



PREVENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Effective for employees, students, directors, and volunteers on or after 1st September 2023

Next Review due: September 2026

Please Note: A formal, full review of this document will take place on a 3-yearly basis. However, in the interim, the document will be updated as necessary to remain current with any statutory legislation and/or significant Government guidance updates on the subject.

DOCUMENT CONTROL

DOCUMENT TITLE: PREVENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE
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CHANGE AUTHORITY: THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Frances Deeley

Signature: _____  _____ **Date:** 20.07.2023

Designation: Chief Executive Officer **Review Date:** September 2026

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Any person seeking to alter this document must consult the author before making any change.

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The person making the alteration must indicate every change between the previous (approved) document version and the altered document version.

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Prevent Policy And Procedure

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1. Our commitment

ESS Education and Support Services are committed to ensuring that the Prevent Policy and Procedure and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy And Procedure are managed appropriately; to ensure that:

A safe environment is provided by ESS Education and Support Services, for children and vulnerable adults, at all times; including every effort being made to help keep children and vulnerable adults safe from the threat of radicalisation.

ESS Education and Support Services is able to take appropriate action to protect young people, who are suffering, or at risk of suffering harm from radicalisation and other Safeguarding matters (various forms of abuse – see Safeguarding Policy for further details). Action will be taken whenever ESS Education and Support Services identifies a risk of harm occurring in the physical world or online.

ESS Education and Support Services follow Safer Recruitment best practices, to check the suitability of staff, Directors, and volunteers to work with, or be in proximity to, children and vulnerable adults.

Staff and Directors are trained to recognise the signs of potential radicalisation or other forms of abuse and take appropriate action in line with ESS Education and Support Services' procedures and with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021.

ESS Education and Support Services ensures that it regularly consults with learners about how safe they feel and about their general welfare, and action is taken where learners tell us they do not feel safe.

ESS Education and Support Services takes steps to support and protect the most vulnerable learners, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, and will support other organisations, such as the police, in the event of a case involving ESS Education and Support Services' students; for example a student becoming missing children etc.

To ensure ESS Education and Support services sufficiently and effectively meets its obligations in relation to Safeguarding, Child Protection and Prevent; the decision was made to separate the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy from the Prevent Policy; to enable each document to focus on the elements to which it appertains. However, both policies touch upon all elements (Safeguarding, Prevent and Child Protection) as these important subjects are often woven together when an incident arises.

2. Objectives

Our objectives are:

- To ensure we establish and maintain an environment where staff and volunteers feel safe, are encouraged to talk and be listened to, when they have concerns regarding the safety and well-being of a child, young person or young adult.
- That learners feel safe to approach staff if they have concerns and are protected, when in ESS Education and Support Services care, from the threat of radicalisation or abuse. We will also ensure that learners who have additional needs or unmet needs are supported appropriately.

3. Key contacts

- Fran Deeley, Chief Executive Officer – fran.deeley@myess.co.uk
- Kelly Criddle, Chief Operations Officer, Deputy DSL – Kelly.criddle@myess.co.uk
- Tyler Whitehouse, Chief Strategy Officer, Designated Safeguarding Officer, - Tyler.whitehouse@myess.co.uk

Note: If a situation arises in which none of the Safeguarding Officers are available, Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) advises that 'All staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.'

4. Scope

The Prevent Policy applies to all ESS Education and Support Services staff (including temporary staff), job applicants, learners, apprentices, prospective students, volunteers and governors; whether they work or study in the main ESS Education and Support Services Centre, outreach centres, or other designated areas.

The policy applies to learners on work experience placements (including those on work experience) and work-based and workplace learning programmes, and those engaged on any organised off-site activity.

The policy applies to working arrangements with other agencies to support ESS Education and Support Services' Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, including local education authorities, schools, support agencies, sub-contractors and employers.

5. Definitions

Safeguarding:

- Protecting children (everyone under the age of 18) from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Taking action where a child is suffering significant harm, or is likely to do so
- Taking action to promote the welfare of a child in need of additional support, even if they are not suffering harm or are at immediate risk.

Child Protection:

- Specific protection measures for a child suffering or at high risk of harm, usually undertaken by Children's Social Care e.g. a Child Protection Plan See Appendix 1 for definitions of types of harm and abuse.

