

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The company has adopted this safeguarding children's policy and expects every adult working at A2B Contract Cars Limited to support it and comply with it. Consequently, this policy shall apply to all staff (including sub-contractors, managers, directors, and anyone working on behalf of the company).

2. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

2.1 This policy is intended to protect children and young people who receive any service from us, including those who are the children of adults who may receive services from us.

2.2 The company believes that no child or young person should experience abuse or harm and we are committed to the protection of children and young person and this policy is intended to provide guidance and overarching principles to those who represent us as staff (including subcontractors), to guide our approach to child protection and safeguarding.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY

ALL STAFF

Every individual working for A2B Contract Cars Limited, irrespective of their role, has a part to play in safeguarding children who need care and support from abuse. All staff will undertake relevant training and must familiarise themselves with our Safeguarding Policy, Guidance and Procedures.

SENIOR MANAGEMENT

The Senior Management Team will receive and scrutinise reports on safeguarding activity via the Designated Persons for Safeguarding. Senior managers will ensure that their staff members are adequately trained to recognise signs of abuse and they should promote the discussion of safeguarding at team meetings.

4. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has been drawn up in accordance with all relevant and applicable legislation and guidance available to the Company in the jurisdictions it operates within the United Kingdom.

5. THE RISKS TO CHILDREN

Nearly every child grows up in a safe and happy environment and it is important not to exaggerate or overestimate the dangers. Nevertheless, there are situations where children will need protection including but not limited to.

- Sexual Abuse
- Grooming
- Physical and Emotional abuse and neglect.
- Domestic Violence
- Inappropriate supervision by staff (including subcontractors)
- Bullying, cyber bullying, acts of violence and aggression with schools and other educational institutions.
- Victimisation
- Self-Harm
- Missing from care
- Unsafe Environments
- Sexual Exploitation

- Crime, and
- Exploitation

MANAGEMENT OF RISK

- 5.1 A2B Contract Cars Limited will ensure that all staff and carers receive comprehensive training on recognizing signs of sexual exploitation and understanding the vulnerabilities of young people and regularly update training to stay informed about new trends and risks.
- 5.2 The Company encourages an open and trusting environment where young people feel comfortable discussing concerns or experiences. Provide accessible avenues for reporting, such as a designated person or helpline.
- 5.3 A2B Contract Cars Limited will continue to develop and communicate clear policies and procedures and ensure that all staff (including subcontractors) are aware of these policies and their roles in enforcing them.

6. YOUNG PERSONS AGED 16 AND OVER

At A2B Contract Cars Limited consideration is given in line with the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) when it comes to decision making for young persons aged over 16 years old in line with safeguarding and the Company will consider whether the young person has the capacity to make decisions for themselves, and if not, whether any decisions made on their behalf are in their best interest.

7. UNIVERSALITY OF PROTECTION

4.1 The company recognises that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children regardless of race, gender, religious beliefs, disability, age, sexual orientation, or identity have a right to equal protection from harm.
- Some children are more vulnerable to harm as a result of their circumstances, prior experiences, communication needs or level of dependency.
- Working with children, young people, their parents/or guardians, carers or other agencies is essential to protecting their wellbeing.

4.2 We apply fair and consistent approach to recruitment. As a Company we are committed to safeguarding children's young adults, we have robust recruitment polices to minimise the risk of engaging any staff member who may pose a risk to children.

4.3 Due to the nature of our companies' services that require our staff (including subcontractors) to undergo DBS and/or police checks under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. The required level of checking will be reflected in the level of frequency of unsupervised access is given to children.

4.4 The Company will take very seriously any allegation of impropriety on the part of any member of the Company. A member of the company who discovers anything amiss should report to the office immediately.

4.5 Allegations will be appropriately reviewed and the likely risk to children as per the company's disciplinary procedures.

8. USE OF MOBILE PHONES AND OTHER DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

All staff (including subcontractors) should be aware of A2B Contract Cars Limited policy and procedures regarding the use of mobile phones and any digital technology and understand that it is unlawful to photograph children and young people without the explicit consent of the person with parental responsibilities. Our companies' policy/procedures on the use of mobile phones and other digital technology.

9. TRAINING AND AWARENESS

A2B Contract Cars Limited will ensure an appropriate level of safeguarding training is available to its staff and any relevant persons linked to the organisation who requires it (e.g., contractors).

For all employees who are working with children, this requires them as a minimum to have awareness training that enables them to:

- Understand what safeguarding is and their role in safeguarding children.
- Recognise a child potentially in need of safeguarding and act.
- Understand how to report a safeguarding Alert.
- Understand dignity and respect when working with children.
- Have knowledge of the Safeguarding Children Policy.

10. REPORTING A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN

A2B Contract Cars Limited has a clear and defined process that is required to be followed if a concern is required to be raised by a staff member concerning a safeguarding matter. (*Please see appendix 2*). Which clearly set out the procedure that is imperative for the wellbeing of the child(s) involved. It is the responsibility of staff to report any safeguarding matters to the office so this can be escalated as deemed appropriate.

