



Creative Courage For Life

Global Safeguarding Policy

In association with:



PHOENIX

Preventing abuse
Protecting innocence
Rebuilding hope

Safeguarding Children in Our Care

Stagecoach is dedicated to developing the potential of children in an environment of safety and security.

We have retained the services of Phoenix Forensic Consultants, an organisation dedicated to all areas of child safeguarding. Their Director, Steve Lowe, is one of the leading experts in this field. The knowledge and experience of experts like Steve has proven crucial in the development of protocols that will protect children in our care.

Child abuse is an all-encompassing term that encapsulates many ways that a child's health or development can be damaged by other people. Anything that prevents a child achieving their full potential, or contradicts the dignity and rights of a child, is abusive behaviour.

Irrespective of Government requirements, our concerns about having an 'Aware Culture' have always been at the top of our agenda. The training we offer those who own and run our schools, the structures we have in place to recruit and monitor teaching staff and methods, and the creation of an environment where children can safely express themselves and find their true potential has always been our goal.

We have a duty of care to our students, teachers, managers and Principals. Parents need to feel confident that, as an organisation, we have the safety of their children as our primary concern.

Stagecoach Performing Arts Ltd

The purpose of this document is to give a clear picture of the expectations Stagecoach has with regard to safeguarding our students and how team members should behave with students in their care.

Phoenix Forensic Consultants work in partnership with Stagecoach to create and maintain safe environments for students who attend our schools and take part in events.

Anyone who is involved with your business must be given a copy of this policy to read. A team member is anyone who has unsupervised contact with students under the age of 18.

Each school Principal or Manager must ensure that all team members read the policy and sign Page 21 to confirm they have read it and are bound by it. Principals and Managers should consider asking team members questions about the policy to ensure they have absorbed the information and we recommend this review takes place on a termly basis. All team members at each school must sign one copy of this Child Safeguarding Policy, and a copy must be on display at all schools for parents to see. All team members should also complete the Confidential Declaration at Appendix 4 and a copy of each held on their personnel file.

In addition, guidance notes giving information regarding specific topics within the safeguarding arena are available on the intranet which a Principal or Manager can obtain to share with team members. These will be added to as relevant topics arise.

Child Safeguarding Helpline

Every child deserves to be safe from abuse. Stagecoach is entrusted to protect your children and we work hard to achieve this.

We have a designated 24-hour child safeguarding line with our Designated Safeguarding Lead Steve Lowe on +(44)**7957 957264**. If for any reason Steve cannot answer, please leave a message and he or a colleague will return your call within 4 hours. Most calls are answered immediately.

You can use this number for emergencies and to seek advice. Talking something through with an expert can save time and may ease your concerns. Please use this number to seek advice for any concern you may have, no matter how insignificant you feel it may be, if your instincts are telling you that something is wrong then call.

The helpline also acts as a 'whistleblowing' line and will handle calls from people afraid to raise concerns about the way Stagecoach is dealing with cases of concern, or who feel they have exhausted all avenues with their Principal or Manager. Please encourage team members to acquaint themselves with the Whistleblowing Policy which can be found in Appendix 5 of this Policy document.

We want all adults working with Stagecoach to report malpractice without fear of victimisation. We are clear that no one should be afraid to report concerns about failures in safeguarding our students.

If you think no action is being taken and that a child is in danger, has been failed by their school, or that students are not being kept safe, nothing should stand in the way of you speaking out. All of those working with Stagecoach will be legally protected from any future workplace discrimination arising as a result of having expressed concerns. Any concerns raised will be passed onto relevant investigatory bodies to pursue further, as appropriate.

Recruiting Team Members

When recruiting team members, please refer to the Stagecoach Operations Manual. The main elements of the recruitment process are:

1. Ensuring that the job specification includes specific reference to suitability to work with children.
2. Obtaining and scrutinising applicant information and checking and satisfactorily resolving any discrepancies or anomalies in CVs.
3. Obtaining independent professional and character references that answer specific questions to help assess an applicant's suitability to work with children and following up any concerns.
4. A face-to-face interview that explores the candidate's suitability to work with children as well as their suitability for the post and investigates any gaps in employment..
5. Verifying the successful applicant's identity.
6. Verifying the successful applicant's academic or vocational qualifications.
7. Checking their previous employment history and experience and discussing most recent employment.
8. Verifying the successful applicant has the health and physical capacity for the job.
9. Obtaining the mandatory criminal record checks for working with children and young people in your region/country.

A criminal record check is a generic term which refers to the relevant service in your country or region which ensures that an individual is safe to work with children and young people. It normally takes the form of an application by an employer to see if there are any spent or unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings held on central police records. Each country or region will have their own authority who look after this service and the cost will vary accordingly. Every person who is involved with Stagecoach must have the relevant criminal record check completed before they can work unsupervised with groups of students. Information relating to the criminal record check relevant for your country, area or region can be found on Backstage – the Stagecoach Intranet.

Any other adult who is on your premises and does not have a full criminal record check which is suitable for working with children must be supervised at all times.