Early help:

- providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life

Children and young people are those aged under 18 years.

Vulnerable adults are those aged over 18 who may be considered vulnerable to abuse, for example those with learning difficulties or disability.

SSCB: Somerset Safeguarding Children Board

<https://www.somersetsafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk/>

Channel: a multi-agency approach which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

Somerset: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/prevent-in-somerset/>

6. The Safeguarding and Prevent Team

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2021), the Designated Safeguarding Lead, and Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for Prevent is a member of the Senior Management Team of ESS Education and Support Services:

Tyler Whitehouse, Chief Strategy Officer

The DSL takes the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection for ESS Education and Support Services.

The DSL will receive training in child protection issues, as required and will receive refresher training at least every 2 years.

The DSL will oversee the referral of alleged harm or abuse to Children's Social Care.

The DSL is also the ESS Education and Support Services Single Point of Contact for Prevent and will oversee any referrals to the Channel programme.

The DSL is also responsible for ensuring that:

- Advice, support and regular updates are provided to staff on issues relating to Prevent, safeguarding, child protection and online safety.
- A proper record of any child protection or Channel referral, complaint or concern is maintained (even where that concern does not lead to a referral)
- Ensuring that parents and carers of children and vulnerable adults within ESS Education and Support Services are aware of the ESS Prevent Policy and Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.
- Every effort is made to be aware of Looked After children and young people enrolled with ESS Education and Support Services, and that their social worker and virtual school head are known
- ESS liaises with local authorities and other appropriate agencies
- ESS liaises with secondary schools which send pupils to the ESS to ensure that necessary awareness of child protection issues is shared appropriately
- ESS liaises with employers and training organisations that receive children or vulnerable adults from the ESS on work experience and placements to ensure that appropriate safeguards are put in place
- Staff receive initial Prevent and safeguarding training, and regular updates, and are aware of ESS's Prevent procedures and Safeguarding and child protection procedures, and of the principles of Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- ESS Education and Support Services' safeguarding Committee meets on a regular basis
- A Prevent Risk Assessment and Action Plan is in place and progress made against it.

Designated Staff Members for Safeguarding and Prevent

ESS Education and Support Services will ensure an appropriate number of Deputy DSLs and designated Safeguarding Officers, continue to be appointed; to ensure that a designated officer is present.

The current Safeguarding team is:

Tyler Whitehouse – Chief Strategy Officer – Designated Safeguarding Lead – tyler.whitehouse@myess.co.uk

Kelly Criddle – Chief Operations Officer – Deputy DSL – Kelly.criddle@myess.co.uk

Appropriate training and support will be provided to enable the designated staff to fulfil their roles. Deputy DSLs will be trained to the same level as the DSL. Safeguarding Officers:

- Report to the senior member of staff with lead responsibility.
- Are trained to make appropriate referrals to Children’s Social Care, and Channel referrals under the Prevent Duty.
- Will be available to advise and support other staff on issues relating to safeguarding and Prevent.
- Have particular responsibility to be available to listen to children and young people studying at the ESS Education and Support Services.
- Will deal with individual cases, including attending case conferences and review meetings as appropriate.
- Will work together to share best practice in Prevent and Safeguarding.
- Have received training in Prevent and Safeguarding issues, as required and will receive refresher training at least every 2 years.

8. The Prevent Self-Assessment, Risk Assessment and Action Plan

The completion of the Self-Assessment Prevent Tool, identified in a number of areas where ESS Education and Support Services could improve its documentation and processes. This is the **Prevent Risk Assessment and Action Plan** published in September 2023

The action points contained therein are being undertaken by the relevant parties and risks are being managed in the meantime, via increased diligence on the part of all members of ESS Education and Support Services. This Risk Assessment will be reviewed again in September 2024 and this policy updated accordingly thereafter.

Current overarching Prevent Risk Rating: Amber (improvements identified and being put into place)

7. Dealing with Allegations and concerns

Concerns about potential radicalisation

Staff should pass on concerns to the Single Point of Contact for Prevent (The Designated Safeguarding Lead), or in their absence, to any Safeguarding Officer.

The SPOC or Safeguarding Officer may make a Channel Referral (see Appendix 3) or discuss with the Regional Prevent Coordinator (see below), if advice is needed.

