



Challenge Partners' Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

All children have an absolute right to a childhood free from abuse, neglect or exploitation. Challenge Partners believes that in all matters concerning child protection and safeguarding, the welfare and protection of the young people¹ we work with is of paramount consideration. All adults involved in Challenge Partners' 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 Challenge Partners 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 for Challenge Partners 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 Challenge Partners activities must follow Challenge Partners' 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 Lead

Challenge Partners has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to:

- Offer support to all staff and consultants involved in Challenge Partners' 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 Challenge Partners and Partner schools.

If there is an allegation, signs and indicators of abuse are identified or if at any point an adult involved with Challenge Partners' work fails to comply with any element of the Code of Conduct this information must be passed immediately to Challenge Partners' Designated Safeguarding Lead. It is the Designated Safeguarding Lead'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). You 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 Lead:

Roisin Killick
Head of Programmes, Networks and Evaluation

¹ For the purposes of this policy a young person is defined as any person under the age of eighteen.

In the event of the Designated Safeguarding Lead being unavailable, please contact the relevant individuals below as quickly as possible:

Role	Person designated	When to contact	Contact details
Designated Safeguarding Lead for Children and Young People	Roisin Killick Head of Programmes, Networks and Evaluation	Contact Roisin immediately in the first instance with any Safeguarding concerns regarding children and young people	roisin.killick@challengepartners.org
Designated Safeguarding Lead for other Safeguarding concerns	Laura Lewis-Williams Managing Director	Contact Laura immediately in the first instance with any Whistleblowing, Bullying and Harassment, employee concerns	laura.lewis-williams@challengepartners.org
If the above individuals cannot be reached, please contact another member of the team as follows:			
Executive Director	Sue John	Contact Sue for any Safeguarding concern if above individuals cannot be reached	sue.john@challengepartners.org
Chief Executive Officer	Kate Chhatwal	Contact Kate for any Safeguarding concern if above individuals cannot be reached	kate.chhatwal@challengepartners.org
Our Trustee with responsibility for Safeguarding can be contacted if it is not appropriate to raise with the staff members above			
Trustee for Safeguarding	Alison Beane	If it is not appropriate to raise issues with the individuals above, our Trustee for Safeguarding can be contacted	alison.beane@btinternet.com

Definitions of Abuse

The updated definitions of abuse from [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022](#):

Physical Abuse: a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Emotional Abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it.

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 Challenge Partners Designated Safeguarding Lead, and/or allocated school child protection and safeguarding lead/s. In the event of Challenge Partners' Designated Safeguarding Lead being contacted the following protocol will be followed:

1. The information will immediately be passed on to the child protection and safeguarding lead/s of the school where the allegation has happened.
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 (the Authorities). Challenge Partners 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. Challenge Partners shall not, under any circumstances, undertake any independent investigation or questioning (as this may jeopardise any enquiry) unless or until Challenge Partners is given authorisation by the school or the Authorities. Following authorisation, Challenge Partners 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.
5. If the DSL is not satisfied that the school has reported the incident to the local authority, s/he 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) without delay. In exceptional circumstances where speaking to the school's DSL or deputy could give rise to harm to a child or young person, the Challenge Partners' DSL should not do so and should report to the relevant local authority without delay.
6. Where a crime has or may have been committed, the DSL will report it to the police, in consultation with the school.
7. The Challenge Partners' DSL will report to the Executive team and Safeguarding Trustee as appropriate, to enable prompt and appropriate reporting of any serious incidents to the Charity Commission and/or insurers. Any serious incident reports to the Charity Commission must be reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees. Guidance from the Charity Commission² indicates the circumstances in which a report should be made and includes where:
 - a. beneficiaries (noting that this is a wider group than children/vulnerable adults) have been, or are alleged to have been, abused or mistreated while under the care of the charity, or by someone connected with the charity, for example a trustee, staff member or volunteer;
 - b. there has been an incident where someone has been abused or mistreated (alleged or actual) and this is connected with the activities of the charity;
 - c. there has been a breach of procedures or policies at the charity which has put beneficiaries at risk, including a failure to carry out checks which would have identified that a person is disqualified under safeguarding legislation, from working with children or adults.
8. Disclosures of historical abuse should be treated in the same way as disclosures of current abuse, particularly where there may still be a risk to children or vulnerable adults.
9. Challenge Partners' Designated Safeguarding Lead will refer cases to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), Disclosure Scotland, or Access NI where a member of staff has been dismissed following concerns they posed a risk to a child, in accordance with relevant legislation and guidance.