Please note: It is important not to rely solely on criminal record checks. It is an essential safeguard, but it will only pick up those abusers who have been convicted, or have come to the attention of the police, or who have been listed as unsuitable to work with children. Many individuals who are unsuited to working with children will have a clear criminal record check.

A Safe Environment

In looking to create a safe environment we have drawn on the work of experts to create a safe zone for our students and their teachers. We aim to control who comes into our schools and, ensure doors can be locked to stop unidentified people from entering and students from leaving without our knowledge. Unless consent has been communicated beforehand, Stagecoach schools are instructed to only allow students to be collected by an individual known to the school, and will only allow students to be collected where this individual is in clear sight of the entry/exit point.

Teachers should give clear instructions to students as to toilets and rules around their use. It is not realistic to escort children to the toilet on all occasions, and if the toilets are within the safe zone (i.e. a designated area of the building to which only Stagecoach, its team members and students have access to) then there is no need to do this. If the toilets are elsewhere or in a shared space then team members should make a judgement about escorting a student. Be aware that potential abuse can come from outside as well as from older, more capable students. Toilets should be clearly labelled for Stagecoach use, with a separate toilet to be used only by Stagecoach team members.

Part of creating a safe environment at Stagecoach is to give students a space to be their true authentic selves, free of judgement or the fear of having to impress. To support this, parents and carers are not permitted inside the classroom space. Where reasonable adjustments are required for an underlying medical condition or a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND), we actively encourage parents and carers to consult with the school Principal to develop a practice which places the child's ability to access learning and prosper from their journey at the forefront of any decision making. This is achieved through a Support Plan which is agreed between Stagecoach and the student's family, and usually reviewed on a termly basis.

Creating and maintaining a safe environment is vital in keeping students safe. Think about potential risks, and plan how to minimise these risks. For example, normal users of the venue or contractors working on site must have the appropriate criminal record check if they have access to your building/rooms whilst you are using them.

Whilst our priority is keeping our students safe, we must also recognise teachers or team members can also be subject to intimidation and bullying, and we must be aware of any concerns.

First aid given should be recorded in writing and reported to the Principal or Manager who should then inform the parent or carer. Keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given. Please ensure that you complete the relevant accident recording details for your location.

Parental consent must be sought in writing and in advance if a student aged 11 years and above expects to leave Stagecoach without a parent, i.e. to catch a bus. If there are any requests that deviate from this, please call Steve Lowe on (+44) 7957 957264. Any such consent should be reviewed and renewed in writing on a term-by-term basis.

If you have any concerns regarding your students' safety, please remember that our Designated Safeguarding Lead Steve Lowe and his team are available to help and talk through any such issues on our dedicated helpline number:

+(44) 7957 957264.

Standards of Professional Behaviour and Boundaries

Everyone working with Stagecoach needs to demonstrate safe behaviour in order to protect the students in our care and also to protect ourselves from allegations of misconduct. For this reason we have developed a Code of Conduct for all of those who work with us.

Code of Conduct for Staff

Good Practice

As an adult working with Stagecoach you are acting in a position of trust and authority, and you have a duty of care towards the children and young people you work with. You carry the ethos and the culture of care and concern. By setting an example, you are role models for our students and are expected to act appropriately.

We expect you to display appropriate behaviour at all times. This includes behaviour that takes place in public arenas outside of Stagecoach and behaviour that takes place online.

- **Always work in an open environment.**

Avoid private or unobserved meetings with students and never allow yourself to be left alone with a student.

There may be rare occasions in schools when a confidential interview or a one-to-one meeting is necessary and, in such circumstances, the interview should be conducted in a room with an open door or one with visual access.

If this is not possible, the teacher, Manager or Principal should ensure there is another adult nearby. This is particularly relevant with regard to training for examinations, which can by its nature be one-to-one. Ensure that parents understand that training for examinations is carried out on a one-to-one basis where necessary.

- **Appropriate touch.**

It is unrealistic and inappropriate for Stagecoach to prohibit physical contact between teachers and students.

Touch is very much part of what we do and it is an essential part of the creative interpretation of roles as well as a means of directing movement, encouraging performance and providing comfort and reassurance. Where physical contact is necessary, the teacher should explain the reason. However, teachers must bear in mind that even innocent actions can be misconstrued. It is important for you to be sensitive to a student's reaction to physical contact and to act appropriately. No student should ever be touched on a part of their body or in a way that is indecent. The areas covered by bra and underpants should never be touched, except in case of emergency. If there is a reason why you have had to touch a child in these areas then you should record what you have done and contact our Designated Safeguarding Lead, Steve Lowe on **(+44) 7957 957264** to discuss. Touch must always be related to the needs of the student.

- **Diversity and inclusion.**

Treat all students equally, with respect and dignity and encourage students to speak out about attitudes or behaviour that makes them uncomfortable.

Challenge discriminating comments and behaviour and take positive action to eliminate discrimination against anyone. Ensure that students are protected from discrimination on any grounds, including ability, gender, sexual orientation, culture, race, ethnicity, disability, and religious belief systems. We need to appreciate that all participants bring something valuable and different to Stagecoach.

Activities should be designed to include all students and to promote positive attitudes towards diversity.