South-West Regional Further Education and Higher Education Prevent Coordinator:

Email: HEFEPrevent.COORDINATORS@education.gov.uk (post currently being filled)

In the light of the concern that the ESS Education and Support Services might be perceived of as a potential target for a terrorist attack, ESS will promote the run-hide-tell response to students and staff (please refer to the Evacuation, Invacuation, lockdown and Protected Spaced Policy)

Allegations of harm or abuse against children or vulnerable adults

Staff should not investigate concerns or allegations themselves, but should report them immediately to a designated Safeguarding Officer. See Appendices 2 and 3 for further guidance.

Records of concerns about children and vulnerable adults will be kept, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.

All records will be kept securely, separate from other student files, either online and password protected or in secure locations by a designated Safeguarding Officer.

Allegations of abuse made against other children

ESS Education and Support Services recognises that children are capable of abusing their peers.

Staff training, and the Tutorial programme for students, will seek to promote a culture of mutual respect and tolerance, and staff will be trained to recognise the forms that peer abuse may take, including online abuse, sexting, banter, initiation ceremonies and sexual harassment.

ESS Education and Support Services Staff and Student Disciplinary procedures will be invoked when peer abuse is recognised, and support offered to the victims of peer abuse through the Personal Tutor system and Counselling service.

Allegations of Abuse against Staff

Where there is an allegation of harm or abuse against staff, both inside and outside the work setting, ESS Education and Support Services will work to ensure allegations are dealt with quickly, fairly and

consistently. Procedures under this policy apply to all staff, as well as volunteers. The procedures are detailed in Appendix 5.

If concerns arise during the course of employment of an existing member of staff about that person's suitability to work with children and vulnerable adults, ESS Education and Support Services will carry out checks as if that person was a new member of staff, which might include, for example, revisiting or seeking new references and interviewing the member of staff.

8. Younger Children

Younger children on ESS Education and Support Services premises

ESS Education and Support Services has a duty of care towards young people who are studying on a school link programme whilst on ESS Education and Support Services premises. In arranging school provision programmes for young people of compulsory school age ESS Education and Support Services will:

- Provide schools with adequate details of provision to enable the school to obtain parental consent for their child to participate. ESS Education and Support Services will require evidence of this written consent.
- Seek to ensure that for young people with special education needs (SEN), ESS is informed of the details of the statement that has been agreed, in order to determine the level of support needed
- Request details from the school of any medical needs or requirements a young person may have and agree with the school how the necessary support can be provided
- Ensure that young people are made aware of the general standards of safety with which all young people and FE at ESS Education and Support Services students should comply.

Concerns regarding safeguarding or Prevent, for young people on school provision programmes, must be referred to the Child Protection Officer at the school where the child is on roll (or the child's social worker if the child is not on a school roll), and to the relevant ESS Education and Support Services Safeguarding Officer if other ESS Education and Support Services students or staff are involved or affected.

Similar arrangements will be made to **ensure the** safety of children visiting ESS Education and Support Services for Taster Days and other events.

Staff should discourage students with young children from bringing them onto ESS Education and Support Services sites repeatedly or for extended periods

9. Work Experience, Work-Based and Work-Place Learning

Staff who arrange, **vet**, and monitor work experience placements and work-based or workplace learning must undertake appropriate safeguarding training.

Organisations who offer work experience placements or work-based / workplace learning for ESS Education and Support Services students will be vetted for their suitability to do so. The assessment will include a check on whether an employer carries out DBS checks on staff who work with children. When the assessment suggests that an employer does not have Prevent, safeguarding and child protection policies, or awareness of safeguarding and child protection issues, or where there is any evidence of risks a student's safety, ESS Education and Support Services will ensure that no students are placed with that employer until the DSL, or a Deputy DSL has made an appropriate assessment. If an employer is deemed unsuitable for work experience placements or work-based / workplace learning, ESS Education and Support Services will make the SSCB or police aware of this.

Children and vulnerable adults who are placed with employers will be given clear advice about whom to contact if they are worried or uncomfortable about the surroundings, or if they suffer abuse.

