

Safeguarding Policy

Introduction, Scope & Purpose

Safeguarding is a term used to communicate the duties and responsibilities of those working in education to protect individuals from harm and ensure they feel safe. All our employees who work with apprentices have a crucial role to play in shaping apprentices' lives and have a unique opportunity to interact in ways that promote awareness of welfare, safety, and empowerment.

Policy Overview

This safeguarding policy covers all apprentices regardless of location and covers all aspects of the apprenticeship programme we offer. All MetaGedu staff must take responsibility for understanding their role in safeguarding across all aspects of our provision. This includes understanding their responsibilities to report all concerns and ensure that children, young people, and adults at risk are protected from harm, informed about potential risks to their welfare, and how to seek help.

The policy applies to all staff, including senior managers and the board of governors, paid staff, volunteers and part-time workers, agency staff, apprentices, or anyone working on behalf of MetaGedu.

Safeguarding covers a wider variety of activities, behaviours and situations that could potentially lead to harm or abuse, which includes:

- Abuse (physical, emotional, financial, institutional, sexual, neglect and organisational)
- Health and Safety
- Well-being
- Internet Safety, Cyberbullying, Cybercrime, and all aspects of electronic communication
- Substance misuse including the misuse of alcohol.
- Child protection
- Protecting vulnerable adults
- Child on Child abuse/ Peer on Peer abuse
- Bullying, harassment, Victimisation, and discrimination
- Domestic violence or inappropriate relationships including coercive control.
- Safety from sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, forced marriage and honour-based violence.
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Grooming (in person, online, by phone, etc)
- Inappropriate supervision (by parents or staff)
- The security and safety of MetaGedu's premises or the apprentice's place of learning
- Protecting people from radicalisation, extremism, and terrorism
- Mental Health concerns including, eating disorders, depression, Self-harm, and risky behaviour.
- Trafficking and modern slavery

- Breast ironing

Key Principles and Aims

- All people are treated with respect and courtesy by staff and apprentices in an environment free from harassment or discrimination.
- All learning environments, communal areas, facilities, and equipment comply with legislative health and safety standards.
- MetaGedu works with apprentices and other agencies to promote a safe and healthy culture.
- MetaGedu develops partnerships to proactively protect apprentices at risk of abuse, neglect or at risk of radicalisation.
- Staff are trained and have a clear understanding of personal safety and good safeguarding practices as well as what factors may make apprentices vulnerable to a range of safeguarding concerns.
- Staff are trained to check the safety and welfare of all apprentices and report all concerns to the designated safeguarding officers.
- MetaGedu works with apprentices to promote their health, well-being and safety including their safety online.
- MetaGedu supports individuals to develop in a way that increases their confidence, personal resilience, and independence and empowers them to make informed choices about their safety and well-being.
- MetaGedu works proactively to raise awareness of radicalisation and extremism to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.
- MetaGedu staff will support apprentices to receive confidential advice, guidance, and support for a range of issues they may face, including signposting to external agencies where specialist support is required.
- The designated safeguarding team use systematic monitoring to support apprentices and reduce the risk of harm or abuse.
- MetaGedu follow safer recruitment practices ensuring all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and as required for existing staff.

Key Strands of Activity

Safe Recruitment

MetaGedu complies with best practices in recruiting and training its staff, in line with legislative requirements. All staff undergo the appropriate pre-employment checks including DBS checks for their role.

Induction and Training

All MetaGedu staff undertake mandatory safeguarding training appropriate to their role. They understand the principles of the MetaGedu Code of Conduct, as outlined in the staff handbook and safe working practices, as outlined in the MetaGedu Health and Safety Policy. This includes how to keep themselves and the apprentices safe by not putting themselves in compromising situations.

All new starters receive appropriate induction, including safeguarding training, which covers the signs and indicators of abuse, neglect, bullying and/or

harassment and how to respond to an individual that discloses welfare issues, abuse, neglect, bullying and/or harassment quickly, sensitively, and appropriately.

Safe learning

The 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' principles and safeguarding agendas are embedded within MetaGedu's teaching and learning practices and our quality assurance and quality improvement processes. We engage with apprentices on issues related to current affairs, financial health, well-being, physical health, and life in modern Britain to promote opportunities and help apprentices to achieve their potential.

Safe environment

MetaGedu provides a safe learning environment for all apprentices, whilst at the same time being friendly and welcoming. All MetaGedu staff wear their identification badges with a MetaGedu lanyard when they are on campus or out on visits. We promote a culture of respect and courtesy, in an environment free from harassment or discrimination.

MetaGedu complies with legislative requirements for Health and Safety and recognises its duty to ensure that employers are suitably positioned to support apprentices and provide a safe working environment. MetaGedu completes risk assessments of all apprentice's workplaces before enrolling them on a programme and continues to monitor this through regular progress reviews with the apprentice and employer.

