



Think FAST Academy Safeguarding Children policy

September 2024

1. Purpose

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

The purpose of this policy statement is to define how Think FAST Academy operates to safeguard children in order to;

- protect children from harm.
- provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding.

ThinkFAST is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership requirements. ThinkFAST recognises that it has responsibilities for the safety and care of children under the Children Act 1989 and 2004. The organisation will act in accordance with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and all relevant legislation. The organisation also recognises and meets its responsibilities under Working Together 2023.

2. Definitions

- A child is anyone up until their 18th birthday.
- “Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children” is defined in Working Together 2023 as:
 - providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
 - protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
 - preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
 - ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
 - promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children

- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework.
- Staff: For the purpose of this policy covers both paid staff and volunteers

3. Persons affected

This policy applies to everyone working/ volunteering on behalf of ThinkFAST, including the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students

4. Safeguarding policy

ThinkFAST is committed to the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. It has:

- a clear line of accountability for the commissioning and/or provision of services designed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children;
- a senior board level lead to take leadership responsibility for ThinkFAST's safeguarding arrangements;
- a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, both in individual decisions and the development of services;
- clear whistleblowing procedures and are suitably referenced in staff training and codes of conduct, and a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children to be addressed;
- arrangements which set out clearly the processes for sharing information procedures with other professionals and with the local authority safeguarding children department.
- a designated professional lead for safeguarding at ThinkFAST. Their role is to support other professionals in their agencies to recognise the needs of children, including rescue from possible abuse or neglect. Designated professional roles should always be explicitly defined in job descriptions. Safeguarding leads should be given sufficient time, funding, supervision and support to fulfil their child welfare and safeguarding responsibilities effectively;
- safe recruitment practices for individuals whom ThinkFAST will permit to work regularly with children, including policies on when to obtain a DBS check;
- appropriate supervision and support for staff, including undertaking safeguarding training
- ensuring that 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;
- staff are given a mandatory induction, which includes familiarisation with safeguarding responsibilities and procedures to be followed if anyone has any concerns about a child's safety or welfare;
- all staff should have regular reviews of their own practice to ensure they improve over time in their work with children, young people and families.

- clear policies and procedures in line with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) procedures for dealing with allegations against people who work/ volunteer with a child/ren. They will make a clear distinction between an allegation, a concern about the quality of care or practice or a complaint. An allegation may relate to a person who works/volunteers with children who has:
 - behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
 - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
 - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

THE ORGANISATION will ensure that staff understand;

- What they need to do, and what they can expect of one another, to safeguard children.
- Core legal requirements, making it clear what individuals and ThinkFAST should do to keep children safe. In doing so, ThinkFAST seeks to emphasise that effective safeguarding systems are those where:
 - The child's needs are paramount, and the needs and wishes of each child, be they a baby or infant, or an older child, should be put first, so that every child receives the support they need before a problem escalates;
 - That all staff who come into contact with children and families are alert to their needs and any risks of harm that individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children;
 - The requirement to share appropriate information in a timely way and can discuss any concerns about an individual child with colleagues and local authority children's social care;
 - The necessity to use their expert judgement to put the child's needs at the heart of the safeguarding system so that the right solution can be found for each individual child;
 - The necessity to contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote a child's welfare and take part in regularly reviewing the outcomes for the child against specific plans and outcomes;
- **Key principles will be communicated that;**
 - safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part; and
 - a child-centred approach: for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children.

4. Revision history

This policy and related guidance will be monitored by ThinkFAST on a regular basis for compliance and will be reviewed at least annually.

Date approved or amended	Amendments	Signed
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