11. SOCIAL MEDIA

All staff (including subcontractors) should be aware of A2B contract Cars Limited social media policy and procedures and the code of conduct for behaviour towards the children we support.

12. WHISTLEBLOWING

It is important that people within A2B Contract Cars Limited have the confidence to come forward to speak or act if they are unhappy with anything. Whistle blowing occurs when a person raises a concern about dangerous or illegal activity, or any wrong- doing within their organisation. This includes concerns about another employee or volunteer. There is also a requirement by A2B Contract Cars Limited to protect whistle-blowers. The company's whistleblowing policy.

13. TRANSPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE

A2B Contract Cars Limited will always ensure the safety of users on transport through risk assessments, background checks and necessary qualifications and licences. The Company will also carry out regular inspections of vehicles to ensure they meet safety standards and provide appropriate child restraints based on age and size of the user. Regular inspections will also be undertaken of contracts to ensure that the conditions of our Home to School Policy are being met.

14. ABUSE OF VULNERABLE ADULTS/CHILD PROTECTION ALLEGATIONS

A2B Contract Cars Limited will investigate where appropriate any allegations made against staff (including subcontractors). This includes any situations where the actions of an individual in their personal life may indicate that their behaviour could be a risk of harm to children they work with e:g perpetrators of domestic violence, neglect or abuse of their own children.

The Company will take very seriously any allegation that is presented, and it will be appropriately assessed and the likely risk to children as per the company's disciplinary procedures.

15. DATA PROTECTION & GDPR

A2B Contract Cars Limited expects all staff (including subcontractors) to maintain confidentiality. Information will only be shared in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and Data Protection.

However, information should be shared with the Local Authority if a child is deemed to be at risk of harm or contact the police if they are in immediate danger, or a crime has been committed. For further guidance on information sharing and safeguarding see name of Confidentiality and Information Sharing policies.

16. RECORDING & RECORD KEEPING

A written record must be kept about any concern regarding a child or young adult with safeguarding needs. This must include details of the person involved, the nature of the concern and the actions taken, decision made and why they were made.

All records must be signed and dated. All records must be securely and confidentially stored in line with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

17. RESPONSIBLE PERSONS

Persons with overall responsibility for safeguarding: **Carly Temple**

CONTACT PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR ENSURING SAFEGUARDING

Designated Safeguarding Lead: **Kirsty Burling**

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: **Carly Temple**

APPENDIX 1

Recognising Signs of Abuse

What is abuse and neglect?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Someone may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or by a stranger, for example, via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children. Child abuse can have major long-term effects on all aspects of a child's health, development, and wellbeing. The main forms of maltreatment are:

Physical Abuse	
Physical abuse is deliberately causing physical harm to a child, which may involve punching, kicking, biting, throwing, hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. It also includes giving a child alcohol or illegal drugs. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of or deliberately induces, illness in a child. In pregnancy an unborn child can be harmed by domestic violence.	
Indicators in a child/ young person	
Bruises – consistent with either straps or slaps	Undue fear of adults - Fear of going home to parents or carers
Bruises, bites, burns, fractures etc which do not have an accidental/ satisfactory explanation	Burns and Scalds – particularly if they are recurrent and especially in non-mobile babies
Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them	Admission of punishment which appears excessive
Repeated or multiple injuries	Aggression towards others
Fabricated or induced illness	Fractures
Withdrawal from physical contact	Untreated injuries
Reluctance to change for, or participate in games or swimming	Injuries that occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc
Aggression towards others	Cuts/scratches/substance abuse

Emotional Abuse	
The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It includes conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. Emotional abuse may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.	
Indicators in a child/ young person	
Nervousness, frozen watchfulness	Obsessions or phobias
Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration	Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults
Attention-seeking behaviour	Persistent tiredness
Running away/stealing/lying	Low self-esteem
Humiliating, taunting, or threatening a child whether in front of others or alone.	Persistent lack of attention, warmth, or praise.
Changes or regression in mood or behaviour particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging. Also, depression/ aggression, extreme anxiety	Radicalization – use of inappropriate language, possession of violent extremist literature, behavioural changes, the expression of extremist views, advocating violent actions and means, association with known extremists, seeking to recruit others.
Drug/solvent abuse	Compulsive stealing

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether the child is aware of what is happening or not. This may involve physical contact including penetrative sex, oral sex, masturbation, kissing, rubbing, or touching outside of clothing, or it may involve non-contact activities such as involving children in watching sexual activities, producing, or looking at sexual images, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Abusers can be men, women, or other children. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse

Indicators in a child/ young person

Language and drawing inappropriate for age.	Regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play
Sexual knowledge inappropriate for their age	Wariness on being approached
Soreness in the genital area or unexplained rashes or marks in the genital areas	Pain on urination
Sexual activity through words, play or drawing	Recurrent tummy pains or headaches
Difficulty in walking or sitting	Stained or bloody underclothes
Bruises on inner thigh or buttock.	Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse
Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults	Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams, or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations	Telling you about being asked to 'keep a secret' or dropping hints or clues about abuse.
Eating disorders - anorexia, bulimia	Unaccounted sources of money

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect is when a parent or carer fails to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment), medical care, or protection from physical and emotional harm or danger. It also includes failure to ensure access to education or to look after a child because the carer is under the influence of alcohol or drugs. In pregnancy neglect may occur because of misusing alcohol or drugs. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

Indicator in a child/ young person

Neglect - under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care etc.	Injuries that have not received medical attention
Persistent lack of attention, warmth, or praise	Untreated illnesses
Poor standards of hygiene	Constant hunger
Inadequate/inappropriate clothing	Neglect - under nourishment, failure
Exposure to danger/lack of supervision	

Remember- Signs and symptoms often appear in a cluster, but also many of the indicators above may be caused by other factors- if in doubt still report.

