

# Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy



**ESTEEM**  
**EDUCATORS**

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|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <b>Category:</b>         | Safeguarding ▾                               |
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| <b>Responsible Lead:</b> | Head of Provision & DDSL                     |
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| <b>Approved by:</b>      | Lianna Andrews - Safeguarding Lead           |
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| <b>Review Frequency:</b> | Annual (or sooner where legislation changes) |

# 1. Purpose

Esteem Educators is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child and young person who accesses our provision. We believe that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that every child has the right to learn, develop and thrive in a safe, supportive and nurturing environment.

This policy sets out the organisation's overarching approach to safeguarding and child protection. It provides the framework for recognising, responding to and reporting safeguarding concerns whilst promoting a culture where the welfare of children and young people is paramount.

As a community-based Alternative Provision provider, Esteem Educators recognises that safeguarding extends beyond the traditional school environment. Our safeguarding arrangements reflect the unique nature of delivering education and mentoring within homes, community venues, educational settings and other off-site locations, ensuring that robust safeguarding practices remain at the heart of all our work.

This policy should be read alongside the organisation's wider safeguarding and governance policies, which provide more detailed guidance on specific safeguarding responsibilities and procedures.

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# 2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All Directors.
- Employees.
- Mentors.
- Volunteers.
- Contractors.
- Agency workers.
- Anyone working on behalf of Esteem Educators.
- Learners receiving education or mentoring through Esteem Educators.
- Visitors involved in organisational activities where appropriate.

It applies to all activities delivered by Esteem Educators, including community-based mentoring, educational sessions, home visits, educational visits, holiday provision, remote learning and any other activities undertaken on behalf of the organisation.

All adults working on behalf of Esteem Educators have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, regardless of their role or level of responsibility.

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# 3. Legal & Statutory Framework

This policy has been developed with reference to the following legislation and statutory guidance:

### **Legislation**

- Children Act 1989.
- Children Act 2004.
- Education Act 2002 (where applicable).
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- Equality Act 2010.
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.
- Data Protection Act 2018.
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).
- Human Rights Act 1998.

### **Statutory Guidance**

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.
- The Prevent Duty Guidance.
- Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers.

Esteem Educators will ensure that safeguarding arrangements remain compliant with current legislation, statutory guidance and local safeguarding partnership procedures.

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## **4. Policy Statement**

Esteem Educators is committed to maintaining a strong safeguarding culture where the welfare of children and young people is the organisation's highest priority.

We recognise that effective safeguarding relies upon creating trusted relationships, working collaboratively with families and partner agencies, maintaining professional curiosity and responding promptly to concerns.

Safeguarding is embedded throughout all aspects of the organisation's work. Every member of staff has a responsibility to identify concerns, act appropriately and contribute to creating an environment where children and young people feel safe, respected and supported.

All safeguarding concerns will be managed promptly, proportionately and in accordance with statutory guidance, ensuring that the needs and best interests of the child remain central to all decision-making.

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## 5. Safeguarding Principles

Esteem Educators is committed to ensuring that safeguarding is proactive, child-centred and embedded within everyday practice.

We will:

- Promote the welfare, safety and wellbeing of every child and young person.
  - Maintain a culture where safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
  - Listen to and act upon the voice of the child.
  - Provide safe, supportive and inclusive learning environments.
  - Work collaboratively with parents, carers, commissioning organisations and partner agencies.
  - Identify concerns early and take appropriate action.
  - Promote professional curiosity and early intervention.
  - Maintain robust safeguarding procedures, reporting arrangements and record keeping.
  - Ensure all staff receive appropriate safeguarding training and ongoing support.
  - Continually review and strengthen safeguarding practice through monitoring, learning and quality assurance.
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## 6. Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Every adult working on behalf of Esteem Educators has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

### Directors

The Directors are responsible for:

- Ensuring appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place across the organisation.
- Providing strategic oversight of safeguarding practice.
- Ensuring sufficient resources are available to support effective safeguarding.
- Promoting a culture of openness, accountability and continuous improvement.

### Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:

- Leading safeguarding practice across the organisation.
- Receiving and responding to safeguarding concerns.
- Making referrals to Children's Social Care, the Police and other agencies where appropriate.
- Providing safeguarding advice and support to staff.
- Maintaining safeguarding records.
- Ensuring safeguarding policies remain up to date.
- Promoting effective multi-agency working.
- Ensuring safeguarding training is delivered and monitored.

### Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs)

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads support the DSL by:

- Responding to safeguarding concerns in the absence of the DSL.
- Supporting safeguarding decision-making.
- Maintaining safeguarding records.
- Providing advice and guidance to staff.
- Assisting with safeguarding monitoring and quality assurance.

## **Student Engagement Team**

The Student Engagement Team is responsible for:

- Monitoring learner engagement and wellbeing.
- Reviewing daily logs and safeguarding information.
- Coordinating external meetings where appropriate.
- Supporting communication with commissioning organisations and partner agencies.
- Escalating safeguarding concerns promptly.

## **Team Leaders**

Team Leaders are responsible for:

- Supporting mentors and staff.
- Providing safeguarding advice.
- Monitoring safeguarding practice.
- Escalating concerns appropriately.
- Supporting reflective practice following safeguarding incidents.

## **Mentors and Employees**

All mentors and employees are responsible for:

- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.
  - Maintaining professional curiosity.
  - Identifying and reporting safeguarding concerns immediately.
  - Following organisational safeguarding procedures.
  - Maintaining appropriate professional boundaries.
  - Completing mandatory safeguarding training.
  - Contributing to a positive safeguarding culture.
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# **7. Recognising Abuse**

Abuse may occur within a family, institutional or community setting and can be perpetrated by adults or by other children and young people.

Staff should be alert to indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of harm. Abuse may take many forms and often involves a combination of different types of harm.

The four recognised categories of abuse are:

## **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse is the deliberate causing of physical harm to a child or young person. It may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical injury.

## **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child or young person that adversely affects their emotional development, self-esteem or sense of worth.

## **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to participate in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. This includes contact and non-contact abuse, exploitation and online abuse.

## **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, resulting in serious impairment of their health or development.

Staff should remember that safeguarding concerns rarely present in isolation. Professional curiosity, effective communication and careful observation are essential when identifying concerns.

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# **8. Specific Safeguarding Issues**

Staff should be aware of a wide range of safeguarding issues that may place children and young people at risk.

These may include, but are not limited to:

- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE).
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).
- County Lines.
- Domestic Abuse.
- Harmful Sexual Behaviour.
- Child-on-child abuse, including bullying, intimate relationship abuse, sexual violence, sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour.
- Online safety and online abuse, including grooming, exploitation, cyberbullying, nude/semi-nude imagery, AI-generated or manipulated sexual imagery and deepfakes.
- Child-on-child abuse.
- Serious violence.
- Persistent or unexplained absence from education and children missing education.
- Mental health concerns where they may indicate safeguarding risks.
- Radicalisation and extremism.
- Honour-based abuse.
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).
- Forced marriage.

- Modern slavery and trafficking.
- Substance misuse.
- Homelessness.
- Prevent concerns.

This list is not exhaustive. Staff should remain professionally curious and seek advice from the DSL whenever they are unsure whether a concern may have safeguarding implications.

## 8.1. Online Safety & Educational Internet Use

Esteem Educators is committed to ensuring that learners access the internet safely, responsibly and appropriately during educational sessions.

Learners must only access online educational resources using Esteem-issued laptops under the direct supervision of their allocated mentor.

Internet access must be restricted to approved educational activities and platforms, including BKSb, TT Rockstars and other resources authorised by Esteem Educators.

Access to social media, recreational gaming, YouTube and other non-educational websites is not permitted unless specifically authorised for an educational purpose.

### Monitoring and Filtering Arrangements

Esteem-issued laptops are subject to organisational monitoring, including the monitoring and review of browsing history and internet activity where appropriate.

Esteem Educators is implementing additional website filtering arrangements to restrict access to inappropriate or harmful online content. These arrangements will be maintained and reviewed once fully operational.

Mentors remain responsible for actively supervising learners' online activity and ensuring that devices are used appropriately throughout sessions.

Any inappropriate content, concerning online interactions, suspected misuse or online safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately to the Safeguarding Team in accordance with Esteem's safeguarding procedures.

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## 9. Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

All safeguarding concerns must be taken seriously and acted upon immediately.