Be an excellent role model and conduct yourself in a manner that sets a good example to students.

Demonstrate and promote relationships that are based on openness, honesty, trust and respect. Avoid showing favouritism and be patient with others.

- **Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback** rather than negative criticism.
- **Always question and challenge any unknown adult** who enters the premises and/or who attempts to engage with the students.
- **Maintain a safe environment** and act in a responsible manner with regard to the care of students.

Bad Practice

The following practices should never be sanctioned, and these sorts of behaviours give rise to serious concerns about an individual worker, they are:

- Entering into an intimate relationship with a student or share a room with students during residential events.
- Using physical force against a student unless it constitutes reasonable restraint to protect them or another person or to protect property. The incident should be recorded in writing, with witness statements (where possible), immediately afterwards.
- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Using physical punishment.
- Engaging in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Tolerating a student's inappropriate use of language and/or behaviour. This should always be challenged, and the Student Code of Conduct be used to reinforce standards of behaviour at Stagecoach.
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a student, even in a light-hearted manner.
- Using sarcasm and bad language and/or reducing a pupil to tears as a form of control.
- Failing to report an allegation made by a student.
- Doing things of a personal nature for students who can do it for themselves (e.g. apply sunscreen).
- Allowing students access to your personal social media/networking sites. For further information please see Appendix 2 'The Internet and Social Networking Sites'.
- Exchanging personal mobile phone numbers or other contact details with students.

- Inviting or allowing students to stay with you at your home or arrange meetings with them away from the school.

All of the above are deemed as gross misconduct and should be reported. It is not an option to 'turn a blind eye, as to do so indicates that you are colluding with bad behaviour. Concerns must be reported immediately to the Principal or Manager who will report to our Designated Safeguarding Lead, Steve Lowe.

If an allegation or concern is raised about an individual, Stagecoach will ask that the individual concerned be suspended whilst an investigation takes place. During this time, a designated support person will be provided by Phoenix Forensic Consultants to the individual concerned.

Code Of Conduct for Students

Good behaviour and personal discipline are a central theme for students at Stagecoach. We expect the highest standards of behaviour from one another **both inside and outside** of the Stagecoach environment.

Courtesy, good manners and consideration for others, together with self-discipline, are encouraged at all times, and are important if we are to make Stagecoach a true, caring community. We place great emphasis on praising students for their achievements, politeness and kindness to others.

All students are encouraged to make a full contribution to Stagecoach and to support the positive endeavours of all its members. Rules are essential for the benefit of all and we try to keep these as simple as possible, but we do expect them to be respected.

Main and Further Stages Students

Our Main and Further Stages Students are expected to:

Contribute to the learning environment by:

- Working to the best of your ability in sessions
- Making it as easy as possible for everyone to learn and for the teachers to teach
- Behaving in a responsible manner and listening and responding to instructions by teachers
- Keeping mobile phones switched off during your time at Stagecoach

Show respect for others by:

- Being courteous, co-operative, kind and friendly to each other.
- Accepting difference in gender, sexual orientation, culture, race, ethnicity, disability, religious belief systems, and appreciate that all of us bring something positive and different to Stagecoach.
- Being polite, courteous, and honest with staff and visitors
- Trying to understand other people's point of view

Act in a responsible manner by:

- Taking pride in your appearance and having respect for other people and their possessions.
- Doing nothing to endanger a healthy, safe and secure environment.
- Ensuring forbidden items are not brought to school e.g. sharp objects
- Not fighting, name-calling or any form of bullying, this includes cyber bullying of other students both inside and outside of Stagecoach.

- Calling out and reporting any instances of bullying immediately to a member of the teaching team. If you see something and remain silent then you will be seen as colluding and therefore part of the problem.
- If you are worried about your teacher's behaviour, including taking photographs of students using their mobile phone, then report it immediately to the Principal or Manager

Early and Stage 1 students

We encourage our younger learners to display very good standards of behaviour whilst they are with us at Stagecoach.

So that all can have fun and feel good whilst they are learning with us, here are 6 simple rules we would like younger students to follow:

1. Show respect

- Tell the truth
- Be polite and respectful to adults and other children
- Don't upset or hurt others
- Try to get on well with each other and work together as a team
- Help other people whenever you can

2. Be safe

- Walk quietly and sensibly round the school
- Don't run or jump down the stairs
- Don't climb on things like stages, chairs and tables
- Don't throw anything at other people

3. Listen and learn

- Listen to the teacher and other children. or other pupils in the class.
- Try not to distract other children

4. Be honest

- Never touch or take other people's property unless the owner says you can

5. Be kind

- Use kind words
- No bullying
- No fighting or play-fighting at any time
- Don't do things you know are wrong
- Don't make fun of other people

6. Talk to the Teacher

- Set a good example and tell the teacher if anything is wrong
- If someone is being unkind to you, or to someone else, tell the teacher and we will help

The Principal or Manager will bring any serious breach of discipline or any disruptive behaviour to the attention of the parents concerned, and an appropriate course of action will be decided upon. If the Code of Conduct is repeatedly breached, a Principal reserves the right to ask a student to leave Stagecoach in line with our Terms and Conditions.

