****

**Safeguarding Policy & Procedure – 2021/22**

(Including Child Protection)

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**Funded by Tees Valley Combined Authority**

**Agreed by:** Scott Campbell, Programme Manager

**Date of Revision:** 14th July2021

**Next Review Date:** 1st August 2022

**Hartlepool Learning and Skills Service**

**Equality** **and** **Diversity** **Statement**

Hartlepool Learning & Skills Service is committed to the promotion of equality and diversity and ensuring that all its services are fully accessible. We recognise that people may be disadvantaged due to a range of circumstances and we will actively work to engage with all our learners, staff and volunteers to understand, reduce and eliminate this disadvantage within the Service

**Commitment** **to** **Quality**

Hartlepool Learning & Skills Service is committed to maintaining and improving the quality of its provision through the processes of continuous improvement and quality assurance. Effective quality processes are rigorously implemented to foster a culture of continuous improvement in all facets of the Service. However, given the largely adult population of learners, the term Safeguarding is referred to rather than Child Protection.

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1. Scope of Policy

This document outlines the policy of Hartlepool Learning & Skills Service on identifying and responding to concerns regarding the safeguarding and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults. This policy clearly explains the duty of the Service in relation to the safeguarding of all learners.

This policy, with the associated procedures, provides guidance for all staff who may come across concerns of this nature within the context of their work for the Service. This includes, but is not restricted to:

• All members of the Service workforce;

• Additional contracted/session staff such as Casual Tutor/Assessors;

• Other individuals, consultants and agencies contracted by the Service.

The policy and procedure for responding to concerns regarding the protection of vulnerable adults, when these are identified, are incorporated in this document following the Care Act 2014. Although the legislative and policy base is different when responding to the safeguarding needs for adults, the principles for staff remain the same as those for children and young people.

This policy has been developed incorporating other key legislation to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults such as Children’s Act 2004, Equality Act 2010 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2017.

**2. Policy** **Statement**

All staff, and those who undertake work on behalf of the Service, must maintain a focus on safeguarding children, young people, vulnerable adults and all learners, and this must be reflected both in sound individual practice and in our internal policies and guidance. All permanent and contracted staff working with children, young people and vulnerable adults must:

• Give highest priority to their safety and welfare;

• Recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children, young people and vulnerable adults;

• Respond appropriately to disclosure by children, young people and vulnerable adults of abuse;

• Respond appropriately to allegations against staff, other adults and against themselves;

• Understand and implement safe practice in carrying out their duties;

• Be alert to the risks which abusers, or potential abusers, may pose and vigorously pursue concerns to demonstrate a similar level of commitment;

• Be aware of the important role in relation to promoting the safety and welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults;

• Contribute, as necessary, to all stages of the Service’s safeguarding and protection processes.

It is on this basis that the Service will aim to:

• Ensure that staff and volunteers in a job or role that involves regulated activity (see Hartlepool Borough Council’s DBS Policy for definition) are checked as to their suitability through the DBS process. They will not be allowed to work until clearance has been obtained without written agreement from Head of Service.

• Raise the awareness to teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults and their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.

• Provide a systematic means of monitoring learners known or thought to be at risk of harm, and to contribute to assessments of need and support packages for those learners.

• Develop a structured procedure within the Service, which will be followed by all members of staff in cases of suspected abuse.

• Develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police.

• Provide an environment in which all staff, learners and visitors feel safe, secure, valued, respected and know that they will be listened to.

• Protect learners from the risk of radicalisation.

The Service recognises that it has a duty to help staff and learners through guidance, support and training to:

• Promote safe working practices in order to minimise risk to individuals and protect staff and learners within the Service;

• Support staff and learners to develop their knowledge and skills under the PREVENT Strategy. This will challenge extremist views to prevent harm to learners by individuals, groups or others who promote terrorism and violent extremism. The Service has a dedicated Prevent Policy.

* Support staff and learners to develop their knowledge and skills relating to modern salvery, county lines and other localised matters.

**3. Context**

The Service recognises its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people, vulnerable adults and all learners. There are two main aspects:

• Arrangements to minimise risks;

• Arrangements to take all appropriate actions to address concerns and actively promote the concept of the ‘safe learner’.

The Service will ensure that robust internal arrangements are in place with respect to the responsibilities and duties for assuring safe and secure provision for children, young people and adult learners across all remits and includes work undertaken by any subcontracted or project specific provision.

