

# Safeguarding Policy Statement

January 2023

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Key2Confidence promotes a nurturing culture of safety, equality and respect for neurodivergent children, young people and adults (hereafter referred to as “mentees”) who enter mentoring and support relationships with us. This reflects our ethos of working with our mentees in a person-centred, strengths-based approach.

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- to ensure mentees entering mentoring relationships with Key2Confidence are protected from harm (including physical, emotional and sexual abuse and neglect)
- to provide mentors and mentees with overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding
- to provide an outline of the processes which will be followed should a safeguarding concern arise

We believe no one should ever experience abuse of any kind and promote the welfare of all our mentees and mentors to keep them safe. Key2Confidence recognises that some neurodivergent children, young people and adults can be particularly vulnerable to harm, and we commit to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

## Legal Framework

This policy has been prepared with reference to legislation, policy and guidance that protects children, young people and vulnerable adults in England, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, racial origin, religious belief or sexual identity, from harm. A summary of key legislation/advice includes, but is not limited to:

- Working together to Safeguard Children 2018
- The Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused (Department of Education advice for practitioners) 2015
- Keeping children safe in education 2019
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Autism Act 2009
- UN Convention on Rights of the Child 1989
- The National Autistic Society’s ‘Safeguarding Autistic Young People on the Autism Spectrum’
- The Care Act 2014

## Supporting Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with Key2Confidence's other policies:

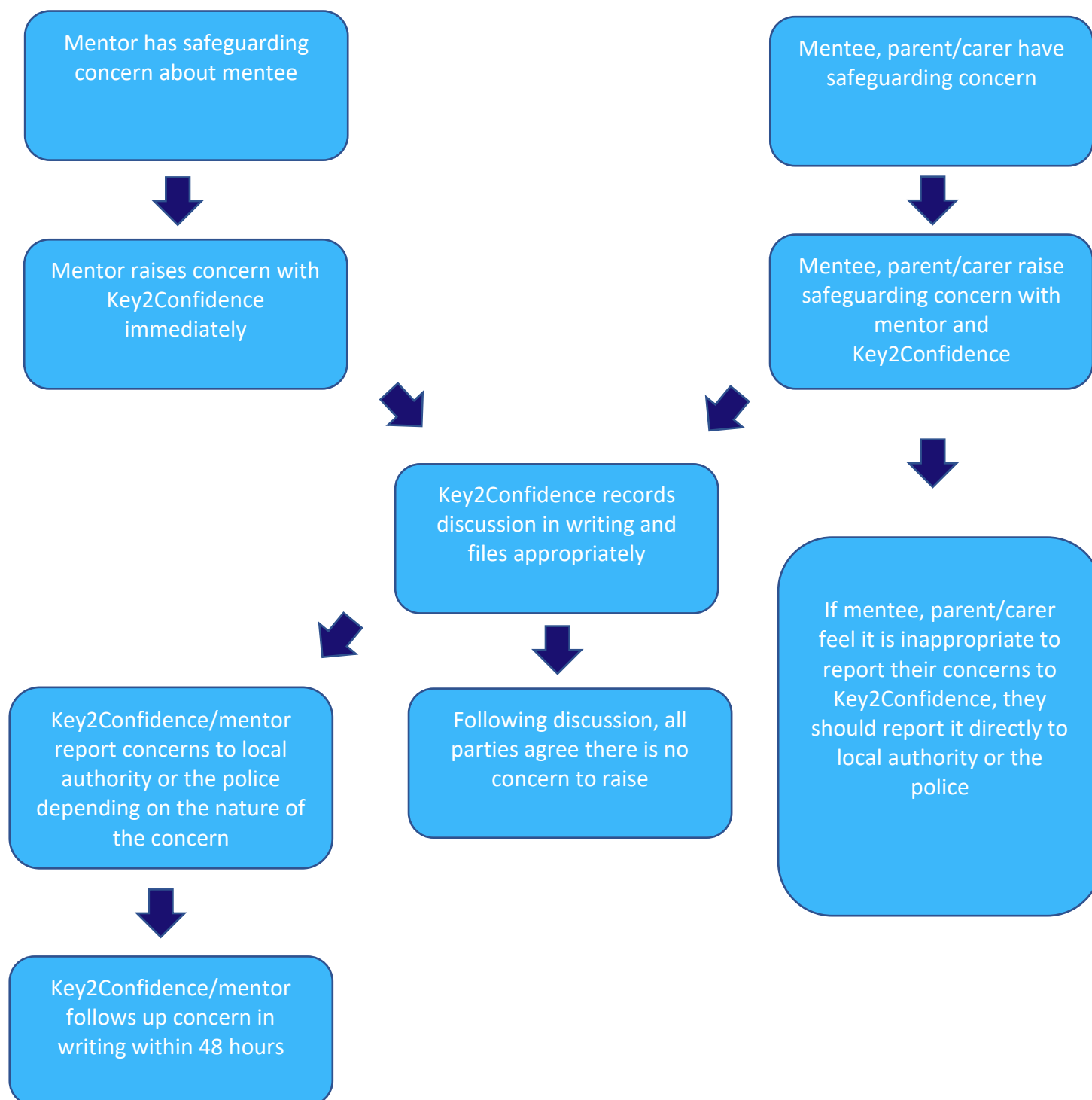
- Confidentiality and Data Protection
- Terms and Conditions for parents and organisations