We advise that a copy of the Student Code of Conduct is given to every new parent to share with their child before starting their Stagecoach journey.

What Is Abuse?

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child; somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to prevent harm. It can take many forms but is usually divided into up to five categories.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is the involvement or enticing of a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative and non-penetrative acts.

Sexual activities may also include non-contact activities, e.g. involving children in looking at, or in production of abusive images, watching sexual activities or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. This may include use of photographs, films, pictures, cartoons, literature or sound recordings e.g. the Internet, books, magazines, audio cassettes, tapes, CDs.

Ultimately it is a corruption of relationship that leaves children damaged and potentially unable to function.

If you are engaged in a professional role with children and young people under 18 years of age you need to be clear that they cannot provide lawful consent to any sexual activity.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, giving children alcohol and/or inappropriate drugs, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer encourages symptoms that are not genuine, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of health and development. Neglect is by far the most common form of abuse and may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, shelter and clothing (including exclusion from home or abandonment).
- Protect a child from physical harm or danger.
- Meet or respond to a child's basic emotional needs.
- Ensure adequate supervision including use of adequate caretakers.
- Ensure adequate access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- Ensure that educational needs are met.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child which would adversely affect his or her emotional development. It may involve:

- Conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only because they meet the needs of another person. This may be verbally or via electronic or written communication.

- Imposing age or developmentally inappropriate expectations, for example over protection or limitation of exploration and learning.
- Causing children to feel frightened or in danger (e.g. witnessing domestic abuse, seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another).
- Exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Bullying and cyberbullying

Bullying is when individuals or groups seek to harm, intimidate, or coerce someone who is perceived to be vulnerable. It may take the form of:

- verbal abuse, such as name calling
- non-verbal abuse, such as hand signs or glaring
- emotional abuse, such as threatening, intimidating or humiliating someone
- exclusion, such as ignoring or isolating someone
- undermining, by constant criticism or spreading rumours
- controlling or manipulating someone
- racial, sexual or homophobic bullying
- physical assaults, such as hitting and pushing
- making silent, hoax or abusive calls.

Bullying can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. When bullying happens online it can involve social networks, games and mobile devices. Online bullying can also be known as cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying includes:

- sending threatening or abusive text messages
- creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos
- 'trolling' - sending menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups
- setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
- encouraging young people to self-harm
- voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name.

Child Trafficking

Child trafficking is child abuse. It involves recruiting and moving children who are then exploited. Many children are trafficked into the UK from overseas, but children can also be trafficked from one part of the UK to another. Children may be trafficked for:

- child sexual exploitation
- benefit fraud
- forced marriage
- domestic servitude such as cleaning, childcare, cooking
- forced labour in factories or agriculture
- criminal exploitation such as cannabis cultivation, pickpocketing, begging, transporting, drugs, selling pirated DVDs and bag theft.

Children who are trafficked experience many forms of abuse and neglect. Physical, sexual and emotional abuse is often used to control them and they're also likely to suffer physical and emotional neglect. Please refer to the Stagecoach Guidance Note for more information.

Female Genital Mutilation

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It's also known as female circumcision or cutting.

The age at which FGM is carried out varies. It may be carried out when a child is new-born, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during pregnancy. Please refer to the Stagecoach Guidance Note for more information.

FGM is child abuse. There are no medical reasons to carry out FGM. It is dangerous and a criminal offence. Please refer to the Stagecoach Guidance Note for more information.

Signs Of Abuse

It is important to remember that a child may suffer or be at risk of suffering from one or more types of abuse and that abuse may take place on a single occasion or may occur repeatedly over time. There is no absolute criterion on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. The following indicators are signs and symptoms that teachers might notice, that may be consistent with abuse; but children may exhibit them for other reasons too. For this reason, any concerns about a child must be raised with the Principal or Manager and Steve Lowe at the earliest opportunity.

Sexual Abuse

- Frequent unexplained abdominal pains/discomfort when walking/sitting
- Inappropriate sexual behaviour or knowledge for the child's age
- Promiscuity
- Sudden changes in behaviour, including emotional withdrawal or aggression
- Inappropriate sexually explicit stories or performances
- Overeating or anorexia
- Substance/drug misuse
- Reports of assault

Physical Abuse

- Frequent or unexplained bruising, marks or injury
- Bruises that reflect hand marks or shapes of articles e.g. belts
- Cigarette burns
- Bite marks
- Flinching when approached or touched
- Unexplained broken or fractured bones
- Scalds
- Fear of parent being contacted
- Reports of injury caused by parents

Neglect

- Poor hygiene
- Weight loss/underweight
- Inappropriate dress
- Unattended physical problems or medical needs
- Constantly tired/listless
- Poor relationship with parent or carer
- Behavioural extremes – aggressive/angry outbursts/ withdrawn or violent behaviour
- Fear of going home

Emotional Abuse

- Delays in physical development or progress
- Sudden speech disorders
- Failure to thrive
- Impairment of intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development

- Being bullied
- Stomach aches and/or headaches
- Reduced concentration becoming withdrawn clingy, depressed
- Tearful, erratic mood swings
- A drop-in performance at school or standard of play

Bullying

It can be hard to know whether or not a child is being bullied. They might not tell anyone because they're scared the bullying will get worse. They might also think that the bullying is their fault.

