



**A SAFEGUARDING STRATEGY  
FOR MRG SERVICES**

**TO SAFEGUARD & PROMOTE THE WELFARE OF  
LEARNERS ON GOVERNMENT FUNDED PROGRAMMES**

**2019 - 2020**

*"Safeguarding the rights of others is the most noble and beautiful end of a human being".*  
Khalil Gibran

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# 'Safeguarding is everyone's business'

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This policy is the second strategy document for the MRG Services and will continue to drive the requirements of what the Company must achieve to keep all learners in a safe, healthy and supportive environment.
- 1.2 There have been many lessons learnt over the years from in-house working and working in Partnership with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LCSB) including other organisations linked to the continual Safeguarding training and improvements.
- 1.3 The main principles still remain constant for the MRG Services with a major role to play in terms of safeguarding all learners on their programmes and promoting their welfare.
- 1.4 The implementation of good practices and robust procedures is the key to effective safeguarding across MRG Services.
- 1.5 In short, within The Company we all have a role to play in this crucially important area. This strategy is intended to set out how the Company can continue to improve its performance in safeguarding all learners and also through its own actions, encourage and enable other agencies to make their own required contribution.
- 1.6 Robust measures, with on-going consultation, not least with those with experience of safeguarding provision in the Company. As the safeguarding strategy is developed, there will be discussion with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board to maintain a multi-agency Safeguarding Strategy Partnership.
- 1.7 Accompanying this document is the Company action plan setting out requirements for the current position relating to each of those requirements and also the actions now needed and the resources available to implement those.

## 2.0 WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING?

- 2.1 The statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children ' defines safeguarding as:
  - Protecting children from maltreatment
  - Preventing impairment of children's health or development
  - Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
  - And undertaking that role so as to enable children to have optimum life chances such that they can enter adulthood successfully.

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- 2.2 Effective child protection is essential as part of wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. However, all agencies and all Company individuals should aim to proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults so that the need for action to protect children/vulnerable from harm is reduced
- 2.3 The Working together to safeguard children streamlines previous guidance documents to clarify the responsibilities of professionals towards safeguarding children and strengthen the focus away from processes and onto the needs of the child. It replaces:
- Working together to safeguard children (July 2018 )
  - Framework for the assessment of children in need and their families (2000),
  - Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (2007).
- 2.4 Most of the responsibilities and procedures in the ‘Working together to Safeguard Children’ remain the same as the 2010 guidance, but the guidance is presented in a much more succinct and less detailed way in 5 chapters.

### **3.0 WHAT LEGISLATION DOES THE GUIDANCE RELATE TO?**

- 3.1 The Working together to Safeguard Children guidance is issued under:
- Section 7 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970, which requires Local Authorities in their social services functions to act under the general guidance of the Secretary of State;
  - Section 11 (4) of the Children Act 2004 which requires each person or body to which the section 11 duty applies to have regard to any guidance given to them by the Secretary of State; and
  - Section 16 of the Children Act 2004, which states that local authorities and each of the statutory partners must, in exercising their functions relating to Local Safeguarding Children Boards, have regard to any guidance given to them by the Secretary of State.
- 3.2 The guidance applies to other organisations as set out in Chapter 2 of the guidance.
- 3.3 The guidance should be complied with unless exceptional circumstances arise.

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- 3.4 The dramatically slimmed down guidance publication "Working Together to Safeguard Children" covers the following 5 chapters:
1. Assessing need and providing help
  2. Organisational responsibilities
  3. Local Safeguarding Children Boards
  4. Learning and improvement framework
  5. Child death reviews
- 3.5 The safeguarding agenda applies to and poses considerable challenges for all who work or come into contact with learners and families, or indeed vulnerable adults, in the course of their day to day business. The task is not simply focussed on responses to suspected or alleged abuse, although that remains crucial; instead, staff and agencies must think holistically and in terms of what they deliver, continually, proactively and preventatively in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.
- 3.6 Safeguarding and promoting welfare must be a common thread which runs throughout the business and for those who come into contact with learners in whatever capacity and under whatever circumstances.
- 3.7 The underlying principle is that these are '**our**' learners.

