



Safeguarding Policy

Version: 29/04/23

Date of next review by Board: 18/01/24

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Stay At School - Safeguarding Statement

Stay At School a UK registered Charity number 1173685 ["SAS"] works to advance the education of children and young people in Solu Khumbu and wider Nepal by providing funding and operational support for infrastructure and facilities ["Projects"] and other services ["Programmes"] to improve the attendance, attainment and well-being of children, enabling them to achieve their fullest potential and create opportunity for themselves and others.

As a charity committed to improving lives through better educational opportunities, we know that ensuring the safety of the children we work with is integral to the effective operation of our organisation. The protection of children requires everyone to take responsibility and be accountable. Keeping all children safe from all types of harm, while upholding their rights is therefore at the core of all our operations.

The Structure of this Safeguarding Policy (as described in Section 1) is to create a framework for achieving our Core Safeguarding Principles, identifying to whom the Policy applies, and outlining the Implementation procedures we will use to achieve these objectives.

Our Core Safeguarding Principles (as described below and in Section 2) show respect for the fundamental rights of the child as stated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) 1989, UK child protection laws, and reflect the unique characteristics of SAS and its work with children.

<p><i>The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), Article 19 states:</i></p> <p><i>“parties shall protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse.”</i></p>
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As described in Section 3 on the Scope of the Policy, our Safeguarding Policy applies to trustees, employees, interns and donors of SAS ["SAS Team"]. SAS also requires its implementing partner Stay At School Nepal ["SSN"] to develop and implement a clear Safeguarding policy with respect to its own trustees and employees ["SSN Team"].

Having defined the Structure of our Safeguarding Policy, the Core Safeguarding Principles, and the individuals to whom this Policy applies (Scope), our final section 4 identifies the key Implementation systems needed to execute the Policy. This includes the need for specific Risk Assessments, relevant Codes of Conduct, Action Steps and other systems and procedures that are needed to achieve our Safeguarding Objectives.

Finally, it is a guiding principle that SAS delivers sustainable development, which means providing ongoing support for Projects and Programmes and continuing engagement. It is the role of SSN to use its best endeavours to ensure that all individuals and organisations supported by funds made available by SAS (including schools, their staff and administration) or engaged by SSN (including third party providers) observe and abide by local policies and regulations, and national and international laws in relation to the protection of children. A protocol is in place between SAS and SSN requiring SSN to report to SAS any breaches of these policies, regulations and laws and the actions it is taking. SAS can decide whether to withhold funding in the light of any such report.

*Board of Trustees
Stay At School
29th April 2023*

Section 1 - Structure of the Policy

The Structure of this Safeguarding Policy is to outline the key aspects that SAS uses to achieve its Safeguarding Objectives.

- SAS seeks to provide appropriate Safeguarding protection for anyone involved with SAS in connection with the delivery of its Projects and Programmes.
- To achieve this, the Policy outlines the Core Safeguarding Principles (Section 2) that SAS believes should guide our safeguarding activities.
- The Policy also sets out the Scope and application of our safeguarding activities (Section 3) so that all parties are clear as to their obligations with respect to Safeguarding.
- We will implement the Policy through detailed Implementation Procedures (Section 4) including Risk Assessments, Codes of Conduct and other procedures that will help ensure that our Safeguarding Objectives are achieved.

Section 2 - Our Core Safeguarding Principles

This Safeguarding Policy seeks to define the duty of care that is owed to any child to protect them from harm. We believe that:

- The best interests of the individual child (and children collectively) are paramount and will be the primary consideration in SAS Safeguarding Policy and Implementation.
- All children should have equality of opportunity and the chance to enjoy activities safely regardless of their gender, ability, race, ethnicity, circumstances or age, and vulnerable children require a particularly high duty of care.
- Children have rights, including the right to protection and the right to be consulted and participate in decisions affecting their lives, and are therefore provided a role in the implementation and revision of this Policy.

More generally, and non-exhaustively:

- SAS will work in an honest and transparent way by informing those we work with about our Safeguarding Policy, and how we work to safeguard children.
- SAS will ensure confidentiality to protect sensitive personal data. Information will only be shared and handled on a need to know basis - access to information must be necessary solely for the conduct of official duties.
- SAS will, where appropriate, work with others to protect children including other non-governmental organisations (NGOs), school and community leaders, law enforcement and specialist child welfare agencies.

- SAS will, through its senior Management, supervised by its Trustees, review the policies and implementation of the Safeguarding Policy on a regular basis. Once approved, the Policy itself will be reviewed by the Trustees once each calendar year and through a regular agenda item at quarterly board meetings. Any significant issues or allegations with respect to Safeguarding shall be notified to the Board according to our response management procedures.

