

Safeguarding Policy

Introduction:

At Ray of Light Teen Mentoring Services, we are committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all young people involved in our coaching and mentoring services. This safeguarding policy outlines our approach to protecting young people during 1:1 coaching and mentoring sessions. We take our duty of care seriously and follow best practices in safeguarding, as required by UK law.

1. Policy Aims:

- To protect young people from harm, abuse, or neglect.
- To provide clear guidelines for staff on safeguarding responsibilities.
- To ensure proper procedures are in place for identifying, reporting, and managing safeguarding concerns.

2. Definitions:

- **Safeguarding:** Protecting the health, well-being, and human rights of individuals, particularly children and vulnerable adults, to live free from abuse, harm, and neglect.
- **Child/Young Person:** For the purposes of this policy, a "child" or "young person" is anyone under the age of 18.

3. Safeguarding Lead:

- A designated Safeguarding Lead will be responsible for overseeing safeguarding within the business. This individual is trained in child protection and is the main point of contact for any safeguarding concerns.

4. Code of Conduct for Coaches and Mentors:

- Always act in the best interest of the young person.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries during 1:1 sessions.
- Avoid physical contact unless necessary and appropriate (e.g., in emergencies).

- Never meet with young people outside of scheduled sessions.
- Ensure sessions are held in a safe, professional environment, such as a designated office, online, or a secure public space.
- Ensure all online sessions are conducted using secure, private platforms with parental/guardian knowledge.
- Maintain confidentiality but understand that safeguarding concerns must be reported.

5. Parental/Guardian Involvement:

- Consent must be obtained from a parent or guardian before commencing coaching/mentoring with any young person.
- Parents/guardians must be informed about the nature of the sessions and have contact information for the business and Safeguarding Lead.
- Parents/guardians will be notified of any significant concerns raised during sessions, unless doing so could increase the risk to the young person.

6. Reporting Safeguarding Concerns:

- If any safeguarding concerns arise, the coach or mentor must inform the Safeguarding Lead immediately.
- All concerns will be documented, and appropriate actions will be taken, including reporting to external agencies (e.g., social services, police) if necessary.
- All concerns must be treated confidentially and shared only with relevant authorities or parties.
- If a young person is at immediate risk of harm, the coach or mentor will take necessary steps to protect them, which may include contacting emergency services.

7. Training:

- All coaches and mentors will receive safeguarding training relevant to their role.
- The Safeguarding Lead will undertake advanced safeguarding training and update it regularly.

8. Confidentiality and Data Protection:

- Information shared during sessions will be treated with respect and confidentiality, except in cases where there is a safeguarding concern.
- Records of sessions and safeguarding concerns will be securely stored in line with GDPR regulations.

9. Online Safety:

- For online sessions, coaches and mentors must ensure that sessions take place on secure platforms with encrypted communication.
- Sessions should be scheduled with prior consent from parents/guardians, and they should be aware of the session timings.
- Young people should never be asked to share personal information such as passwords or sensitive data.

10. Monitoring and Review:

- This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains up to date and in line with UK safeguarding laws and guidelines.

Contact Information:

- Safeguarding Lead: Philip Ray
- Contact Details: Rayoflightteenmentoring@hotmail.com 07990 558063
- Local Safeguarding Authority: Southend-on-Sea

This policy is effective as of 01/09/24 and will be reviewed on 01/09/25.

Confidentiality Policy

Purpose:

To ensure that all information shared during coaching and mentoring sessions remains confidential, except where safeguarding concerns arise.

Policy:

- All personal information shared by young people in sessions will be kept confidential.
- Information will only be shared with others (e.g., parents, authorities) if there is a safeguarding concern.
- Confidentiality may be breached if a young person is at risk of harm, but this will be done following safeguarding procedures.
- Records of sessions will be securely stored and only accessible by authorised personnel.

Exceptions:

- Safeguarding concerns.
- Legal requirements to disclose information.

Data Protection and Privacy Policy

Purpose:

To ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and protect the privacy of young people and their families.

Policy:

- Personal data will be collected, used, and stored only for the purpose of providing coaching/mentoring services.
- Consent from parents/guardians will be obtained for data collection for young people under 18.
- Data will be stored securely and will only be shared with necessary parties (e.g., safeguarding authorities).
- Clients have the right to access, correct, or delete their personal data.
- All online communication will take place on secure platforms.