The Service acknowledges that within this context abuse can take the form of:

* **Physical abuse** – including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, misuse of restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.
* **Domestic violence or abuse** – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse or so called ‘honour’ based violence.
* **Sexual abuse –** including sexual assault, indecent exposure, harassment, photography or acts to which the individual did not, or could not, consent.
* **Psychological abuse** – including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services.
* **Financial or material abuse** – including theft, fraud, internet scamming and exploitation/pressure in relation to wills, property, inheritance or transactions;
* **Modern slavery** – including slavery, human trafficking, forced labour or domestic servitude. The Service has a dedicated Modern Slavery Policy and Procedure which should be read alongside this Policy and Procedure.
* **Discriminatory abuse** – including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.
* **Organisational abuse** – including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital, care home or in relation to care provided in an individual’s own home.
* **Neglect or acts of omission** – including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services or the withholding of the necessities of life.
* **Self-neglect** – including a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one’s personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding with no other perpetrator.
* **County Lines** – refers to a model used by criminal gangs to supply drugs. These gangs frequently exploit children, young people and vulnerable adults to courier drugs and money to other areas. Some vulnerable adults have their homes taken over by the gangs (cuckooing) using force or cohesion.
* **FGM** – refers to Female Genital Mutilation and the Department for Education’s Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019 explains that FGM comprises ‘all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs’. FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences.

**4. Overview of Safeguarding**

Safeguarding practices are applied to children and young people up to the age of 18 and are equally applied to vulnerable adults. The term also includes those aged 18-20 who have been looked after by a Local Authority from 16 or who have a Learning Difficulty and/or Disability.

The Working Together to Safeguarding Children Act 2017 confirms professionals and Local Authorities responsibility regarding the protection, safeguarding and welfare of all children. It confirms that safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility and for services to be effective each professional should play their full part.

This is underpinned by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1992 which highlights the importance of treating every child as a unique person, which helps to ensure that all of their needs are met in a way that is specific to them, enabling them to have a high quality of life.

Similar standards of protection are also applied to vulnerable adults under the Care Act 2014. This places responsibility on professionals to report and prevent abuse or neglect and then stop it quickly when it happens.

The main categories of people covered by this definition of an adult include people aged over 18 with:

* Learning Difficulty and/or Disability;
* Physical or sensory impairments;
* Mental illness including dementia;
* Detained in custody or under a probation order;
* Considered at risk due to problems with substances or vulnerable due to other circumstances such as asylum seekers.

Whilst it is important to recognise that certain groups of people are legally defined as at risk, and the Service must have relevant policies, procedures and practice in place to cover them. It is better to have inclusive and integrated ‘safer’ practices that apply to all staff and learners. This creates a safer environment for all and ensures that no one is left out which is imperative for the Hartlepool Learning & Skills Service.

**5. Procedure**

The Service procedures are in line with Hartlepool and Stockton-On-Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSSCP) and in the case of vulnerable adults, the Tees Valley Safeguarding Adults Board.

Staff and volunteers must adhere to the following procedure when a safeguarding issue has been raised:

* Immediately inform the Principal Safeguarding Officer and/or Designated Safeguarding Officer and Head of Service.
* Complete an electronic Cause for Concern Form through Tootoot which is the dedicated Safeguarding Portal.
* The Principal Safeguarding Officer, Designated Safeguarding Officer, Head of Service (or Senior Manager within the service in their absence) will then contact the following numbers to report the concern and inform the Council’s Level 3 Designated Safeguarding Officer:
  + In relation to concerns about children and young people aged under 18 years; contact 01429 284284 or [childrenshub@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:childrenshub@hartlepool.gov.uk)
  + In relation to concerns about adults aged over 18 years; contact 01429 523390 or [dutyteam@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:dutyteam@hartlepool.gov.uk)
* If the concern is outside of normal office hours or during Bank Holidays then contact should be made with the Council’s Emergency Duty Team for both adults and children who can be contacted 24 hours on 01642 524552.

**6. Tootoot Platform**

Tootoot is a Digital Safeguarding and Pastoral Support Platform which has been implemented by the Learning & Skills Service.