No one sign indicates for certain that a child is being bullied, but you should look out for:

- belongings getting 'lost' or damaged
- physical injuries such as unexplained bruises
- being afraid to go to school, being mysteriously 'ill' each morning, or skipping school
- not doing as well at school
- asking for, or stealing, money (to give to a bully)
- being nervous, losing confidence or becoming distressed and withdrawn
- problems with eating or sleeping
- bullying others.

Child Trafficking

Signs that a child has been trafficked may not be obvious, but you might notice unusual behaviour or events.

Children who have been trafficked may:

- have to do excessive housework chores
- rarely leave the house and have limited freedom of movement
- not have any documents (or have falsified documents)
- give a prepared story which is very similar to stories given by other children
- be unable or reluctant to give details of accommodation or personal details
- not be registered with a school or a GP practice
- have a history with missing links and unexplained moves
- be cared for by adults who are not their parents or carers
- not have a good quality relationship with their adult carers
- be one among a number of unrelated children found at one address
- receive unexplained or unidentified phone calls whilst in a care placement or temporary accommodation.

Female Genital Mutilation

A child at risk of FGM may not know what's going to happen. But they might talk about, or you may become aware of:

- a long holiday abroad or going 'home' to visit family
- relative or cutter visiting from abroad
- a special occasion or ceremony to 'become a woman' or get ready for marriage
- a female relative being cut – a sister, cousin or an older female relative such as a mother or aunt
- missing school repeatedly or running away from home.

A child who has had FGM may:

- have difficulty walking, standing or sitting
- spend longer in the bathroom or toilet
- appear withdrawn, anxious or depressed
- have unusual behaviour after an absence from school or college
- be particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations
- ask for help but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.

Action: What To Do

If you observe bad practice...

If you have concerns about anyone involved with Stagecoach who shows signs of bad practice in line with the examples above, talk this through with the Principal or Manager and our Child Safeguarding Adviser Steve Lowe.

It is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. Whilst it is accepted that teachers are not experts at such recognition, you do have a responsibility to act if you have any concerns about the behaviour of someone (an adult or a child) towards a student.

All team members have a duty to discuss any concerns about the welfare of a student immediately with the Principal or Manager, who will then refer to our Designated Safeguarding Lead Steve Lowe on +(44)7957 957264. Report your concerns and allow others to help.

If a student tells you something ...

When a student discloses something to you or you observe any of the behaviour detailed above, it is important that your actions do not abuse the student further or prejudice further enquiries. For example:

- Listen to the student if they are telling you something. If you are shocked by what is being said, try not to show it.
- It is OK to observe bruises but not to ask a student to remove or adjust their clothing to observe them
- Let the student dictate the pace when they tell you something. They should not feel pressed or pressurised to give you details. Avoid asking such questions as "what did they do next?" or "where did they touch you?"
- It is our role to listen, not to investigate. Use open questions such as "is there anything else you want to tell me?" or "yes?" or "and?" Try not to press the student or introduce your own hypotheses about what you are being told.
- Accept what the student says. Be careful not to burden them with guilt by asking questions such as "why didn't you tell me before?"
- Do acknowledge how hard it was for them to tell you this.
- Don't criticise the alleged perpetrator as this may be someone they love.
- Don't promise confidentiality. Reassure the student that they have done the right thing, explain that you will have to tell the Principal or Manager and Steve Lowe and explain why. Do not make promises that you cannot keep such as "I'll stay with you all the time" or "it will be alright now".

If you see something of concern

Looking through the list of signs of abuse as set out above can lead people to be hypersensitive to the possibility of abuse, but it is important you take action if you notice something, particularly any changes in line with the signs of abuse. As above, contact Steve Lowe and discuss.

Report to the Principal or Manager and Steve Lowe

After talking with the student and noting any concerns, you must discuss the matter with the Principal or Manager as soon as possible and **no later than the end of the teaching session**. Normally the Principal or Manager will make contact with Steve Lowe, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, on (+44) 7957 957264.

If Steve is not available and a child is known to be in **imminent danger** then the Principal or Manager must phone the police. They will keep calling Steve Lowe to make him aware of the situation. The Stagecoach Safeguarding helpline is open 24 hours a day 7 days a week so reports at weekends should not wait until Monday. If something happens at the weekend, you must report this to Steve Lowe as soon as possible.

Steve will advise you on what action needs to be taken, if any, and guide you through any statutory reporting that is required, for example involving the Police, Social Services, Local Authority responsible for welfare of children, etc. Steve will remain your point of contact until the matter is closed.

Recording The Information

Make some brief notes at the time or immediately afterwards; record the date, time, place and context of the disclosure or concern, recording facts and not assumption and interpretation. Use the Incident/concern reporting form at Appendix 1, which should be signed and dated. A copy should also be emailed to Steve Lowe.

Note the non-verbal behaviour and the key words in the language used by the student (do not translate into “proper terms”). It is important to keep these original notes and pass them to the Principal or Manager.