Code of Conduct for Coaches and Mentors

Purpose:

To ensure professional and ethical behaviour by all coaches and mentors.

Policy:

- Maintain professional boundaries with young people.
- Always act in the best interest of the young person.
- Avoid personal relationships or inappropriate contact with young people.
- Keep sessions focused on the coaching/mentoring objectives.
- Ensure any physical or online sessions are conducted in a safe and appropriate environment.



Health and Safety Policy

Purpose:

To provide a safe environment for both in-person and online sessions.

Policy:

- Risk assessments will be carried out for all physical locations where sessions are held.
- Fire exits and first aid will be available during in-person sessions.
- For online sessions, secure platforms will be used to protect young people's safety.
- All coaches will be aware of emergency procedures and health and safety requirements.
- Young people and parents will be informed of any health and safety risks in advance of in-person sessions.



Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy

Purpose:

To ensure a safe environment free from bullying, harassment, or discrimination.

Policy:

- Bullying, harassment, or discrimination will not be tolerated in any form.
- Coaches will immediately address any instances of bullying or harassment.
- Any complaints will be investigated thoroughly and promptly.
- Support will be offered to any young person who experiences bullying or harassment.

Complaints Policy

Purpose:

To provide a clear process for handling complaints from clients or parents.

Policy:

- Complaints can be submitted verbally or in writing to the Safeguarding Lead or management.
- Complaints will be acknowledged within 5 working days.
- A full investigation will be conducted, and the outcome will be communicated within 14 days.
- If the complaint is unresolved, it may be escalated to external authorities, such as local safeguarding bodies.



Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

Purpose:

To promote equality and inclusion in all aspects of the coaching and mentoring business.

Policy:

- The business does not discriminate on the grounds of race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or religion.
- All young people will have equal access to services.
- Coaches will receive training to avoid unconscious bias.
- Efforts will be made to promote diversity within the business and its activities.



Whistleblowing Policy

Purpose:

To encourage the reporting of unethical or illegal behavior without fear of reprisal.

Policy:

- Any concerns about misconduct or illegal activity within the business should be reported to the Safeguarding Lead.
- Reports will be treated confidentially.
- Individuals making reports will be protected from retaliation.
- Concerns will be thoroughly investigated, and external authorities may be contacted if necessary.

Safeguarding Online Policy (For Virtual Coaching Sessions)

Purpose:

To ensure the safety of young people during online coaching and mentoring sessions.

Policy:

- Online sessions will only be conducted using secure and encrypted platforms.
- Parents/guardians will be informed of the platforms used and must consent to online sessions.
- Coaches will ensure a professional environment and maintain privacy during online sessions.
- Young people will be advised on safe online practices.
- Any safeguarding concerns identified during online sessions will be reported in line with the safeguarding policy.



Lone Working Policy

Purpose:

To ensure the safety of both coaches and young people when working one-on-one.

Policy:

- Coaches must notify the Safeguarding Lead of any lone working situations and session details (e.g., location, time).
- Sessions should take place in a safe environment
- All lone working must follow safeguarding and confidentiality guidelines.
- Parents/guardians will be informed of session times and locations for all in-person or online meetings.



Parental Consent and Involvement Policy

Purpose:

To involve parents/guardians in the coaching process and ensure their consent.

Policy:

- Parental/guardian consent must be obtained before any coaching sessions begin.
- Parents/guardians will be informed of the goals of the coaching/mentoring.
- Regular updates will be provided to parents on the progress of the young person, without breaching confidentiality unless there are safeguarding concerns.
- Parents will have contact details for the Safeguarding Lead in case of concerns.





Session Cancellation and Refund Policy

Purpose:

To provide clear guidelines on session cancellations and refunds.

Policy:

- Cancellations must be made at least 24 hours in advance of a session to avoid charges.
- If the coach/mentor cancels a session, an alternative date will be offered, or a refund provided.
- Refunds for missed sessions will only be offered in extenuating circumstances, such as illness or emergencies.
- In cases of persistent cancellations by the client, the business reserves the right to terminate the coaching agreement.



Professional Boundaries Policy

Purpose:

To establish and maintain professional boundaries between coaches/mentors and young people.