Where a member of staff becomes aware of a safeguarding concern, they must:

- Remain calm and listen carefully.
- Reassure the child or young person without making promises that cannot be kept.
- Avoid asking leading questions or investigating the concern themselves.
- Record the information accurately using the organisation's safeguarding procedures as soon as possible.

- Report the concern immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL.

Where there is an immediate risk of significant harm, staff must take appropriate action to protect the child and contact emergency services where necessary. This must not be delayed whilst waiting to speak with the DSL.

The DSL will consider the information received and determine the most appropriate course of action, which may include:

- Monitoring the concern.
- Providing Family Help / Early Help support.
- Speaking with parents or carers where appropriate.
- Making a referral to Children's Social Care.
- Contacting the Police or other emergency services.
- Working with partner agencies to safeguard the child.

All safeguarding concerns, decisions and actions taken will be recorded securely in accordance with organisational safeguarding procedures.

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## 10. Managing Disclosures

Where a child or young person chooses to disclose information that gives rise to a safeguarding concern, staff must respond calmly, sensitively and appropriately.

Staff should:

- Listen carefully without interrupting.
- Remain calm and reassuring.
- Take the child or young person seriously.
- Explain that the information cannot be kept confidential and will need to be shared with people who can help keep them safe.
- Allow the child or young person to speak freely without asking leading or investigative questions.
- Clarify information only where necessary to understand what is being disclosed.
- Reassure the child or young person that they have done the right thing by speaking up.

Staff must not:

- Promise confidentiality.
- Ask leading or investigative questions.
- Express shock, disbelief or judgement.
- Confront an alleged perpetrator.
- Delay reporting the concern.

As soon as possible following the disclosure, the member of staff must make an accurate, factual record of what has been disclosed using the organisation's safeguarding procedures and report the concern immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL.

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## 11. Family Help and Early Intervention

Esteem Educators recognises the importance of identifying concerns at the earliest opportunity and providing appropriate support before needs escalate.

Family Help / Early Help aims to improve outcomes for children, young people and families by addressing emerging needs through coordinated support and ensuring children receive the right help at the right time.

Where concerns do not meet the threshold for statutory intervention, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) may:

- Monitor the child's wellbeing.
- Work collaboratively with parents or carers.
- Liaise with commissioning organisations.
- Participate in multi-agency meetings.
- Signpost families to appropriate support services.
- Contribute to Early Help assessments where appropriate.

Providing Family Help / Early Help does not remove the responsibility to make a safeguarding referral where the level of risk increases, needs escalate or progress is not being made.

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## 12. Multi-Agency Working

Effective safeguarding relies upon strong partnership working between professionals, families and agencies.

Esteem Educators will work collaboratively with:

- Commissioning schools.
- Local Authorities.
- Children's Social Care.
- Police.
- Health professionals.
- Alternative Provision partners.
- Youth Offending Services.
- Other relevant agencies involved in supporting the child or young person.

The organisation is committed to sharing relevant information appropriately, attending multi-agency meetings where required and contributing to plans that promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

All multi-agency working will be undertaken in accordance with the Information Sharing Policy and Data Protection & UK GDPR Policy.

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## 13. Record Keeping and Confidentiality

Accurate, timely and secure record keeping is essential to effective safeguarding.

All safeguarding concerns, disclosures, decisions and actions taken will be recorded promptly and stored securely using the organisation's approved safeguarding systems.

Safeguarding records will:

- Be factual, accurate and objective.
- Clearly distinguish between fact, opinion and professional judgement.
- Be completed as soon as reasonably practicable.
- Include actions taken and decisions made.
- Be stored securely with appropriate access controls.

Safeguarding information will be shared with individuals who have a legitimate need to know in order to safeguard children and young people or fulfil legal and professional responsibilities. Data protection legislation is not a barrier to safeguarding and must never prevent necessary and proportionate information sharing to protect a child.

Information sharing will always be carried out in accordance with the Information Sharing Policy and the Data Protection & UK GDPR Policy.

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## **14. Creating a Safer Culture**

Esteem Educators is committed to creating and maintaining a safeguarding culture where children and young people feel safe, valued and respected, and where staff are confident to raise concerns.

The organisation promotes a safer culture through:

- Robust safer recruitment practices.
- Appropriate safeguarding training.
- Professional supervision and support.
- Clear professional boundaries.
- Open and transparent communication.
- Prompt reporting of safeguarding concerns.
- Reflective practice and continuous learning.
- Quality assurance and regular policy review.