The following key action steps will be used to ensure these core principles can be embedded practically and effectively within the operating frameworks of Stay At School:

- **Educating** – SAS believes that the best method of achieving its Safeguarding objectives is to educate and train all individuals and groups to whom this policy applies.
- **Monitoring** – SAS believes that only by careful, systemised monitoring of the procedures outlined by this policy will its Safeguarding objectives be properly achieved.
- **Responding** – SAS believes that it is critical that effective, formal systems for responding to suspicions or allegations of breaches of this policy are effectively implemented and managed.

Section 3 - Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to the SAS Team and SAS Visitors as defined below. This policy makes clear that Safeguarding is the responsibility of all SAS personnel and visitors who have contact with children. This policy sets out the minimum standards expected, and all stated parties are bound to act according to the requirements it sets out.

This policy is integral to the operations of SAS and should be assumed to underpin all other policies and activities of the organisation.

Definitions:

Stay At School Team [SAS Team] – All trustees and employees and contractors of SAS. It is worth noting that although Safeguarding applies everywhere, it is likely that any problems are most likely to arise in Nepal where SAS’s activities most directly engage with children and more vulnerable individuals. Our policies and procedures are therefore more focused on Risk Assessments relating to visits by SAS Team members to Nepal.

Stay At School Visitors [SAS Visitors] – All volunteers, donors and other SAS on-site visitors present at a SAS project site. As above, policies and procedures are focused on Risk Assessments relating to contact by SAS Visitors with beneficiaries at project sites.

SAS also requires its implementing partner Stay At School Nepal [“SSN”] to develop and implement a clear Safeguarding policy with respect to its own trustees and employees [“SSN Team”].

Section 4 - Implementation

a) Risk Assessment

Beyond the general application of the Principles and Scope of Safeguarding Policy, SAS believes that Safeguarding is most effective when it is targeted at the areas and situations where there is the highest risk. This is done by formal Risk Assessments which may be broad in focus. It is vitally important that these risk areas, general and specific, be under review on a defined timely basis. A template Risk Assessment is at Appendix 1.

b) Codes of Conduct

The second overarching procedure of our Safeguarding Policy is the use of detailed Codes of Conduct to give clear indications to individuals in various contexts as to appropriate behaviour. The existence and details of specific Codes of Conduct for various categories of individual will be guided by our formal Risk Assessments. Codes of Conduct are critical in distilling the most important aspects of SAS Safeguarding Policy, giving instructions relevant to the individual's involvement, and practical examples of what is or is not appropriate.

For our principal activities, we believe that TWO separate Codes of Conduct are required:

1. Code of Conduct – SAS Team
This is an overall code of conduct that would apply to the SAS Team.
2. Code of Conduct – SAS Visitors
Required for occasional visitors who may be visiting SAS activities for a shorter time.

It is important that the Codes of Conduct (and the details contained in each Code) are reviewed on a regular basis, as established by this Safeguarding Policy. The two Codes of Conduct are at Appendix 2.

c) Key Actions

This is the third major component of this, SAS's Safeguarding Policy. The three identified key actions are: educat(ing), monitor(ing) and respond(ing).

i. Educating

SAS provides compulsory Safeguarding Training ["ST"] for all members of the SAS Team within the two weeks of initial involvement. ST is an appropriate level of documentation and practical training designed to ensure that all SAS Team members know and accept the broad and detailed elements of this Safeguarding Policy. Revised, current ST will be provided to SAS Team members on an annual basis to ensure that best practice is maintained and updated as needed. Likewise, ST will be provided to SAS Visitors appropriate and in line with the scale and scope of their involvement with the organisation.

ii. Monitoring

Monitoring is the process of ensuring that the core principles and key steps of the policy are being adhered to. Monitoring processes are typically managed on a quarterly basis. A [Monitoring Process Template](#) is at Appendix 3.

iii. Responding

Responding is the process whereby concerns about possible breaches of Safeguarding Policy (including potential breaches in educating and monitoring) are raised and addressed in an appropriate and timely manner. Any suspicion, suggestion or allegation of potential breach of Safeguarding Policy will be evidenced by any member of SAS Team or a SAS Visitor completing a “Cause for Concern” form and communicating that information to a specific individual within SAS. The “responding” process, once a Cause for Concern has been communicated to a SAS Team member is established by the Safeguarding Concern Protocol which establishes the procedures of escalation, evidence and decision-making, including timelines and direct responsibilities, to ensure that SAS Core Safeguarding Principles are upheld. [The Safeguarding Concern Protocol](#) is at Appendix 4. SAS will also maintain a Cause for Concern Register. This Register is a logbook and file that includes all Cause for Concern forms, evidence, documentation, deliberations and decisions with respect to that Cause for Concern, whether closed or not. A [Whistleblowing policy](#) is at Appendix 5.

