



# SAFEGUARDING OF VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN POLICY AND CODE OF PRACTICE

## INTRODUCTION

AFE Group Ltd is committed to maintaining safety and wellbeing in the communities in which it operates and recognises the right of every individual to stay safe. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the protection from harm and promotion of welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults, and to provide guidance on how AFE Group will achieve that purpose.

AFE Group acknowledges it has a duty to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults who are either employees, persons connected with our customers and stakeholders, or take part in events or activities either hosted by AFE Group or in which it participates.

AFE Group Ltd will also protect employees who have contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults in the event of allegations being made, subject to them following this policy.

This policy applies at work and outside of work.

All children, young people and vulnerable adults regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse. AFE Group does not tolerate abuse of any kind.

Employees, service partners and contractors working for AFE Group Ltd may come into contact with children and vulnerable adults through the provision of our installation and maintenance of commercial foodservice equipment. The nature of our work involves -

- **Site Surveys.** A scheduled visit by a surveyor, engineer or project manager to undertake a register or assessment of the installed equipment for the purpose of condition survey, or scope of work associated to the proposed repair, removal, or installation of new equipment. Surveys are usually undertaken by a one or two persons and take a few hours to complete.
- **Installation works.** A scheduled visit by AFE installation engineers or service partners to undertake the delivery and installation of new foodservice equipment and the removal of redundant equipment for safe disposal. Foodservice equipment will require connection, and access to building services including electrical, gas and water supplies, drainage, extraction and ventilation systems. Works will be undertaken by a small number of workers. The nature of the work may require attendance on site for a number of days.
- **Planned and Preventative Maintenance works.** A scheduled visit by AFE engineer(s) or service partners made under a service contract for planned maintenance checks of commercial foodservice equipment. Depending upon the extent of equipment checks required, the works will be undertaken over a period of hours or carried out over a series of days.
- **Warranty and Reactive Repair Works.** A scheduled visit to undertake the assessment and repair of commercial foodservice equipment. Attendance by AFE Group engineers or service partners may be unplanned, and where time is of the essence (such as the attendance to a freezer break down or reported gas leak). Reactive repair works are carried out over a period of hours.
- **Business Development Activities.** AFE Group participation and attendance at conferences, exhibitions, culinary demonstrations and trade and industry events.

The varying nature of work undertaken by AFE Group Ltd means that the types of contact with children and / or vulnerable adults may be potentially regulated. Regulated activity can be defined as 'frequent contact' with a vulnerable person (once a month or more) or as 'intensive contact' (3 days or more within a 30-day period).

This policy seeks to ensure that AFE Group Ltd undertakes its responsibilities with regards to protection of children and / or vulnerable adults and will respond to any concerns raised in an appropriate manner. The policy establishes a framework to support employees and contractors and service partners in their practices and clarifies the organisation's expectations.

This policy applies to all AFE Group Ltd employees in the UK and in all international offices and those working overseas temporarily and provides contractors and service partners with the overarching principles that guide AFE Group Ltd approach to safeguarding.

## DEFINITIONS

AFE Group will ensure safeguarding practices are adopted throughout the organisation to ensure the protection of children and / or vulnerable adults wherever possible.

Abuse is when someone is misusing or mistreating another person for your own benefit. This often causes the abused person distress or harm. Abuse will always affect the victim negatively and can be caused by those inflicting harm or those who fail to act to prevent harm.

Abuse can take several forms, including the following: -

- Physical, Psychological, Discriminatory, Sexual or Emotional abuse
- Bullying, Neglect or Omission
- Controlling or Coercive Behaviour
- Harassment or Gaslighting
- Financial (or material) abuse
- Modern Slavery

### Definition of a Child and Young Persons

**A child** is defined as someone aged under 18 as per the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child.

**A Young Person/People" or "Youth"** in line with United Nations definitions, include individuals – young women, young men, and young persons of other gender identities - aged 15 years to 24 years old. This group spans the categories of 'children', 'adolescents' and 'adults' but regards young people as having particular safeguarding needs and requiring distinct consideration aside from younger children and older adults.

**University students, work experience students and apprentices** under the age of 18 are covered by these safeguarding guidelines.

### Definition Of Vulnerable Adults

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 or over, who is in receipt of or may be in need of community care or other recognised services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation. This may include a person who: -

- The elderly, including carers.
- People who have serious illnesses or diseases, or long term health conditions.
- People who are physically disabled or who have cognitive impairments.
- People with physical disabilities or sensory impairments
- Alcoholics or drug addicts
- People with reduced mental capacity or who have learning disabilities.
- People who are experiencing extreme poverty
- People who have undergone severe trauma

### Definition of a Responsible Person

A responsible person is the teacher, parent, guardian or carer of a child, young person or vulnerable adult.

## **Responsibilities**

All employees, contractors and service partners have responsibility to follow the guidance laid out in this policy and related policies, and to pass on any welfare concerns using the required procedures.

AFE Group Ltd expects all employees, contractors, and service partners to promote good practice by being an excellent role model, contribute to discussions about safeguarding and to positively involve people in developing safe practices.

