

# Schools' Climate Education



South Yorkshire

## **Schools' Climate Education South Yorkshire (SCESY) Safeguarding Guide**

At SCESY we believe that everyone has the right to live free from abuse of any kind, and that everyone should feel safe when participating in our activities. We all have a legal responsibility to do everything we can to keep children and vulnerable adults safe and to report any concerns we have about their welfare.

This guide is to help us:

- understand what safeguarding means,
- ensure that we take the necessary steps to keep everyone safe,
- meet any legal safeguarding requirements, and
- know what to do if you have a safeguarding concern

### **Safeguarding: what is it and what responsibility do we hold?**

Safeguarding means protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of health or development; ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable them to have the best outcomes. It also means protecting the rights of adults to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. Some adults are considered more “at risk” or vulnerable to abuse than others and these groups are protected by law (see section further down on adults at risk for more information).

It is the responsibility of every individual to do what they can to prevent harm to vulnerable groups, and to report any suspicions as soon as possible to the relevant authorities. As a SCESY member you also have a particular role in ensuring that safeguarding best practice is followed within SCESY.

This guide outlines safeguarding responsibilities relating to children and adults at risk.

### **What we expect of individuals and groups working with SCESY**

SCESY expects all individuals and groups working with us to take the following steps:

- Read and acknowledge this safeguarding guide.
- Seek advice from SCESY where you have questions about safeguarding.
- Operate in accordance with this guidance, including following the key prevention behaviours, reporting any safeguarding concerns to SCESY.

If you are a school or school group, to follow your own safeguarding procedures in the first place.

- Appoint a Safeguarding Lead, especially if they intend to do significant work with children or vulnerable adults at risk.
- Recognise that failure to follow this guidance could lead to an expulsion from SCESY.

SCESY recommends that its volunteers, if they are expected to be in contact with children, receive safeguarding children in education training.

**In the first place, SCESY Volunteers should read this guide.**

**SCESY volunteers should not have unsupervised contact with Children and Young People (CYP). This is recommended even where enhanced DBS checks are in place.**

It is the responsibility of schools to include SCESY staff in their relevant Risk Assessments for instance in relation to attendance at a SCESY Conference or hosted event.

### **Reporting a safeguarding concern**

If you suspect that a young person or vulnerable adult attending a SCESY meeting or activity is at risk of harm or is the victim of abuse, you must report it as soon as possible.

During a SCESY Schools Conference or hosted event please get in touch with the point of contact for safeguarding for the day (See SCESY Risk Assessment), who will then be in touch immediately with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

In the first instance, unless someone is at immediate risk of harm, please report all safeguarding concerns to the **Safeguarding Lead at the event ( for the purposes of the SCESY 2023 Conference this is Mark Lallemand – see Risk Assessment)** or by emailing [admin@scesy.org.uk](mailto:admin@scesy.org.uk). After this report it to your schools safeguarding lead. This should be done within 24 hours of the incident or concern being raised. We will then work with you to identify appropriate next steps – including contacting your Local Authority and/or Childline. SCESY can liaise with DSL and put in place preventative strategies for future conferences. All safeguarding concerns will be treated seriously.

**If someone is at immediate risk, please call 999 straight away** and follow your school's safeguarding policies and report the incident to the SCESY Safeguarding Lead for the event. After this report it to your schools safeguarding lead.

See below for important guidance on behaviour, communication and note-taking if you observe an incident of abuse or someone makes a disclosure of abuse to you.

### **Allegations and Concerns About SCESY Members & Volunteers**

If you have any concerns about the behaviour of a SCESY Volunteer in this respect, please refer to the SCESY Safeguarding Lead and your own school's safeguarding lead.

### **What constitutes abuse?**

[Content warning: links to description of signs and symptoms of different types of abuse]

In order to recognise when to report a safeguarding concern, you need to understand the main types of abuse, and their main signs and symptoms.

Children tend to be at risk from four main types of abuse:

- Neglect
- Physical abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual abuse

Please read [this page](#) which provides an outline of different forms of abuse and the signs to look out for in children.

In adults there are ten recognised forms of abuse, including in addition to the above:

- domestic violence
- modern day slavery
- discriminatory abuse
- financial or material abuse
- organisational or institutional abuse
- self-neglect

Please read [this page](#) which provides an outline of different forms of abuse and the signs to look out for in adults.

