

Please ensure all staff have read the Safeguarding Guide before the Work Experience placement begins.

This Safeguarding Guide contains all of the information you need to ensure a safe environment for Work Experience students. The Guide includes details about our Safeguarding Procedure, as well as information about:

- 1. What to do if you have a Safeguarding concern about a student**
- 2. What to do if a student is absent**
- 3. What to do during a medical emergency**
- 4. Our Safeguarding Code of Conduct**

The Switch staff are on hand to support you throughout the Work Experience placement. We are your first port of call for any concerns, and we can guide you through the best course of action.

If you have raised a safeguarding concern and would like to discuss it further, you can contact Megan, our Designated Safeguarding Officer and CEO, for more support.

You will receive all of the contact details you need, including School contact numbers and email addresses, in advance of the placement starting.

Key contacts at The Switch:

Aimee Staniford

The Switch Work Experience Manager

T: 020 3882 6626

E: aimee.staniford@theswitch.org

Megan Hunter

The Switch Designated Safeguarding Officer

T: 0207 655 0355

E: megan.hunter@theswitch.org

If there is an urgent safeguarding concern and you cannot get through to The Switch:

MAST (Multi Agency Support Team)

T: 020 7364 5006 option 3.

Please see below key points for ensuring a safe working environment during Work Experience.

- If you are supervising a young person doing work for you, **work in a communal area if possible**. If not, **please leave your office door open and ensure you are in view of another member of staff**.
- **Do not accompany a young person to use the toilet.**
- **Never share any personal social media accounts or personal information** which is not appropriate for the workplace.
- **Do not accept students' invitations on personal social media accounts** (e.g. Facebook, WhatsApp, LinkedIn). If a student attempts to contact you on personal social media, inform The Switch.
- **Do not initiate physical contact with a young person**, other than to greet them or say farewell by shaking hands.

What to do if you have a safeguarding concern about the welfare of a young person

You must phone The Switch before the end of the working day. You will receive these contact details via email.



The Switch may ask you to send an email detailing the concern. The Switch will then contact the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Switch will let you know that your concern has been reported and that the School are following it up.



If it is urgent and you do not get a reply from The Switch by the end of the working day, you should contact MAST (Multi Agency Support Team) for advice on 020 7364 5006 option 3.

What to do if a student is absent unexpectedly

If a student is absent and did not inform you previously, you must call The Switch within the first hour of the placement workday.



The Switch will contact the School, who will contact the student's parents or guardians immediately. This is to ensure the safety of our students. The Switch will let you know any updates.

What to do if there is a medical emergency

Contact the relevant emergency services and the School immediately. You will receive the School's contact details via email before the placement begins.



You should then contact The Switch to make them aware of the situation. The Switch will follow up with the School.



You should always contact the School before contacting The Switch in a medical emergency, so parents or guardians of the student can be informed.

Code of Conduct for Employers

- Follow this code of conduct, even if you happen to encounter a young person when not on site or involved with a project.
- You are representing The Switch, so uphold The Switch's positive reputation and behave in a way which would not be misinterpreted, avoiding compromising or potentially dangerous situations.
- Be an excellent role model – keep conversation and actions appropriate to the situation. Keep your focus on the task and learning objectives.
- Keep an open mind, taking care not to hold presuppositions or stereotypes.
- Treat everyone with respect and sensitivity. Never promote your religious or political ideas or beliefs.
- Put the wellbeing of each young person first.
- Don't share contact details or social media. (If a young person shares contact details or social media, treat it as a Safeguarding concern).
- Never take photos, videos or screenshots of young people without written photo consent. Please ask The Switch if in doubt.
- Dress appropriately, avoiding revealing clothing or anything with inappropriate images or slogans.
- Never give gifts or money to an individual young person. Lunch and travel may be considered, please contact The Switch for more information.
- Call out any abusive, discriminatory or demeaning attitudes, language or behaviour from staff, volunteers and young people.
- If a young person needs to use the bathroom, please direct them to where they are. An individual bathroom would be preferable to one with multiple stalls, where the student may come into contact with other adults. Never accompany them to the toilet inside and avoid other colleagues being in the bathroom at the same time.
- Never initiate physical contact with a young person.
- Do not make sexually suggestive comments.
- Never engage in a sexual relationship with a young person, whether inside or outside work. Any person in a Position of Trust engaged in sexual activity with a person under 18 years of age is breaking the law.
- Do not vape, smoke or drink alcohol in the presence of a young person, virtually or in person.
- Never invite a young person to individual homes or other venues other than those agreed with The Switch.
- Never promise to keep anything confidential.
- Always adhere to the [The Switch safeguarding policy](https://theswitch.org/safeguarding-policy).
- Know what to do if a young person makes a disclosure.

Dealing with a disclosure

Volunteers have a duty of care to be vigilant and respond appropriately to concerns about the wellbeing of a young person.

This does not mean that it is your responsibility to decide if a situation is poor practice, bullying, abuse etc. but it is your responsibility to report your concerns.

If you have a concern, you should:

- Take seriously any allegations, suspicions or concerns about abuse that a young person makes.
- Observe, listen and remain calm. Allow them to talk freely without interruptions or questions.
- Don't ask for more information or make judgements or negative comments. Don't push or lead the conversation.
- Never try to interpret any of the information yourself. Remember it is not your job to prove or disprove what the young person tells you.
- Tell them what you are going to do next. Explain that the information they have shared will need to be shared with others – do not promise to keep anything confidential.
- Report any concerns that you have, no matter how small they might be.
- Report your concern on the day you first feel concerned.

Follow your programme's procedure for reporting concerns. If in doubt, phone The Switch's Designated Safeguarding Officer:

Megan Hunter - 020 7655 0300