APPENDIX 2

REPORTING A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN PROCESS FLOW

It is imperative that any staff member (including subcontractors) raise any safeguarding concerns via the relevant process below. This is the responsibility of all staff and this process, and this policy should be always adhered to and is imbedded in the companies' values that the welfare of our clients is at the heart of all we do.

All safeguarding concerns should be referred to the office with immediate effect on 01279 211695 and initially needs to be completed verbally to the Safeguarding Lead or in their absence to the Deputy Safeguarding Lead and then should be followed up via email in writing as instructed (please be aware that concerns should NOT be raised in the company of the child or parent/ guardian) This is to comply with confidentiality, all office staff have a responsibility to refer concerns to the safeguarding lead as soon as they are made aware of them.



During the conversation a comprehensive outline of the concern will be taken, please provide as much information to the as possible in order for the concern to be escalated. The concern will need to be backed up in writing as comprehensively as possible so the matter can be escalated to the relevant area. If a concern is raised out of office hours the safeguarding lead should be contacted as soon as possible via email or phone depending on the severity of the concern.



The procedure that will be taken will include some or all the following depending on the circumstances surrounding the concern:

- Contact the Police
- Contact Social Services
- Contact Essex County Council
- Contact a Social Worker
- Contact School / College / Care Home
- Contact Parent / Carer or Contact Next of Kin



All correspondence will be followed up in writing and kept in a secure environment under password protected files. Information is to be treated with the upmost care and should only be shared with people/organisations on a need-to-know basis. Any written correspondence relevant should be via secure email. Involvement of A2B Contract Cars Ltd to remain until an official department or organisation confirms that the matter is either closed or is being investigated by the relevant professionals.

APPENDIX 3

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN DO'S & DON'TS

DO

Staff who are concerned about the safety or welfare of a child should always:

- discuss their concerns with a designated safeguarding officer as soon as possible.
- make a record, read and be familiar with the companies safeguarding children policy.
- undertake relevant safeguarding training.
- Listen carefully, gently, and patiently rather than asking questions.
- If you do ask for more information, use TED: 'tell me...' 'explain to me...' 'describe...' this should mean you do not ask leading questions.
- Write down what you have been told, using the exact words if possible, including the date, time, place and people present which you sign and date.
- Report the disclosure ASAP – inform your manager or a safeguarding lead.

DON'T

Staff should never:

- investigate or seek to prove or disprove possible abuse.
- do nothing. Ignore what you have been told.
- assume that someone else knows or will act.
- attempt to resolve the matter themselves.
- Prompt them or ask detailed or leading questions.
- Promise it will not happen again. Promise to keep secrets - or make promises you cannot keep.
- Do not contact or confront the alleged abuser.
- Do not exam or take photos of any injuries.
- Dismiss your concerns or worry that you may be mistaken.
- Discuss individual cases or give information about the disclosure to anyone who doesn't need to know.

APPENDIX 4

USEFUL CONTACTS

- 24-hour protection line for children and vulnerable adults: **0345 603 7634**
- Concerned about an adult? Essex social care direct: **0345 603 7630**
- [Report a concern about a child](#) – Essex County Council
- Report a concern about a child to the Children and Families Hub on **0345 603 7627**. Out of hours or bank holidays, call the emergency duty team on **0345 606 1212**. E-mail: initialresponseteam@essex.gcsx.gov.uk
- Essex Safeguarding Adult Board: <https://www.essexsab.org.uk/>
- Essex Safeguarding Children Board: <https://www.esccb.co.uk/>
- NSPCC Child Protection Helpline – **0808 800 5000**
- In an emergency, call **999**.
- Childline is a service to help anyone under 19 in the UK with any issue they're going through. You can talk about anything. Whether it's something big or small, our trained counsellors are here to support you. Childline is free, confidential and available any time, day or night. You can talk to them by calling **0800 1111**, by email or through 1-2-1 counsellor chat

APPENDIX 5

SAFEGUARDING POLICY DECLARATION STAFF

A copy of this policy is provided to all drivers and passenger assistants who work for A2B Contract Cars Ltd company along with all subcontractors. It forms part of the induction training for new members of staff. Staff and subcontractors acknowledge their understanding and compliance.

I declare that I have understood the contents of the above Safeguarding Children's Policy and procedure document. I understand the process that I am required to follow if a safeguarding concern needs to be raised and am confident in being able to fulfil my obligation.

Signed.....

Print Name.....

Date.....