

## **Safeguarding Policy**

### **Introduction**

HCL recognises its duty to promote the safeguarding of children, young people and adults in their activities and ensures that all employees understand their behaviour must always demonstrate these responsibilities.

Within the Children Act 2004 and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, there is a statutory duty for all organisations to have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults. In addition, The Care Act 2014 sets out a clear legal framework for how local authorities and other parts of the system should protect adults at risk of abuse or neglect.

Safeguarding is defined as protecting children and adults from maltreatment, preventing impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances and that adults are treated with care and dignity.

This Policy applies to all employees and the Board of Directors, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of HCL.

We will endeavour to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults by:

- Adopting safeguarding guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for employees and volunteers
- Recruiting employees and volunteers safely; ensuring all necessary checks are made and that induction is rigorous
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with employees and volunteers
- Sharing information about the Prevent Strategy with employees and volunteers which aims to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists, extremists or supporting terrorism and raising awareness of support and re-direction to individuals at risk of, or in the process of being groomed or radicalised into terrorist activity before any crime is committed
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know
- Providing effective management for employees and volunteers through supervision, support and training
- Reviewing our Policy and evaluating our practice annually to ensure standards remain consistently high

This Policy forms part of a suite of policies and procedures relating to the safeguarding responsibilities of HCL. This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Preventing Illegal Working Policy, Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy, Discipline and Performance Management Policy, Social Media Policy and HCL Employee Handbook.

All HCL employees should read Part One of the Department for Education's (DfE) guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (KCSiE) – "Safeguarding Information for all staff" (Page 5).

All HCL employees working with vulnerable adults should read the [Care and Support Statutory Guidance](#), Section 14 on Safeguarding.

HCL follows the recommended procedures established by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board – [www.hertssafeguarding.org.uk](http://www.hertssafeguarding.org.uk), and the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board.

### **Important Contacts**

HCL has appointed individuals who are responsible for dealing with any safeguarding concerns reported by employees. In their absence, a deputy will always be available for employees to consult with.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead within HCL can be contacted at Head Office on 01707 292724.

Other key contacts:

Children's Services	0300 123 4043 (including out of hours)
Safeguarding Adults from Abuse	01707 354556 (not 24 hour service)
Police (CAIU)	0845 33 00 222 (or in an emergency 999)
NSPCC	0808 800 5000

NB: There are Designated Safeguarding Leads in all schools and Care Homes. Please speak to your Manager, School Office or Care Home Manager in the first instance

### **Key Responsibilities**

All members of HCL employees and volunteers are required to:

- Understand and apply the Policy and Procedure in their activities
- Identify appropriate opportunities to undertake training to support them in their role
- Act appropriately at all times and challenge inappropriate behaviour in others
- Be able to recognise harm
- Know how to report any concerns in a timely and appropriate way

In addition, Senior Members of HCL, the Safeguarding Leads, and the Board of Directors are required to:

- Ensure employees are aware of this Policy
- Offer appropriate opportunities to undertake relevant training
- Ensure that the Policy and Procedure are adhered to
- Ensure that employees are aware of the process by which to report a concern
- Concerns reported are acted upon, clearly recorded and followed up in a timely and appropriate manner

### **Procedure**

#### Managing allegations against an adult who works with children or adults

An allegation is any information which indicates that an employee or volunteer may have:

- Behaved in a way that has, or may have caused harm
- Possibly committed a criminal offence related to a child or vulnerable adult
- Behaved towards a child or vulnerable adult, in a way which indicates that they are unsuitable to work within that workforce, including expressing or demonstrating an intention to harm

This applies to any child or vulnerable adult the employee or volunteer has contact with, within their personal, professional or community life.

To reduce the risk of allegations, all employees and volunteers should be made aware of safer working practices and be familiar with the guidance that is available to them.

### Personal Relationships

All employees and volunteers must be aware that direct or indirect contact made outside of the school or work environment as a result of the employee coming into contact with a pupil or vulnerable adult, may have an impact on their employment. To keep all employees and volunteers safe, the below must be followed (as outlined in the HCL Safeguarding Policy and Social Media Policy):

- Not to accept or respond to a pupil or vulnerable adult attempting to give their personal details e.g. telephone number and address to an employee. This also includes friendship requests for social media sites.
- Do not give any personal information to a pupil or vulnerable adult including your personal social network site accounts.

If a pupil or vulnerable adult confides in you, listen to their concerns and advise them that you will seek help from a professional and to reassure them you will report the matter immediately.

### Taking action

All allegations should be taken seriously. Confidentiality should not be promised and the person should be advised that the concern will be shared on a 'need to know' basis.

A written record should be made of the allegation using the informant's words, including date, time and place the allegation took place, what was said and anyone else present. This record should be signed and dated and immediately passed onto the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay.

If there is an immediate or imminent risk of significant harm to the child, young person or adult you should contact the [Local Authority Designated Officer](#) (LADO) or the Police and then speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead to inform them of the actions taken.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will follow the Managing Allegations against Adults who work with Children and Young People Policy in the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB) manual by referring the issue to the LADO.

If for any reason there are difficulties in following this Procedure, a referral should be made directly through the Whistleblowing Procedure or a referral made directly to Children's Services, Adult Care Services or the Police.

### Confidentiality

If an employee is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential, he or she should seek guidance from a Senior Manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead. Any actions should be in line with Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB) or the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (HSAB) information sharing protocols.

Information about a referral should be restricted to those who have a need to know in order to:

- Protect children and vulnerable adults
- Facilitate enquiries
- Avoid victimisation
- Safeguard the rights of the person about whom the allegation has been made and others who might be affected
- Manage disciplinary/complaints aspects

The named person for safeguarding may ask for further information in order to make any referrals. This information must not be discussed or shared with anyone else within HCL. Any paperwork records generated should be stored securely.

This policy will be reviewed as appropriate to sustain its effectiveness, and such changes will be brought to the notice of employees. It may be supplemented in appropriate cases by further statements.

The undersigned endorses this Safeguarding Policy on behalf of HCL:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ian Hamilton", followed by a period.

**Signed Off By:** Ian Hamilton Chief Executive on behalf of HCL Board

**Sign Off Date:** June 2021