



EAST COAST GUARDIANS

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

(Including Safer Recruitment)

Policy Owner: Designated Safeguarding Lead

Approved By: Directors

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Next Scheduled Review: January 2027

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

East Coast Guardians is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, host families, drivers, volunteers and associated professionals to share this commitment.

The purpose of this policy is:

- To protect children and young people who receive East Coast Guardians' services from harm.
- To provide staff, volunteers, host families, students and parents with clear safeguarding principles.
- To ensure safeguarding practice reflects current UK legislation and statutory guidance.

This policy applies to:

- Directors and senior management
- Host families
- Drivers and transport providers
- Volunteers and agency staff
- Contractors and third parties
- Anyone working on behalf of East Coast Guardians

2. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy is based on current safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance in England, including:

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006





- Care Act 2014
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent Duty)
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Modern Slavery Act 2015

East Coast Guardians also works in partnership with local safeguarding partnerships and statutory agencies.

3. SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES

East Coast Guardians recognises that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or background, have the right to equal protection from harm.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Early identification and intervention are essential.
- Children can be vulnerable to harm both offline and online.

Categories of Abuse Recognised

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), including county lines
- Modern slavery and trafficking
- Online abuse and grooming
- Domestic abuse
- Radicalisation and extremism





4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

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Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

Name: Philip Coles

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The DSL is responsible for:

- Managing safeguarding and child protection concerns
 - Making referrals to Children's Social Care or the Police
 - Liaising with schools and external safeguarding agencies
 - Ensuring safeguarding training is up to date
 - Maintaining confidential safeguarding records
 - Ensuring safer recruitment procedures are followed
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5. SAFER RECRUITMENT

East Coast Guardians operates robust safer recruitment procedures in line with statutory guidance.

All host families, staff and relevant personnel must:

- Undergo Enhanced DBS checks with barred list checks
- Provide verified identification
- Provide two satisfactory references
- Undergo interview and suitability assessment
- Complete safeguarding training prior to placement

Host families are:





- Visited prior to approval
 - Re-visited annually
 - Reviewed following placements
 - Required to notify East Coast Guardians of any changes within the household
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6. TRAINING

- DSL and Deputy DSL undertake advanced safeguarding training every three years.
 - All staff and host families receive safeguarding induction training.
 - Safeguarding updates are provided annually.
 - Prevent awareness training is delivered in line with statutory duties.
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7. PREVENT DUTY

Under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, East Coast Guardians has a duty to prevent students from being drawn into terrorism.

East Coast Guardians will:

- Assess risks relating to radicalisation
 - Provide Prevent awareness guidance to host families
 - Refer concerns to appropriate authorities
 - Work collaboratively with schools and safeguarding agencies
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8. ONLINE SAFETY

East Coast Guardians recognises risks associated with online activity.

We will:

- Provide guidance to host families on safe internet use
 - Monitor concerns relating to online grooming, exploitation or bullying
 - Liaise with schools where online safeguarding concerns arise
 - Encourage students to report online concerns
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9. LIAISON WITH SCHOOLS, PARENTS AND AGENTS

- Safeguarding information may be shared with a school's Designated Safeguarding Lead on a need-to-know basis.
- When a student transfers schools, relevant safeguarding information will be transferred securely.
- Parents will usually be informed of safeguarding concerns unless doing so would place the child at risk.
- Safeguarding information will only be shared with agents where necessary and on a confidential basis.

Local Safeguarding Contact

North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership

Telephone: +44 (0) 1609 535123

Email: nyscp@northyorks.gov.uk

In an emergency or where a child is at immediate risk of harm, dial **999**.

10. REPORTING CONCERNS

If a staff member, host family member or driver has concerns about a child:

1. Record the concern factually and clearly.
2. Report immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL.
3. Do not investigate.
4. Maintain confidentiality.
5. Act immediately if a child is at risk of significant harm.

No concern is too small.



11. RECORD KEEPING

- All safeguarding concerns are recorded securely.
 - Records are factual, dated and signed.
 - Information is stored in accordance with UK GDPR.
 - Records are retained in line with legal requirements.
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12. MISSING STUDENTS

If a student is missing:

- The DSL must be informed immediately.
 - The Police will be contacted where appropriate.
 - Parents and the school will be informed.
 - The incident will be fully documented.
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13. WHISTLEBLOWING

Staff, volunteers and host families may raise safeguarding concerns about poor practice without fear of reprisal.

Concerns about the DSL should be reported to the Director or directly to local safeguarding authorities.

14. POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if:

- Legislation or statutory guidance changes
 - A safeguarding incident indicates a need for review
 - Organisational structure changes
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