Note that poor mental health and/or self-harm do not come under the legal safeguarding framework. However, if you have a concern about an adult or a young person that you come into contact with please contact the Safeguarding Lead. If someone is in immediate danger, please dial 999.

### **Key behaviours for prevention**

A key element of safeguarding at any activity or event is prevention. To ensure everyone feels safe and risk of harm is minimised, you should always adhere to the following behaviours and practices. If you are ever unsure if a young person is under 18 and you are unable to ask, please act as if they are.

- **Never work alone.** Ensure that you are never in an enclosed or isolated space alone with children, young people or adults at risk. Always work in pairs if possible or take your activity into a shared or public space.

**SCESY volunteers should not have unsupervised contact with Children and Young People (CYP). This is recommended even where enhanced DBS checks are in place.**

- Keep room doors open if possible, especially when working with a young person or adult at risk.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries.
  - o Physical contact with young people should be of the kind that they can initiate or cease whenever they wish (high fives rather than hugs).
  - o Remain fully clothed at all times. Do not change your clothes in view.
  - o If you need to show a young person to the toilet, remain outside.

- o Do not single out a young person for special treatment or individual attention.
- o Do not give a young person gifts or money, even to access transport or buy food at your event.
- o Do not arrange to meet a young person alone outside of the event or activity.
- o Do not offer a young person a lift in a private car.
- Do not give out or accept personal contact details from under 18s. This includes “friending” on social media through personal accounts.
- o All contact with under 18s should be through [admin@scesy.org.uk](mailto:admin@scesy.org.uk) and at least one committee member (with DBS) cc’ed in.
- o with adults we do not suggest that you withhold contact details, but if you are concerned about someone’s vulnerability try to adhere to the guidance above (eg. always cc: another group member into any communications with them). In all cases you should ensure that you are complying with SCESY GDPR guidance. ([Privacy policy – Schools' Climate Education South Yorkshire \(scesy.org.uk\)](https://www.scesy.org.uk/privacy-policy) )
- Do not provide alcohol for under 18s. If there are unaccompanied under 18s at your event, it is best practice to make any refreshments alcohol-free. If this is not possible, have a means of clearly identifying under 18s to avoid giving them access to alcoholic drinks (eg. colour wristband system).
- Do not fundraise from under 18s or adults at risk. Ensure your group only fundraises from over 18s and people who you are sure are donating with full understanding of their actions.

#### Group meetings

When planning meetings, please consider the following to prevent any safeguarding concerns from arising:

- Check whether anyone attending is under 18 or has any other risk factors. It is expected that most contact that SCESY has with young people will be through a school setting. All attendance by under 18s needs to be with **direct teacher or parent/guardian supervision**. Teachers should refer to their own school’s safeguarding policy in this regard. Any non-school attendance by a student (for example home educated) must be with a parent or responsible adult. If in doubt it is generally sensible to assume that there are vulnerable people in the room. While not strictly a safeguarding measure, this is also a good time to consider access needs.
- Set clear ground rules. This should be standard practice anyway, but where more vulnerable people are present it is even more important to ensure that they have space to be heard and are not at risk from bullying or abusive behaviour by other attendees. Remember that seemingly mild “bad” behaviour (consistent interrupting, for example) can make a new person, particularly if they are young or have other barriers to speaking up, feel at best unwelcome and at worst unsafe.
- Appoint a facilitator or chair for your meeting who is confident to implement the ground rules and keep the meeting to time (a younger person may feel less comfortable going home late from a meeting than an adult).
- Appoint and share with the meeting a safeguarding lead within the group if the designated Safeguarding Lead is not present. This could be a relatively informal role – someone who looks out for others and makes sure that young or vulnerable people have someone to go to if they need to.

- Ensure that everyone at the meeting has read and understood this guide, the ground rules and any guidance or procedures that your group has. Check that they are clear on what to do if they are told or witness anything of concern.

### **Other events and activities**

While we want you to be able to get excited about planning and running creative and impactful events, we also ask that you consider how you keep participants safe. You should:

- Fill out a risk assessment (See SCESY Risk Assessment Form) and be sure that everyone is clear what to do if certain incidents occur.
- Record names, contact info and date of birth of all attendees who are not under school supervision (e.g., home ed) so you know who is under 18 (in advance if possible). If you're unsure about someone's age, act as if they are under 18.
- Appoint a safeguarding lead (someone from your group) for the event and ensure that attendees know who they are.
- Ensure SCESY Volunteers attending the event have read this guide and are familiar with the procedure for recording and reporting concerns, as well as the key behaviours.
- Write and adhere to clear ground rules. This is good practice at any event regardless of who is coming but if you have more vulnerable individuals in the room, it is doubly important to ensure that the space feels safe from bullying, intimidating or otherwise inappropriate behaviour.