Concerns relating to the conduct of adults working on behalf of the organisation will be managed in accordance with the:

- Low-Level Concerns Policy.
- Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy.
- Whistleblowing Policy.

All staff are expected to contribute positively to maintaining a culture where safeguarding remains everyone's responsibility.

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## 15. Community-Based Safeguarding

As a community-based Alternative Provision provider, Esteem Educators delivers education and mentoring in a variety of settings beyond the traditional classroom. These may include community venues, libraries, educational facilities, leisure venues, public spaces, home visits and other agreed locations appropriate to the individual learner.

The organisation recognises that delivering provision within the community presents unique safeguarding considerations. Robust safeguarding arrangements are therefore embedded into all aspects of planning and delivery.

To support safe practice, Esteem Educators will:

- Undertake appropriate risk assessments before delivery begins.
- Select venues that are suitable, safe and appropriate for the learner's needs.
- Ensure staff understand and follow lone working procedures.
- Maintain effective communication and reporting arrangements throughout delivery.
- Ensure attendance, wellbeing and safeguarding information is recorded promptly.
- Work collaboratively with commissioning organisations and partner agencies where safeguarding concerns arise.
- Review safeguarding arrangements whenever circumstances or risks change.

Community-based safeguarding is supported by the organisation's Lone Working Policy, Educational Visit and Outing Policy, Health & Safety Policy, Attendance Policy and Holiday Provision & Safeguarding Protocol.

Safeguarding responsibilities remain consistent regardless of where learning takes place, and all staff are expected to exercise professional judgement to ensure that children and young people remain safe throughout every aspect of delivery.

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## 16. KCSIE 2026 and OSCP Additional Safeguarding Requirements

Esteem Educators has reviewed this policy against Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and the Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership model approach. The following requirements apply alongside the procedures above.

### Safeguarding Definitions and Approach

Safeguarding includes providing help and support as soon as problems emerge; protecting children from maltreatment inside or outside the home, including online; preventing impairment of mental and physical health or development; ensuring safe and effective care; and taking action to enable the best outcomes.

Child protection is part of safeguarding and concerns children who may be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Staff must maintain an 'it could happen here' approach and act in the best interests of the child.

### Children Who May Be More Vulnerable

Staff must recognise additional safeguarding barriers for children with SEND, disabilities, communication needs or medical conditions; children with a social worker; looked-after and previously looked-after children; children affected by domestic abuse, parental offending, substance misuse or mental ill-health; children who are persistently absent, on part-time timetables, at risk of exclusion or accessing Alternative Provision; and children at risk of exploitation, trafficking, serious violence or radicalisation.

Staff must not assume that changes in behaviour are explained by SEND or a known diagnosis.

## **Child-on-Child Abuse**

Children can abuse other children inside or outside education settings and online. The absence of reports does not mean abuse is not occurring. Abusive behaviour must never be dismissed as banter, part of growing up or similar.

Concerns may include bullying and cyberbullying, intimate relationship abuse, physical abuse, sexual violence, sexual harassment, harmful sexual behaviour, upskirting, initiation or hazing, threats involving weapons, and non-consensual or manipulated intimate imagery including AI-generated imagery.

All concerns must be reported to the DSL and responded to in a child-centred way, considering the safety and support needs of all children involved.

## **Exploitation, Serious Violence and Weapons**

Child Criminal Exploitation and Child Sexual Exploitation are forms of abuse and may involve coercion, manipulation, threats, violence, debt, exchange, grooming or an imbalance of power. Children may not recognise themselves as victims.

Staff must be alert to county lines, financial exploitation, trafficking, modern slavery and extra-familial harm in community and online contexts.

Any concern that a child is carrying, using, seeking or threatened with a weapon, or is involved in serious violence, must be reported immediately. Call 999 where there is immediate danger.

## **Domestic Abuse**

Children who see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse are victims in their own right. This includes abuse in teenage intimate relationships and child-to-parent abuse.

Where information is received through Operation Encompass or another professional route, the DSL will consider the support and safeguarding action required and liaise with the commissioning school where appropriate.

## **FGM and Honour-Based Abuse**

FGM is illegal and a form of child abuse. Concerns that a girl may be at risk must be reported immediately to the DSL.