This information must then be passed to the Principal or Manager and a copy sent to Steve Lowe, by email at steve@phoenixforensic.co.uk

The Aftermath

Stagecoach recognises that students who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. Being at Stagecoach may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. For this reason, we would encourage teachers to allow students who have made disclosures to ‘feel normal’ whilst they are at Stagecoach.

For team members receiving a disclosure or observing signs of abuse, this can also be a distressing time and you should feel free to talk this through with the Principal or Manager or Steve Lowe, our Designated Safeguarding Lead, who is there to give you support and guidance.

Parents

Parents play an important role in protecting their children from abuse. We are required to consider the safety of the student and, should a concern arise, seek advice from Steve Lowe before contacting parents. The reason for this, at this stage, is that it may be that we need to be clear that they are not involved in any potential abuse.

We will work with parents to support the needs of their child.

We aim to help parents understand that Stagecoach, like other schools, has a responsibility for the welfare of all students and has a duty to refer appropriate cases to the Police and/or Social Services in the interest of the child.

Confidentiality

Teachers have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the safeguarding of children with other professionals, particularly investigating agencies. If a student confides in a member of the team and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the team member tells the student sensitively that they have a responsibility to speak to the Principal or Manager and Steve Lowe for the student's own sake. Within that context, the student should be reassured that the matter will be disclosed only to the people who need to know about it. Team members who receive information about children and families in the course of their work should have the information only within professional context. Child safeguarding records should be kept securely locked, or on a secure encrypted/password-protected cloud-based storage medium.

Agreement

I have read the Stagecoach Safeguarding Policy in full, including the Appendices, and I agree to uphold the expectations that it places upon me as a professional working with children and young people. I have signed the confidential declaration at Appendix 4 and accept that if my behaviour with students falls short of the expectations set out above, or if I have given false information at Appendix 4, then I will be subject to a review of my engagement with Stagecoach. In addition, I will inform you immediately if there is any change in my circumstances that may affect my ability to work with children and young people and accept that failure to do so may result in a review of your engagement with Stagecoach. I understand if I am no longer engaged with Stagecoach due to child safeguarding concerns or issues, Stagecoach Performing Arts will report me to the relevant Safeguarding Board.

All team members to sign:

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Signed	Date
Criminal Record Check Certificate Number	Issue Date or (Update Service Check – UK only)
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Appendix 1. Guidance On What Steve Lowe Will Need

If the matter is urgent, telephone our Designated Safeguarding Lead Steve Lowe on +(44) 7957 957274 immediately. If it is not urgent, complete this form before telephoning.

Your Name.....

Position in organisation.....

Stagecoach school.....

Concern relating to:

Name.....

Student/Teacher/Other (If other give detail).....

If Student – their age

Make a brief note below of the context of any information given or concern, recording facts and not assumption and interpretation. If this report relates to something said, please note the non-verbal behaviour and the key words in the language used, do not translate into “proper terms”.

Name/s and contact details of any witnesses.....

Signature..... Date.....

Appendix 2. The Internet and Social Media/Networking Sites

Personal Accounts

Social media and networking sites as they appear and develop must never be used by Principals, teachers, teaching assistants or helpers to communicate with students. Social networking sites are precisely that, 'social'. It is essential that you maintain appropriate boundaries to keep those in your care safe.

Profiles should be set to private or limited. Stagecoach students and their parents may at times ask if they can be a friend or follower and these requests must be politely declined. It might be helpful to remind both parents and students of this at the beginning of each term.

Some might think that this is an overreaction, but the reasons for this rule are clear and are as follows:

1. Social networking sites are used by children and young people to maintain contact with friends in the same way they might phone one another, meet and discuss their lives etc. These are, quite rightly, areas that we, as adults, do not play a part in. You should not consider your students as friends as this would fundamentally change the relationship, and leave the student and you unsafe.
2. Even if your motives are pure, you leave students with the view that it is 'okay' to make contact with teachers and other professionals outside the usual school environment. There are some adults who will use the fact that you have breached a boundary with students as a way of making their own behaviour seem acceptable, opening up the potential for them to groom and abuse young people. As soon as you start to communicate with students outside the school environment you begin a process that makes them unsafe.

Similarly, you should not use your own personal email account or social networking sites to communicate with students in your care. You should also consider what material you have on your social networking sites that is accessible to all. Do not include material that might cause offence or undermine your position in your professional role.

Principals and Managers and teachers should periodically remind our students that we do not allow contact between students and teachers out of the school environment. Students need to be re-assured that it is in no way a snub if they ask and are declined, and that we do so in order to be clear about the safeguarding of those in our care.

Social Networking Accounts

Stagecoach Head Office has a Facebook and an Instagram account and these are used to communicate with the general public about the services Stagecoach has to offer. Stagecoach schools that have their own Facebook page or other social networking sites should let Stagecoach Head Office know so we can assess and monitor how it is being used. Stagecoach Head Office must have admin rights to these, and any account must be set up using a school's designated Stagecoach email address.

Appendix 3. The Use of Cameras, Mobile Phones, and Digital Recording Equipment

Increasingly sophisticated technology makes it easy for video pictures and images to be shared on the internet and on mobile phones.

