

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy Hospitality Connect Ltd

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1. Purpose and Scope

This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy sets out how Hospitality Connect Ltd protects children and young people who take part in our programmes and activities.

Our project connects schools and colleges with hotels and hospitality venues, offering group workplace visits, talks, practical workshops and curriculum-linked experiences.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, partner venues, and stakeholders involved in delivering our programmes.

2. Our Commitment

We believe that the welfare of the child or young person is paramount and that all children, regardless of background or ability, have the right to equal protection from harm.

We are committed to creating a safe and positive environment, following best practice in child protection, and deliver Safeguarding elements within our Hospitality Connect Ambassador Induction so that all partners understand and comply with this policy.

3. Legal and Policy Framework

This policy is based on and complies with UK legislation including:

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Education Act 2002
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government 2023)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2024)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR

4. Roles and Responsibilities

For the purposes of Safeguarding, our partnerships managers are the designated persons who receive reports of safeguarding concerns, and ensure that policy and procedures are implemented. We also recommend to all Hospitality Connect Ambassadors (our volunteers leading on school engagement activities) that they liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead at their partnered school, for sharing any concerns, general questions or disclosures.

The partnership managers can be contacted individually on laura.johnson@hospitality-connect.org or andi.fletcher@hospitality-connect.org

All staff and volunteers (Ambassadors) must report concerns immediately to the partnership managers and their DSL and complete any paperwork that the school / college requires.

If a concern is raised or disclosure received from a young person aged under 18 during out of hours (evenings and weekends), we advise that volunteers call the Local Authority safeguarding phone line to report their concern. The Local Authority will then make the necessary next steps and provide advice / support as needed.

How do I find the out of hours line?

All Local Authorities have an out of hours call line and this is easily searched for online. For example, if an Ambassador has a concern about a young person in Milton Keynes they would search: 'Milton Keynes safeguarding phone number out of hours.'

For **internal safeguarding** concerns about a member of the Hospitality Connect team, Adrian Ellis, Founder should be contacted on Adrian.Ellis@hospitality-connect.org

5. Volunteer Management and Recruitment

Volunteer Ambassadors are recruited via their employer membership to the local Hospitality Association. The venue is considered the partner to the school, and the venue nominates 1 or more Ambassadors to the initiative, at first to attend the Hospitality Connect Ambassador Induction session (which covers safeguarding and other key matters relating to the project) and then secondly to

attend the launch event and subsequently collaborate with the allocated partner school contact to facilitate engagement activities.

Post the launch event, the Hospitality Association Chair leads their local Hospitality Connect initiative and collates feedback from members / Ambassadors on a termly basis of what has taken place.

Following current guidance on employer engagement activities with schools in England, our Ambassadors are not required to have a DBS check.

6. Partnership with Schools and Venues

Activities with hospitality venue partners only take place under a formal agreement with schools. The school remains responsible for students' supervision unless otherwise agreed.

Arrangements for students with SEND will be made in consultation with the school and hotel / hospitality venue management.

The partnership is autonomous between the hotel venue (Ambassador volunteers) and the school. They follow the recommended activity programme themes from Hospitality Connect such as venue visits, school based careers events, curriculum support and encounters with teachers, parents/carers to showcase the hospitality sector.

7. Code of Conduct for Volunteers and Partners

Do' and Don't's:

DO:

- Be professional, polite, and supportive at all times.
- Follow the school's and your employer safeguarding guidance.
- Report any incidents, however minor, immediately to the school Designated Safeguarding Lead, or out of hours Local Authority phonenumber

DON'T:

- Be alone with a student or exchange personal contact details.
- Make inappropriate jokes or comments.

- Photograph or film students without prior consent.
- Ignore or delay reporting a concern.

8. Recognising and Responding to Concerns (External Reporting)

If a concern arises:

1. Record details immediately (what was said word verbatim, who was present, date/time)
2. Report to the DSL at the school
3. Do not investigate or promise confidentiality
4. If the concern arises out of school hours (evenings / weekends) then the concern should be reported to the Local Authority out of hours safeguarding phoneline.

9. Internal Reporting and Escalation of Safeguarding Concerns

All safeguarding concerns, disclosures, allegations, or suspicions about a member of the Hospitality Connect Ltd organisation must be reported to ensure appropriate organisational oversight, consistent decision-making, and legal accountability. Adrian Ellis, Founder should be contacted on Adrian.Ellis@hospitality-connect.org

Any member of staff who becomes aware of a safeguarding concern about a colleague must:

- Report the concern as soon as possible to Adrian Ellis.
- Record the concern factually and accurately, using the organisation's safeguarding reporting procedure.
- Not investigate the matter themselves or promise confidentiality to the individual raising the concern.

