

# Mentor Connect Policies and Procedures Manual

**Website:** [www.mentorconnect.org.uk](http://www.mentorconnect.org.uk)

**Registered Office:** Birch Park Community Hub, 83 Birchover Road, Nottingham, NG8 4BW

**Office Hours:** Monday – Friday, 10:00am – 4:00pm

**Email:** [info@mentorconnect.org.uk](mailto:info@mentorconnect.org.uk)

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## 1. Introduction

Mentor Connect provides structured, personalised one-to-one mentoring for young people aged 11–18. Our programme empowers young people to build confidence, develop resilience, improve academic outcomes, and make positive, informed decisions about their future.

This Policies and Procedures Manual outlines the framework that governs the safe, ethical, and effective delivery of our mentoring services. It applies to:

- Directors
- Staff
- Mentors (paid and voluntary)
- Contractors
- Partner organisations
- Service users and families

All individuals representing Mentor Connect are required to read, understand, and comply with these policies.

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## 2. Mission, Vision and Values

### 2.1 Mission

To empower young individuals through structured, evidence-informed one-to-one mentoring that builds resilience, confidence, and informed decision-making for a better future.

### 2.2 Vision

A community where every young person has access to consistent support, positive role models, and opportunities to realise their full potential.

### 2.3 Core Values

- **Empowerment** – Supporting young people to discover their strengths and capabilities.
  - **Respect** – Valuing diversity, individuality, and lived experience.
  - **Integrity** – Operating with transparency and accountability.
  - **Safety** – Providing a secure and supportive environment.
  - **Collaboration** – Working in partnership with families, schools, and community services.
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### **3. Governance and Accountability**

#### **3.1 Organisational Structure**

Mentor Connect is governed by a Board of Directors responsible for:

- Strategic direction
- Financial oversight
- Regulatory compliance
- Safeguarding accountability
- Risk management

The Programme Manager (or designated lead) oversees daily operations, mentor supervision, and safeguarding implementation.

#### **3.2 Legal and Regulatory Compliance**

Mentor Connect complies with:

- UK safeguarding legislation
  - Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
  - Equality Act 2010
  - Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
  - Children Act 1989 & 2004
  - Keeping Children Safe in Education (where applicable)
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### **4. Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

#### **4.1 Commitment**

Mentor Connect is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. The welfare of the child is paramount.

#### **4.2 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

A named DSL and Deputy DSL will:

- Manage safeguarding concerns
- Maintain safeguarding records
- Liaise with statutory agencies
- Provide staff training and guidance

#### **4.3 Recruitment Safeguards**

All mentors and staff will undergo:

- Enhanced DBS checks
- Identity verification
- Reference checks (minimum of two)
- Safeguarding training before working with young people

#### **4.4 Recognising Abuse**

Staff and mentors must be alert to signs of:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Exploitation
- Online abuse

#### **4.5 Reporting Procedures**

If a concern arises:

1. Ensure immediate safety of the young person.
2. Report to the DSL immediately.
3. Record concerns factually and accurately.
4. DSL will determine next steps (e.g., referral to Social Care).

No staff member should investigate independently.

#### **4.6 Confidentiality and Safeguarding**

Confidentiality may be broken if a young person is at risk of harm. This will be explained to all participants at programme start.

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### **5. Safer Recruitment Policy**

Mentor Connect ensures safe recruitment through:

- Clear role descriptions
  - Structured interviews
  - Safeguarding-focused questioning
  - DBS checks
  - Reference verification
  - Probationary periods
  - Induction and training
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### **6. Mentor Code of Conduct**

Mentors must:

- Maintain professional boundaries
- Avoid personal relationships with mentees
- Communicate appropriately and respectfully
- Not give gifts of significant value
- Avoid transporting young people unless authorised
- Use only approved communication platforms
- Report safeguarding concerns immediately
- Maintain confidentiality

Breaches may result in suspension or termination.

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## **7. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy**

Mentor Connect is committed to equality of opportunity and does not discriminate based on:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Race or ethnicity
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Socio-economic background

We promote inclusive practice and cultural sensitivity in all mentoring relationships.