Stagecoach Principals and Managers should adopt a common-sense approach to the use of cameras and other recording equipment used to film students during performances and showcases. There will be occasions where Stagecoach Principals and Managers parents and carers will wish to take photographs or make video recordings of their child/children taking part in a performance.

In order for schools to ensure that use of photography and video is safe, Principals, Managers and teachers should:

1. Tell parents that they have permission to take photographs and videos of their child/children during performances. This information should be given prior to a performance, in writing, to allow for any parents who might object to make their views known to you. Make it clear that the Principal or Manager and teaching team have the safeguarding of children as a priority and that you reserve the right to challenge anyone who you think is misusing the opportunity.
2. Seek permission from parents if you plan to use a video or photographs of their child or children for marketing purposes. Parents should complete a media consent form via the Stagecoach website which contains explicit information relating to how and where the image or video will be used. Parents need to complete a unique Media Consent form for any external event that their child takes part in. If you do not get parental permission, you cannot use that child in any of your marketing.
3. Ensure that photography or video recording only takes place in designated areas. For example, in the main school hall where the performance is taking place and not in 'backstage' areas.
4. If you intend to photograph or video performances on behalf of the school, use a designated camera or video recorder. Before the performance begins, let parents and carers know that you will be videoing or taking photographs of the event and explain how those images will be used, for example a DVD of the event which will be available to buy.
5. If you intend to use a photographer to capture your footage, ensure that they have signed a GDPR compliant contract for photographers of your choice (available on the Stagecoach intranet). You will need to ensure that the photographer has the relevant criminal record check from the last two years and that you have given parents notice that there will be a photographer in attendance.
6. Have in mind that there may be those who would want to misuse the opportunity to take photographs and film students in your care. You will minimise this risk by having all filming and photography confined to the performance.

7. Be clear with students that they should not take photographs or video (including on mobile phones) whilst engaging in Stagecoach activities.

A Note about Mobile Phones

Unless there is a specific medical need to do so (e.g. blood sugar monitoring) which has previously been agreed between parents and the Principal or Manager, students should not use their mobile phones while they are at Stagecoach. Parents who need to contact their child should ring the Principal or Manager.

Teachers can use their mobile phones solely for audio purposes and in emergency situations to summon the Principal or Manager, they should not use their mobile phone for any other reason. We would suggest that best practice is to use a 'tech desk' in each room where staff can leave any device they might be using to play music, etc, and it is clear that they are not using it as a camera.

A dedicated Stagecoach device should be used for any photography or video that is taken for use by the Stagecoach business. Under no circumstances should personal devices be used for this purpose.

Appendix 4. Confidential Declaration

This form is to be completed by all Stagecoach team members and must be held on their personnel file, along with a copy of either their birth certificate, driving licence or passport to verify their identity.

Stagecoach maintains a high level of safeguarding for children in our care over and above any legal requirements. You are completing this form because you have either applied for or taken up a post with Stagecoach where you will have, at times, unsupervised contact with students under the age of 18 years. Stagecoach will also ask you to complete a mandatory criminal record check for working with children and young people relevant to the region or country you reside in.

If you do not complete this form or you fail to inform us of any conviction or other relevant information that later comes to light, it is likely that you will no longer be engaged by Stagecoach. If such a situation arises, information directly relevant to the safeguarding of children will also be shared with the relevant Safeguarding Authority for your region or country, the body responsible for the approval of people working with children and young people.

1. Have you ever been cautioned or convicted for an offence in relation to children and young people, within the last 5 (five) years? YES / NO

If 'YES', please give details below

2. Have you ever been known by any other name than the one given to Stagecoach? YES / NO

If 'YES', please give details below

3. Have you been barred from working with children by any authority or organisation? YES / NO

If 'YES', please give details below

4. Do you knowingly live in the same household as another person who has been barred from working with children by any authority or organisation? YES / NO

If 'Yes', please give details below

I confirm that the information above is true and complete and that I accept that any false or incomplete disclosure may result in a review of my engagement with Stagecoach. I further agree to notify Stagecoach immediately of any change in my circumstances that may affect my suitability to work with children and young people and that failure to do so may result in a review of my engagement with Stagecoach.

Full name:.....

Signed:.....

Date.....

Appendix 5. Whistleblowing Policy

Stagecoach is committed to conducting its business with honesty and integrity, and we expect all Franchisees and team members to maintain high standards. However, all organisations face the risk of things going wrong from time to time, or of unknowingly harbouring illegal or unethical conduct. A culture of openness and accountability is essential in order prevent such situations occurring or to address them when they do occur.

The aims of this policy are:

- To encourage Franchisees, team members and anyone to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible, in the knowledge that their concern will be taken seriously and investigated as appropriate, and that their confidentiality will be respected.
- To provide Franchisees, team members and anyone with guidance as to how to raise those concerns.
- To reassure Franchisees, team members and anyone that they should be able to raise genuine concerns in good faith without fear of reprisals, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

WHAT IS WHISTLEBLOWING?