Adrian Ellis will inform board members where a safeguarding concern presents significant risk to the organisation. All safeguarding concerns will be handled in line with data protection requirements, and information will be shared on a need-to-know basis only.

10. Handling Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers

Scope: this section applies to any allegation, concern, or complaint that a member of staff or volunteer has:

- Harmed, or may have harmed, a child or vulnerable adult
- Behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm
- Acted in a manner inconsistent with the organisation's safeguarding code of conduct (see above).

Procedure:

Where an allegation is made against a staff member or volunteer, the concern must be reported immediately to our Safeguarding Leads as follows:

For allegations against any of our Hospitality Connect volunteer ambassadors – contact laura.johnson@hospitality-connect.org (North Partnership Manager) or andi.fletcher@hospitality-connect.org (South Partnership Manager).

For allegations against Hospitality Connect staff contact Adrian Ellis, Founder on Adrian.Ellis@hospitality-connect.org

The organisation will take immediate steps to ensure the safety of all individuals involved, which may include temporary suspension or role modification (this is a neutral act and not a disciplinary sanction).

The allegation will be assessed and referred to the appropriate external authority (e.g. LADO, police, or social services) where required.

Internal disciplinary procedures will not be initiated until external safeguarding processes have concluded, unless advised otherwise by the relevant authority.

The organisation will ensure that:

- All parties are treated fairly and respectfully
- Confidentiality is maintained as far as possible
- Records of allegations and outcomes are securely retained in line with legal and regulatory requirements

If it is an emergency then 999 must be called first.

11. Risk Mitigation Measures Where DBS Checks Are Not Carried Out

Hospitality Connect Ltd recognises that DBS checks are an important safeguarding measure within public facing roles in the United Kingdom. Our volunteers are spending time within schools, and welcoming group visits to their properties (hotels and other venues) however we do not carry out DBS checks.

Hospitality Connect relies on the safeguarding procedures within the schools in which our ambassadors are volunteering. Ambassadors are not left alone with students at the school setting – and teachers are always present when groups visit the ambassador's venue.

Preferred Approach:

- Volunteers can obtain a **DBS check through schools or partner organisations** (such as the local careers hub team / DYW for Scotland) where this is available and required.
- Where a volunteer already holds a valid DBS check for similar work, this may be accepted at the organisation's discretion.

Alternative Safeguarding Measures

If a DBS check is not in place, the organisation will implement the following measures:

- Where a DBS check is not in place, volunteers may be asked to confirm that they have no unspent criminal convictions that would make them unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults.
- Volunteers will be required to:
 - Pledge to adhere to the organisation's Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct
 - Complete safeguarding awareness training as part of Hospitality Connect Ambassador induction
- Volunteers without DBS clearance will:
 - Not be left unsupervised with children or vulnerable adults
 - Work under the oversight of staff or volunteers who are DBS-checked
- Schools and employer partners retain responsibility for agreeing appropriate risk assessments for volunteer engagement activities, in line with their own safeguarding procedures and the nature of the encounters.

Hospitality Connect Ltd will review safeguarding arrangements where concerns are raised and may limit or amend volunteer involvement where

appropriate. The organisation reserves the right to restrict or withdraw volunteering opportunities if safeguarding risks cannot be adequately mitigated.

12. Data Protection and Confidentiality

Information will be shared only with those who need to know and stored securely in line with data protection law. Hospitality Connect will not retain any information concerning safeguarding / child protection reports, disclosures or decisions – this is all held by the school / college / Local Authority involved.

13. Training and Review

All staff and volunteers will receive safeguarding induction information via the Hospitality Connect Ambassadors Induction session and periodic refresher training. This policy will be reviewed annually or following significant changes.

14. Whistleblowing

Concerns about misconduct should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Local Authority Designated Officer or NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline (0800 028 0285).

15. Contact Details

For any information or clarification about this policy or Hospitality Connect Ltd, please contact us on:

Founder, Adrian Ellis – Adrian.Ellis@hospitality-connect.org

Partnerships Manager North, Laura Johnson – laura.johnson@hospitality-connect.org

Partnerships Manager South, Andi Fletcher – Andi.Fletcher@hospitality-connect.org

Thank you for helping us ensure a safe and positive experience for all young people.