

Safeguarding Training Support Materials

Child Protection

We all have a responsibility to protect children from harm. Everybody involved in the Aimhigher Mentoring Scheme has a statutory duty to safeguard children and promote their welfare.

“Ultimately, effective safeguarding of children can only be achieved by putting children at the centre of the system, and by every individual and agency playing their full part, working together to meet the needs of our most vulnerable children. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined 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.”*

The guidance above is taken from government policy - **HM Government: Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2013)**

It is important for mentors to have an awareness and understanding of the scheme’s policies in this area, which are detailed over the next few pages and were covered in training. It is also important that mentors are aware of their own behaviour and how, in certain circumstances, behaviour can be misinterpreted.

Safeguarding is the responsibility we all have in protecting children from harm.
It does not matter what your role is in this scheme, mentor, teacher or a member of staff from a university. It is our role to safeguard children.

For mentors there are three practical points to note:

- It is essential to set ground rules at the start of the mentoring relationship
- Confidentiality cannot be maintained in child protection or illegal situations
- If you are unsure or suspect anything – speak to somebody. Your first contact should be the school co-ordinator.

Forms and Classifications of Child Abuse

Neglect

The persistent or severe neglect of a child including failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in significant impairment of the child’s health or development. A cluster of indicators may be present.

Indicators of neglect can be physical symptoms such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Constant Hunger• Poor personal hygiene - dirty/smelly• Poor state of clothing	Emotional/behavioural symptoms such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Constant tiredness• Late/poor school attendance• Not-attending medical appointments/ treatment• Few friends
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emaciation / weight loss • Untreated medical problems. 	AND / OR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destructive tendencies • Low self-esteem • Neurotic behaviour • Chronic running away • Compulsive stealing • Scavenging for food or clothes • Being left alone or with unsuitable carers.
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Physical Abuse

This is when a child is physically hurt. It can involve hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning and biting. It includes giving a child poisonous substances, inappropriate drugs and alcohol. It can also occur when a parent/carer knowingly fails to protect a child from physical injury or suffering.

Indicators of physical abuse can be physical symptoms such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bruising • Cigarette burns • Bite marks • Scalds. 	AND / OR	Emotional/behavioural symptoms such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggression • Absence • Flinching • Withdrawn/watchful • Depression • Fear of other individuals.
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Sexual Abuse

Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent. The child may be dependent or emotionally immature or otherwise unable to truly comprehend what is happening or give informed consent. It may include indecent exposure, fondling, masturbation, oral sex, sexual intercourse or exposure to pornography.

Indicators of sexual abuse can be physical symptoms such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain/bruising in genital areas • Sexually transmitted illnesses • Discomfort • Pregnancy. 	AND / OR	Emotional/behavioural symptoms such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggression • Absconding • Nightmares or bedwetting • Inappropriate sexual knowledge • Self-harm.
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Emotional Abuse

The actual or likely adverse effect on the child's emotional and behavioural development, caused by persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection. This can be a consistent lack of love or affection, or continual taunting, verbal attacks and shouting.

Indicators of emotional abuse can be physical symptoms such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure (including non-organic) to thrive. • Speech disorders • Developmental delay. 	AND / OR	Emotional/behavioural symptoms such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neurotic behaviour • Self-harm • Poor play skills • Fear of making mistakes • Fear of other individuals.
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Garbarino, J and Garbarino, AC (1994) described a number of components of emotion abuse including;

- Rejecting:** The abuser refuses to acknowledge a child's worth and legitimacy of a child's needs.
- Isolating:** The abuser cuts the child off from normal social experiences and contact and prevents the child from making friendships – makes the child believe he/she is alone in the world.
- Terrorising:** Abuser verbally assaults the child, creates a climate of fear, bullies and frightens the child – makes the child believe the world is capricious and hostile.
- Ignoring:** The abuser deprives the child of essential stimulation and responsiveness stifling emotional growth and intellectual development.
- Corrupting:** The abuser missocialises the child, stimulating them to engage in destructive anti-social behaviour. Then reinforces that deviance and makes the child unfit for normal social experiences.
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Bullying

In a school/college environment the most common type of abuse a mentor may encounter is bullying. A bullied student may be facing threatening behaviour, physical violence, insults or isolation from their peers and this may be taking place inside or outside of the school environment.

