff, trustees and volunteers will take any concerns or allegations of abuse against children very seriously. TAP will deal with all concerns and allegations appropriately, with the understanding that it may be necessary to refer them to children's social care services, the independent Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for allegations against staff, trustees and other volunteers, and in emergencies, the police.

TAP maintains a high standard in recruiting staff and volunteers. For all staff and volunteers who work with children, DBS (previously CRB) or other police checks will be undertaken and detailed training given in Child Protection policies and procedures. TAP will request an Enhanced DBS disclosure and Children's Barred List information on all volunteers undertaking Regulated Activity with children at or on behalf of TAP. Under no circumstances will TAP permit an unchecked volunteer to have unsupervised contact with children.



2. Types of Abuse

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

There are four types of child abuse as defined in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2019) as follows:

Physical Abuse: physical injury to a child where there is knowledge, or a reasonable suspicion, that their injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

Neglect: the persistent or severe neglect of a child which results in serious impairment of the child's health or development (both physical and mental).

Emotional Abuse: the persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment of a child which has severe adverse effects on the behaviour and emotional development of that child.

Sexual Abuse: the involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent. This doesn't have to be physical contact, and it can happen online.

Other types of abuse include:

Domestic abuse: Witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse, and teenagers can suffer domestic abuse in their relationships.

Online abuse: Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the web, whether through social networks, playing online games or using mobile phones.

Child sexual exploitation: Child sexual exploitation is a type of sexual abuse in which children are sexually exploited for money, power or status.

Female genital mutilation (FGM): Female genital mutilation (FGM) is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons.

Bullying and cyberbullying: Bullying can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. It's usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally.

Child trafficking: Child trafficking is a type of abuse where children are recruited, moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold.

Grooming: Children and young people can be groomed online or in the real world, by a stranger or by someone they know - for example a family member, friend or professional.



Further information regarding indicators of child abuse can be found via this link <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/information-service/definitions-sigs-child-abuse.pdf>

3. Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities

TAP has a legal duty of care to pass on all relevant information regarding any allegations of abuse, or identified signs and indicators of possible abuse.

3.1. Staff and Volunteers

All staff and volunteers are responsible for:

- Complying with the Safeguarding Children Policy and Code of Conduct.
- Being alert to the signs of abuse and their need to refer any concerns to the Designated Child Protection Officer;
- Raising any concerns with the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible or contacting the police/ childrens social services/ NSPCC if a child is at immediate risk of harm;
- Maintaining an attitude of 'it could happen here'. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members and volunteers should always act in the interests of the child.

3.2. Designated Child Protection Officer

TAP has a Designated Child Protection Officer to offer training and support to staff and volunteers, to ensure staff and volunteers are vetted in line with safer recruitment procedures and to act as the main point of contact with staff and external agencies in the event of an allegation or disclosure.

If the allegation or indicators of abuse are passed on to TAP, it is the Designated Child Protection Officer's responsibility to collect all relevant information and make decisions on how to proceed. This is most likely to be contacting the Designated Safeguarding Officers in the young person's school, or in exceptional circumstances Children's Social Care or police, who are the investigative agencies.

It is important to remember that TAP staff are not investigating officers. At all times, the welfare of the young person is paramount. Swift reporting will enable the investigative agency to give advice and take appropriate action.



4. Safeguarding Processes and Procedures

4.1. How to report any concern

If a member of staff or volunteer has identified any signs or indicators that a child/young person is being abused, they should immediately contact the Designated Child Protection Officer.

Known facts should be recorded in writing and sent to the Designated Child Protection Officer, by completing an incident/ concern form available online [here](#). You contact the safeguarding team at stayingsafe@theaccessproject.org.uk

In the event of an emergency - and the child is at risk - inform the police or childrens social services/ NSPCC first and then the Designated Child Protection Officer.

If an incident occurs in the school the UAO is based in, they should follow the school's safeguarding procedures for reporting a concern. If the student is a part of TAP, they should also inform TAP's DCPO.