We respect your right to a private life, but we must also ensure that confidentiality and our reputation are protected. Even if your social media activities take place completely outside of work, as your personal activities should, what you say can have an influence on your ability to conduct your job responsibilities, your colleagues' abilities to do their jobs and ESS Education and Support Services business interests. We have therefore created guidelines, so you are aware of the acceptable conduct by ESS. It is extremely important that you follow these guidelines as failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of your employment.

10. Support for Students, Parents and Staff

Students will be made aware of possible risks to their safety, including online safety, through tutorial, and in the course of studying in the ESS Education and Support Services, with the intent that they are better able to protect themselves and others from situations of potential harm.

To ensure that everyone on ESS Education and Support Services premises can be identified, students will be expected to wear a student uniform whilst at ESS Education and Support Services or elsewhere representing ESS Education and Support Services.

ESS Education and Support Services will seek to raise student's awareness of the risks inherent in radicalisation and extremism (see ESS's Prevent Policy for further details).

ESS Education and Support Services will seek to ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on ESS Education and Support Services' and staff for safeguarding and child protection by setting out its obligations.

Safeguarding Officers and staff who may receive disclosures from young people, may find themselves distressed by what they have witnessed or learnt. ESS Education and Support Services recognises this possibility and will support staff in this situation via provision of Counselling services or other appropriate support.

11. Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers

Recruitment procedures will seek to reflect the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021) and will aim to 'prevent people who pose a risk of harm from working with children' (Part 3, page 47). All those employees involved in the recruitment process will undertake Safer Recruitment training.

ESS Education and Support Services will ensure that procedures are in place to ensure that all appropriate checks are carried out on staff, Directors and volunteers who have substantial access to children and vulnerable adults, including enhanced DBS checks, and that a single central record is kept of such checks.

On occasions when an individual starts work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available, HR will ensure other recruitment checks have been carried out and the individual is appropriately supervised.

HR staff and others involved in the recruitment process are trained in Safer Recruitment. A range of Safe Recruitment procedures will be employed and these are described in the Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure.

12. Visitors and Contractors

Visitors to ESS Education and Support Services Offices or other premises will be required to sign in.

Where events draw many visitors to the ESS Education and Support Services, for example an Open Evening, the manager responsible for the event should use their discretion about the need to supervise visitors.

If an event is being arranged where there will be guest external speakers; a Risk Assessment will be undertaken, to ensure that hazards are identified and risks managed accordingly to keep children and young people safe (e.g. from threat of radicalisation).

13. Staff Training and Development

ESS Education and Support Services will provide regular Prevent and Safeguarding training for all staff and governors. The training will be available in a variety of formats, address a range of Safeguarding and Prevent-related topics, and ensure awareness is updated annually.

A Prevent and Safeguarding briefing is included within the induction programme for new staff, and all new staff will be expected to complete the online Safeguarding modules and attend face to face Safeguarding training within the 6 month probation period.

After the first year of employment, all staff will be expected to undertake a minimum of one Prevent and Safeguarding related training in each year of employment. This can include (the list is not exhaustive):

- Face to face Safeguarding training
- Prevent or WRAP training
- Online safety

These first three should be regarded as the priority courses, and good practice is to repeat these regularly to receive updated information. Other internal or external courses / events that qualify include:

- Attendance at a Safeguarding update briefing at an ESS Education and Support Services, Training Day or Staff Conference
- The Somerset Safeguarding training (levels 1 – 3)
- Project Argus / terrorist incident training
- Courses or workshops on:
 - Domestic Violence
 - Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
 - Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
 - Drugs and substance misuse
 - Relationship / peer to peer abuse
- A revisit to Safeguarding Essentials, especially when this is updated.

At appraisal managers will discuss with staff that year's Prevent and Safeguarding related training.

14. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and will be referred to in ESS Education and Support Services publications and available on the ESS website.

ESS Education and Support Services Safeguarding Management Team will monitor and review this policy at least annually, or when an event occurs or amendments to key legislation are made in the interim. The policy will be reviewed and if required, updated as soon as possible thereafter.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will prepare an annual report in relation to Prevent and Safeguarding to update the Senior Management Team on the situation and identify any areas of improvement.

Any significant deficiencies or weaknesses, in regard to Prevent, Safeguarding and child protection arrangements will be remedied without delay.

