

## Safeguarding & Prevent Policy

### 1. Policy Statement:

Fera aims to provide the highest possible standards of care for all staff. As such, we recognise our responsibilities for safeguarding vulnerable adults and young people and are committed to working with all stakeholders to provide effective safeguarding across all aspects of our work. This policy also applies to all staff, volunteers, and contractors involved in delivering or supervising work experience placements.

Fera will remain mindful of its duty of care and other legal obligations such as those it owes under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the General Data Protection Act 2018.

This policy should also be read in conjunction with the following legislation and guidance:

- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015
- Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (2023)
- Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism (2025)
- Multi-agency statutory guidance on FGM (2020)
- Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing Safeguarding services (2018)
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- General Data Protection Act 2018 Clearly articulate the organization's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of individuals. This should emphasize a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, discrimination, and neglect.
- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Education Act 1996
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- 

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following staff documents:

- Fera Employee Handbook
- Fera Code of Conduct
- Fera Safeguarding Policy
- Fera Employment Screening Standard & Procedure
- Anti-Racism, Discrimination, Harassment & Bullying Policy
- Diversity and Inclusion Policy

- Health, Safety and Environment Policy
- Information & Cyber Security Policy
- Speak Up Policy

## 2. Our Commitment & Policy Aims

At Fera we are committed to fulfilling our social, moral, and legal responsibilities to safeguard the welfare of every young person or vulnerable adult. In fulfilling this commitment, Fera will provide a safe and friendly environment for all stakeholders and ensure effective protection from harm (including radicalisation and extremism).

### **Fera believes that:**

- Every staff member, subcontractor and partners has the right to enjoy a safe, caring, and inclusive research and working environment
- Every person should always be valued, respected as an individual and treated with dignity
- Every person has the right to learn and/or work in a democratic environment where core British values are modelled and actively promoted by staff
- Every person has the right to learn in an environment where any form of discrimination, abuse, harassment, bullying, or victimisation are strictly unacceptable
- Every person has the right to expect staff to listen to them when they need to express themselves and to take any necessary action to provide support where this might be required

Fera ensures it adopts a culture of vigilance where all staff and people that interact with us will have their welfare promoted and where timely and appropriate safeguarding action is taken for any person who needs extra help or who may be suffering, or likely to suffer harm.

All staff must recognise that ignoring abuse and other potential safeguarding risks is not an option. They must, therefore, report any concerns for the well-being of staff in accordance with this policy and guidance, which has the full commitment of Fera's Operational Leadership Team.

### **Zero Tolerance Approach**

Fera operates a 'zero tolerance' approach to all instances of abuse, bullying, harassment, discrimination, or exploitation. This applies in all instances and whether the identified concern is physical, sexual, or emotional in form.

The principles of good standards of behaviour and respect for others are embedded within Fera values and are, therefore, expected of all individuals and interacting organisations throughout their association with Fera. We are, however, mindful that

there are instances where these standards may not be achieved and are committed to investigating all instances where a potential/actual risk to safety or welfare is raised as a safeguarding concern.

### 3. Policy Aims

This policy has been developed to:

- Ensure that all stakeholders understand their safeguarding responsibilities and are equipped to take all reasonable measures to assess and minimise the risk of harm to all staff and individuals we interact with
- Ensure that processes are in place to enable all stakeholders to develop a clear understanding of the potential safeguarding risks to staff and organisational individuals that we interact with
- Ensure that clear procedures are in place to enable timely reporting and effectively manage responses where any safeguarding concerns might be identified.

#### **To achieve this, Fera will:**

- Provide a safe environment for all stakeholders by ensuring thorough risk assessment and safe working practices are put in place.
- Embed a culture of safeguarding across the organisation by ensuring all staff operating procedures and learner information includes reference and information about this policy
- Establish procedures for reporting and responding to safeguarding concerns (including allegations of abuse and radicalisation) and ensure these are applied consistently by all staff.
- Embed safer recruitment procedures across the organisation, ensuring that training, candidate checks, questions and vetting processes are integral elements of the recruitment procedure.
- Provide appropriate training for all staff as part of their induction, and through additional refresher sessions, including additional training which may be required for specific roles.
- Embed effective information-sharing protocols with staff and key partners, such as employers in order to report concerns to outside agencies, where appropriate.
- Promote awareness across the organisation through providing regular updates on emerging themes relating to Safeguarding and the Prevent Duty, British values, and policy/legislative changes.
- Have a designated Safeguarding Lead who will report to the Chief Executive Officer and will take the strategic lead in relation to Safeguarding Staff.
- Equip staff and organisational partners with the skills they need to keep themselves safe online in their work and build resilience in their personal lives

- Raise employee awareness of Safeguarding and Prevent issues such as minimising risk, recognising abuse, and treating all staff with respect.
- Ensure that subcontractors and partners have appropriate Safeguarding and Prevent policies and procedures and that these are checked when tendering for work with Fera.
- Ensure that any external speakers or visitors are always vetted and accompanied.
- Work in partnership with Local Safeguarding Boards, Prevent Coordinators, and other Child Protection Agencies, where applicable.
- Review the effectiveness of policies and procedures where there has been a Safeguarding or Prevent concern

#### **4. Scope of this Policy**

This policy covers all activities associated Fera and its staff and partner organisations.