Whistleblowing is the disclosure of information which relates to suspected wrongdoing or dangers at work. This may include:

- any safeguarding matter
- criminal activity
- miscarriages of justice
- danger to health and safety
- damage to the environment
- failure to comply with any legal or professional obligation or regulatory requirements;
- financial fraud or mismanagement
- negligence
- breach of our internal policies and procedures conduct likely to damage our reputation
- unauthorised disclosure of confidential information
- the deliberate concealment of any of the above matters

A whistle-blower is a person who raises a genuine concern relating to any of the above. If you have any genuine concerns related to suspected wrongdoing or danger affecting any of our activities (a whistleblowing concern) you should report it under this policy.

If you are uncertain whether something is within the scope of this policy you should seek advice from the Compliance Team at Head Office via customersupport@stagecoach.co.uk or telephone: (+44) 1483 247404.

RAISING A WHISTLEBLOWING CONCERN

We hope that in many cases team members will be able to raise any concerns with their Principal and Franchisees with their RFM. You may tell them in person or put the matter in writing if you prefer. They may be able to agree a way of resolving your concern quickly and effectively. In some cases, they may refer the matter to a member of the Compliance team. However, where the matter is more serious, or you feel that your Principal or RFM has not addressed your concern, or you prefer not to raise it with them for any reason, you should contact the Compliance team at Head Office. Anyone external to the Stagecoach business should contact the Compliance team at Head Office. In regard to safeguarding concerns, you should contact the safeguarding helpline **+(44)7957 957264**.

We will arrange a meeting with you as soon as possible to discuss your concern. You may bring a colleague to any meetings under this policy. Your companion must respect the confidentiality of your disclosure and any subsequent investigation.

We will take down a written summary of your concern and provide you with a copy after the meeting. We will also aim to give you an indication of how we propose to deal with the matter.

CONFIDENTIALITY

We hope that everyone in the company will feel able to voice whistleblowing concerns openly under this policy. However, if you want to raise your concern confidentially, we will make every effort to keep your identity secret. If it is necessary for anyone investigating your concern to know your identity, we will discuss this with you.

We do not encourage anyone to make disclosures anonymously. Proper investigation may be more difficult or impossible if we cannot obtain further information from you. It is also more difficult to establish whether any allegations are credible. Whistle-blowers who are concerned about possible reprisals if their identity is revealed should come forward to a member of the Compliance team at Head Office and appropriate measures can be taken to preserve confidentiality.

EXTERNAL DISCLOSURES

The aim of this policy is to provide a mechanism for reporting, investigating and remedying any wrongdoing in the workplace. In most cases you should not find it necessary to alert anyone externally, other than for safeguarding concerns where the helpline should be used.

The law recognises that in some circumstances it may be appropriate for you to report your concerns to an external body such as a regulator. It will very rarely if ever be appropriate to alert the media. We strongly encourage you to seek advice before reporting a concern to anyone external, except with regard to the safeguarding helpline. The independent whistleblowing charity, Public Concern at Work, operates a confidential helpline. They also have a list of prescribed regulators for reporting certain types of concern.

Whistleblowing concerns usually relate to the conduct of our staff, but they may sometimes relate to the actions of a third party, such as a customer, supplier or service provider. The law allows you to raise a concern with a third party, where you reasonably believe it relates mainly to their actions or something that is legally their responsibility. However, we encourage you to report such concerns internally or through the safeguarding helpline first. You should contact your RFM or a member of the Compliance team.

INVESTIGATION AND OUTCOME

Once you have raised a concern, we will carry out an initial assessment to determine the scope of any investigation. We will inform you of the outcome of our assessment. You may be required to attend additional meetings in order to provide further information.

In some cases, we may appoint an investigator or team of investigators including staff with relevant experience of investigations or specialist knowledge of the subject matter. The investigator(s) may make recommendations for changes to enable us to minimise the risk of future wrongdoing.

We will aim to keep you informed of the progress of the investigation and its likely timescale. However, sometimes the need for confidentiality may prevent us giving you specific details of the investigation or any disciplinary action taken as a result. You should treat any information about the investigation as confidential.

Malicious allegations or allegations which have been made with a view to personal gain will be investigated and appropriate action will be taken.

IF YOU ARE NOT SATISFIED

While we cannot always guarantee the outcome you are seeking, we will try to deal with your concern fairly and in an appropriate way. By using this policy you can help us to achieve this. If you are not happy with the way in which your concern has been handled, you can raise it with another Head Office Manager, a Senior Manager or a Director.

PROTECTION AND SUPPORT FOR WHISTLEBLOWERS

It is understandable that whistle-blowers are sometimes worried about possible repercussions. We aim to encourage openness and will support anyone who raise genuine concerns in good faith under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

No-one must suffer any detrimental treatment as a result of raising a concern in good faith. Detrimental treatment includes, but is not limited to, termination of services, threats or other unfavourable treatment connected with raising a concern. If you believe that you have suffered any such treatment, you should inform a member of the Compliance team immediately. If the matter is not remedied you should raise it formally using our Grievance Procedure. Franchisees must not threaten or retaliate against whistle-blowers in any way. Any such conduct will be investigated and appropriate action will be taken.