This policy should not be read in isolation and should be cross-referenced to other relevant ESS Education and Support Services student and employment and policies and procedures (please see below).

15. Additional support

If you require any additional support or advice, please contact a member of the HR Team.

16. Associated policies

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
Disclosure and Barring Policy
Equality & Diversity and Recruitment Policy

A large, light green watermark of the Education Support Services logo is centered on the page. It features two hands reaching towards each other within a circular frame, with the text "Education Support" and "SERVICES" overlaid.

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17. Appendices

Appendix 1 DEFINITIONS

Prevent:

Prevent is part of the government's counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST. Its aim is to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. Channel is about safeguarding children and adults from being drawn into committing or assisting terrorist-related activity. It is about early intervention to protect and divert people away from the risk they face before illegality occurs.

Radicalisation

Radicalisation can occur when a vulnerable child or adult is befriended and then influenced, by an individual or group linked to terrorism/the support of terrorism, to potentially adopt extreme views and behaviours that would lead them to do harm to themselves or others.

A large, faint watermark of the Education Support SERVICES logo is centered on the page. It consists of the words "Education Support" in a large, light green font, with "SERVICES" in a smaller, light green font below it. The logo also includes a circular emblem with two hands, one dark green and one light green, reaching towards each other.

Appendix 2

DISCLOSURE

Children and young people have a right to expect ESS Education and Support Services to provide a safe and secure environment and a fundamental right to be protected from the kinds of harm defined in Appendix 1 of the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

If a child or young person discloses that she / he, or another child, is subject to these kinds of harm or neglect it is essential that you:

<p>Do Act Quickly Do Take Seriously Don't be Afraid to Voice Your Concerns</p>	
<p>Listen carefully but do not question or interview</p>	<p>It is not the role of ESS Education and Support Services to investigate allegations of harm or abuse. Disclosure gives the opportunity to gather information to assist in making an informed decision on any further appropriate action or referral to external agencies. Do not ask questions or interview – inexperience can result in unintentional leading questions which could negate some of the information gathered.</p>
<p>Do not make judgements</p>	<p>It is important to remain neutral in your approach and make no judgements on the situation or information given.</p>
<p>Reassure</p>	<p>The child or young person is likely to be emotional / angry / distressed / detached / reluctant at the point of disclosure. Quietly reassure that, following this disclosure you will report further, to enable them to receive the help they need and to take the issue forward appropriately.</p>
<p>Keep accurate notes</p>	<p>Take brief accurate notes if there is an opportunity to do so. Try to record any names or relationships disclosed and be specific on the language used. Notes are confidential and should be given to a designated Safeguarding Officer. No copies should be kept and no reference should be added to the student file. All notes should be signed and dated by the member of staff (it is not necessary to ask the student to sign the notes).</p>
<p>Refer</p>	<p>All concerns must be reported to a ESS Education and Support Services designated Safeguarding</p>

	Officer, or to Somerset Children's Social Care, as soon as possible, and urgently if the child or young person appears to be in immediate danger.
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In addition, you MUST tell the child or young person that you have to pass this information on to an ESS Education and Support Services Safeguarding Officer.

Referral

- All reports of Child Protection issues must be referred to a designated Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible after disclosure has been made (see section 5).
- Once the initial referral has been made a designated ESS Education and Support Services Safeguarding Officer will make a decision regarding further appropriate action.
- ESS Education and Support Services responsibility is not confined to the protection of ESS Education and Support Services students. If any member of staff is made aware of any harm to any child or young person, a referral to a designated Safeguarding Officer, or a direct referral to Somerset Children's Social Care, should be made.

Confidentiality

- Once disclosure and referral have been made the incident should be considered confidential. The situation should not be discussed with any other member of staff (with the exception of a designated Safeguarding Officer), student or outsider.
- Do not engage the student in any further discussion. If the child or young person tries to instigate further discussion, he/she should be referred to a designated Safeguarding Officer.

Appendix 3

Safeguarding Procedure (Somerset)

Speak with/report to the ESS Education and Support Services Designated Safeguarding Lead or one of the Deputies.