Policy:

- Coaches will maintain clear boundaries and avoid relationships that could be seen as personal or inappropriate.
- All communication outside of sessions will be for professional purposes only.
- Social media interaction between coaches and young people is prohibited unless directly related to the coaching process and conducted in a professional manner.
- Coaches must avoid sharing personal contact information with young people unless necessary for the coaching arrangement.



Social Media and Communication Policy

Purpose:

To ensure safe and professional communication between coaches and young people.

Policy:

- Coaches will only use approved methods of communication (e.g., business email, official messaging platforms).
- Social media contact is discouraged unless directly related to the mentoring or coaching program.
- Any online communication must adhere to safeguarding guidelines.
- Coaches must not share personal information via social media or engage in inappropriate conversations online.



Crisis Management and Incident Reporting Policy

Purpose:

To handle crisis situations or serious incidents effectively.

Policy:

- If a young person is at risk of harm (e.g., self-harm, abuse), coaches must contact the Safeguarding Lead immediately.
- In an emergency, emergency services (e.g., police, ambulance) will be contacted immediately.
- All incidents will be documented and reported to the appropriate safeguarding authorities, where necessary.
- Parents/guardians will be informed unless doing so would increase the risk to the young person.

Life Coaching Session Recording Policy

To ensure the safety and well-being of both students and staff during 1:1 life coaching sessions, all sessions will be recorded. This policy is in place to protect both the students and the mentors and to maintain a professional and secure environment.

Policy Guidelines:

1. Recording of Sessions:

- All life coaching sessions will be recorded via audio or video for safeguarding purposes. These recordings are strictly confidential and are taken to protect both the student and the mentor.

2. Notification and Consent:

- Parents/guardians and students will be informed in advance that sessions will be recorded. By participating in the coaching sessions, parents/guardians and students consent to the recording.
- A consent form acknowledging this policy must be signed by the parent/guardian before any coaching sessions begin.

3. Access to Recordings:

- Recordings will only be viewed by the life coach, relevant safeguarding personnel, or higher authorities within the organisation, if necessary.
- Recordings will not be shared with any third parties unless required by law or as part of a safeguarding investigation.

4. Storage and Retention:

- All recordings will be securely stored and retained for a period of 12 months before being permanently deleted, unless required for ongoing safeguarding concerns.

5. Use of Recordings:

- Recordings are solely for the purpose of ensuring the safety and protection of both students and staff. They will not be used for any promotional, educational, or other purposes without prior consent.

6. Parental/Guardian Rights:

- Parents/guardians have the right to request access to any recordings in which their child participates, under circumstances deemed appropriate by safeguarding personnel.

7. Dispute Resolution:

- If a student or parent/guardian has any concerns regarding the recording of sessions, they may contact Phil Ray to discuss these concerns.

Life Coaching Session Recording Consent Form

This consent form confirms that I, the undersigned parent/guardian, understand and agree to the recording of my child's life coaching sessions for safeguarding and protection purposes, in accordance with the **Life Coaching Session Recording Policy**.

Parent/Guardian Agreement

1. I acknowledge that all 1:1 life coaching sessions will be recorded via audio or video for the purpose of ensuring the safety of both my child and the mentor.
2. I understand that these recordings are confidential and will only be viewed by the life coach, relevant safeguarding personnel, or higher authorities within the organisation as necessary. I further acknowledge that these recordings will not be shared with any third parties, except where required by law or in safeguarding investigations.
3. I understand that the recordings will be securely stored and retained for a period of 12 months and will be deleted after this period, unless required for an ongoing investigation.
4. I acknowledge that these recordings will not be used for any promotional or educational purposes without my explicit written consent.
5. I understand that I have the right to request access to any recordings involving my child, under circumstances deemed appropriate by safeguarding personnel.
6. I confirm that I have read and understood the **Life Coaching Session Recording Policy** and that I agree to the terms stated within.

Child's Information

- **Child's Full Name:** _____
- **Date of Birth:** _____

Parent/Guardian Information

- **Parent/Guardian Full Name:** _____
- **Relationship to Child:** _____
- **Contact Number:** _____
- **Email Address:** _____

Signatures

By signing this consent form, I give my full consent to the recording of my child's life coaching sessions, as outlined in the policy.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ **Date:** _____