It is a simple and effective tool which can be accessed by learners and staff members through a range of devices including computers, tablets and mobile phones. The platform supports the fast, effective and confidential resolution of learner concerns whilst offering substantial benefits for the service such as providing:

* All learners with a trusted and confidential reporting tool so they can disclose their concerns such as money management, cyberbullying, domestic abuse or mental health which can then be responded to and support offered by the dedicated Safeguarding and Pastoral Support Teams.
* A paperless incident recording and monitoring system which will improve communication and provide a timely response to any concerns. Tootoot also allows additional staff members to be tagged to the incident with a detailed audit log for the Safeguarding Team.
* A comprehensive reporting dashboard which provides real-time data to measures the effectiveness of interventions and allow the Service to understand trends in specific groups, locations, reporting times and learner involvement. This strengthens our learner offer and will facilitate the development of tailored hot topics for Tutor/Assessors.

All staff members will be given a login for Tootoot as part of their Induction within the Service and it will be made available to any learner.

**7. Safeguarding** **Structure**

Safeguarding concerns are discussed at management meetings in order to monitor, review and develop the work of the Service with reports provided through the Tootoot Platform.

**The Level 3** **Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSO)** within Hartlepool Borough Council are:

* John Lovatt (Head of Service) Adults, Telephone 01429-523903 (DSO for Adults)
* Penny Thompson (Head of Service) Children’s Hub and Partnerships, Telephone 01429-284878 (DSO for Children and Young People)

The **Lead Safeguarding Officer (LSO),** who has overall accountability and strategic responsibility for safeguarding groups at risk within the Service is Scott Campbell as Principle Officer. The **Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSO),** who have operational responsibility for safeguarding groups at risk within the Service whilst carrying out a co-ordination role are Malcolm Yorke, Andrea Willingham, Hannah Sutherst and Julia Ellis.

Staff and learners working in direct contact with individuals at risk on a day to day basis, i.e. staff involved in teaching and providing pastoral guidance, may come across signs of harm and/or abuse. Staff need to ensure that any concerns for wellbeing of a child, young person or vulnerable adult are reported to the Safeguarding Team. In instances where members of the Safeguarding Team are unavailable, staff should report any concerns to a member of the management team who will be able to advise on appropriate action and/or ring the relevant numbers shown in the Procedures Section.

Upon referral to the relevant Children and Young People or Adults Safeguarding Hubs, the Safeguarding Team will review and invoke the appropriate procedures to protect the child, young person or vulnerable adult, involving the Police as appropriate. Where staff members are unsure and need guidance about safeguarding issues, they are encouraged to seek support from a member of the Safeguarding Team.

Where an allegation of abuse or inappropriate behaviour is made against the PSO, the Head of Service will be informed. If the allegation relates to the Head of Service, the DSO will be informed and Council’s Level 3 Designated Safeguarding Officer. Where an allegation of abuse or inappropriate behaviour is made against a learner, in addition to actions set out in this section, the Head of Service will advise and guide in relation to Learner Disciplinary Procedure.

**8. Confidentiality**

All matters relating to safeguarding and child protection are confidential. However, information will be disclosed to staff about a learner on a ‘need to know’ basis. All staff have a professional responsibility and legal duty to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

It should be noted by staff, that promises of confidentiality cannot be given as the matter may develop in such a way that these might not be able to be honoured due to the Safeguarding Policy.

**9. Control** **Measures**

The Service reserves the right to refuse to admit a child, young person or vulnerable adult to a programme of study, or other managed activities, if it judges that the adaptations necessary to safeguard that individual’s wellbeing go beyond what is reasonable and proportionate.

As a condition of admission to certain programmes, where they will come into close contact with groups at risk, learners are required to undergo an enhanced Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) check prior to the commencement of placement activity. The Service is obliged to refuse admission if the DBS disclosure, on a reasonable assessment, would disqualify the individual from entering placement or practising within regulated activities.

The Service does not consider it practicable to take steps other than those described above, to vet the backgrounds of learners who, during the course of learning and teaching activities and administrative activities, come into contact with other learners who are children, young people or vulnerable adults.

It should be noted that children of learners, staff members or visitors should not be present within buildings unless they are enrolled as learners, or are otherwise involved in an activity through the Service. If they are within the buildings then they remain the responsibility of their parents/guardian.

**10. Safer Recruitment**

The Service reserves the right to deny employment to individuals where DBS checks suggest that they might pose a danger. It also reserves the right, in accordance with its employment procedures, to suspend and/or dismiss staff members from employment or from undertaking a specific role with respect to that employment (e.g. academic staff acting as a personal tutor). This may be in circumstances where the individual acquires or extends a relevant criminal record, or where they have withheld information about their criminal record at the point of employment and is shown in the Council’s Recruitment Policy.

