



# GROUP SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY

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## LEGAL STATUS

'YOU' is the operating name of 'The **YOU** Trust', a Company Limited by Guarantee and registered in England No.1898188 and Charity No. 291489.

My Learning Cloud Limited is registered in England No. 8191627, a wholly owned subsidiary of The YOU Trust. All statements in policies referring to **YOU Group** apply to My Learning Cloud Limited.

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### **No Warranty**

The **YOU** Trust makes no warranty regarding the suitability of this policy (or any part of it) arising from its unauthorised use.

## 1 PURPOSE

This policy is intended to provide everyone working at or with **YOU Group** clarity regarding **YOU Group's** safeguarding policy and procedures. The **YOU Group** operates a zero-tolerance approach to abuse both within the organisation and with all people we work with, including service users, family and friends and other organisations we work with in partnership.

## 2 SCOPE

All staff, trustees, workers and volunteers are responsible to be aware of issues of abuse, neglect or exploitation and following **the Group's** safeguarding processes and procedures. **The Group's** commitment to defined quality standards are fundamental to creating and sustaining trust between staff and the people who use our services

This policy is to be read in conjunction with **YOU Group's** Children & Young Peoples Safeguarding Procedures and Children & Young Peoples Safeguarding Further Information for Best Practice.

A child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday, the term 'children' therefore means child/children/young person/young people.

## 3 RESPONSIBILITIES

### DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The YOU Director is the **YOU Group** lead officer for Children Safeguarding and is ultimately responsible for ensuring all policies and procedures followed within the Group are in line with national legislation and local guidance and practice.

YOU Directors and Director of MLC are responsible for working together to ensure that all policies and procedures, and ultimately all services within **YOU companies** are up to date with any and all changes to legislation and working practice.

YOU Directors and Director of MLC ensure that all Managers within their services are cognisant of their responsibilities around safeguarding and are able to support their staff teams to be aware of issues that may lead to a safeguarding concern or alert.

### YOU Group Board

- 3.2 The YOU Group Board has a responsibility to support the policy and be aware of issues and promote the development of initiatives relating to safeguarding children.

The policy is part of the YOU Group Board's response to ensure all necessary steps are taken to safeguard children within the **YOU Group**.

## LINE MANAGEMENT–TEAM LEADERS, DEPUTY MANAGERS AND MANAGERS

- 3.3 Line managers have a responsibility to ensure they and their teams identify and respond appropriately to allegations of abuse and/or suspicion or disclosures of abuse immediately.

Line managers will ensure that all people working in their team, whether paid or unpaid, have completed appropriate safeguarding training and are aware of and follow **YOU Group** policy and procedures.

Line managers are responsible for ensuring that all staff have access to their areas reporting processes as agreed via the local safeguarding children board.

## STAFF, WORKERS AND VOLUNTEERS

- 3.4 Staff, workers and volunteers have a responsibility to make sure they read and fully understand all **YOU Group** safeguarding policies, procedures and, guidance.

Staff, workers and volunteers have a responsibility to ensure they are up to date with, have read and understand national and local safeguarding guidance and referral processes.

Staff, workers and volunteers will immediately inform their line manager or duty manager of any concerns or issues relating to safeguarding and follow agreed processes.

## CENTRAL ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

- 3.5 Designated central support staff have a responsibility to receive, request and gather safeguarding data from all services in order to maintain and update a central safeguarding register.

## 4 EQUALITY AND VULNERABILITY

Within the **YOU Group**, children have the same protection regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity. The **YOU Group** is committed to anti-discriminatory practice and explicitly recognise the additional needs of children from minority ethnic groups and disabled children and the barriers they may face, especially around communication.<sup>1</sup>

The **YOU Group** recognises that some children are additionally vulnerable due to their life experiences, level of dependency or other issues. The **YOU Group** is committed to work in partnership with children, families, parents, carers and other agencies, ensuring their welfare is promoted at all times.

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<sup>1</sup> NSPCC

## 5 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

5.1 This policy has been drawn up and informed by national law and legislation and local guidance concerned with the protection and safety of children: -

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Working Together to Safeguard Children Statutory Guidance 2018
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection 2018
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- NSPCC Charity Trustees 2021
- Local safeguarding guidance
- Gov.uk Safeguarding and Protecting People for Charities

The welfare of the child is paramount as enshrined in the Children Act 1989

### 5.2 SECTION 11 of The Children Act 2004

This section places duties on a range of statutory organisations to ensure their functions are discharged with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. All voluntary sector organisations that work with children are also expected to have these arrangements in place.

The **YOU Group** has these processes in place and ensure they are understood and adhered to by all staff working with children, via induction, training and supervision: -

- Clear lines of accountability
- Senior board level lead taking responsibility for the organisations safeguarding arrangements
- A culture of listening to children, both in individual decisions and service development
- Clear whistle blowing procedures, codes of conduct and a culture that promotes honest discussion
- Information sharing arrangements
- Designated Lead for Safeguarding<sup>2</sup>
- Safer Recruitment Practices
- Appropriate training and supervision

The **YOU Group** has clear policies in place for dealing with allegations against people who work with children, including **YOU Group** staff and staff from external/partner

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<sup>2</sup> The Designated Lead for Safeguarding is the Director of Operations and Business Development

agencies. The **YOU Group** has processes that support both the member of staff and the child regarding allegations, complaints or concerns about quality of practice.

## 6 DEFINITIONS

Safeguarding is broader than child protection and relates to the actions taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 outlines that all organisations must play their part in full by adopting a child centred approach based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of the child. The guidance highlights specifically that practitioners should, in particular, be alert to the potential need for early help for some children.