For incidents regarding e-safety concerns, follow the steps in [this](#) flowchart.

4.2. Responding to a disclosure

If a child or young person discloses information relating to abuse

1. They should be allowed to speak without interruption and encouraged only to disclose information they feel comfortable disclosing. Staff and volunteers should be accepting of what is said and should not ask leading questions or conduct any kind of investigation.
2. Staff and volunteers must not promise to keep a secret for a young person - they should advise the young person that will offer support, but that they must pass on information relating to safeguarding concerns. The young person should be reassured that any information will be kept confidential and only disclosed to the Designated Child Protection Officer.
3. If the young person refuses to disclose anything more, this decision should be respected and the incident should still be reported.
4. Immediately after a disclosure, the Designated Child Protection Officer should be contacted regarding any student on TAP.
 - In the case of an incident occurring in the school a University Access Officer (UAO) is in, school's safeguarding procedures should also be followed.
 - In the event of an emergency – and the child is at risk – inform the police or children's social services/ NSPCC first and then the Designated Child Protection Officer.
5. The incident should be recorded factually in writing using the Incident form (Appendix A), including the account provided by the young person using their exact words where possible, and sent to the Designated Child Protection Officer without delay.



On being informed of an incident relating to the safeguarding of children and young people, TAP's DCPO (or Deputy) will immediately liaise with the school's DSL regarding all incidents or concerns.

If the decision is made by the school's DSL to report to the relevant local authority (which is the local authority where the child or young person lives, or if not known, where the incident occurs), TAP's DCPO will provide the school with any relevant information without delay.

If TAP's DCPO (or Deputy) is not satisfied that the school has reported to the local authority, they should consult the policies of the relevant local authority and in accordance with those policies make a report to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

4.3. Confidentiality and Handling Data

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with the principles set out in current data protection legislation and TAP's Data Protection Policy (available on request).

The Data Protection Act (2018) and GDPR does not prevent TAP from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

When dealing with the personal data of young people:

1. All information should be handled with sensitivity and confidentiality.
2. The information should be kept securely and not be made available to others without the authority of TAP.
3. Dispose of personal data, particularly relating to under 18s, in a confidential manner, by shredding or deleting it when it is no longer needed.
4. Do not use the information inappropriately, especially if it will cause harm to the young person concerned.

5. Safer Recruitment

TAP will ensure that Safer Recruitment practices are always followed and that safeguarding considerations are at the centre of each stage of the recruitment process.

All staff and volunteers must pass the Safeguarding assessments including obtaining DBS clearance and two references and providing satisfactory answers to our safeguarding questions.

For paid staff at TAP, every interview panel will be overseen by at least two



members of staff. We will check on the identity of candidates, follow up references with referees and scrutinise applications for gaps in employment.

We will record the answers to safeguarding questions asked during the interview process on staff personnel files and on volunteer records.

Offers of employment and offers to volunteer are made subject to satisfactory vetting checks.

6. Training and Supervision

All members of staff and volunteers receive a safeguarding induction and must undertake and pass TAP's online Safeguarding Children training.

Staff working directly with young people are required to attend refresher safeguarding training annually.

Every three years, DBS checks must be refreshed and staff and volunteers retrained. This training covers detailed information in addition to this document. Staff and volunteers will not be permitted to work in regulated activity at TAP until these checks have been refreshed.

All members of the safeguarding team, including the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding lead, will undergo updated child protection training every two years and in addition to formal training, their knowledge and skills will be refreshed at least annually.

We may from time to time drop into volunteer tutorials for quality assurance, safeguarding and feedback purposes. We will contact volunteers prior to doing so to confirm. This is a vital part of ensuring effective delivery, so we require our volunteers to be cooperative with these requests.

7. Allegations against a member of staff or volunteer

At TAP, we recognise the possibility that adults working with our organisation may harm children. It is vital that anyone with concerns about the conduct of a member of staff/ volunteer that seems inappropriate or unsafe feels able to raise these concerns. Concerns must be listened to fairly and equally with all allegations taken seriously. Allegations may arise in a number of ways, such as a concern, suspicion, complaint or report from a child, parent or another adult within or outside of the organisation.