Accidents and Incidents

All accidents and incidents whether at MetaGedu campuses or the Apprentice's workplace must be reported on the My Concern platform and progress reviews on Bud. If the accidents and incidents occurred in the apprentice's workplace, the overall responsibility to investigate lies with the employer, but MetaGedu will still investigate the incident. If out of the workplace whilst under the supervision of MetaGedu staff, we have overall responsibility to investigate.

Prevent Duty

MetaGedu has legal obligations under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. All staff are trained to understand their duties under the Government's Prevent strategy and detailed in MetaGedu's Prevent Policy, risk assessments and action plan. MetaGedu have robust processes in place for reporting concerns about apprentices or staff who might be at risk of being drawn into extremism or being radicalised.

Apprentices will be encouraged to explore and discuss issues with their Apprenticeship Development Coach in a safe and open environment.

External Speakers

In the interest of safeguarding our apprentices, MetaGedu must ensure external speakers and the material they will be presenting do not promote extremism, incite radicalization or be offensive in any way when delivering the programme or additional learning to our apprentices.

All external speaker(s) must complete the 'External Speakers Form' and supply presentation material to the Head of Quality to vet and approve at least 14 days before the event. This allows for further enquires and appeals if required.

Mental Health, Well-being, SEND and Resilience

MetaGedu recognises that apprentices with SEND, mental health needs, or those questioning their gender may face additional safeguarding risks. We recognise the importance of supporting positive well-being and building resilience to enable people to reach their full potential. We will engage apprentices in activities embedded in their programme to increase their understanding of the steps they can take to help to increase their well-being. Apprentices can discuss concerns with their apprenticeship development coach or seek further support from the safeguarding team. MetaGedu recognises that some individuals may wish to access confidential support that is not linked to their apprenticeship, so we provide free access to a professional clinically managed service designed to improve mental health called Togetherall. All Apprentices and staff will receive details on how to access this service to create an anonymous account and access support.

Providing Support

MetaGedu recognises that an individual who is abused or witnesses domestic violence/abuse may find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth, that in these circumstances they may feel helpless and humiliated and they may feel self-blame. This can mean the individual displays a variety of behaviours that might range from behaviour which is perceived to be normal to being aggressive or withdrawn.

It is therefore important for MetaGedu staff to record precisely what has been alleged/witnessed, using the words of the complainant and factual observations about the observable physical and emotional state of the individual sharing their concerns or the situation witnessed. This information should be recorded on MyConcern which complies with the confidentiality policy and can only be accessed by those who need to access it. This might be as part of an investigation, or action taken to resolve a complaint/ allegation. Access to records is restricted to authorised personnel, and records are transferred securely when apprentices move provision.

MetaGedu can provide a comprehensive list of external agencies and protection services that are in a position to provide expertise on a variety of safeguarding and welfare issues.

Safeguarding apprentices

MetaGedu has a legal obligation to protect young people and vulnerable adults from abuse and recognises that we can play a significant part in raising awareness among all apprentices to prevent harm and support them to make positive choices in life.

MetaGedu staff are trained to provide information, advice, and guidance on a range of topics and to reduce the risk of harm by providing good lines of communication as trusted adults. The staff are supported by an appropriately

trained Designated Safeguarding Lead and Safeguarding Officers, who form a 'safeguarding team.'

All staff ensure that disclosures made by apprentices are dealt with quickly, sensitively, and appropriately.

All staff are trained in the appropriate response to an apprentice's disclosure and the correct procedure for dealing with concerns about an apprentice.

Allegations Against Staff

MetaGedu follows the current guidance and procedures set out for managing safeguarding allegations or concerns against teaching staff, other staff, volunteers, and contractors. These requirements are implemented within the MetaGedu Disciplinary and Grievance policy.

MetaGedu promotes a culture of openness and transparency where all staff are encouraged to report any low-level concerns about colleagues. These concerns may not meet the harm threshold, but are important for maintaining professional standards and safeguarding children.

Low-level concerns should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and recorded confidentially. Patterns of behaviour will be monitored and addressed appropriately.

Confidentiality

MetaGedu recognises that all matters relating to children and vulnerable adults' welfare and safeguarding are highly confidential. The staff have a professional responsibility to report all concerns to the Safeguarding Team using the My Concerns portal. The Safeguarding team will only share information with other members of staff, external agencies, or the apprentice's employer on a 'need to know' basis.

All records, such as Concern reports and referral letters, will be electronic on the My Concern portal. There must not be any record stored in other methods for example on a hard drive or memory stick.