Cyber bullying is also an increasing problem, where threatening behaviour towards a young person is facilitated by mobile phones, social networks or online forums. Due to the nature of technology, a child facing online bullies can be under additional duress as unlike face-to-face situations, they are unable to 'hide' from their abusers. It can happen 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Equally, they may be facing abuse from anonymous individuals or even whole groups of people that they have never met.

Any form of bullying behaviour is unacceptable. If your learner discloses to you that they are being bullied in any way or you have a strong suspicion that it may be the case, you must treat the matter seriously and treat it as a disclosure as you would for any other form of abuse (more information on how to deal with disclosures is included later in this section).

Radicalisation and Extremism

Since July 2015 schools and colleges have had a legal duty to protect children from radicalisation (the PREVENT duty). This is similar to their duty to protect children from other harms (e.g. drugs, gangs, neglect and sexual exploitation). Schools and colleges are also expected to build resilience to radicalisation by promoting "British values", encouraging debate and enabling pupils to challenge extremist views

Assessment of an individual engaged with an extremist group, cause or ideology includes some/all of the following indicators:

- Spending increasing time in the company of other suspected extremists
- Changing their style of dress or personal appearance to accord with the group;
- Their day-to-day behaviour becoming increasingly centred around an extremist ideology, group or cause

- Loss of interest in other friends and activities not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause
- Possession of material or symbols associated with an extremist cause (e.g. the swastika for far right groups)
- Attempts to recruit others to the group/cause/ideology
- Communications with others that suggest identification with a group/cause/ideology

If your learners disclose anything that gives you cause for concern you should treat it as a safeguarding issue.

Effects of abuse

Abuse in all its forms can affect a child at any age. The effects are so damaging that if untreated it may follow an individual into adulthood. For example, an adult who has been abused as a child may find it difficult or impossible to maintain a stable, trusting relationship, become involved with drugs or prostitution, attempt suicide or even abuse a child in the future.

There have been a number of studies which suggest that certain groups of children/young people are at increased risk of abuse through various factors such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, isolation or a powerlessness to protect themselves/adequately communicate that abuse has occurred - for example, those with learning difficulties or disabilities, from ethnic minorities or who identify as LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender).

What to look for (BASELINES)

Once you get to know your learner you will recognise what is normal behaviour for them. If this behaviour changes it may be an indication that something is wrong. Below are some examples of body language. You should approach this with caution, as it is not an exact science. For example crossing your arms might not mean you are being defensive – it might mean your neck is aching and this is the most comfortable position to sit in. It is important that you have a basic understanding of body language which may tell you that the learner you are with is under some sort of pressure or stress. However, it is important to know what your learners “baseline” or normal behaviour is, before using body language as a measure. Your baseline is what you normally do; it is when you are behaving in an unusual way that gives an indication that something is wrong.

B	<p>Blinking, Breathing, Blood Vessels</p> <p>Blinking – fast blinking, telling lies?</p> <p>Breathing – breathing can change. Do they have asthma or are they anxious about something?</p> <p>Blushing – are they embarrassed or do they just fancy you? Both of these could be an indication of rising blood pressure.</p>
A	<p>Adaptors</p> <p>Pen clicking, playing with a necklace, playing with hair or earrings. Could mean pressure is building or it might just be something they always do</p>
S	<p>Sweating, Swallowing</p> <p>Swallowing more could mean they are getting nervous about something.</p> <p>Sweating on the upper lip or hands.</p>
E	<p>Eye Contact</p> <p>Very difficult as it can mean many different things. Some people might think that eye contact is for ‘pulling’ the opposite sex yet others may find it sexually threatening. People who are uncomfortable will not make eye contact, but be aware as some cultures avoid eye contact.</p>
L	<p>Leakage</p> <p>When bits of the body start doing things involuntarily. For example when sitting at a table with somebody the top half of the body may be giving out the signal that everything is fine but under the table the leg is going up and down or they are tapping their feet.</p>
I	<p>Indicators</p> <p>Fidgeting/doodling/not really listening. They may have drifted off and their mind is somewhere else or they might be doing it to block what they don’t want to listen to.</p>
N	<p>Nodding</p> <p>When you bring somebody back from their mental trip out of the room they nod, or say yes, yes, yes after everything you say. Trying to give you the impression that they have been with you all the time. Be warned that some people do this all the time.</p>
E	<p>Expressiveness</p> <p>The blank look that goes with indicators that they are not with you.</p>
S	<p>Space</p> <p>Body space – British people tend to like a metre. People from other cultures can get very close. A reaction that gives a change in space between you and your learner could mean something is wrong. This is why you step backwards if somebody says something you don’t like.</p>

