

Students4Students child protection and safeguarding children policy

All children have an absolute right to a childhood free from abuse, neglect or exploitation. Students4Students believes that in all matters concerning child protection and safeguarding, the welfare and protection of the young people we work with is of paramount consideration¹. All adults involved in Students4Students' activities and who come into contact with children have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare. This policy and the procedures contained within it exist not to discourage adults from being involved in the work of Students4Students but to ensure, as far as possible, that people who may abuse children do not get the opportunity to do so.

- There is a duty placed upon us to ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of our young people are competent, confident and safe to do so.
- Adults working or volunteering for Students4Students are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead a reasonable person to question their motivation or intention.
- Everyone involved in Students4Students activities must follow Students4Students Code of Behaviour.
- They must also be familiar with the steps to be taken in the event of becoming aware of suspecting or receiving allegations of abuse.

Designated Safeguarding Officer

Students4Students have a Designated Safeguarding Children Officer to:

- Offer support to all staff and volunteers involved in Students4Students work.
- To act as the main point of contact in the event of any allegation or disclosure.
- To act as the main point of contact between Students4Students and partner schools on matters relating to child safeguarding.

If there is an allegation, signs and indicators of abuse are identified or if at any point an adult involved with Students4Students work fails to comply with any element of the Code of Behaviour this information must be passed immediately to Students4Students Designated Safeguarding Children Officer. It is the Designated Safeguarding Officer's responsibility to collect all relevant information and make decisions on how to proceed (this will include contacting the designated safeguarding lead at the relevant partner school/s). All volunteers and staff have a duty of care to pass on all relevant information regarding any allegations of abuse, or identified signs and indicators of possible abuse.

Designated Safeguarding Officers:

Primary point of contact: Nicole Jones (nicole.jones@students4students.org.uk). For her phone number please see the child safety leaflet all volunteers/staff are provided.

Secondary Point of contact: Alex Astley (alex.astley@students4students.org.uk) For his phone number please see the child safety leaflet all volunteers/staff are provided.

In the event that the designated safeguarding officer is not available please email safeguarding@students4students.org.uk. This email goes directly to the Safeguarding Trustee.

¹ For the purposes of this policy a young person is anyone under the age of 18.

Definitions of Abuse:

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 effect 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.

Extremism: A vocal or active opposition to fundamental human values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Grooming: When someone builds an emotional connection with a child or a young person to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation.

Self Abuse: Any means by which a child or young person seeks to harm themselves. This can take lots of physical forms, including cutting, bruising, scratching, hair-pulling, poisoning, overdosing and eating disorders.

Procedures:

In all cases related to child protection and safeguarding, the main procedure is to treat the allegation seriously, in strict confidence and immediately contact the allocated school child protection and safeguarding lead/s and Students4Students Designated Safeguarding officers. In the event of Students4Students Designated Safeguarding Officers being contacted the following protocol will be followed:

1. The information will immediately be passed on to the school's child protection and safeguarding lead/s.
2. The school shall follow the school's procedure for contacting the local Police Child Protection Unit or the Social Services Department of the relevant Local Authority. Students4Students shall support the school with any action that the school deems appropriate and shall undertake reasonable endeavours to provide the school with any assistance or documents.
3. Students4Students shall not, under any circumstances, undertake any independent investigation or questioning (as this may jeopardise any enquiry) unless or until Students4Students is given authorisation by the school or the Authorities. Following authorisation, Students4Students may independently follow up on the allegation.
4. All allegations or suspicions shall be referred to the school no matter how insignificant they seem to be or when they occur. Any information about suspicious behaviour or circumstances will be passed to the local Police Child Protection Unit or the local Social Services within 24 hours or as soon as shall be reasonably practicable.

In the event that a young person discloses abuse to an employee of Students4Students or a volunteer tutor Employees of Students4Students and volunteers shall:

1. Allow the young person to speak without interruption, encouraging them to tell you only what they feel comfortable telling you, and be accepting and be non-judgemental about what is said. Do not ask investigative or leading questions of any kind.
2. Advise the young person that you will offer support, but that you MUST pass what they tell you and are not able to keep anything they tell you confidential.
3. If they refuse to tell you anything unless you promise to keep it a secret, inform them that you want to help and that there is one person you have to tell. If they then refuse to tell you any more, please respect their decision and report this incident.
4. Ensure that the young person is not immediately at risk of any further abuse.
5. Immediately after a disclosure, contact the Designated Safeguarding lead at the school the child concerned attends.
6. Report the facts as you know them/ or understand them, including the student's name and the account given to you by the young person using the words that they used as well as including any other information your feel is relevant.
7. Provide this detailed information to the Designated Safeguarding lead at the school as soon as you are able.
8. Immediately after informing the Designated Safeguarding lead at the school provide the same information to the Students4Students Designated Child Safety Officer
9. Students4Students shall retain a copy of all such notifications for a period of 10 years.

