

Think Education - Safeguarding Policy

Background

Think Education is committed to creating a safe and secure learning environment for all students in the schools we support. This safeguarding policy outlines our commitment to promoting the welfare of all students and protecting them from harm, neglect, or abuse.

This policy ("Policy") applies to all staff, [including but not limited to senior managers, board of directors, board of advisors, paid staff, volunteers, facilitators, students and anyone working on behalf of Think Education.

We recognise that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. We are committed to a philosophy and practice which protects children and young people from harm.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- Safeguarding: protecting students from maltreatment, abuse, and neglect.
- Child protection: preventing harm to children or young people.
- Vulnerable adult: any adult aged 18 or over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age, or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

Policy Statement

Think Education acknowledges its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all students in the schools we support. We recognize that all children and young people have the right to protection from harm and abuse, regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, or any other factors. We also recognize our responsibility to protect vulnerable adults who may be at risk of harm.

Procedures

Think Education will implement the following procedures to ensure the safeguarding and welfare of all students in the schools we support:

1. Recruitment and Selection

Think Education will ensure that all staff who work with students undergo appropriate background checks and screening to ensure their suitability for working with children and young people. This includes checks of criminal records, professional references, and qualifications. The recruitment and selection process will adhere to safer recruitment practices including conducting relevant background checks such as criminal record checks, as well as a full understanding of the necessary qualifications and experience to work with children and young people.

2. Training and Support

All staff who work with students will receive appropriate training and support to enable them to recognize and respond to signs of abuse or neglect. This will include training on child protection and safeguarding procedures, as well as regular updates and refresher training.

3. Risk Assessment

Think Education will carry out regular risk assessments to identify any potential risks to the welfare and safety of students and take appropriate action to address these risks.

4. Code of Conduct

All staff who work with students will be required to adhere to a code of conduct that sets out clear expectations of behavior, and which includes guidance on appropriate boundaries and relationships with students. We will ensure that any activities we undertake which involve direct contact with children or young people are planned to take place in groups or with teachers, parents or caregivers in attendance and will avoid spending time alone with an individual child.

5. Reporting and Recording

Any member of staff who has concerns about the welfare of a student or who suspects that a student is at risk of harm must report their concerns immediately to the designated safeguarding officer. Think Education will then follow the appropriate procedures for reporting and recording concerns. Think Education will maintain accurate and up-to-date records of all safeguarding concerns, investigations, and actions taken, ensuring that they are kept confidential and secure.

6. Confidentiality

Think Education will respect the confidentiality of any information they receive about partner schools, students, and their families, and will only share information on a need-to-know basis, and only with those who are authorized to receive it.

7. Provision of Information

We will ensure that all teachers, parents, and caregivers are made fully aware of our work with the children and young people, and they are made aware that they can always remain present.

8. Complaints Procedure

We will ensure that an effective complaints procedure is in place, which will enable anyone who has concerns or complaints about safeguarding and child protection issues to raise them in confidence and without fear of reprisals.

9. E-Safety

Think Education will have clear guidelines on e-safety, including appropriate use of information on the internet and social media

Procedures following Allegations and Record-Keeping

Think Education recognizes the importance of recording and following clear procedures when allegations are made to ensure the safety and welfare of all children and young people. We are committed to maintaining accurate records and ensuring that concerns are shared appropriately with relevant agencies and parties.

Procedures for Recording Allegations

We will ensure that every allegation made by a child or young person is recorded accurately and promptly. The record will include the date, time, location, and nature of the allegation, as well as the name and contact details of the person making the allegation.

Procedures for Responding to Allegations

We will follow clear and transparent procedures when an allegation is made against Think Education. We will ensure open dialogue with the school authorities in question and, where appropriate, refer the matter to the Social Welfare unit and, in emergencies, the police.

Record-Keeping Procedures

We will keep records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately. All records will be kept securely and in accordance with relevant data protection legislation.

Sharing Concerns with Relevant Parties

We will share concerns with agencies, including applicable schools, who need to know and involve parents, children, and young people appropriately. We will ensure that all parties are informed of the actions taken and any ongoing support that is available.

Annual Review

Think Education is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all students in the schools we support. This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it remains effective and reflects any changes in legislation or best practice. We will ensure that all staff members are aware of any changes to the policy and receive appropriate training on these changes.