d) Management, Accountability and Review

Ultimate responsibility for Safeguarding lies with the Board of Trustees of SAS. This Policy imposes responsibilities on every member of SAS Team or any SAS Visitor to perform actions within the key steps of Educating, Monitoring and Responding, and each Team member or Visitor is accountable to the Board for his or her actions. It is the duty of SAS management to implement SAS Safeguarding Policy and to provide appropriate and timely recommendations to the Board for any revisions to the Policy. At a minimum, a formal, comprehensive recommendation for any revisions to the Policy must be submitted to the Board at least once every Financial Year.

e) Safe Personnel Recruitment

In addition to the Key Actions outlined above, SAS believes that Safeguarding begins with recruiting appropriate individuals to SAS. [The Safe Personnel Recruitment Protocol](#) is at Appendix 6. This protocol covers both the SAS Team and Volunteers.

f) Communication Guidelines

Stay At School extends Safeguarding of children to include proper communications, data collection and retention and the informed consent for images of children (and other individuals). [Appendix 7 Communications Guidelines](#) outlines requirements with respect to these issues.

Appendix 1

Risk Assessment

Identified Risk	Potential impacts	Initial rating	Existing control measures	Final rating	Additional action required (by whom and completion date)
<i>e.g. Visitors at school site</i>	<i>Inappropriate contact with children</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>Guidelines and Code of Conduct for Visitors</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>Review each year</i>

Appendix 2

Code of Conduct - Stay At School Team

Principles

As an adult working in as part of the Stay At School Team – whether as a member of staff or Trustee – you have a responsibility to ensure that everyone, particularly children, young people and vulnerable adults, are protected from harm. It is the responsibility of each adult on the Stay At School Team to ensure that:

- their behaviour is appropriate at all times;
- they observe the rules established for the safety and security of children, young people and vulnerable adults;
- they follow the procedures following suspicion, disclosure or allegation of child abuse;
- they recognise the position of trust in which they have been placed; and
- in every respect, the relationships they form with the children, young people and vulnerable adults associated with Stay At School are appropriate

All persons who wish to work for and on behalf of Stay At School, must accept and understand these principles. They must also agree to put Stay At School's policy on Safeguarding into practice and undertake a formal check through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Meeting your responsibilities

To give positive guidance, the Code of Conduct provides a list of “do’s and don’ts” to help you ensure that:

- the welfare of the children and/or young people and/or vulnerable adults for whom you have a duty of care is safeguarded;
- you avoid compromising situations or opportunities for misunderstandings or allegations.

As a member of the Stay At School Team, we would like you to:

- ✓ Put this code and Stay At School policies and procedures into practice at all times;
- ✓ Report any concerns about or allegations of abuse or poor practice according to the reporting procedures laid out in the Safeguarding policies;
- ✓ Keep your Safeguarding training up to date, meeting the requirement to undertake annual refresher training on Safeguarding principles and issues;
- ✓ Do not engage in any behaviour that constitutes any form of abuse;
- ✓ Treat everyone with dignity and respect and set an example you would wish others to follow;
- ✓ Respect your position of trust and maintain appropriate boundaries and relationships;
- ✓ Respect the right to personal privacy of a child, young person or vulnerable adult;
- ✓ DO allow children, young people and vulnerable adults to talk about any concerns they may have;
- ✓ Encourage others to challenge any attitudes or behaviours they do not like;
- ✓ Make everyone aware of Stay At School's procedures for safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults;
- ✓ Remember this code even at sensitive moments, e.g. when responding to bullying, bereavement or abuse;

- ✓ Keep other members of the Stay At School Team informed of where you are and what you are doing;
- ✓ Remember someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well-intentioned; and,
- ✓ Do not discriminate against anyone, regardless of gender, race, sexual orientation or ability.

- ✗ **DO NOT** trivialise abuse;
- ✗ **DO NOT** form a relationship with a child, young person or vulnerable adult that is an abuse of trust;
- ✗ **DO NOT** engage in inappropriate behaviour or contact;
- ✗ **DO NOT** use inappropriate language - writing, phoning, email or internet; and,
- ✗ **DO NOT** let allegations, suspicions, or concerns about abuse go unreported.

As a member of our staff, we understand you have the right to:

- Enjoy the time you spend with us and be supported in your role;
- Be informed of our safeguarding procedures and what you need to do if something isn't right;
- Have access to ongoing training and support;
- Be listened to;
- Be involved and contribute towards decisions that affect the club/centre;
- Be respected and treated fairly; and,
- Feel welcomed, valued and not judged based on your race, gender, sexuality or ability.