## **Implementation**

AFE Group Ltd operates with a comprehensive suite of corporate policies and ethical procedures in order to uphold best practice standards. AFE Group Ltd corporate policies can be downloaded from our web site – [www.theafegroup.com](http://www.theafegroup.com)

The AFE Group Safeguarding Policy will be implemented in association with other AFE Group policies and procedures within the organisation. These include: -

- Code of Conduct policy and conflicts of interest statement
- Whistleblowing Policy.
- Grievance and disciplinary procedures
- Health and Safety policy,
- Equal Opportunities policy
- Modern Slavery policy
- Privacy policy

Employees receive periodic training in the application of AFE Group policies and procedures.

## **Recruitment Safeguarding checks**

AFE Group Ltd recruitment procedures give consideration to safeguarding needs.

- Job descriptions for all roles involving contact with children and / or vulnerable adults will contain reference to safeguarding responsibilities.
- Candidate assessment is undertaken by formal application, submission of a CV. Recruitment decisions are based on a candidate's skills, experience and potential when reviewed against the specific criteria needed in a position.
- Interviews are conducted according to equal opportunity principles and interview questions are based on the relevant job description and person specification.
- References may be requested in association with appointment and a period of probationary working.
- DBS Disclosures will be requested for specific roles for all employees, contractors and service partners working with children and vulnerable adults.

## **DBS Checks**

AFE Group Ltd will ensure that employees, contractors and service partner roles are regularly reviewed through:

- A 3-year rolling programme of re-checking DBS's is in place for holders of all identified posts.
- Existing employees who transfer from a role which does not require a DBS Disclosure to one which involves contact with children / vulnerable adults will be subject to a DBS Disclosure request.

## **Training and Support for Employees**

AFE Group Ltd undertakes induction and training of its employees, in order to effectively communicate its safeguarding policy. Support mechanisms in relation to safeguarding are provided through regular team meetings, and the publication of health safety and wellbeing bulletins.

All employees, contractors and service partners who, through their role, are in contact with children and /or vulnerable adults will have access to induction training and follow up online assessment training to ensure the principles of the AFE Group Ltd Safeguarding Policy and Code of Practice are understood and implemented.

## **Monitoring, and Review**

This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually by the AFE Group Ltd Chief Executive Officer

## AFE GROUP LTD SAFEGUARDING CODE OF PRACTICE

AFE Group Ltd expects all employees, contractors and service partners to uphold professional integrity and good ethical standards at all times.

The following professional boundaries must be adhered to: -

### DO: -

- observe this code at all times.
- Clearly explain and communicate the nature of your work to the responsible person.
- Always undertake your work in an open and transparent manner
- stay within the confines of the agreed site or work area. Only use agreed access routes.
- obtain consent if access is required outside the site or work area or if alternative access routes are required.
- dress appropriately. Always ensure workwear and PPE is worn.
- report any matters out of the ordinary or of concern, involving children/ vulnerable adults, immediately to the responsible person or site manager and your line manager.
- Always be polite. Exercise discretion, caution and care in the presence of children and vulnerable adults and avoid lengthy conversations.

### DO NOT:-

- use inappropriate, abusive, or offensive language when on site.
- respond to inappropriate behaviour/language.
- make physical contact with a child or vulnerable adult.
- give out addresses or mobile phone numbers to the children/vulnerable adults.
- arrange to meet with children/vulnerable adults either inside or outside of the organisation site.
- consume or bring any alcohol during working hours or on the site.
- share food or drinks with children/vulnerable adults due to potential risks of allergies, intolerances and medical reactions.
- offer to buy items from or sell items to children/vulnerable adults.
- accept responsibility for any valuables on behalf of a child or vulnerable person.
- accept money as a gift/borrow money from or lend money to children/ vulnerable adults.

Employees contractor's and service partners should never be in contact with children or vulnerable adults without supervision from the responsible person and customer organisation.

One's actions no matter how well intentioned, could be misinterpreted. Be mindful of the need to avoid placing yourself in vulnerable situations.

If an employee sees or hears anything relating to a young person or vulnerable adult that worries them, this should be reported to their line manager, HR manager or AFE Group Ltd Whistleblowing Line (Tel 01553 817585). A concern may not be an obvious safeguarding issue, but combined with other concerns or left without action, it could develop into a serious issue.

In the event of an incident or allegation under this policy AFE Group Ltd will undertake an investigation and keep a dedicated log of all written and oral statements, along with a record of relevant telephone conversations.

If the professional boundaries and/or policies are breached, this could result in disciplinary procedures being taken.

## SAFEGUARDING LEGISLATION

This policy has been drawn up based on law and guidance that seeks to protect children, young people, and vulnerable adults, namely:

- Care Standards Act 2000 and Care Act 2014
- Children Act 2014 and United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (EU) 2016/679
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 & Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 and Human Rights Act 1998
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Mental Health Act 1983 and NHS and Community Care Act 1990
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Relevant government guidance on safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults.

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AFE Group Ltd