All allegations raised to TAP's Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO) or CEO will be reported to the Designated Officer(s) (previously the LADO) of the relevant



area. It will be up to the Designated Officers to determine whether the reported concerns meet the threshold of an allegation. TAP will work with openness and transparency with all agencies as required within Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018), including the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) of the student's school.

Further details of the allegations procedure can be seen in our Allegations Policy and Appendix C.



8. Staff and Volunteers' Code of Conduct

For all staff and volunteers interacting with young people on The Access Project.

You must:

- ✓ Report any incidents or concerns that a child may be at risk. This includes a requirement under the Prevent duty to report if you suspect that a child or adult at risk may be under the influence of radicalisation or extremism.
- ✓ Operate within TAP's Safeguarding Children Procedures in the event of any disclosure/concern.
- ✓ Encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable enough to point out attitudes or behaviour that are inappropriate.
- ✓ Treat all young people with respect.
- ✓ Only communicate with the young people on the programme in a professional manner.
- ✓ Be sensitive to the needs of young people.
- ✓ Respect a young person's right to personal privacy.
- ✓ Treat all information and data (including photographs and video footage) pertaining to a young person with sensitivity.
- ✓ Avoid being alone with a young person. All tutorials must happen in a public place or in an office meeting room or other public place within the office with a door open, ensuring there are other people present in the tutorial vicinity.
- ✓ Remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned.
- ✓ Be aware that any physical contact with a young person can be misinterpreted and should always be avoided.
- ✓ Recognise that special caution is required when discussing sensitive issues with young people.
- ✓ Refer to our Lone worker Policy to risk assess when setting up tutorials.



You must not:

- X Engage in, or attempt to engage in, sexual or inappropriate relationships with a young person on TAP.
- X Make suggestive or derogatory remarks in front of young people or via electronic communication
- X Communicate with a young person from TAP by social media, which includes (but is not limited to) 'Linkedin', 'WhatsApp', 'Facebook', 'Snapchat' and 'Skype'.
- X Give special rewards or privileges to build up an inappropriate relationship with a young person. Gifts may only be given and received in line with our Gift Giving policy and you should be aware of your obligations under the *Bribery Act 2010* at all times.
- X Be under the influence of alcohol or other substances when working on activities involving young people.
- X Take photographs of young people without permission from relevant Access Project staff.
- X Transfer the personal data of young people to third parties without express permission from relevant Access Project staff, the young person or their family.
- X Reveal excessive personal details to a young person from TAP (for example, your address).
- X Either exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues.
- X Discriminate against or harass a young person or any other volunteer or Access Project Staff on the basis of that person's age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage or civil partnership; pregnancy or maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and/or sexual orientation.
- X Rely on your good name or that of the organisation to protect you.

Any serious breaches may result in a referral being made to the police or the relevant Local Authorities Designated Officer.



9. Contact details

Our Designated Child Protection Officer Jennifer Guerin and Deputy Designated Child Protection Officer Cheryl Eaton can be contacted at:

E: **stayingsafe@theaccessproject.org.uk**

M: DCPO mobile: **07542 881 501**

T: London Office: **020 3960 6592**

If you think a child is in immediate danger, call the police on 999 or children's social services/ the NSPCC straight away

NSPCC Helpline: **0808 800 5000** (available 24/7)