Signature of Stay At School Team Member:	
Print name and position:	
Signature of Line Manager:	
Print name and position:	
Date:	

Appendix 3

Monitoring Process Template

<i>Reporting period:</i>	
<i>Report compiled by:</i>	
<i>Date submitted:</i>	

Completed Actions

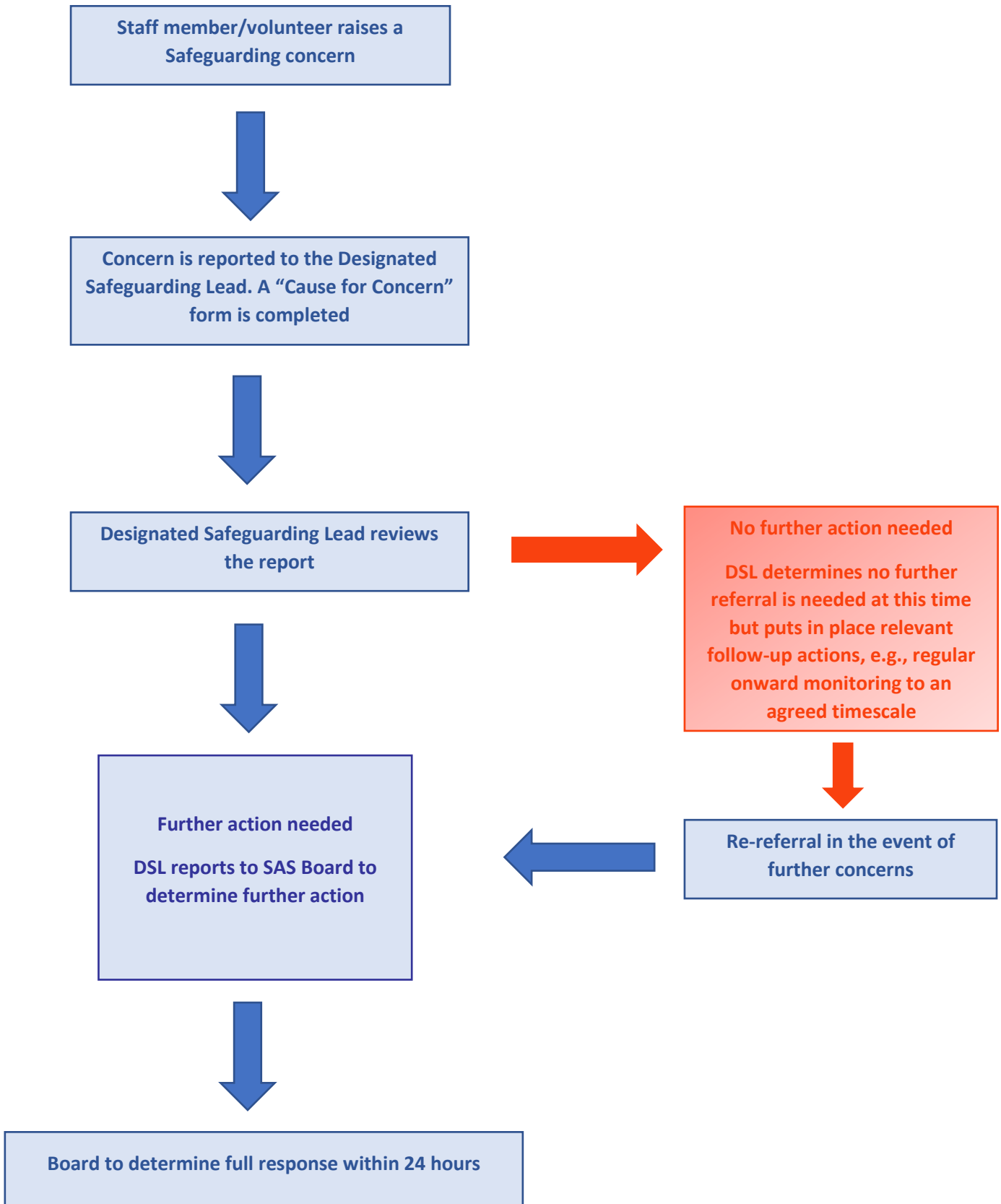
Priorities

Reported incidents

Detail	Action taken	Further monitoring

Appendix 4

Safeguarding Concern Protocol



Appendix 5

Whistleblowing

Policy statement

Stay At School is committed to being open, honest and accountable. It encourages a free and open culture in its dealings between the Trustees and those working for Stay At School, both employees and volunteers.

Aims of the policy

This policy aims to help the Trustees, employees and volunteers to raise any serious concerns they may have about colleagues or their employer with confidence and without having to worry about being victimised, discriminated against or disadvantaged in any way as a result. More specifically, the policy:

- Provides an effective way for serious concerns to be raised;
- Ensures anyone raising serious concerns receives feedback on any action taken as a result of the concerns raised;
- Ensures those raising concerns in good faith are protected from reprisals or victimisation;
- Signposts further options available if the person raising concerns is dissatisfied with Stay At School's response, or if internal investigation is not appropriate; and,
- Allows Stay At School to take action against any employee who makes allegations in bad faith and/or publicly discloses information when it is unreasonable for them to do so.