### **Additional points:**

- During a SCESY Schools Conference, all participating CYPs must be clear that mobile phones or other personal devices are not to be used.
- School staff to supervise this.

Any photographs or videos taken during workshop sessions cannot feature CYP without written consent from the CYP, if able to give this, their parents/carers, or in the case of a looked after child, written consent from the Local Authority and social worker.

### **Digital communications**

In digital communications, particularly with young people, adherence to the key behaviour guidance above is as important as during face-to-face engagement. In addition, you should do the following to ensure young people and vulnerable adults are safe in online spaces you host:

- When working with under 18s you must gain opt-in permission to use their digital images and be clear about what the images will be used for. This includes photographs, videos or screenshots of online calls. Permission must come from their parent or responsible adult or teacher following school safeguarding policy. You can use our permission form (See Appendix C)
- Avoid private communications with under 18s. This includes social media, and private messaging on platforms such as WhatsApp and within the chat on webinars.
- Any pre-recorded video material provided by external participants for use in webinars will be screened beforehand for appropriateness.

- If you are hosting a webinar where young people will be present, please follow the guidance above for face-to-face events as closely as possible. Some ways to ensure that young people are safe in your online spaces include:

1. Making sure your online space is password protected to prevent uninvited participants.
2. Using appropriate usernames (not offensive and correctly identify attendees by name/school).
3. Schools are responsible for holding attendance registers for online conference participants. Home educators should provide basic information about participants in advance to SCESY at [admin@scesy.org.uk](mailto:admin@scesy.org.uk), including date of birth to know who is under 18. You can also ask about access needs.
4. Disabling the private chat function so you can see all communications in the chat box.
5. Having two hosts, one to keep an eye on participants and another to facilitate.
6. Dropping into break-out rooms to check how the conversation is going.
7. Making use of the mute button! Ensure you're familiar with the host controls so you can facilitate effectively and cut off any harmful behaviour such as consistent use of bad language or sharing of inappropriate content by participants.
8. Considering a friendly, informal check in with the young participants afterwards.

### **Adults at risk**

Any hosted SCESY meeting which does not involve schools may have adults at risk. An adult might be considered at risk if they are aged 18 years or over and:

- have needs for care and support (whether or not the local council is meeting any of those needs) and;
- are experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- as a result of those care and support needs are unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

An adult at risk may be a person who:

- Is elderly and frail due to ill health
- Has a learning disability
- Has a physical disability and/or a sensory impairment
- Has mental health needs including dementia or personality disorder
- Has a long -term illness /or condition
- Misuses substances or alcohol
- Is unable to make their own decisions and is in need of care and support

- Is a young adult, over the age of 18, who has care and support needs and is 'in transition' from children to adults' services
- Is a carer (looking after another person with care and support needs)

This list is not exhaustive, other people might also be at risk. If you are in doubt as to whether an adult should be considered at risk, please record your concerns and contact the Safeguarding Lead at the earliest opportunity. If anyone at your event or activity is at immediate risk of harm dial 999.

### **More info: Guidance on recording abuse**

A safeguarding concern could come to your attention via a variety of means. You might observe something, someone might disclose an allegation of abuse about themselves or someone else, or someone might report something to you that they have seen or suspected. In all scenarios it is vitally important to keep a cool head, keep your communication compassionate, objective and honest, and record as much factual information about what has happened as you can. You should not in any circumstance tell someone that you will keep a disclosure a secret, as you have a legal obligation to report any concerns that you have.

The following guidance will help you to engage and record appropriately if a concern comes to your attention.

#### **1. Be a reassuring presence.**

One of the most important steps you can take to help children or vulnerable people is to reassure them that they are safe and that they have done the right thing. If you are panicking or appear alarmed, they will be too. Make sure your behaviour mirrors your words.

- Be truthful – never tell a lie to make someone feel better.
- Frame it positively – use constructive, positive, peaceful language.
- Be consistent
- Be compassionate – use appropriate tone of voice and body language.
- Explain – keep them informed of positive developments so they have ownership over their part in the situation.
- Offer a drink of water or juice (no food unless they are with you for an extended period of time).
- **Do not have physical contact** – regardless of whether it seems appropriate or not, it is best to refrain from physical contact to maintain a professional boundary. This is especially important as you may not know the extent of a person's vulnerability, and to maintain a bond of trust your behaviours must be completely professional.
- Work as a pair with another member of your group or trusted adult.
- Support but don't give advice.
- Avoid commenting on what they have told you. Reporting or disclosing abuse can generate a mix of emotional responses and your reactions may be unwelcome or inappropriate.