For urgent action, if the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy is unavailable:

If you are worried about a child or young person who could be in danger please contact:

- Children's Social Care on 0300 123 2224
- by email at childrens@somerset.gov.uk
- or the police

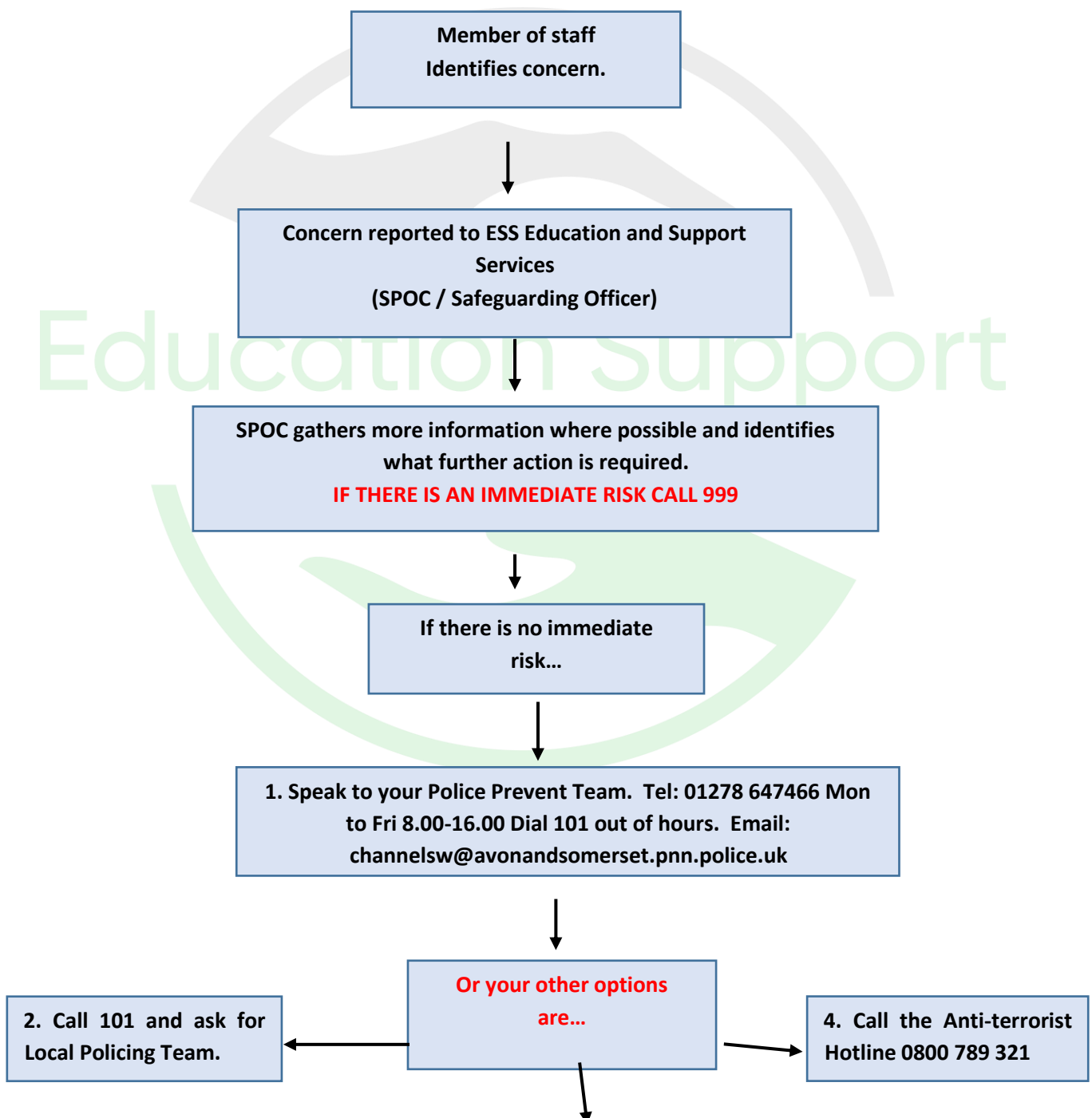
You can contact the police directly by dialling 101 and they will discuss with Children's Social Care what action should be taken. In an emergency always contact the police by dialling 999.