Application of the policy

This policy applies to everyone who works for and volunteers with Stay At School.

Defining Whistleblowing

"Whistleblowing" is a term used to refer to the internal or external disclosure of malpractice as well as illegal acts, or omissions, at work.

Protecting individuals using the policy

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 amended the Employment Rights Act 1996 and it provides protection for individuals who raise legitimate concerns about specified matters, outlined below. These are called qualifying disclosures. A qualifying disclosure is one made in good faith by an individual who has a reasonable belief that:

- A criminal offence (including fraudulent and corrupt behaviour, e.g. theft, fraud or malpractice);
- A miscarriage of justice;
- An act creating risk to health and safety;
- An act causing damage to the environment;
- A breach of any other legal obligation; or,
- Concealment of any of the above.

It is not necessary for an individual to have proof that such an act is being, has been, or is likely to be, committed. They do, however, need to hold a reasonable belief of such an action having been, being or likely to be carried out. If such a protected disclosure is made, the individual has the right not to be

dismissed, subjected to any other detriment, or victimised. This is the case even were it to materialise that they were genuinely mistaken. Stay At School will not tolerate any individual being subjected to a detriment as a result of their making a disclosure in good faith.

Under the law, interns, contractors or volunteers, are not afforded the same legal protection that is afforded to employees. Stay At School, however, wants to promote and encourage an open and honest environment in which concerns can be freely raised and will therefore, in so far as is possible, aim to treat all individuals making a disclosure in the spirit of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

Malicious disclosures

If it is found that an individual has raised a matter which they know to be untrue or they are involved in any way in the malpractice, wrongdoing or illegal acts or omissions, their behaviour may be addressed through the appropriate policy.

Non-Whistleblowing concerns

This policy is only to be used in the exceptional circumstances as outlined above. There are other policies that will be relevant in other circumstances.

Raising a concern

Any whistleblowing concern should be raised as soon as possible. This will make it easier to act and to enable any problems to be resolved or reported quickly. Disclosures can be made orally but written disclosures are preferable as these will make the process more efficient and effective.

A disclosure should:

- Provide any relevant context and background, including relevant dates, venues, names, etc; and,
- State clearly the reason why the situation causes concern.

An individual must state why they are raising a concern using the whistleblowing policy and whether they wish their identity to be kept confidential. While Stay At School will make every effort to deal with a case confidentially, depending on the circumstances of the case this may not always be possible. Where this is the case, the complainant will be informed of this and the reasons why it was not possible. Stay At School will consider anonymous disclosures, but they are not encouraged as anonymity often makes it difficult to properly investigate concerns, protect employees or give feedback on outcomes.

Who to raise a concern with?

Concerns should always be raised with a line manager in the first instance. Where this is not appropriate because they may be involved in the alleged malpractice, wrongdoing or illegal acts or omissions in some way, concerns should be raised with the Executive Director. In some circumstances where it would be inappropriate to raise with either, concerns should be taken directly to the Board of Trustees. Where a concern is about the Executive Director or a trustee, you should contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If appropriate, it may be arranged for the concern to be investigated externally and independent of Stay At School, and for appropriate follow-up action to be taken.

What happens after a concern is raised?

A disclosure will always be acknowledged within three working days. It will be investigated by the manager or Trustee to whom the concern has been raised. They will arrange a meeting as soon as

possible, away from the workplace if necessary, to enable a full explanation of the concern. Details may not always be able to be kept confidential, but an individual will always be told if it is not possible to do so. They will be told either at the meeting or as soon as possible afterwards, what action will be taken to address the concern raised. Where action is not taken, they will be informed and given an explanation. The action taken in response to a disclosure will depend on the nature of the concern.

Typically, the matters raised may result in one or more of the following:

- No action required;
- Action being taken under other Stay At School policy or procedure;
- An internal investigation under this policy;
- A referral to the police or relevant statutory body;
- A referral to the Charity Commission; or,
- An independent enquiry.

Anyone receiving a potential whistleblowing concern must notify the Board of Trustees immediately that a concern has been raised and inform them of progress in resolving the concern.

Raising a concern externally

Stay At School strongly encourages individuals to exhaust the internal processes set out above in the first instance. In exceptional or urgent circumstances, however, or where, having made a disclosure, they are unhappy with the outcome, they have a legal right to make a disclosure to prescribed bodies.

These include but are not limited to:

- The Charity Commission;
- HM Revenue & Customs;
- The Health and Safety Executive;
- The Financial Services Authority;
- The Office of Fair Trading;
- The Environment Agency; and,
- The Fundraising Regulator.

