



1st for EPA Ltd Safeguarding Policy

1. Policy purpose

This policy is to inform everyone connected with 1st for EPA Ltd.'s end point assessment (EPA) service, and with whom it contracts or comes into connection with, of our position with regard to the safeguarding of apprentices.

1st for EPA Ltd recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all apprentices undertaking EPA, by commitment to practice that protects them and looks to minimise potential harm. 1st for EPA Ltd is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of apprentices undertaking EPA and expects all apprentices and 1st for EPA Ltd staff and contractors involved in EPA to share this commitment.

The policy document was developed to implement a set of principles that we have adopted to guide our safeguarding approach when providing EPA for apprentices.

2. Safeguarding principles

- The best interests of the Apprentice undertaking the EPA are paramount and shall be the primary consideration in our approach.
- Equality of protection to ensure that all apprentices undertaking EPA have the same positive opportunity and engage in our EPA activities safely regardless of their gender, ability, race, sexuality, ethnicity, circumstances or age.
- Children and vulnerable adults require particular attention in order to optimise their safety needs whilst undertaking EPA activities.
- We take responsibility to meet our obligations regarding our duty of care to all of apprentices undertaking EPA activities.
- We reject the use of child or forced labour in our business activities and in our business relationships.
- We make clear our standards to all assessors and will ensure they have Safeguarding training, in particular to concerns in relation to children and vulnerable adult protection risks and incidences.
- We will take prompt action where we believe that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of abuse or harm or has been harmed.
- We recognise and acknowledge an element of risk can exist in many learning situations, and while we may never be able to eliminate this completely, we will do all we can to reduce or limit its impact.
- We are honest and transparent in our approach and publicly disclose both this Policy and the way we work to try and protect all of our apprentices and in particular young people and vulnerable adults.
- We will work with others to protect children and vulnerable adults; this could include law enforcement or child welfare agencies where necessary.
- We require incidents relevant to this policy, in respect of all apprentices undertaking EPA, to be reported in a timely way both internally and to the appropriate authorities, linked to proper recording of the relevant details.
- All apprentices undertaking EPA have the right to be assessed in a safe and caring environment and where their welfare is paramount.
- Bullying in any form is strictly unacceptable.
- Racist, homophobic and sexist language or behaviour is strictly unacceptable.
- Any form of discrimination is strictly unacceptable.
- Adopting robust safeguarding guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for apprentices, staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies that need it and involving apprentices and their parents/carers as appropriate.



- Ensuring all apprentices have a ready point of contact, referral or support, such as the designated lead and their main assessor.

3. Safeguarding Purpose

The purpose of this policy and its supporting documents will be to:

- Provide protection for apprentices using the 1st for EPA Ltd EPA service.
- Provide 1st for EPA Ltd staff and contractors with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect an apprentice may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm or abuse.
- Provide staff with training, guidelines and a policy.

Safeguarding is intended to keep children safe from a range of potential harm and looks at preventative action, not just reaction. It is protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health and development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. (Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 [in force on 1st Sept 2023]). 1st for EPA Ltd.'s EPA service extends its responsibilities to vulnerable adults.

Safeguarding defines how we will respond to:

- Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection.
- Protection from maltreatment (abuse, neglect, exploitation or victimisation) or risk of harm where the perpetrator is a member of the apprentice's family, the wider community, another apprentice or a member of 1st for EPA Ltd staff.
- Welfare support needs.
- Responding to an apprentice (of any age) via either direct intervention, advice and guidance or signposting where an issue exists within their day to day lives (including the workplace) which could impact upon their ability to complete the EPA.
- For apprentices under 18 this includes providing early help.

4. Who we safeguard

The term 'child' means anyone who has not yet attained the age of 18. The Department of Health defines a 'vulnerable adult' as a person, aged 18 or over, who is, or may be, in need of community care services by reason of disability (mental or other), age or illness. They are also considered vulnerable if they are unable to look after themselves, protect themselves from harm or exploitation or are unable to report abuse.

1st for EPA Ltd is mindful that a number of other situations may render a person 'vulnerable', such as victims of domestic violence, migrants, living in a drug-misusing family, living in areas of high crime, being likely to face racism or having caring responsibilities.