Supporting staff

MetaGedu recognises that staff who have become involved with a child or vulnerable person who has suffered harm or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting. We will support all staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their feeling with a Designated Person who can seek further support if this is needed. Staff are also reminded that they can access the Togetherall portal for resources to help their well-being.

Filtering and Monitoring (Online Safety)

MetaGedu ensures appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place on our campuses to safeguard apprentices online. These systems are reviewed regularly to ensure they block harmful content while supporting educational access.

Law and Guidance

This policy has been written and will be implemented in line with the safeguarding and child protection procedures and in accordance with legislation and related guidance.

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(Latest Version\)](#)
- [Early Years Inspection Handbook \(Latest Version\)](#)
- [Education Inspection Framework Handbook \(Latest Version\)](#)
- [Counter Terrorism and Security Act \(Latest Version\)](#)
- [Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022](#)
- [Education Act 2022](#)
- [Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009](#)
- [Education and Training \(Welfare of Children\) Act 2021](#)
- [What to do if you are worried a child is being abused \(2015\)](#)
- [Behaviour in schools \(Latest Version\)](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(Latest Version\)](#)
- [Serious Crime Act](#)
- [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#)
- [Safeguarding and Remote Education](#)
- [Education for a Connected World](#)
- [Using external expertise to enhance online safety education](#)
- [Harmful online challenges and hoaxes](#)
- [When to Call the Police](#)
- [The Children Act](#)
- [The Care Act](#)
- [The Equality Act](#)
- [The Data Protection Act](#)
- [Human Rights Act](#)
- [Modern Slavery Act](#)
- [Mental Capacity Act](#)
- [Making Referrals to the DBS](#)
- [Sexual Offences Act](#)
- [Recruit Teachers from Overseas](#)
- [Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding](#)
- [Local Safeguarding Arrangements Guidance](#)
- [Online Safety Act](#)

Time for Policy Review

This Policy is to be reviewed annually.

Dissemination

The Policy is available for current and potential clients and apprentices to view.

Disclaimer

MetaGedu reserve the right to amend the Safeguarding Policy at any time to comply with new legislation, guidance and lessons learnt.

Roles & Responsibilities

Appointed staff have Designated Safeguarding Person accountability regarding:

- Adhering to the processes about referring or monitoring an issue if there are concerns about possible abuse or an individual or vulnerable group needs our intervention.
- Ensuring staff are fully aware of and adhere to policy, procedures, and escalation processes.
- Ensuring Designated Person contact lists are up to date and readily available on the My Concern portal.
- Providing support and expertise in investigating issues to their conclusion
- Safe keeping of written and electronic records of all welfare and safeguarding concerns about an individual, even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.
- Signposting to specialist or protection agencies, as appropriate
- Notifying the appropriate agency if staff or apprentices are aware of potential risks or raise a concern about activities within the environments in which we or they work in. For issues that may require external intervention or investigation; such as legal tribunals, Ofsted, CQC, or funding body, The Designated Person for Safeguarding or their nominated deputy, consults with an appropriate senior manager, before a decision is made to refer a complaint or allegation, having gathered and examined all relevant testimony and information
- Ensuring that all such records are kept confidential and only shared on a need-to-know basis. Records are to be kept on the My Concern portal separate from the apprentice's or their employer's files.
- Monitoring will be completed via My Concern to enable statistical analysis at a national level and to facilitate the sharing of best practices and continual improvement.

Staff members, in MetaGedu, are responsible for:

- Raising employers' awareness of the need to safeguard apprentices and their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse, bullying or harassment, of any nature, and of identifying those that may be in need.
- Source, provide and signpost the apprentices to the most appropriate information, advice, and guidance on a wide range of welfare topics or issues, consulting with their Designated Safeguarding Officer for advice if unsure of how to address an issue.

- Recording all actual or potential cases of welfare or safeguarding issues, either witnessed or raised and reporting them immediately through the My concern portal to their Designated Safeguarding Officer
- Adhering to the processes concerning referring or monitoring an individual if there are concerns about possible abuse or an individual in need.

Key Contacts

The safeguarding team can be contacted via phone on 0333 004 8178 (ext.1) or via email at safeguarding@metagedu.io

- Designated Safeguarding Lead:
 - Samantha Northwood – Learning Support Coordinator 07842 000223
 - Steve Barker- CEO 07858 236375
 - Ian Alston – Interim Head of Operations - 07842 000228
- Additional Designated Officers are listed below -
 - Collette O'Loughlin – ADC 07842 024498

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to legislative or DfE funding rule changes. All apprentices and staff will be informed of any updates.

Policy Owner: Head of Quality, Compliance & Curriculum

Approved by: Senior Leadership Team

Review Frequency: Annual

Last Review Date: May 2026

Next Review Date: May 2027