Similar to the rights and obligations of an employee, Stay At School reserves the right to make a referral to any of the above agencies without consent.

Making a disclosure to the press

Disclosures to the press will not be considered reasonable and may constitute misconduct. As such, the matter might be treated as a disciplinary matter in accordance with the relevant policies and procedures.

Further help and assistance

At any stage in the procedure, independent advice can be sought from someone at Public Concern at Work. This body is an independent charity staffed by lawyers, which offers confidential free legal and practical advice on how people can raise concerns about malpractice at work. They can also provide advice about what legal protection may be available. Public Concern at Work can be emailed at whistle@pcaw.org.uk or reached on their advice line: 020 3117 2520.

Appendix 6

Safe Personnel Recruitment Policy and Guidelines

Policy Statement

Stay At School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the well-being and welfare of children, young people and all others who come into contact with the Charity. Stay At School requires all individuals who are involved or associated with the Charity - including trustees, employees and volunteers - to share this commitment. This is a key governance priority for the trustees of Stay At School. By having an open culture which is committed to safeguarding and promoting the well-being and welfare of children, young people and all others who come into contact with the charity, Stay At School aims to support all individuals who are associated with the Charity, to fully understand their roles and responsibilities. Stay At School wishes to attract the best possible applicants to vacancies. The Charity is committed to safe recruitment, selection, and pre-employment vetting, as outlined in this Safer Recruitment Policy. The adoption of safer recruitment practices and procedures is vital to help ensure a safe workforce by identifying, deterring and rejecting applicants who are unsuitable to work with children and young people.

Introduction

Safer recruitment is the first step to Stay At School safeguarding and promoting the well-being and welfare of children and young people. Stay At School wishes to recruit and retain the highest calibre individuals who are involved or associated with the Charity - including trustees, employees and volunteers - who will support its commitment to safeguarding. The Charity is also committed to being a supportive employer. The Charity and its trustees are committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness and will abide by all relevant equality legislation. This Policy applies to those in both paid and unpaid roles – whether on a full or part-time basis, as well as to individuals who are associated with the Charity who do not have direct responsibility for children and young people, but who will have contact with them within the Charity and will be seen as safe and trustworthy, and/or have access to confidential and sensitive information. The Safer Recruitment Policy forms part of the Charity's wider commitment to safeguarding and promoting the well-being and welfare of children and young people. This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Charity's Safeguarding Policy.

Aims and Objectives

The overarching aim of this Safer Recruitment Policy is to help deter, reject and identify applicants who might abuse children, or who are otherwise unsuitable to work with them. Other aims of the Charity's Safer Recruitment Policy are as follows:

- To ensure that the best possible applicants are recruited on the basis of their skills, abilities and suitability for the position;
- To ensure that all applicants are treated equally and consistently;
- To ensure that no applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity; disability or age; and,
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, statutory requirements, Government and Charity Commission guidance, and best practice - including guidance and the Code of Practice issued by the Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS).

Individuals involved in the selection and recruitment of employees and volunteers must familiarise themselves and comply with this Policy.

The Charity has a principle of open competition in its approach to recruitment. The recruitment and selection process should ensure the identification of the person best suited to the role at the Charity based on the applicant's skills, abilities, qualifications, and experience, as measured against the role description and person specification, and information on an applicant's application form.

The recruitment of employees and volunteers will be conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner, and in compliance with current employment legislation (as appropriate), relevant safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance, and best practice. If an individual involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant, they must declare it as soon as they are aware of their application and avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection decision-making process. The Charity aims to adopt a consistent and thorough process of safer recruitment - while obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information from and about applicants who apply for roles at Stay At School – in order to ensure that those who are recruited are suitable.

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the role of the Board of Trustees to:

- Ensure the Charity has adequate safeguarding policies and procedures in place – including for safer recruitment – that are appropriate for the Charity's particular circumstances and which reflect both the law and best practice; and,
- Make sure that these policies and procedures are effectively implemented and regularly reviewed.

It is the responsibility of the Executive Director and other members of staff involved in recruitment to:

- Ensure the Charity operates safer recruitment procedures - including the satisfactory completion of all pre-employment checks;
- To monitor contactors' or agencies' compliance with this Policy; and,
- Safeguard and promote the well-being and welfare of children and young people at every stage of the recruitment process.

Recruitment and Selection Procedure

Role descriptions and person specifications

A role description is a key document in the recruitment process and must be finalised prior to taking any other steps in the recruitment process. It will clearly and accurately set out the duties and responsibilities of the role. The role description should clearly set out the extent of the relationship with, and the degree of responsibility for, children and young people with whom the person will have contact. It must also refer to the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the well-being and welfare of children and young people. The person specification is of equal importance and informs the selection decision. It details the skills, qualifications and experience needed for the role; the competencies and qualities that the applicant should be able to demonstrate; and how these will be tested and assessed during the selection process. The person specification must include a specific reference to an applicant's requisite suitability to work with children and young people. All applicants will be assessed equally against the criteria contained in the person specification without exception or variation.

