



## **NEXT GEN Engagement**

### **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

**Approved by:** Senior Leadership Team

**Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** Emma Maylett

**Deputy DSL:** Adam Pickersgill

**Review cycle:** Annually or in line with statutory updates

### **1. Introduction**

NEXT GEN Engagement is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people aged 5–18. We recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that all staff, volunteers, and contractors have a duty to protect children from harm.

This policy applies to all children attending NEXT GEN Engagement, including those placed through commissioning schools and local authorities, and should be read alongside related policies including Behaviour, Health and Safety, and Staff Code of Conduct.

### **2. Statutory Framework and Guidance**

This policy is informed by, and operates in accordance with, the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) – September 2025
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004
- Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021

- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR

This policy also reflects local safeguarding partnership procedures and guidance issued by the local authority.

### **3. Safeguarding in an Alternative Provision Context**

NEXT GEN Engagement operates as an **alternative provision** and works in partnership with a range of commissioning schools and local authorities.

While commissioning schools retain overall responsibility for pupils they place, NEXT GEN Engagement recognises its duty to:

- Safeguard and promote the welfare of all children attending the provision
- Identify safeguarding concerns early
- Act promptly where concerns arise
- Share relevant information with commissioning schools and appropriate agencies
- Work collaboratively to support positive outcomes for children and young people

### **4. A Child-Centred and Trauma-Informed Approach**

Safeguarding practice at NEXT GEN Engagement is child-centred and underpinned by trauma-informed principles. Staff understand that behaviour can be a form of communication and that children may present with complex emotional, social, or behavioural needs.

Safeguarding is closely linked with our Behaviour Policy and the PACE approach (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, and Empathy), which supports de-escalation, emotional regulation, and relationship-based practice.

### **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

The DSL, **Emma Maylett**, has overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection and will:

- Manage safeguarding concerns and referrals
- Liaise with commissioning schools, local authorities, and external agencies
- Maintain secure, accurate, and confidential safeguarding records
- Provide advice and guidance to staff
- Ensure safeguarding practice reflects current legislation and guidance

#### **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead**

In the absence of the DSL, safeguarding responsibilities will be undertaken by the Deputy DSL, **Adam Pickersgill**.

## **All Staff**

All staff and volunteers must:

- Be vigilant to signs of abuse, neglect, and exploitation
- Record and report safeguarding concerns promptly
- Follow this policy and associated procedures
- Attend safeguarding training and updates

## **6. Recognising and Responding to Safeguarding Concerns**

All safeguarding concerns must be reported without delay to the DSL or Deputy DSL.

Where a child is placed by a commissioning school, concerns will normally be shared with the commissioning school's DSL. Referrals to Children's Social Care or other agencies will be made where statutory thresholds are met.

If a child is at immediate risk of harm, staff will contact emergency services or Children's Social Care directly and inform the DSL as soon as possible.

NEXT GEN Engagement will not delay action where a child's safety is at risk.

## **7. Information Sharing and Record Keeping**

Safeguarding information will be:

- Shared in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Proportionate, timely, and on a need-to-know basis
- Stored securely and confidentially

Consent will be sought where appropriate; however, information will be shared without consent where there is a risk of harm.

## **8. Safer Recruitment and Staff Training**

NEXT GEN Engagement follows safer recruitment practices in line with KCSIE, including appropriate vetting and DBS checks.

All staff receive safeguarding training appropriate to their role and are required to read and understand Part One of KCSIE (or Annex A where appropriate). Training is refreshed regularly.

## **9. Monitoring, Review, and Quality Assurance**

Safeguarding arrangements are monitored through supervision, incident review, and partnership working with commissioning schools.

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation, statutory guidance, or organisational arrangements change.

## **Appendix: Working with Commissioning Schools**

NEXT GEN Engagement works in partnership with commissioning schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

### **Information Sharing**

NEXT GEN Engagement will:

- Share safeguarding concerns promptly with the commissioning school's DSL
- Provide updates relating to attendance, welfare, behaviour, and incidents
- Communicate clearly and professionally in line with placement agreements

### **Responding to Safeguarding Concerns**

- Concerns will be recorded and reported internally to the DSL or Deputy DSL
- Where appropriate, concerns will be shared with the commissioning school
- Referrals to Children's Social Care will be made where thresholds are met
- Action will not be delayed where a child is at risk of harm

### **Partnership Expectations**

Commissioning schools are expected to:

- Share relevant safeguarding and contextual information at placement
- Inform NEXT GEN Engagement of known risks or safeguarding plans
- Work collaboratively to support safeguarding outcomes

Safeguarding arrangements will be reviewed as part of ongoing placement monitoring and partnership working.

## **Appendix: Staff Safeguarding Flowchart**

**If you are worried about a child, always act. Do not promise confidentiality.**

### **1. Concern Identified**

You notice a concern, disclosure, change in behaviour, injury, or safeguarding risk.

### **2. Immediate Risk?**

- If a child is in immediate danger or at risk of serious harm:
  - **Call emergency services / Children's Social Care immediately**
  - Inform the DSL as soon as possible.

### **3. Report the Concern**

- Record the concern factually and promptly.
- Report it **the same day** to:
  - **DSL: Emma Maylett**
  - or **Deputy DSL: Adam Pickersgill** (if DSL unavailable)

### **4. DSL Decision-Making**

The DSL will:

- Review the concern and records
- Decide next steps
- Liaise with commissioning school DSL where appropriate
- Make referrals to Children's Social Care or other agencies if thresholds are met

#### **5. Information Sharing**

- Information is shared on a **need-to-know basis**
- In line with **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)** and data protection legislation

#### **6. Ongoing Support and Monitoring**

- Child is supported within the provision
- Actions and outcomes are recorded
- Safeguarding concerns are monitored and reviewed

#### **Remember:**

- Never investigate yourself
- Never delay reporting
- Always act in the child's best interests