For the purpose of the guidance and this policy, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 as: -

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

## 7 DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (formerly Independent Safeguarding Authority)

7.1 The **YOU Group** is a safer recruiting organisation and all workers, staff and volunteers who will be working with any vulnerable people are subject to pre-employment Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks at the appropriate level.

7.2 All new staff at the **YOU Group** are enrolled in the DBS Update Service which allows applicants to keep their DBS certificates up to date online and allows employers to check a certificate on line.

## 8 FORMS OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT

8.1 Abuse can be something that is done, or omitted from being done, to a child. It may happen within different settings including, home and school and may be perpetrated by a worker, family member, another adult in a position of trust, friends or another member of the community, it can be:

- **Physical** - including slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint

- **Sexual** - including rape and sexual assault, non-consensual sexual acts, giving consent under duress - whether the child is aware they have engaged in a sexual act or not
- **Psychological and emotional** - including threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of human contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal
- **Financial** - including theft, fraud, exploitation
- **Neglect** - including acts of omission, ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to required services, heating, appropriate clothing
- **Discrimination** - including racism, sexism, acts based on another person's protected characteristic including age, disability and sexual orientation, withholding a service that is offered to others
- **Domestic Violence** - may include intimate teen violence, child on parent violence or being a victim of domestic abuse - if the child is 16+ they may be recognised as a client within most domestic abuse services
- **Honour Based Violence** - seen within cultures with an honour system and may include violence and abuse, **forced marriage** and **female genital mutilation**
- **Cyber abuse** - may include one person, a group of people or be used as an adult to form an inappropriate relationship with a child
- **Sexual exploitation** - where a child is sexually exploited for money, power or status
- **Grooming** - where someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of abuse, exploitation or trafficking
- Other areas may include - human trafficking, young carers at risk of harm

## 9 RESPONDING TO AND REPORTING ABUSE

- 9.1 All staff, workers and volunteers have a responsibility for safeguarding the welfare and wellbeing of children and young people we work with, come into contact with and observe day to day. This includes noticing and being aware of any behaviours of YOU Group staff, workers and volunteers that give cause for concern. All staff, workers and volunteers are required to act in accordance to this policy to avoid any false allegations of inappropriate behaviour being made about their conduct that would give us cause for concern.

YOU and MLC have a Code of Conduct for all staff, workers and volunteers and if any member breaches that Code this may give cause for a safeguarding concern.

## 9.2 ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF, WORKERS & VOLUNTEERS

It is our responsibility to support anyone we work with to make a safeguarding complaint/report or if they are concerned about their treatment. The person reporting and the person harmed will both be protected and supported.

At the point of disclosure of an alleged safeguarding concern against a member of staff, workers or volunteers, the person hearing the disclosure will reassure the person making the disclosure and explain that the information will be passed on to the relevant YOU Director or MLC Director , who in turn will speak with the Director of People, and update the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO).

The Directors, and Manager will then make the decision regarding next stages, ensuring the person making the allegation is safe. The alleged abuser will be contacted and removed from further work, this is a protective measure for all parties. Following actions then fall under the Codes of Conduct and moves from safeguarding to other HR processes which will be managed alongside and independently of any safeguarding processes.

## 9.3 FOR ALL ALLEGATIONS

The wellbeing of the child experiencing abuse is paramount and it is important to ensure they are safe and in a place of safety if appropriate. When a staff member receives a disclosure of abuse they must reassure the person disclosing or sharing the information regarding the abuse.

The member of staff, worker or volunteer will follow the **YOU Group** Procedure and inform their line manager and seek support and advice regarding reporting to the local safeguarding team.

All suspicions, allegations and disclosures must be treated seriously. Safeguarding concerns can sometimes arise through witnessing an incident or hearing of a particular issue or through a gradual building of information until a safeguarding concern emerges.

All staff, workers and volunteers at the **YOU Group** have a responsibility to act if they suspect abuse, regardless if they are working directly with a person or not. All suspicions, allegations, disclosures or witnessed incidents should be reported immediately to the Line Manager or duty on call manager if out of hours.

## 10 PREVENTION OF ABUSE

The **YOU Group** acknowledges that an important aspect of safeguarding is in prevention and early intervention. The **YOU Group's** first priority is to prevent abuse from occurring.

Adherence to the **YOU Group's** recruitment practices, code of conduct, thorough support planning and risk management, induction and training all contribute to safeguarding children, even when we are working directly with the adult and not the child.

People visiting our accommodations, where children reside, are accompanied and are required to sign a Visitors Safeguarding Notice detailing our commitment to safeguarding, and our expectations of them.

Early liaison with other agencies and proactive partnership work combined with positive client involvement can prevent challenging or complex situations escalating into safeguarding concerns. Prevention by empowerment through discussion, awareness-raising, accessible information sharing and policy consultation are vital aspects of the **YOU Group's** safeguarding work.

Training of all **YOU Group** staff, workers and volunteers also contributes to early identification and prevention. **YOU Group** staff receive mandatory and specialist training that covers the skills and knowledge required to: -

- Recognise and respond to suspicions, allegations or disclosures of abuse
- Intervene positively in situations where abuse is identified
- Promote safeguarding and contribute to the prevention and early intervention aspects of safeguarding work.
- Report abuse or suspected abuse in line with this policy and local protocols
- Improve practice and service delivery with relation to safeguarding
- Work in partnership with other agencies to share information which further protects and safeguards children

Safeguarding is an area of discussion within individual supervision and team meetings

The **YOU Group** and all staff are aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

*For Admin use only*

**POLICY HISTORY**

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