How to deal with a disclosure of abuse from your learner

Although disclosures of abuse are very rare in the history of Aimhigher mentoring, we want all mentors to be prepared. This is general guidance on how you should respond if you feel that a young person is going to disclose something to you:

- React calmly so as not to frighten the learner
- Take what the learner says seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what a learner who has a speech disability and/or differences in language says
- Reassure the learner, but do not make promises of confidentiality, which might not be feasible in the light of subsequent developments
- Keep questions to the absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said
- Tell the learner that he/she is not to blame and that it was right to tell someone
- Make a full record of what had been said, heard, and/or seen as soon as possible.

Do: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be accessible and receptive• Take it seriously• Reassure the child that they are right to tell you• Make careful notes• Get prompt help and assistance.	Don't: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jump to conclusions• Try to force disclosure• Speculate or accuse• Make promises you can't keep• Promise confidentiality• Take a statement.
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If you have a disclosure situation, it is important that you make notes. Your notes should:

1. Be purposeful
2. Separate fact and fiction
3. Be assumption free
4. Avoid loaded language
5. Be mindful of an individual right to access to records
6. Use plain English
7. Be accurate
8. Be legible
9. **Confidential (see below) – BUT DO NOT PROMISE CONFIDENTIALITY.**

As a mentor you are working within a general confidentiality and safeguarding framework. Confidentiality also extends to where you keep your notes including on hard copy or on a memory stick. Keep your notes and information safe and you must always guard against accidental access by people around you such as other learners, family, friends and flatmates. Your information and notes on Learners including personal details and your handbooks should not be shared with anyone outside of the scheme except in the following cases:

- I. A child protection disclosure
- II. A police investigation
- III. If the learner or anyone else is in danger.

Disclosure Notes - National Government Guidance

When making notes relating to any young person or situation, please use the following government guidance and if in doubt contact your university co-ordinator

7 Key Rules	7 Key Questions
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information2. Be open and honest with the person from the outset3. Seek advice if in doubt (can be done without disclosing identity)4. Share with consent where appropriate (and without it if it is in the public interest to do so)5. Consider safety and well-being of the person involved6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure7. Keep a record of your decision and what you share.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Is there a clear and legitimate purpose for sharing?2. Does the information identify a living person?3. Is it confidential?4. Do you have consent to share?5. If you do not have consent, is there sufficient public interest to share the information?6. Are you sharing appropriately and securely?7. Have you properly recorded the information sharing decision?

'Suspected Abuse' Situations

You have a responsibility to report **ANY concern** you might have that a learner is being subjected to any form of abuse or if you have been informed of an illegal situation. It is equally your responsibility to report if your learner has not directly made a disclosure but you have reason to suspect an abuse situation, even if you feel you may have got it wrong. It is better to report it and it turn out to be nothing of concern than not report it at all. All staff involved in the scheme will support this approach. If you have a concern you should speak with the school co-ordinator. If this is not appropriate, every school has a designated teacher who has specific responsibilities for the co-ordination of child protection procedures within the school and for liaison with social services and other agencies.

Key Message #1

Always put the wellbeing of young people first and tell somebody!

Mentoring Behaviour

Mentors should not behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question your suitability to work with children or act as a role-model. If you have any uncertainty whether you are using good practice, seek guidance from your University or school co-ordinator.

Protect yourself

Although it is important to follow Key Message #1, is also important to protect yourself by avoiding any conduct that could be misinterpreted as 'grooming behaviour'. To avoid any possibility of claims of abuse against you, the following notes are provided to give you general guidance.

- Avoid doing anything that is not totally open

- Avoid any favouritism and make sure you treat all learners the same way
- Avoid making unnecessary physical contact with any student
- If you are in a situation where contact is unavoidable / impractical, ensure that you have the learners consent and explain clearly what you are doing while you are assisting them. Do this openly and in sight of other participants
- Avoid making contact with any student's genitalia and in the case of girls their chest as well.
- Do not make any sexually suggestive comments to any learners
- Do not engage in rough physical or provocative games or play with any learners
- If physical contact is inevitable it is essential that participants consent to the methods of lifting, carrying and contact that will take place.