The Service obtains enhanced DBS disclosures for all staff and volunteers who are in a job or role which involves regulated activity as defined within the Council’s DBS Policy. The Council has established procedures to evaluate information about any staff member’s criminal record, and make sensible, fair and consistent judgements about whether the individual is safe to engage (or remain engaged) in the employment role.

**11. Staff Members**

The Service has a responsibility to safeguard staff members and volunteers alongside learners. It is therefore imperative that all staff members adhere to the Safeguarding Policy and the following key points:

* It is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have non work-related contact with any children, young people or vulnerable adults that they work with including all forms of electronic communication such as Social Media.
* Staff should only use electronic communication for reasons relating to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. It is not for general socialising and they should not add children, young people or vulnerable adults to their Social Media Pages such as Facebook. Staff should not use Social Media to conduct Council business unless they are authorised to do so by the Head of Service.
* If a child, young person or vulnerable adult discloses information or anything of a concerning matter arises via email, the staff members must follow the Safeguarding Procedure. Staff should not respond to the email and should report this matter to a member of the Safeguarding Team.
* Staff should seek to ensure that their personal profiles or any social networking sites should be set to the highest form of security to avoid children, young people or vulnerable adults from accessing personal information or seeing pictures of a personal nature.
* The guidance for texting, calling and email contact is the same as Social Media. Staff should not give learners their personal number and should use their work phone as their contact for all work related matters. Staff should not make disparaging or inappropriate comments about the Council, learners, members or colleagues on Social Media.
* Staff should not post remarks on Social Media that are or could be considered as harassment or bullying, defamatory, obscene, pornographic or sexually explicit, or likely to bring the Council, our partners, stakeholders, or colleagues into disrepute.

If an allegation is made against a staff member or volunteer then it must be dealt with following the Council Policy. Where necessary, the staff member or volunteer will be suspended but will receive a named contact within the Service. The Policy confirms that it is essential for any allegation of abuse made against a member of staff or volunteer to be dealt with very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection and, at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

The procedures for dealing with allegations are led by the Council’s HR Team and will be applied with common sense and judgement. The following definitions should be used when determining the outcome of allegation investigations:

* Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation;
* Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive;
* False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation;
* Unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence;
* Unfounded: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made.

It is extremely important that when an allegation is made, the Services makes every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. It will be investigated by the Council’s HR Team or a named Senior Manager and the report will be made available to the Head of Service.

**12. Responsibilities**

Due to the sensitive nature of issues which can arise, everyone involved in, or with knowledge of potential issue relating to the associated policies and procedures, must conduct themselves in an appropriate manner and treat all information in accordance with their role. In the interests of fairness and equality all parties must ensure, throughout the process, that no conflicts of interest and/or roles occur with the responsibilities for managers and staff members highlighted below:

**Managers:**

Are responsible for:

* Ensuring their staff have access to, and an awareness of, policies and procedures, including the Safeguarding Policy.
* Ensuring that all staff members are recruited through the Council’s Safer Recruitment Procedures including Right to Work in UK, DBS Check, two references and a comprehensive Service Induction.
* Regularly communicating these policies and any updates so they have a clear understanding of the standards expected within the Service.
* Ensuring attendance from all staff members on annual training relating to Safeguarding, Modern Slavery, Equality & Diversity, County Lines, Prevent, and any other localised training to protect learners.
* Ensuring that all staff members have access to the Tootoot Platform and report concerns in relation to Safeguarding/Pastoral Support.
* Providing all staff members with ID Badges following the existing Council Procedure available on the Intranet.

It is accepted by all parties that managers play an important role in the day-to-day supervision of their staff and they should seek initially to rectify problems through informal discussions without invoking formal procedures.

**Staff and Volunteers:**

Are responsible for:

• Adhering to and fully understanding all policies and procedures including the Safeguarding Policy.

* Complying with all safer recruitment processes and checks including DBS Checks conducted by the Council.

• Co-operating and participating fully with all stages of the procedure and being alert to signs and symptoms of possible abuse.

• Undertaking their duties in accordance with the behaviours and attitudes set out in the Council’s Code of Conduct.