Advertisements and information for applicants

To ensure equality of opportunity, the Charity will advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of applicants as possible. Normally this entails an external advertisement. The Charity will demonstrate its commitment to equal opportunities, and to safeguarding and promoting the well-being and welfare of children and young people, by ensuring that all recruitment advertising material contains a policy statement to that effect. All recruitment advertising material will include the following policy statement:

“Stay At School is an equal opportunities employer and it welcomes applications from all sections of society and the communities it operates in. Stay At School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the well-being and welfare of children and young people, and requires all individuals who are associated with the Charity – including trustees, employees and volunteers - to share this commitment. Successful applicants will be required to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the role, including checks with past employers and/or employers (as appropriate) and the Disclosure and Barring Service.”

All information given to an interested applicant will highlight the importance placed by Stay At School on rigorous selection processes. The information should stress that the identity of the candidate, if successful, will need to be checked thoroughly, and that where a DBS check is appropriate, the person will be required to complete an application for a DBS disclosure straightaway. All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Applications and Shortlisting

Stay At School uses its own application form, which all applicants for employment or volunteering will be required to complete fully. The application form will require:

- A declaration that the applicant has been resident in the UK during the 12 months prior to the application;
- Full personal information, including any former names by which the person has been known in the past;
- A full history of employment - both paid and voluntary (if applicable), since leaving school, including any periods of further education or training (if applicable);
- Details of any relevant academic and/or vocational qualifications;
- Two independent references;
- A declaration, as appropriate for the position, that the person has no convictions, cautions, or bindovers; or,
- If they do have convictions, cautions, or bind-overs, to provide details either in a sealed envelope marked “Private and Confidential” or as a PDF document sent as an attachment to the relevant email address. Information received will be scanned and shredded where received in an envelope, and all information received will be held in a secure online environment on the applicant’s record.

Incomplete application forms will not be considered. It is a criminal offence for anyone to seek or accept work in a regulated position knowing that they are barred from working with children; and for an employer to offer work to or employ a person in a regulated position knowing that the person is barred from working with children. All applicants will be made aware that providing false information is an offence, and could result in the application being rejected, or summary dismissal or the requirement for a volunteer to cease to carry out their role, if the applicant has been selected or recruited, and referral to the police and/or the DBS. The applicant will be given an information pack

including general information about the Charity and specific information on the post in which they are interested.

Shortlisting will be carried out on the basis of a close match between the role description, person specification and information on an applicant's application form. Internal candidates will be treated no more or less favourably than external candidates.

References

Wherever possible, references will be obtained immediately after short listing and prior to the interview stage, so that any discrepancies or issues of concern can be explored further with the referee and discussed with the applicant during interview.

All offers of employment or volunteering will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two independent references which are considered satisfactory by the Charity. One reference must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer or deployer (in respect of volunteering), if applicable. If the applicant's current or most recent role does/did not involve work with children or young people, but the applicant has worked with children or young people in the past, then the second reference should be from the employer or deployer of that role who can comment on their previous work with children or young people, and their suitability to work with them. The referee should not be a relative.

References must always be supplied directly by referees. References should provide objective verifiable and factual information to support appointment decisions. In order to achieve this, a reference pro-forma with questions relating to the applicant's suitability to work with children or young people will be provided.

All referees will be asked:

- Whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the role for which they have applied, and whether they have any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children or young people; and,
- To confirm whether the applicant has been the subject of any disciplinary sanctions and whether they have had any allegations made against them or concerns raised which relate to either the safety or welfare of children or young people, or about the applicant's behaviour towards children or young people. Details about the outcome of any concerns or allegations will be sought.

Interviews

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to attend an interview. Interviews will be with two members of the Stay At School team. The applicant's attitude towards children and young people in general will also be tested together with their commitment to safeguarding and promoting the well-being and welfare of children and young people. For example, the applicant should be asked why they think safeguarding is important.

The interview panel will fully explore during the interview any discrepancies or anomalies, or gaps and changes in employment history, that have been identified from the information provided to the Charity by the applicant or a referee. At least one member of the interview panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training, or refresher training as applicable, and both of whom will have undertaken safeguarding training.

All applicants who are invited for an interview will be required to bring documentary evidence of their identity – either a full birth certificate, passport or photocard driving licence and additionally a

document such as a utility bill that verifies the applicant's name and address. Where appropriate, change of name documentation must also be brought to the interview. Applicants should also be asked to bring original or certified copies of documents confirming any necessary or relevant educational and professional qualifications.