Some examples of reassuring things to say include: “You've done the right thing by asking us for help, we are going to make sure you get the help you need”. “If you wait here with us you will be safe until more help arrives” or “This is a safe place to wait until more help arrives”.

## **2. Recording and reporting**

You may need to record an incident that you have observed or that someone else has reported or note down a disclosure prior to notifying the SCESY Safeguarding Lead. Always follow these guidelines to ensure that your information is as accurate as possible, and you are supporting the person appropriately.

- Never promise that you will keep it a secret. Ensure you inform anyone about to give you information that you will share it with the relevant people to ensure the safety of everybody involved. If this means that they then do not tell you something, you must accept this. Please record the incident anyway and report it to the Safeguarding Lead.
- Listen attentively, and if you are unsure about any details someone is telling you, ask for clarification (without making suggestions). For example, you may say “please could you repeat that last bit” or “what do you mean by that?”. You should NOT say “so, you mean that such and such happened?” because that is suggesting your version, and not listening to their facts.
- Listen and record in chunks, rather than trying to listen to the whole lot and then writing everything down once the individual has gone. If another group member or trusted adult is there with you, it may be easier for one of you to talk and one of you to keep notes.
- If applicable, repeat the record you’ve taken back so the person giving the information can check the accuracy.

Key information to record:

- The date, time and location your notes were taken.
- Make sure you record the identity of the person supplying the information, or the identity/description of the subject of your observations.
- Record the name and contact details if possible, of anyone else present during the record taking.
- Record as much factual information about the incident, report or concern as possible. Take care to only record what is said or what is observed – do not draw conclusions or include your opinions in your report.
- Record any action that you took as a result of the report or observation.

### **First Aid**

During a schools’ conference SCESY staff must ensure that the setting and schools provide enough staff trained in first aid,

Consideration must also be given to any specific hazards on site.

Emergency services need to be informed of the location of the conference.

School &/or setting must keep a record of any treatment given.



Some accidents are reportable to the HSE under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR).

Emergency situations:

All schools should have arrangements in place for dealing with emergencies for all activities, wherever they take place including school trips.

### **Information Sharing**

See guidelines from the Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership [8.5 Information Sharing \(proceduresonline.com\)](#) for more on this. Also refer to your Local Authority CSP.

### **SEN**

Schools working with SCESY should make SCESY aware of any SEND needs which need to be taken into account before a conference, so that SCESY can liaise with workshop providers to ensure that all CYP attending are included. These needs might relate to any of the four main areas of SEND:

- Social & emotional mental health difficulties
- Sensory and/or physical needs
- Communication & interaction
- Cognition & learning

### **Visits to Settings**

**SCESY volunteers should not have unsupervised contact with CYP in settings** with or without the relevant enhanced DBS check. They must be able to provide evidence of their DBS status and provide photographic evidence of their identity on arrival in any educational establishment. However, **SCESY volunteers should not have unsupervised contact with Children and Young People (CYP). This is recommended even where enhanced DBS checks are in place.**

### **Bullying**

SCESY volunteers should look out for any signs of bullying between CYP when working with them at a conference or in an educational establishment. All instances of perceived bullying must be reported to the relevant school staff. See the Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership [3.1.1 Bullying \(proceduresonline.com\)](#) or your Local Authority CSP for more information on what constitutes bullying and for useful indicators.

### **CYP at Risk of Extremism/Radicalisation**

SCESY volunteers should look out for any signs of CYP who might appear vulnerable to extremism or radicalisation when working with them at a SCESY hosted event or in an educational establishment. All instances of perceived extremism/radicalisation must be reported to the relevant school staff. See the Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership [3.4.3 Children Vulnerable to or from Extremism](#)

[proceduresonline.com](http://proceduresonline.com)) or relevant Local Authority CSP for more information on what constitutes radicalisation or extremism and for useful indicators.

#### Reasonable Force, Searching & Screening

SCESY volunteers need to be aware of the guidelines on this subject from the Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership, or relevant LACSP [reasonable force searching screening sept 22.pdf](http://safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org) ([safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org](http://safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org))