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### What are the aims of the MRG Services Safeguarding Strategy?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to ensure, first and foremost, that all Learners (vulnerable adults, children and young people) are safe;</li> <li>• to improve, embed and develop Safeguarding preventive procedures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to ensure there is good communication and consultation about safeguarding and that services are appropriately accessible;</li> <li>• to improve management and ensure statutory requirements are met within all external companies engaged in Government Funded training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to raise awareness about safeguarding across MRG service and in the community ensuring that adults know who they can contact if they have a concern about any learner</li> <li>• to encourage, embed and maintain the best safeguarding practice across all MRG services area of operation and ensure continuous improvement and compliance with national and local policies</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to enhance staff and provide effective governance and scrutiny</li> <li>• to develop the workforce with a focus on safe recruitment, supervision and staff development that establishes and secures change management, so that staff are equipped to undertake their crucial safeguarding role;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• making sure that we know what to do when abuse and neglect is identified</li> <li>• ensuring learners’ know who they can contact when they have concerns about their own or other’s safety and welfare</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• working to ensure that sub-contracted organisations working, or in contact with learners children, only have people working for them that are safe and competent to do so</li> <li>• helping professionals and the general public understand what safeguarding is all about</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to make an effective contribution to the work of any sub-groups the business works with, by supplying information and providing evidence of the effectiveness of safeguarding;</li> <li>• to develop enhanced performance management arrangements;</li> <li>• children abused and neglected within families, including those where domestic abuse happens in their family and /or parents are taking drugs or abusing alcohol</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to ensure that preventive services are continuously developed, so that departments and professionals focus beyond the relatively narrow parameters of ‘child protection’ - crucial though those processes remain - and think creatively and holistically about their responses to adults, children and young people who are or who may be vulnerable.</li> <li>• children who are bullied</li> <li>• children and young people whose parents have significant mental health problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to reinforce the mind-set that the Learners (adults, children and young people) are our ‘Duty of Care’ as well as using knowledge and information about issues that arise.</li> <li>• proactive work that aims to target particular groups</li> <li>• work to safeguard and promote those children and young people who are potentially more vulnerable than others, for example, children living away from home, children who have run away from home, children in custody, or disabled children</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure MRG fulfil national and local policies and requirements for safeguarding</li> <li>• responsive work to protect children who are suffering, or at risk of suffering harm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• activity that affects all children and aims to identify and prevent maltreatment or impairment of health or development, and ensure children are growing up in circumstances consistent with safe and effective care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• children abused by stranger</li> <li>• children abused by other young people</li> <li>• young perpetrators of abuse</li> <li>• children abused through prostitution and sexual exploitation</li> <li>• children abused outside families by adults known to them</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children abused and neglected by professional carers, within institutional settings, or anywhere else where children are cared for away from home</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• making sure that there are proper procedures in place so everyone understands when there are children and young people who need special help or attention</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• children who self-harm or attempt suicide</li> </ul>

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### 4.0 E-SAFETY

- 4.1 Technology enhances learning and can do much to ensure learners get the most from it, by encouraging responsible online behaviour. Involving our learner in the development of the company e-safety policy has been seen as one way to minimise risk and embed important principles.
- 4.2 E-Safety has been identified as a learning process that impacts on all learners, welfare, social living and when out of working/learning hours. This makes learners more vulnerable and open to a multitude of cyber incidents.
- 4.3 MRG Services has seen this as an issue that must have its own standards for engaging learners through digital communication due to the complexity of the issues involved with all learners. Standards for Engaging Staff & Learners through Digital Communication April 2013

### 5.0 MRG SERVICES SAFEGUARDING STRATEGY

- 5.1 In brief terms, The MRG Services Safeguarding Strategy is 'the way we do things to keep learners safe'.
- 5.2 The document explains the processes through consultation, mapping and awareness-raising will continue as well as the mechanisms for reviewing progress and the timescales within which this appraisal will occur.
- 5.3 The strategy relates to and will involve all MRG staff and learners.
- 5.4 The strategy links in with many of the aims of the Education and Skills Funding Agency Strategic strategy, around the themes of sustainable and an inspiring, safe, healthy and supportive environment for all learners.
- 5.5 It complements MRG Services mission to "Staying Safe", with further work to strengthen inter-agency communication to promote the safety and well-being of all vulnerable adults, children and young people on Government funded programmes.
- 5.6 It is a broad brush strategy, taking full account of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) as well as thresholds for needs assessment and service delivery. The impact of key initiatives such as these will be evaluated at appropriate stages and any emergent issues considered and addressed as the strategy is revised and updated.