All responsibilities and processes within this policy, therefore, apply to all staff, sub-contractors and temporary staff whilst working with Fera.

#### **Subcontractors and Subcontracted Provision**

We are committed to working closely with all our subcontractor partners to ensure the effective implementation of this policy as part of this support our due diligence processes include an annual review of all relevant operational process in place with each subcontractor (including relevant policies day to day processes, provision for staff training, etc).

#### **5. Safeguarding Children & Young People**

Safeguarding children and young people refers to processes relating to those under 18 years of age. Specific responsibilities in relation to children and young people are outlined within the statutory guidance document “Keeping Children Safe in Education” which is updated annually, the process for students, volunteers and contractors is included in section 7 of this policy .Within this guidance safeguarding is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children’s health or development.
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

At Fera we believe that it is our moral duty to provide the best possible support for all interactions with children in our community. We are, therefore, committed to taking all necessary steps to promote welfare and safety children within our community, whether, or not, this is required within our statutory duties.

## **Safeguarding Adults**

Safeguarding Adults refers to processes relating to those over 18 years of age. The Care Act 2014 establishes a duty to protect adults from abuse and neglect, and also emphasises the importance of actions to protect vulnerable adults.

Factors considered within identification of a vulnerable adult includes (but is not restricted to) individuals with any of the following:

- Disability (physical or mental)
- Learning Difficulties
- Physical Impairments
- Sensory Impairments
- Mental Health Needs
- Age Related Frailty
- Dementia
- Brain Injuries
- Drug, Alcohol or Substance Problems

At Fera we believe that it is our moral duty to provide the best possible support for our people. We are, therefore, committed to taking all necessary steps to promote welfare and safety of adults within our community, whether, or not, this is required within our statutory duties.

## **6. Legal Framework:**

Fera reference relevant laws, regulations, and standards pertaining to safeguarding. Ensure compliance with local and national legislation related to the protection of vulnerable individuals.

## **7. Principles of Safeguarding**

Fera will follow the six key safeguarding principles needed to protect people in line with the Care Act 2014

### **1. Empowerment**

Ensuring people are supported and confident in making their own decisions and giving informed consent. Empowerment gives individuals choice and control over decisions made

## **2. Providing support and representation for those in greatest need.**

Organisations can put measures in place to help stop abuse from occurring and offer help and support to those at risk.

## **3. Prevention**

It is crucial to try and take action before harm occurs, preventing neglect, harm or abuse is the primary objective. Prevention is the act of organisations working to stop abuse before it happens. Raising awareness, training staff, and making information easily accessible are all ways that they can demonstrate prevention measures and encourage individuals to ask for help.

## **4. Proportionality**

We must take a proportionate and least intrusive response to the issue presented. Proportionality ensures that services take each person into account when dealing with abuse. They will respect each individual and assess any risks presented

## **5. Partnerships**

Forming partnerships with local communities can create solutions as they can assist in preventing and detecting abuse. Partnerships give organisations the opportunity to work together, as well as with the local community.

## **6. Accountability**

Being accountable and having complete transparency in delivering safeguarding practice.

Safeguarding is everyone's business and accountability makes sure that everyone plays their part when it comes to safeguarding vulnerable people. Everyone is accountable for their actions as individuals, services, and organisations

## **7. Roles and Responsibilities:**

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of staff, stakeholders and vulnerable students age 16 to 18 years of age is everyone's responsibility. All Fera staff, therefore, have a part to play in ensuring the best possible support and care is provided. All staff working with Fera are required to:

### **All staff will:**

- Be familiar with, understand and adhere to this policy and all mandatory guidance
- Be familiar with, understand and adhere to the Fera Staff 'Code of Conduct'

- Be familiar with the potential risks which apply to the Fera and understand the potential indicators of these concerns and remain vigilant to these in all aspects of work within the organisation
- Be familiar with and understand the process for dealing with a disclosure relating to a safeguarding concern
- Be familiar with and understand the process for referring a safeguarding concern, including any concerns relating to staff, stakeholders, work experience students 16 to 18 years of age.
- Report instances of actual or suspected safeguarding concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Officer, in line with the processes outlined within this policy and the legal duty for reporting.
- Complete all relevant training and development identified by Fera and be aware of all responsibilities outlined within this policy and within relevant statutory documents or other guidance.