In the event that a volunteer tutor suspects abuse, but it has not been disclosed by the young person Employees of Students4Students and volunteers shall:

1. Not discuss your suspicions with the young person in question or conduct any form of investigative work.
2. Report the facts as you know them/ or understand them, including the student's name and the account given to you by the young person using the words that they used as well as including any other information you feel is relevant.
3. Provide this detailed information both to the Designated Safeguarding lead at the school and Students4Students Safeguarding Officers as soon as you are able.
4. Students4Students shall retain a copy of all such notifications for a period of ten years.

If you receive an allegation about any adult or about a volunteer tutor (including the person hearing the allegation) Employees of Students4Students and volunteers shall:

1. Immediately after receiving an allegation or disclosure, contact Students4Students Child Safeguarding officers and the Designated Safeguarding lead at the school the child attends.
2. Report the facts as you know them/ or understand them, including the names of relevant adults and/or young people and the account given to you using the words that they used as well as including any other information your feel is relevant.
3. Students4Students shall retain a copy of all such notifications for a period of ten years.

If you deal with the personal data of young people (including names, grades and school) Employees of Students4Students and volunteers shall:

1. Handle all information with sensitivity and confidentiality in compliance with Students4Student Data Handling Policy.
2. The information should be kept securely and not be made available to others without the authority of Students4Students in compliance with Students4Students Data Handling Policy

Recruitment and Training:

Students4Students maintains a high standard in recruiting staff and volunteers. All Students4Students employees and volunteers will be subject to an enhanced DBS check before they can begin working within our partner schools. Every volunteer and employee must be able to fulfil one of the following:

- Have an existing enhanced DBS check, which is registered with the update service, and have it checked by a member of Students4Students staff, with the disclosure number and date of issue recorded, along with photographic ID.
- Arrange with Students4Students to have a new enhanced DBS check processed

Students4Students staff and volunteers receive mandatory training on the contents of this policy as part of their induction, this policy is made available to all adults involved in Students4Students's activities and all volunteers sign a volunteer agreement, which confirms that they are familiar with the contents and procedures in this policy.

The Code of Behaviour

All adults coming into contact with children and young people through Students4Students's work must comply with this Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Policy and this Code of Behaviour.

You must:

- Act in accordance with the partner school's policies and procedures regarding child protection and safeguarding.
- Avoid being alone with a young person or cause someone else to be alone with a young person because of your actions e.g. being late.
- If alone in a room with young people keep the door open at all times. 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. Shaking hands in a public setting is considered acceptable.
- Be aware that social networking sites are in the public domain if not protected by privacy settings. Strongly consider strengthening any privacy settings so that young people would not be able to access your online profiles and be privy to any information you would not want in the public domain.
- Block any young people that approach you online and inform Students4Students' Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately.
- Recognise that special caution is required when discussing sensitive issues with young people.

- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspensions of abuse to the Students4Students' Designated Safeguarding Officer.
- Operate within Students4Students's procedures in the event of any disclosure/concern.
- Raise any questions or concerns about child protection and safeguarding with Students4Students's Designated Safeguarding Officer, or if unsure of a school's procedure, information should be sought from school staff.

You must not:

- Promise confidentiality to young people in any situation.
- Seek out or add young people on any social networking site.
- Respond to any online communication from a young person, for example on a social networking site.
- Share any personal contact details with young people, or, seek out their personal contact details.
- Arrange to meet a young person outside of the allocated tutoring time, unless on the school premises and with the prior knowledge of a member of staff.
- Act in a manner that excludes the young people you are working with
- Make suggestive or derogatory remarks in front of young people.
- Have inappropriate physical contact or verbal contact with young people.
- Show favouritism to any individual.
- Be under the influence of alcohol or other substances when working on activities involving young people.
- Take photographs of young people.

This policy will be formally reviewed every year, or in line with Governmental guidance.

This policy was reviewed and agreed by the board of trustees at the Trustee Board January 2021.

Signed by on behalf of the trustees

Alex Astley

Director and co-founder