### 6.0 PROCESS IN DEVELOPING THE STRATEGY

- 6.1 The strategy has been developed in response to a shared understanding that safeguarding requires continuous attention and improvement, both locally and nationally. There is a need to engage more with learners about what approaches are **most effective for them**.
- 6.2 Emerging themes will also inform future departmental action plans relating to this strategy. Examples of issues which may warrant future consideration by departments include the rates of mental illness, teenage pregnancy, drinking problems and child poverty and sex offenders.

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- 6.3 This Safeguarding Strategy will be continually developed; responding to the needs of learner’s who enter into Government Funded training.
- 6.4 While safeguarding learners is always everyone’s business, there are certain teams and individuals with specific roles and responsibilities, whose work brings them into particular or regular contact with some of our most vulnerable learners. Within the Business it is these groups that will be the main initial focus of the MRG Safeguarding Strategy, for example those people working within:
- External training with frequent contact with learners
  - Executive or senior management teams of those providing or delivering services.
  - Any Strategic Partnership, particularly health & wellbeing and crime and disorder
- 6.5 Consultation on this strategy will be undertaken with a broad range of those who deliver and use our services and, most importantly, those learners we seek to safeguard and support. There will also be substantial consultation with key partner agencies, in parallel with the development of their own strategies for safeguarding children.

### 7.0 SUB CONTRACTORS

7.1 None

### 8.0 IDENTIFYING MRG SERVICES STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- 8.1 Strategic priorities for the next year have been identified and developed through our work with learners and with key partners.
- 8.2 Each year the business plan is produced with other work programmes and these are regularly reviewed to make sure we are doing what we said we would do.
- 8.3 Sometimes other priorities emerge throughout the year as a result of government policies or from case or service reviews. When this happens, we revisit our plans and may decide to include some areas of work which weren’t there at the beginning of the year.
- 8.4 The safeguarding Strategy is discussed at all SLT meetings and the plan is reviewed and updated.
- 8.5 All the departments work in partnership with and contribute to the safeguarding work of the Safeguarding Plan.

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### 9.0 GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

- 9.1 Continual improvements and the process of awareness raising and action planning require input from every department within the business. The strategy will be treated as a working document, and scrutinised by the SLT.
- 9.2 The designated Safeguarding Lead (Designated Person) will be responsible for promoting discussion of safeguarding issues at meetings and will report monthly on progress made and challenges faced in implementing the strategy and delivering the priorities. Safeguarding is a key issue for the MRG Services who need to develop, embed and improve performance management bringing together a wide range of input from all the departments.
- 9.3 All directors are expected to ensure that there is discussion about safeguarding priorities within their meetings, taking account of safe recruitment issues, the need to raise awareness of safeguarding amongst all staff and identifying and meeting their own safeguarding responsibilities.
- 9.4 The designated Safeguarding Lead (Designated Person) supported by the Company take responsibility for promoting careful discussion of safe recruitment and safeguarding training for staff.
- 9.5 The designated Safeguarding Lead (Designated Person) will, in this capacity, take a full share in ensuring that the business complies with inter-agency reporting requirements and contributing to the development of a joint inter-agency Safeguarding Strategy.
- 9.6 Managers in every department must have a strong management ‘grip’, supported by all other members of staff. Department managers are to continually update and remind staff on their duties towards safeguarding as well as MRG has to safeguard their position.

### 10.0 LEARNERS VOICE

- 10.1 Learners will be part of the overall planning phase. Learners are given the opportunity to contribute to the strategy and feed back on the learning resource.
- 10.2 The learners voice is an effective tool in allowing learners to inform and set contracts towards their own safety.

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### 12.0 QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PERFORMANCE

12.1 Robust and well-established performance reporting systems support early identification of poor performance. A performance reporting structure, with a monthly cycle of meetings, provides a clear framework for escalating issues:

- Key measures are monitored on a monthly basis which enables managers to view information about good-quality monthly performance alongside activities to support improvement.