• Knowing the standards of work performance expected and seeking clarification if unsure including matters of safeguarding.

• Recognising problems with meeting the standards required and bringing this to the attention of their manager at an early stage.

• Taking ownership of their own personal development by identifying their own development needs.

* Dealing with any disclosures of abuse from a learner, volunteer or staff member by following the procedure, informing the Safeguarding Team and providing a written account.
* Wearing their Council ID Badge at all times and challenging any learners, guests or stakeholders who do not have a Visitors ID Badge.
* Adhering and promoting the e-safety procedures and reporting any concerns to the Safeguarding Team.
* Reporting any safeguarding concerns immediately by following the procedure through the dedicated Tootoot Platform.

This is not an extensive list and all staff members should follow procedures to identify, respond and notify any concerns regarding the safeguarding and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults. All staff members and volunteers will receive annual safeguarding training alongside monthly ‘hot topics’ from the Safeguarding Team. The designated Safeguarding Team will be trained in their role and undertake regular and specialist safeguarding training/updates.

**13. Security including External Guests and Events**

Staff members must clearly display their ID card at all times within all premises including Victoria Buildings and Hartlepool Enterprise Centre and any other external buildings.

All learners and guests will be given a Visitors Badge at Reception which must be worn whilst on the premises. Spot checks are regularly carried out to ensure all are visibly wearing their ID or Visitors Badges. All staff are encouraged to challenge anyone not visibly wearing their ID badge/lanyard whilst in the building, these measures are in place for the safety and safeguarding of learners, staff members, volunteers and all other stakeholders within the Service.

All visitors are required to sign in at all Reception areas, whther internal or external to the Council and wait to be escorted by the member of staff whom you have come to visit who will ensure that they are never left on their own with learners including children, young people and vulnerable adults. This is to safeguard learners, volunteers and staff members within the Hartlepool Learning & Skills Service.

Please note that when large numbers of visitors are within the building such as Open Days and other events, there will be staff members available within all rooms. The visitors will also be escorted from Reception in groups to other areas of the building to ensure the safety and safeguarding of all stakeholders. The guests will be provided with the location of the emergency exits that they should use in the event of the alarms sounding and any other child protection/security information.

**14. Fire, Bomb and Terrorist Evacuation**

The Service has a comprehensive evacuation procedure which is clearly displayed for all learners, staff, volunteers and visitors providing information on:

* How to raise the alarm in the event of a ﬁre, gas leak or bomb scare;
* What to do if you hear the ﬁre alarm;
* The route you should take – including a plan of the route from each room or area in the building, and;
* The nearest assembly point – for example, at the corner of Tower Street.

The building has a dedicated signing-in sheet which should be checked upon evacuation to ensure the safety and safeguarding of all learners out of the building.

There will be regular opportunities and test evacuations within all buildings to ensure the procedure is being followed by all learners, staff, volunteers and guests/stakeholders within the Service.

**15. Online Safety**

Being online is an integral part of the lives for all learners including children, young people and vulnerable adults. Social media, online games, websites and apps can be accessed through mobile phones, tablets, computers, and laptops which all form part of learners’ online world.

The internet and online technology provides new opportunities for learning and growth, but it can also expose learners to new types of risks. E-safety is therefore a fundamental part of the safeguarding and child protection measures. Government guidance highlights the importance of safeguarding learners from harmful and inappropriate online material. The Service takes a whole organisation approach to online safety which helps ensure that staff, volunteers, learners, apprentices and stakeholders understand online safety.

The Service has a dual responsibility when it comes to e-safety; to ensure the online procedures keep learners safe, and to teach them about online safety both inside and outside the Service. The Learning & Skills Service therefore fosters an open environment in which learners are encouraged to ask any questions and participate in an ongoing conversation about the benefits and dangers of the online world.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into three areas of risk:

* Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views;
* Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children; and
* Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying.

The Service has a duty to limit exposure to the above risks from the IT system. As part of this process the Service has an appropriate filtering and monitoring system in place which is controlled by Northgate who are the Council’s ICT Provider. The sites are carefully monitored by the Council to ensure that it is not ‘overblocking’ and therefore does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what learners can be taught with regard to online learning.