## We seek to keep our mentees and mentors safe by:

- ensuring all mentors are suitably experienced
- ensuring all mentors have a theoretical knowledge and practical experience in understanding of neurodivergence (most commonly autism and ADHD) in a social model approach, including how the autistic neurotypical differs to neurotypical profiles; awareness of differences in social communication and interaction; perspective taking; sensory sensitivities; use of evidence-based strategies to help unpick these differences to ensure effective shared understanding
- ensuring all mentors receive regular supervision and support and have suitable continued professional development (CPD) that meets the needs of mentees
- ensuring all mentors have valid enhanced DBS certificates in place
- developing effective procedures to respond to safeguarding concerns (see Appendix 1)
- ensuring all mentors and mentees understand and adhere to the professional and personal boundaries within our mentoring relationships (see Appendix 2)
- having documented guidelines on effective mentoring practice, boundaries, confidentiality (see Appendix 2)
- recording and storing information professionally and securely
- sharing relevant information and concerns as required legally with any individuals or agencies who need to know, including partner organisations and local safeguarding leads
- actively listening to the views of our mentees, taking account of their wishes when reaching decisions that affect them as individuals
- creating an anti-bullying environment and guidelines for responding to reports of bullying behaviours (see Appendix 3)
- applying Health & Safety measures to ensure all activities are delivered in a safe and supportive environment (see Appendix 4)
- ensuring our mentees and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern (see Appendix 1)
- ensuring our mentors know what to do if they have a concern or if someone raises a concern against them (see Appendix 1)
- regularly reviewing and updating our safeguarding procedures and policies, annually

## Appendix 1

Key2Confidence procedure for responding to safeguarding concerns:



## Appendix 2

### Key2Confidence – Mentoring Approach

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- Key2Confidence provides mentoring relationships which involve an experienced, knowledgeable person (the mentor) working with a mentee in a person-centred, strengths-based approach
- Well-being is always at the heart of Key2Confidence's work
- Mentoring relationships are based on trust and respect from the start
- Mentoring sessions are goal-orientated individual sessions (unless otherwise specified, e.g., where small group work is agreed), consistent, reliable and carried out in an neurodivergent-friendly environment, at a mutually agreed time, e.g., weekly one-to-one sessions for as long as required and agreed
- Mentoring sessions follow professional boundaries where roles and the nature of the mentoring relationship are firmly established and communicated during the initial session and re-iterated at the beginning of each subsequent session
- Mentors make a conscious decision on the approach they will use which is tailored to the needs of the mentee and works towards their individual goals, e.g., mentors consider mentees learning and communication preferences, levels of emotional understanding and mindset
- Mentors work together with their mentees to build a trusted and mutually respectful relationship, using their informed knowledge and experience to lead their mentees to person- focused solutions
- Mentors use exploratory conversation and a range of evidence-based resources to mutually create decisions and goals
- Mentees are given the time and space to be listened to, reflect and consider different perspectives
- Mentoring relationships provide opportunities for mentees to: have greater control over their own lives, express their own identities, transfer their skills and knowledge, feel valued as an individual, reflect on past experiences; move towards self-identified goals
- Mentoring sessions in your home, should take place with parent/adult carer in an adjoining room, with the door ajar
- Where mentoring sessions are delivered at the Mentor's home, they will be delivered in a downstairs room, with a window/glass door

Mentoring relationships are confidential unless the mentee is happy for information to be shared with parents and/or teachers. Or if they give the mentor reason to have safeguarding concerns for their mentee or others.

## Appendix 3

### Key2Confidence – Anti-Bullying Procedures

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In-line with Key2Confidence's nurturing culture of safety, equality and respect for all individuals, we adhere to the principles of the Equality Act 2010 employing an anti-bullying approach to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conducts
- advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between autistic individuals (regarded as a disability and therefore a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010) and other neurotypical individuals
- prevent, de-escalate or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour
- react to reports of bullying in a reasonable and consistent way
- safeguard mentees who have experienced bullying and, if appropriate, signpost to sources of support

In the unlikely event a mentee or member of their family has a concern around bullying behaviour by Key2Confidence, they should raise this with their mentor's supervisor (Patsy at Key2Confidence), if appropriate, seek guidance from their local authority anti-bullying lead.

## Appendix 4

### Key2Confidence – Health & Safety Policy

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**Key2Confidence** will take reasonable measures to always ensure the health and safety of both its mentees and mentors.

Unless otherwise required, mentors will not require adjustments made to your home. Mentors will require a suitable confidential, quiet space for mentoring sessions with safe seating. Pets are welcome to join us if it is safe to do so.

If any physical obstacles or dangerous situations are observed, the mentor will conclude the mentoring session.

**Precautions in the event of a pandemic:**

- Up to date government guidelines will be followed at all times