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## **8. Health and Safety Policy**

### **8.1 Duty of Care**

We ensure a safe environment for all sessions.

### **8.2 Risk Assessments**

Risk assessments are conducted for:

- Premises
- Off-site activities
- Events

### **8.3 Incident Reporting**

All accidents or incidents must be documented and reported to management immediately.

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## **9. Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy**

### **9.1 Data Collection**

We collect personal data necessary for:

- Registration
- Safeguarding
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Communication

### **9.2 Data Storage**

- Stored securely (password-protected systems and locked cabinets)
- Access restricted to authorised personnel

### **9.3 Data Retention**

Records are retained in accordance with legal requirements.

### **9.4 Participant Rights**

Participants have the right to:

- Access their data
- Request corrections
- Withdraw consent (where applicable)

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## **10. Mentoring Programme Procedures**

### **10.1 Referral Process**

Referrals may come from:

- Schools
- Parents/Guardians
- Community organisations
- Self-referral (where appropriate)

A needs assessment is conducted before acceptance.

### **10.2 Matching Process**

Young people are carefully matched with trained mentors based on:

- Needs
- Interests
- Personality compatibility
- Experience and expertise

### **10.3 Programme Structure**

- One-to-one mentoring sessions
- Structured goal setting
- Regular review meetings
- Holistic support (young person and family engagement where appropriate)

### **10.4 Session Guidelines**

Sessions must:

- Take place in approved settings
- Be logged after each meeting
- Follow safeguarding and professional standards

### **10.5 Programme Duration**

Duration is agreed at intake and reviewed periodically.

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## **11. Monitoring, Evaluation and Quality Assurance**

Mentor Connect maintains quality through:

- Regular supervision of mentors
- Participant feedback
- Outcome tracking
- Safeguarding audits
- Annual policy review

Key indicators include:

- Improved confidence
- Academic engagement
- Goal achievement
- Emotional resilience

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## **12. Complaints Policy**

### **12.1 Commitment**

We take complaints seriously and treat them fairly and confidentially.

### **12.2 Procedure**

1. Submit complaint in writing (email: [info@mentorconnect.org.uk](mailto:info@mentorconnect.org.uk)).
2. Acknowledge within 5 working days.
3. Investigate within 20 working days.
4. Provide written outcome.

If unresolved, the complaint may be escalated to the Board of Directors.

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## **13. Confidentiality Policy**

All information shared within mentoring sessions remains confidential except where:

- There is a safeguarding concern
- There is risk of serious harm
- Disclosure is required by law

Participants are informed of confidentiality limits at programme start.

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## **14. Professional Boundaries Policy**

Mentors must:

- Avoid dual relationships
- Not connect via personal social media
- Use approved communication methods
- Maintain session transparency

Any boundary concerns must be reported immediately.

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## **15. Social Media and Online Safety Policy**

- Only authorised staff may post on official channels.
  - Consent must be obtained before sharing images or testimonials.
  - Mentors must not communicate via personal accounts.
  - Online sessions must use approved secure platforms.
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## **16. Training and Development Policy**

Mentors and staff will receive:

- Safeguarding training
  - Equality and diversity training
  - Ongoing supervision
  - Annual refresher training
  - Professional development opportunities
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## **17. Whistleblowing Policy**

Mentor Connect encourages staff and volunteers to report concerns about malpractice, safeguarding, or unethical behaviour without fear of retaliation.

Reports may be made confidentially to:

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead
  - A Director
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## **18. Risk Management Policy**

We maintain a Risk Register covering:

- Safeguarding risks
- Operational risks
- Financial risks
- Reputational risks

Risks are reviewed quarterly by leadership.

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## **19. Record Keeping Policy**

Mentors must:

- Complete session logs
- Maintain accurate records
- Submit reports on time
- Store records securely

Records must be factual, objective, and dated.

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## **20. Policy Review**

This manual will be:

- Reviewed annually
  - Updated in response to legislative changes
  - Approved by the Board of Directors
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