NSPCC Email: **helpline@nspcc.org.uk**

NSPCC Website: **www.nspcc.org.uk**

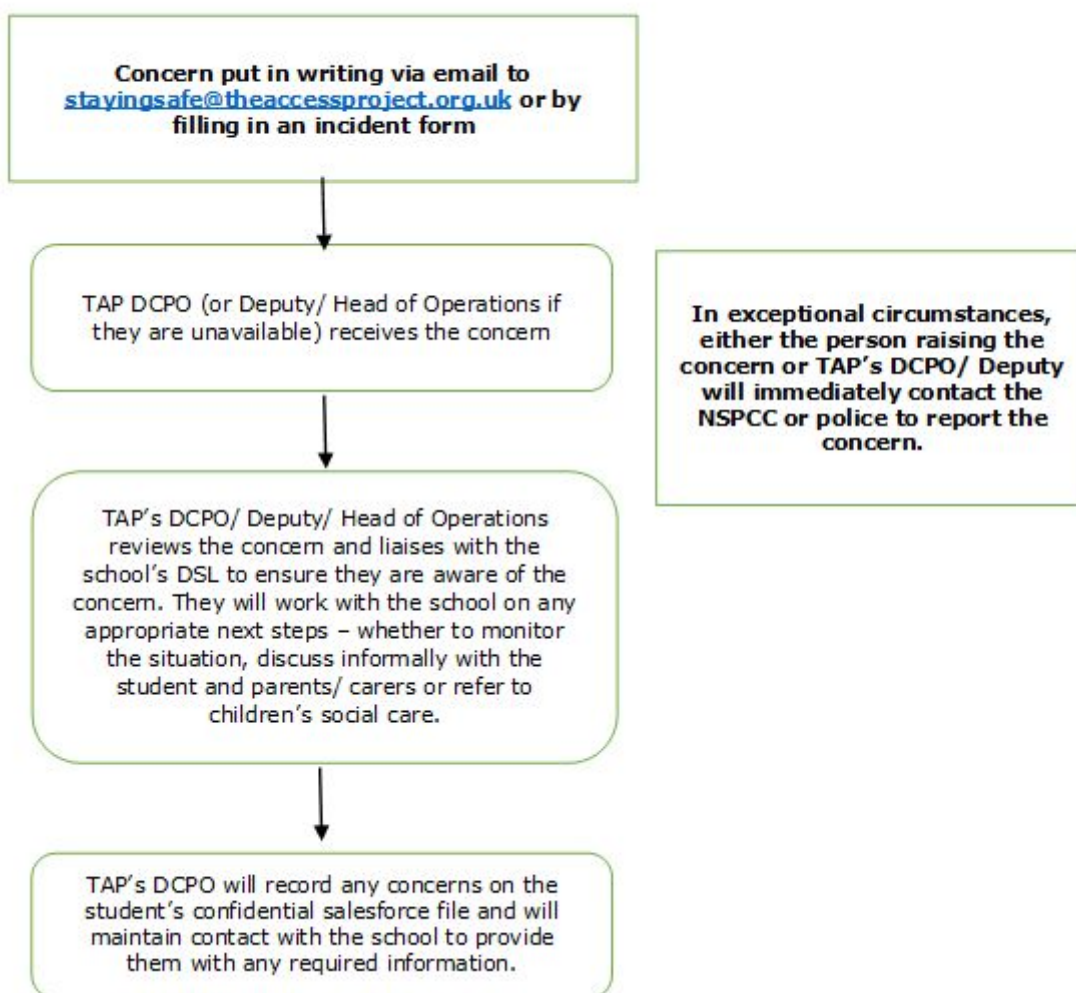
Additional policies from TAP, including the Incident/ Concern form, can be found here - <https://www.theaccessproject.org.uk/safeguarding>



Appendix A - Incident/ Concern Form

Date of Report	
Name of Access Project student School year/ Age School	
Person reporting: Name, Job role, Contact Details	
Person who raised the concern (if not yourself): Name, Role, Contact Details	
When did the incident occur/ concern arise? Date and time	
Where did the incident occur/ concern arise?	
Witnesses/ Anyone else involved Name, Age (if under 18), Contact details	
What happened? (Factual information only - Use exact words spoken if possible)	
What action has been taken?	
Is the student aware at the moment that the concern has been raised/ incident reported? (Y/N)	
Has the school been informed of the situation? If yes, who has been notified?	
Have external agencies been notified (such as police, social services, Local Authority or NSPCC)? Details	

Appendix B - Reporting a concern



Appendix C - Allegations Procedure