If you would like to speak to a social worker outside of office hours please phone the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on 0300 123 23 27

Please report any actions taken to the ESS Education and Support Services Designated Safeguarding Lead or one of the Deputies; so that any further action can be taken as appropriate to provide support and respond to queries from Children's Social Care or the Police.

Appendix 4
Channel Referral Procedure (SW England)

It is important for you as a member of staff to know where to go if you have a concern that someone may be on the route to radicalisation. Below is a flow chart which aims to show the process to follow



3. Local Authority contact: Lucy Macready
Tel: 07887 955440
Email: lmacready@somerset.gov.uk

Once a referral has been made and enters the Channel process, the below process map illustrates what happens next...

Further information gathering with your institution and other key agencies that the individual is involved with. Are there shared concerns between partners? Is there a vulnerability to radicalisation?

YES

Police will organise a Multi-Agency Channel meeting which will be made of key partners. The meeting will be chaired by your Local Authority.

NO

If it is deemed there is low risk –further action within normal support. Key agency progresses with further monitoring.

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It is important to remember that consent is gained with the individual to be part of Channel support and intervention.

Implement support plan depending on level of risk.

Regularly review process – Channel Panel members work together to review progress and reduce risks.

The individual will exit the Channel process when all partner agencies feel that the vulnerability to radicalisation has been completely removed or significantly lessened.

Once a referral has exited the process, it will be reviewed at 6 and 12 months. If concerns remain, the individual can be re-referred.

Appendix 5

Sharing Information

- All information regarding child protection issues will be kept securely by a designated Safeguarding Officer.
- ESS Education and Support Services is obliged to work and share information with external agencies charged with the protection of children and young people. This includes Children's Social Care, the police, local schools etc.
- ESS Education and Support Services seeks to demonstrate excellence in inter-agency cooperation to enhance the safety and safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.
- The designated Safeguarding Officers are in regular contact with the Somerset Local Authority Designated Officer and seek advice as appropriate.

Note: 'confidentiality' is often misunderstood. An over emphasis on confidentiality can leave young people in danger of harm. If something is confidential, this does not mean that it cannot be shared. However, it is important to:

- Share only what it is necessary to share to protect a child or young person
- Record what you shared, and with who
- Record your reasons for sharing.

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Appendix 6

REPORTING AND DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST A MEMBER OF STAFF

Introduction

ESS Education and Support Services recognises that a safeguarding allegation made against a member of staff may be made for a variety of reasons and that the facts of the allegation may or may not be true. It is imperative that those dealing with an allegation maintain an open mind and that investigations are thorough and not subject to delay.

ESS Education and Support Services recognises that the Children Act 1989 states that the welfare of the child or vulnerable adult is the paramount concern. It is also recognised that hasty or ill-informed decisions in connection with a member of staff can irreparably damage an individual's reputation, confidence and career. Therefore, those dealing with such allegations within ESS Education and Support Services will do so with sensitivity and will act in a careful, measured way.

Receiving an Allegation from a Child or Vulnerable Adult

A member of staff who receives an allegation about another member of staff from a child or vulnerable adult should follow the guidelines in Appendix 2 for dealing with disclosure.

The allegation should be reported immediately to ESS Education and Support Services Chief Executive Officer, Fran Deeley. This may be via a designated Child Protection Officer. Where the ESS Education and Support Services CEO is the person against whom the allegation is made, the allegation should be reported to one of the other Safeguarding Officers, who will take the matter forward as appropriate.

The Chief Executive Officer should:

Obtain written details of the allegation from the person who received it and sign and date these. The written details should be countersigned and dated by the Chief Executive Officer.

Record information about times, dates, locations and names of potential witnesses.

Initial Assessment

The Chief Executive Officer should make an initial assessment of the allegation, consulting with the HR team as appropriate. In most cases the advice of the Local Authority Children's Social Care team should be sought where there is any cause for concern, not just where the allegation is considered to be either a potential criminal act or indicates that the child or vulnerable adult has suffered, is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.

Following the Working Together to Safeguard Children (Updated December 2020) guidance, the CEO will refer, to the Local Authority Children’s Social Care team, an allegation of abuse or maltreatment made against “a person who works with children where that person who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child or vulnerable adult;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or vulnerable adult;
- Behaved towards a child or vulnerable adult in a way that is unsuitable to work with children, in connection with the person’s employment or voluntary activity.”