The Service understands its responsibility for e-safety in relation to learners, staff, volunteers and other stakeholders and provides the following:

* All learners receive an e-safety leaflet as part of the Enrolment Pack. This provides useful information and resources which is also incorporated within the Induction Presentation for learners on all courses.
* All Tutor/Assessors receive continuous professional development such as annual Safeguarding Training so that they can effectively embed and teach learners about e-safety within all programmes.
* The computers and tablets used by learners and staff have online security software installed to block offensive content including sexual content, gambling sites and materials which may promoting terrorist/radicalisation.
* The Social Media platforms used by the Service have e-safety mechanisms to ensure any offensive content or bullying/harassment is reported following the Safeguarding Policy.
* All users of IT systems accept the IT Acceptable Use Statement when logging onto its machines and misuse is flagged to the Council’s ICT Team and the Safeguarding Team.
* All users must:
  + Not gain unauthorised access or make unauthorised modifications to computer materials (hacking);
  + Take all reasonable care not to distribute copyright materials in breach of copyright law;
  + Take all reasonable care not to distribute any materials which could be classed as defamatory, and;
  + Not display, access, modify, view, extract, store, distribute, print or otherwise process information which contravenes the law.

The above guidance aims to ensure that all learners feel safe both on and offline within any provision including remote programmes such as Distance Learning. The Tootoot Platform also supports this approach to safeguarding as learners can confidentially report any e-safety instances including online bullying or sexting which feeds directly into the Safeguarding Team.

**16. Arrangements for Supporting Learners under the age of 18**

The Service is not able to take on the authority, rights and responsibilities of parents in relation to their children, and it will not act in loco parentis in relation to learners who are under the age of 18 years. However, when enrolling a learner or apprentice who will be under the age of 18 when attending, the Service will consider a wide range of issues, including social interaction, provision of support and supervision as follows.

* Teaching and Support – The format of teaching support when under-18s are involved will seek to avoid single tutorials or supervisions. It is recognised, however, that one-to-one contact with Tutors, Assessors or members of the Safeguarding/Pastoral Support Team may be necessary.
* IT – The use of the internet by under-18s for study will be as for all other learners with security protocols in place on all ICT Devices.
* Liaison with Tutor/Assessors – The Service will inform/consult with the relevant Tutor/Assessor as early as possible about any learner who will be under the age of 18 who is being enrolled so that appropriate measures can be put in place to meet safeguarding obligations.

To support the safeguarding of all stakeholders, it is imperative that any learners under the age of 18 are not left alone with other learners and are provided with a named Mentor/Pastoral Support Officer.

**17. Transportation of Learners**

The Service acknowledges that there are occasions where children, young people and vulnerable adults may need to be transported due to the nature of their programme/activity. In these cases, staff should always seek to utilise approved transport arrangements in conjunction with their Line Manager e.g. the Council’s Taxi Contractor.

Where these travel arrangements are not possible and a member of staff is utilising their own transport, it is imperative that consent to transport the learners has been given in writing from parents/carers. In such cases, the member of staff must have permission from their Line Manager and hold appropriate business insurance as outlined by the Council. The Service also requires a minimum of two members of staff to be present during the transportation process.

**18. Visiting** **Learners** **at** **their** **Home**

The Service does not operate provision from individual learner’s homes, and as such the visiting of learners at their home is strictly prohibited.

In the event that there is a need to either provide or collect specific information/documentation from a learner, and this cannot be done by alternative means due to time constraints or external requirements, the member of staff must have permission from a Line Manager and hold appropriate business insurance as outlined by the Council.

**19. Monitoring and Reporting**

The policy and associated procedures will be monitored and reviewed regularly and systematically in line with the requirements of the Service.

It should be noted that non-observance of the policy, and associated procedures, should be reported immediately to a member of the Safeguarding Team. This will result in immediate action as all staff members should be aware of and responsible for following the Safeguarding Policy.

**20. Safeguarding** **Procedure (Flow Chart)**

**Upon request the Head of Service, PSO and or DSO will attend relevant meetings with the Safeguarding Board.**

**The Children and Young People and/or Adult Designated Safeguarding Lead will invoke the appropriate procedures issued by the Council and refer to Hartlepool and Stockton Safeguarding Children’s Board or Tees Valley Safeguarding Adults Board.**

**Concern is raised and reported to the relevant Hartlepool Borough Council Children and Young People and/or Adults Safeguarding Team.**

**Concern is raised and reported by a staff member or volunteer with the Designated Safeguarding Officer, Principal Safeguarding Officer and/or Head of Service through the Tootoot Safeguarding Portal.**