Offer of appointment to successful applicant

Any offer of appointment made to a successful applicant, including one who has lived or worked abroad, will be conditional upon satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks, including:

- Verification of the applicant's identity (if this has not previously been verified straight after the interview);
- The receipt of two satisfactory independent references – if references were not obtained before the interview, it is vital that they are obtained and scrutinised before a person's appointment is confirmed;
- A DBS Disclosure appropriate to the role.
- Verification of the applicant's right to work in the UK (for employees only);
- Confirmation that the applicant is not subject to an Order under section 79 of the Charities Act 2016 for their removal/disqualification from a charity;
- Criminal record checks and/or overseas police checks, as appropriate, for an applicant who has lived or worked overseas;
- Where appropriate, sign a declaration that they are not disqualified from childcare or disqualified by association under the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009; and,
- Verification of any relevant qualifications and professional status, as appropriate (if not verified straight after the interview), and whether any restrictions have been imposed by a regulatory body.

Stay At School will use the services of an independent checking service for the processing of DBS applications for each applicant.

Any information which has been provided to Stay At School regarding past disciplinary sanctions; allegations or concerns that relate to the safety or welfare of children and young people, or about an applicant's behaviour towards children and young people; or cautions or convictions will be discussed and considered in the circumstance of the individual case during the recruitment process.

Safeguarding Induction Training

All new trustees, employees and volunteers will be required to complete safeguarding induction training, regardless of whether they work directly with children and young people. This will include an introduction to the Charity's safeguarding policies and procedures, including the Safeguarding Policy and the Code of Conduct. It will also explain the identity and specific responsibilities of individuals with designated safeguarding responsibilities.

Induction training will provide trustees, employees and volunteers with a full explanation of their roles and responsibilities – and expectations which will govern how they carry them out, and the standard of conduct and behaviour expected from them.

Employees and volunteers will also be made aware of the Whistleblowing Policy.

The induction training will also include child protection training which will be tailored at a level appropriate to the person's work with children.

Probationary periods of 3 months will typically apply for new employees, during which time performance will be monitored. The Charity reserves the right to extend this period by a further 6 months at its absolute discretion. Performance will be reviewed against the role description after this time.

Record Retention and Data Protection

All data will be processed and retained in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Ongoing employment and volunteering

Stay At School recognises that it must have robust policies and procedures in place for recruitment and selection, which should be viewed as initial measures in an ongoing commitment to create a safe organisation. The Charity will therefore provide ongoing training and support for all trustees, employees, and volunteers.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Stay At School is committed to monitoring all recruitment procedures to ensure that the best possible procedures are in place. The Board of Trustees will be responsible for ensuring this Policy is monitored and evaluated with respect to its effectiveness and implementation. The Board will review the effectiveness of this Policy annually.

Safeguarding

Stay At School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the well-being and welfare of children, and all others who come into contact with the Charity. Stay At School requires all individuals who are involved or associated with the Charity - including trustees, employees and volunteers - to share this commitment. This is a key governance priority for the trustees of Stay At School.

Any safeguarding concerns and allegations must be reported in accordance with Stay At School's Safeguarding Policy. All individuals who are associated with the Charity will be made aware that any safeguarding concerns or allegations should be raised in accordance with Stay At School's policies and procedures.

Where a trustee, employee or volunteer feels unable to raise an issue with the Charity, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them:

- General guidance on whistleblowing can be found via: <https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>; and,
- The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available as an alternative route for those who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding safeguarding or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled. Employees can call 0800 028 0285 (line is available from 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday) or email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Review

This policy will be regularly monitored and reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees.

These policy and procedures will be reviewed periodically to ensure compliance with changes in law and equality and diversity legislation.
Adopted: October 2020
To be reviewed: October 2022

Appendix 7

Communications Guidelines

Stay At School has a strong network of supporters and followers to engage in our work and promote our objectives. To maintain this network, external communications are required. When using photographic images, film content and narrative data, Stay At School is committed to ensuring:

- Our beneficiaries are portrayed with consideration and care, and our decisions are guided by processes of clear and informed consent.
- Any portrayal of children and wider beneficiaries in our media channels (website and social media) must be positive in approach and every step must be taken to ensure that any material that could be construed as potentially degrading is prevented.
- The rights of parents, children and any other beneficiaries to withdraw consent for their data and/or images to be used are always upheld.

Stay At School provides clarity on expectations for appropriate messaging and information sharing in all external communications including written, visual and verbal (offline and online). Staff and volunteers are expected to use these guidelines to ensure that all external communications regarding children respects the dignity and privacy of the individual.

Any guidelines relating to external communications and photographs equally apply to the internal sharing of information regarding children and wider beneficiaries. It is expected that all staff and volunteers will follow these guidelines, sharing only appropriate information regarding children internally and using safeguarded sharing processes as required (e.g. password protection).