5. What are we safeguarding from?

In line with [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/654212/Working-Together-to-Safeguard-Children-2018.pdf) and [Keeping children safe in education 2023 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/654212/Keeping-children-safe-in-education-2023.pdf) - safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of a child's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

The following should therefore be considered when delivering EPA to apprentices:

- Sexual abuse or inappropriate relationships
- Physical and emotional abuse or neglect



- Exploitation e.g., financial, sexual, forced marriage
- Neglect
- Grooming behaviour
- Domestic violence
- Forced marriage
- Bullying including cyber bullying, bullying in the workplace
- Victimisation (race, sexuality, gender, disability etc.)
- Accidents (road, home, in the workplace)
- Self-harm
- Unsafe activities and environments
- Crime
- Unsuitable housing/homelessness
- Extremism

6. Levels of Responsibility

[Keeping children safe in education 2023 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk) states that 'Schools, colleges and other educational providers have a pivotal role to play in safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. Their co-operation and buy-in to the new arrangements will be vital for success. All schools, colleges and other educational providers have duties in relation to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare.' and in addition, 'employers are responsible for ensuring that their staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and creating an environment where staff feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role'

1st for EPA Ltd is committed to supporting all staff to understand the requirements placed upon them and the various pieces of safeguarding legislation. This is done through a variety of ways including information, advice and guidance, training and the provision of support resources.

All 1st for EPA Ltd staff and contractors have responsibility for safeguarding in the provision of EPA services, and have a duty to act to ensure that the welfare of the apprentice is paramount.

7. Information and support for apprentices

All apprentices will have access to this Safeguarding Policy when using our EPA services.

Apprentices can expect that they will be treated sensitively and with dignity should a safeguarding incidence/concern occur, or an allegation of abuse be made.

1st for EPA Ltd requires staff to treat such matters confidentially, notifying colleagues only on a 'need to know' basis under the direct guidance of the owner.

8. Confidentiality

Whilst respecting privacy and data protection, the 1st for EPA Ltd End Point Assessment Service cannot guarantee confidentiality in all circumstances. If we discover anything that we believe parents/carers, social services or the police should be informed of, we will do so believing it is in the best interests of the individual involved.

1st for EPA's end point assessment service takes its responsibilities to report crime seriously and as a result will not afford confidentiality in the following situations:

- Where it is identified that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of harm.
- Where we are told that a serious crime has been committed or is about to be committed.
- Where information regarding terrorism or drug trafficking is disclosed.
- Where we are instructed to disclose something by a court.



9. Relevant legislation

This document reflects the following key pieces of legislation:

- Keeping Children safe in Education (2023)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- Education Act (2011) · Children Act (1989/2004)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- Information Sharing (2015 and 2018)

10. Safeguarding Policy Process

Any staff or contractor with a concern regarding an apprentice's – or staff member – welfare, should inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately.

If an apprentice or staff member reports a concern either personally or about another person, this should be responded to in exactly the same way as any other safeguarding concern. It is required by law that if a disclosure is made, it cannot be ignored and must be reported with immediate effect.

Staff are encouraged to:

- Listen non-judgementally
- Ask open-ended questions to seek enough detail to make a referral to the DSL
- Do not offer personal opinion or offer any advice
- Never promise confidentiality – explain that you are duty bound to refer the situation to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Reassure the apprentice/staff member, but do not make any physical contact
- Make every effort to have the conversation in a place where another colleague knows your location
- Inform the Safeguarding team immediately and don't share the information with anybody else
- Make a record of the information shared, ensuring that you have an accurate account of the concern.

An accurate record must be kept of any concern and this will include:

- The date and time of the incident/disclosure
- The date and time of the report
- The name and role of the person to whom the concern was originally reported and their contact details
- The name and role of the person making the report (if this is different to the above) and their contact details
- The names of all parties who were involved in the incident, including any witnesses
- The name, age and any other relevant information about the child, young person or vulnerable adult, who is the subject of the concern (including information about their parents or carers and any siblings)
- What was said or done and by whom
- Any action taken to look into the matter
- Any further action taken (such as a referral being made)
- The reasons why the organisation decided not to refer those concerns to a statutory agency (if relevant).

The report must be factual and any interpretation or inference drawn from what was observed, said or alleged should be clearly reported as such.

Sometimes concerns might be raised about an adult who works or volunteers with children, young people or vulnerable adults and this could be because they've:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, the person
- Committed a criminal offence against, or related to, the person
- Behaved in a way that indicated they are unsuitable to work with young people.



Clear and comprehensive records will be kept of all allegations made against adults working or volunteering with children, young people or vulnerable adults, including:

- What the allegations were
- How the allegations were followed up
- How things were resolved
- Any action taken
- Decisions reached about the person's suitability to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults

Records of allegations regarding 1st for EPA staff or contractors will be kept in that person's staff file until they reach retirement age or 10 years, whichever is longer.

11. Policy Review

This policy was last reviewed 12th September 2023. It will be reviewed annually and as legislation requires.