If the learner becomes unwell either take them to reception or attract the attention of a teacher immediately. Don't try and deal with it yourself. All schools have qualified First Aiders and when you first arrive in the school ensure you know what the procedure is to contact them in an emergency.

Appropriate mentoring behaviour

In addition to the points made previously, you may want to consider your approach carefully within certain areas of the scheme. The following guidance can be helpful if you are unsure of how to react to a specific scenario. Remember if you are ever uncertain about how to deal with any situation you can contact either your school or university co-ordinator - it is their role to assist you!

Dress and Appearance

Mentors should wear clothing which:

- Is appropriate to their role as a mentor in a school/college environment
- Is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative
- Does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding
- Is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans
- Is not considered to be discriminatory and is culturally sensitive.

Gifts

- The scheme does not accommodate the giving of gifts, however if you feel a gift is appropriate (For example educational support materials) please speak to the university co-ordinator in the first instance. Do not show any favouritism towards any of your learners
- Ensure that any gifts **given or received**, particularly in situations which may be misconstrued, are declared to the school/university co-ordinator.

Infatuations

- Occasionally a learner may develop an infatuation with a mentor. You should deal with these situations sensitively and appropriately to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned
- Be aware that infatuations carry a high risk of words/actions being misinterpreted and therefore you should make every effort to ensure that your own behaviour is above reproach at all times
- If aware of a developing infatuation, mentors should at the earliest opportunity contact the school co-ordinator so that appropriate action can be taken to avoid any hurt, distress or embarrassment
- Mentors should accurately report and record any incidents or indications that suggest a learner may have developed an infatuation

- If a learner makes approaches to you, or is overly familiar (verbally, physically or in written communication) you should remove yourself from the situation and report the matter to the school co-ordinator as soon as possible, also inform your university co-ordinator
- Mentors should always acknowledge and maintain professional boundaries.

Out of school activity

- No child or young person should be invited into the mentor's home. There should be no contact with the learner's family unless agreed beforehand
- Mentors should not make arrangements to meet with their learners outside of the school setting. The exception to this rule is, if a development in the mentoring relationship takes it to a different location. This requires the consent and agreement of the school, university co-ordinator and the learner's parents
- All activities need to be open and disclosed to prevent any misinterpretation.

Communication with learners

- Mentors **must not** give their personal contact details to learners, including their mobile telephone number and email addresses this includes instant messaging (see below). Contact with your learners should only be during mentoring sessions or through the Bright Links e-mentoring system. Any other form of communication is not acceptable
- Mentors must not take pictures or videos of their learners or other students
- Only make contact with learners for professional reasons and in accordance with the scheme's policy
- The only acceptable and permissible mode of communication, outside of the mentoring / e-mentoring sessions is through the school / college or university co-ordinator.

Social Networking Sites

- Under **NO CIRCUMSTANCE** allow your learners to connect with you online outside of Brightlinks. If they try to add/follow you, decline and then discuss in your face-to-face meetings why this is not possible / appropriate within the scheme
- Be aware that information that you may put onto social networking sites which often can include pictures are going into the public domain
- Set your own privacy levels at the highest possible
- Consider whether profile pictures of a "good night out" may send out the wrong messages about your suitability to work with children, to the people you are working with and their families
- Please be aware that policies adopted by most social networking sites are designed to protect the site owners rather than the user
- **Remember that future employers may look at the same information.**

Other people's behaviour

If during your involvement in the mentoring scheme, you are concerned about or made to feel uncomfortable by the behaviour of those around you, then please speak to your university co-ordinator or as an alternative you can speak to a member of the Aimhigher Co-ordination Team. If you are uncertain as to whether you are using good practice, are unsure about anything in this section or feel that you do not understand any part of it - seek guidance from your university co-ordinator or your School / College Co-ordinator.

Key Message #2

Be completely open in everything you do. Always ensuring somebody else knows where you are and what you are doing and never hesitate to gain approval for any activity you are planning especially if it is different to what you do week in,