Where the statutory FGM mandatory reporting duty applies to a teacher who discovers that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18, the teacher must make the required report to Police personally and also inform the DSL.

Staff must not examine a child to determine whether FGM has occurred. Forced marriage and so-called honour-based abuse must be treated as safeguarding concerns.

## **Online Safety, Mobile Technology and AI**

Online safety is integral to safeguarding. Staff must be alert to grooming, exploitation, cyberbullying, sexual harassment, extremist content, scams, coercive control, harmful content, nude/semi-nude imagery and AI-generated or manipulated sexual imagery/deepfakes.

Staff must follow approved communication and device arrangements. Any online safeguarding concern must be reported to the DSL.

Staff must not search for, copy, forward or store illegal child sexual abuse material.

## **Attendance and Absence**

Attendance is a safeguarding matter. Repeated, prolonged or unexplained absence may indicate neglect, exploitation, county lines, domestic abuse, mental health difficulties or other harm.

Esteem Educators will monitor every scheduled session, follow welfare-check and attendance procedures, communicate promptly with commissioners and escalate safeguarding concerns to the DSL.

## **Children Questioning Their Gender**

Children who are questioning their gender must be supported sensitively and individually.

Safeguarding, wellbeing, equality, dignity, privacy and the best interests of the child will be considered together in line with KCSIE 2026 and applicable law.

The DSL should be involved where a request or situation raises safeguarding, welfare, SEND, clinical, family, facilities, sport, trip or accommodation considerations.

Parents and carers should ordinarily be involved unless doing so would place the child at increased risk of harm. Decisions and rationale must be recorded and reviewed.

## **DSL Availability and Cover**

The DSL is Lianna Andrews. Deputy DSL arrangements are provided by Bradley Gilchrist, Connor Hall and Brandon Gilchrist.

Staff must know how to contact the DSL or a Deputy DSL before delivering provision. Safeguarding activity must not stop because a particular safeguarding lead is absent.

Where a child is in immediate danger or at risk of serious harm, staff must contact emergency services and/or Children's Social Care without waiting for the DSL.

## **Information Sharing and Professional Escalation**

Data protection is not a barrier to safeguarding. Information may be shared without consent where there is a lawful basis and sharing is necessary and proportionate to protect a child.

Where Esteem Educators remains concerned following a decision by another agency, the DSL will use the relevant local safeguarding partnership resolution and escalation procedure and continue to advocate for the child.

## 2026 Legislation

This policy also has regard to the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 and the Crime and Policing Act 2026 as relevant provisions are commenced.

The Crime and Policing Act 2026 contains a prospective mandatory reporting duty for specified child sexual abuse. The Government has indicated that the duty is expected to come into effect in 2027.

Until commencement, staff must continue to report child sexual abuse concerns immediately through existing safeguarding procedures; Esteem Educators will update training and procedures before the statutory duty takes effect.

## Oldham Safeguarding Contacts

For an Oldham child protection referral, contact Oldham MASH / Children's Social Care on **0161 770 7777** or **child.mash@oldham.gov.uk**.

Outside office hours, the Oldham Emergency Duty Team can be contacted on **0161 770 6936**.

Call Police on **999** in an emergency or **101** for non-emergency matters.

Where a learner lives outside Oldham, the relevant local authority Children's Social Care referral route must be used.

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## 17. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner where:

- Legislation changes.
- Statutory safeguarding guidance is updated.
- Local safeguarding partnership procedures change.
- Organisational practice changes.
- Lessons learned from safeguarding incidents identify improvements.
- Internal quality assurance identifies opportunities to strengthen safeguarding practice.

Responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy rests with the **Head of Provision & Safeguarding Lead**.

Safeguarding practice will be continually monitored through supervision, quality assurance, staff training, safeguarding audits, incident reviews and ongoing organisational learning to ensure that children and young people remain effectively safeguarded.

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## 18. Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside the following organisational policies:

### **Safeguarding**

- Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy
- Low-Level Concerns Policy
- Information Sharing Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Absconding Policy
- Holiday Provision & Safeguarding Protocol
- Educational Visit and Outing Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Mobile Phone & Personal Smart Device Policy

### **Governance**

- Whistleblowing Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Recruitment & Induction Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
- Data Protection & UK GDPR Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- First Aid Policy