It is important that the CEO does not investigate the allegation. The initial assessment should be on the basis of the information received. The Chief Executive Officer should make a decision based on whether or not the allegation warrants further investigation.

Potential outcomes are:

- The allegation warrants further investigation.
- The allegation represents inappropriate behaviour or poor practice by the member of staff and is neither potentially a crime nor a cause of significant harm to the child or vulnerable adult. The matter should be addressed in accordance with ESS Education and Support Services disciplinary procedures.
- The allegation can be shown to be false because the facts alleged could not possibly be true.

Enquiries and Investigations

Child Protection enquiries by social services or the police are not to be confused with internal, disciplinary enquiries by ESS Education and Support Services. ESS Education and Support Services may use the outcome of external agency enquiries as part of its own procedures. The child protection agencies, including the police, have no power to direct ESS to act in a particular way, however, ESS will assist the agencies with their enquiries.

ESS Education and Support Services internal enquiries should wait while the formal police or social services investigations proceed; to do otherwise may prejudice the investigation. Any internal enquiries should conform to the existing staff disciplinary procedures. The member of staff will be made aware of these rights under ESS Education and Support Services’ disciplinary procedures.

If there is an investigation by an external agency, the CEO will be involved in, and contribute to, the inter-agency strategy discussions. The CEO is responsible for ensuring that ESS Education and Support Services gives every assistance with the agency’s enquiries,

and that appropriate confidentiality is maintained, in the interests of the member of staff about whom the allegation is made.

Subject to objections from the police or other investigating agency, the Chief Executive Officer shall:

- inform the child/children, vulnerable adult(s) or parent/carer making the allegation that the investigation is taking place and what the likely process will involve.
- ensure that the parents/carers of the person making the allegation have been informed that the allegation has been made and what the likely process will involve.
- inform the member of staff against whom the allegation was made of the fact that the investigation is taking place and what the likely process will involve.
- inform the appropriate bodies of the allegation and the investigation.
- The CEO shall keep a written record of the action taken in connection with the allegation.

Suspension of Staff

In the case of allegations of abuse against a member of staff, suspension will occur:

- where a child or vulnerable adult is at risk.
- where the allegations are potentially sufficiently serious to justify dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct.
- where necessary for the good and efficient conduct of the investigation.
- The suspension will follow the process outlined under ESS Education and Support Services disciplinary procedures. However, where a member of staff is suspended following an allegation of abuse, the CEO will address the following issues:
 - the directors and the LADO should be informed of the suspension in writing.
 - depending on the nature of the allegation, the Chief Executive Officer will consider whether a statement to the students of ESS Education and Support Services and/or parents/carers should be made.
- where the Chief Executive Officer has been suspended, the Board of Trustees will need to take action to address the management of ESS Education and Support Services.

The Disciplinary Investigation

The disciplinary investigation should be conducted in accordance with the existing ESS Education and Support services disciplinary procedures.

Allegations without foundation

False allegations may be indicative of problems of abuse elsewhere. A record will be kept and consideration given to a referral to the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) in order that other agencies may act upon the information.

In consultation with the designated senior member of staff, The Chief Executive Officer shall:

- inform the member of staff against whom the allegation is made both orally and in writing that no further disciplinary or child protection action will be taken.
- inform the parents/carers of the alleged victim that the allegation has been made and of the outcome.
- where the allegation was made by a child or vulnerable adult other than the alleged victim, consideration will be given to informing the parents/carers of that other.
- prepare a report outlining the allegation and giving reasons for the conclusion and confirming that the above action had been taken.
- consider whether the allegation made against the member of staff was malicious. In such an event if the child or vulnerable adult is a student at the ESS Education and Support Services, an investigation under the ESS Education and Support Services Student Disciplinary Procedures may be undertaken.

Records

It is important that documents relating to an investigation are retained in a secure place, together with a written record of the outcome and, if disciplinary action is taken, details retained on the member of staff's personal and confidential file.

If a member of staff is dismissed or resigns before the disciplinary process is completed, he/she will be informed about the ESS Education and Support Services statutory duty to inform the Secretary of State for Education with reference to the Children and Vulnerable Adults Barred Lists.