12.2 There is now visible confidence among senior managers that services are being managed effectively, with a focus on outcomes for individual learners. This has facilitated a strong working relationship and additional resources.

### 13.0 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

13.1 This strategy is intended to safeguard and promote the welfare of all learners. It will be important that all staff, when taking necessary action to deliver the strategy, give particular care to promoting diversity. In the context of safeguarding, this means that all staff must take particular care to ensure that the safety and welfare of vulnerable, marginalised and potentially excluded children is promoted. Meeting the needs and welfare of disabled children, children from minority ethnic groups and all faith groups, those from travelling and highly mobile families and those whose parents are vulnerable<sup>4</sup> is central to successful implementation of the strategy.

13.2 Improvements to safeguarding arrangements should increase fair access to children’s services and consulting with parents and children who have experienced safeguarding services is intended to positively promote equality and diversity.

### 14.0 RISK MANAGEMENT

14.1 This strategy is intended to raise awareness of safeguarding issues across the business. It is also designed to support improvements in the promotion of the safety and welfare of adults, young people and children.

14.2 If continuous improvement is not achieved by staff working proactively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, will increase the risk to vulnerable children. Careful management of the action planning associated with this strategy and on-going scrutiny of performance against the targets will help to minimise such risks.

### 15.0 REVIEW - EVALUATING, EMBEDDING AND NEW INITIATIVES

15.1 The evolving nature of the national safeguarding strategy dictates that this Safeguarding Strategy will need to be revisited and re-evaluated continually.

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**MRG SERVICES SAFEGUARDING DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

<b>IN RESPONSE TO:- Strategic Safeguarding Plan</b>	<b>DATE: 18/02/2019</b>
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<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	<b>Timescales &amp; Milestones</b>	<b>Responsibility for Action</b>	<b>Monitoring Method</b>	<b>Costing and Additional resources</b>	<b>Achievements To Date</b>
Strategic Plan to identify the updated content of the policy, strategy and action plans.	All changes and updates to be agreed by the SLT. Then disseminated to all staff.	Fully qualified and up to date staff at all levels.	September 2019	AB to update and discuss at the February SLT.	Monthly meetings	Staff time AB to attend a 2day course to update all knowledge and skills. £175.00	Proposed documents and training
Improved learner resources and learning on safeguarding awareness.	Safeguarding work book in draft format.	Raised the knowledge of learners and made them aware of what safeguarding means to them.	March 2019	A Boyes SLT	Staff feedback. Learner's voice.	Staff time	Safeguarding work book being piloted with a small group of learners.
.Identify the best way of recording and storing the information of safeguarding cases.	Create a secure data base for all cases to be monitored and information be protected	Protection of all learners, their issues and privacy.	April 2019	SLT	Regular meetings	Staff time	NIL
Staff Training	Identify necessary training sessions for individual staff.	Up to date Knowledge and skills of staff	April 2019	A Boyes	Staff training records	Staff time	Staff training records reviewed.

**S.M.A.R.T**    **S** = SPECIFIC    **M** = MEASURABLE    **A** = AGREED    **R** = REALISTIC    **T** = TIMEBASED

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**MRG SERVICES PREVENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

<b>IN RESPONSE TO:- Strategic Safeguarding Plan - Review</b>	<b>DATE: 18.2.19</b>
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<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Measurable Outcomes</b>	<b>Timescales &amp; Milestones</b>	<b>Responsibility for Action</b>	<b>Monitoring Method</b>	<b>Costing and Additional resources</b>	<b>Achievements To Date</b>
Improved learner resources and learning on the prevent duty awareness.	Prevent work book in draft format	Raised the knowledge of learners and made them aware of what Prevent means to them.	March 2019	A. Boyes	Staff feedback. Learners voice	Staff time	Prevent work book being piloted with a small group of learners.
Embed local media news and prevent issues into the programme.	Set assignments to keep learners alerted to the dangers of Radicalisation.	Educated learners on the government's agenda to prevent radicalisation.	Embed into roll on , roll off programmes	All staff	Learners voice and surveys	Staff time	Discussions have taken place with staff on the development of resources and assignments.

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