² Refer to the Charity Commission's Serious Incident Guidance for more information: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>



In the event that a young person discloses abuse to an employee or contractor of Challenge Partners

Employees of Challenge Partners and contractors shall:

1. Allow the young person to speak without interruption, encouraging the young person to tell them only what they feel comfortable telling them, and be accepting and non-judgemental about what is said. They will not ask investigative or leading questions of any kind.
2. Advise the young person that they will offer support, but that they **MUST** pass on what they hear as they can't keep anything told to them confidential.
3. If the young person refuses to say anything unless promised it is kept a secret, employees or contractors will let them know that they have to tell one person. If the child or young person refuses to say any more their decision will be respected but the incident must be reported.
4. Ensure that the young person is not immediately at risk of any further abuse.
5. Immediately after a disclosure, contact the DSL at Challenge Partners.
6. Report the facts as known/ or understand, including the student's name and the account given by the young person using the words that they used as well as including any other information that is deemed relevant. Note the date, time, place and context in which the disclosure took place.
7. Provide this detailed information in an email to the DSL at Challenge Partners as soon as possible.
8. Challenge Partners shall retain a copy of all such notifications for a period of one year.

In the event that an employee or contractor of Challenge Partners suspects abuse, but it has not been disclosed by the young person

Employees of Challenge Partners and contractors shall:

1. Not discuss suspicions with the young person in question or conduct any form of investigative work.
2. Report the facts known/ or understand, including the student's name and the account given by the young person using the words that they used as well as including any other information that is deemed relevant. Note the date, time, place and context in which the disclosure took place.
3. Provide this detailed information in an email to the DSL at Challenge Partners as soon as possible.
4. Challenge Partners shall retain a copy of all such notifications for a period of one year.

In the event that an allegation is received about any adult or about a consultant (including the person hearing the allegation)

Employees of Challenge Partners and consultants shall:

1. Immediately after receiving an allegation or disclosure, contact the DSL at Challenge Partners.
2. Report the facts as known/ or understand, including the names of relevant adults and/or young people and the account given using the words that they used as well as including any other information that is deemed relevant. Note the date, time, place and context in which the disclosure took place.
3. Provide this detailed information in an email to the DSL at Challenge Partners as soon as possible.
4. Challenge Partners shall retain a copy of all such notifications for a period of one year.

When dealing with the personal data of young people (including names, grades and school)

Employees of Challenge Partners and consultants shall:

1. Handle all information with sensitivity and confidentiality.
2. Make sure that information is kept securely and not made available to others without the authority of Challenge Partners.

Recruitment and Training:

Challenge Partners maintains a high standard in recruiting trustees, staff and consultants.

All Challenge Partners' consultants will be subject to an enhanced DBS check before they can begin working within our partner schools. Every consultant must be able to fulfil one of the following:

- Have an existing enhanced DBS check not more than 3 years old verified by a member of Challenge Partners' staff, with the disclosure number and date of issue recorded.
- Arrange with Challenge Partners to have a new enhanced DBS check processed.

All Challenge Partners' trustees require:

- An enhanced DBS check
- Checks to confirm their identity (including as a part of the DBS check) and proof of address

Challenge Partners' staff and consultants receive training on the contents of this policy as part of their induction, this policy is made available to all adults involved in Challenge Partners' activities and all consultants should confirm 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 Challenge Partners' 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.
- Treat all young people with respect.
- 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 Challenge Partners' DSL immediately.
- Recognise that special caution is required when discussing sensitive issues with young people.
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspicions of abuse to the Challenge Partners' DSL.
- Operate within Challenge Partners' procedures in the event of any disclosure/concern.
- Raise any questions or concerns about child protection and safeguarding with Challenge Partners' DSL, 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.
- 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.