Alongside their general responsibilities as a member of staff, specific post-holders also have the following responsibilities associated with their role(s):

#### **The Board will:**

- Have accountability for ensuring that effective processes are in place across the organisation.
- Hold overall responsibility for ensuring that Safeguarding is effective across the organisation.
- Review and annually approve the Safeguarding & Prevent Policy, ensuring it complies with all legal, moral, and social responsibilities relevant to its application.
- Provide oversight through review of all Board updates and assess the impact of this policy in achieving our legal, moral, and social responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.
- Ensure that appropriate time, funding, and resources are made available to the Designated Safeguarding Lead to enable effective implementation of this policy and all associated processes.

#### **The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:**

- Hold responsibility for the implementation of this policy and all related procedures, ensuring that all processes across the organisation provide effective safeguarding.
- Promote a culture of vigilance where all staff are aware and can confidently execute their responsibilities within this policy and its associated processes
- Ensure that all staff receive appropriate training and understand the key risks (including abuse, neglect, peer on peer abuse (including violence and sexual violence), Criminal Exploitation, FGM, Prevent and online safety) and are aware of the potential indicators of these harms.

- Be available for all staff to discuss safeguarding concerns and take a lead of management on the organisation's response to any safeguarding concerns, including referrals to other agencies where this is required.
- Lead the response to any allegations made against staff in relation to safeguarding, including liaison with schools/colleges.
- Ensure all safeguarding concerns are effectively recorded and that appropriate responses are implemented following any concern that is raised.
- Ensure the effective monitoring of safeguarding concerns, including analysis of trends/patterns, and identifying any lessons to be learned following the management of any safeguarding issues.
- Provide regular updates to the Board outlining the safeguarding context and operational effectiveness of safeguarding processes.
- Keep up to date with the latest national and local guidance, requirements, and risks, ensuring that these are shared with the safeguarding team and wider staff through regular updates.

## **Work Experience Students**

Fera ensure that effective processes are in place across the organisation for workplace students, volunteers and contractors.

Supervisors and managers involved in delivering or supervising work experience placement outlines the safeguarding responsibilities of Fera Science Ltd when hosting work experience students, aged 16–18.

- Work experience is not permitted for students under the age of 16. We are committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment that promotes the welfare of all young people.
- Supervisors are DBS checked (basic or enhanced depending on duties)
- Must report any safeguarding concerns immediately to the DSL and must not promise confidentiality to students.

## **Pre-Placement Requirements**

- Risk Assessment: Conducted and reviewed before placement begins, tailored to the student's age, maturity, and any additional needs.
- Insurance: Ensure Employers' Liability Insurance covers work experience students.
- Consent Forms: Obtain signed consent from both the student and their parent/guardian.
- Induction Plan: Includes safeguarding briefing, confidentiality expectations, and health & safety procedures.

## During Placement

- Supervision: Students must be supervised at all times. Avoid one-to-one meetings in closed or isolated spaces.
- Environment: Ensure a professional, respectful, and inclusive workplace. Physical contact must be appropriate and minimal.
- Breaks and Hours: Ensure students have regular breaks and do not exceed appropriate working hours.
- Emergency Contacts: Maintain up-to-date emergency contact details and school liaison information.

## Safeguarding Concerns

If a student discloses harm or abuse:

- Listen calmly and non-judgmentally
- Do not investigate or promise confidentiality
- Report immediately to the DSL or school safeguarding contact
- Record the concern factually and securely

## Prevent Duty

- Staff must be aware of signs of radicalisation and report concerns to the DSL or appropriate authority.
- Training on Prevent is required for all staff involved with work experience students. [Prevent duty training - GOV.UK](#)
- Confidentiality and Data Protection
- Students must be briefed on confidentiality and data protection. Any sharing of information (e.g., social media posts) must be approved by the student, parent/guardian, and school.

## Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or following any safeguarding incident. Feedback from students and schools will inform improvements.

## The Safeguarding Team will:

- Ensure all safeguarding concerns are recorded in line with the established processes, and that all concerns are effectively responded to including liaison with Schools and collage's
- Keep up to date with emerging issues, including attending regular meetings to discuss any relevant national and local updates.

## **Recruiting Managers will:**

- Ensure Safer Recruitment practices and the Fera Employment Screening Standard & Procedure are followed when recruiting for posts,.
- Ensure appropriate action is taken within the response to any allegation made against a member of staff.

## **8. Staff Recruitment**

Fera is committed to recruiting high quality staff and will ensure that all recruitment processes support the provision of the highest possible standards of safeguarding for staff and stakeholders.

### **Fera Employment Screening Standard & Procedure**

In accordance with the Fera Employment Screening Standard & Procedure, all staff joining Fera are required to complete pre-employment vetting checks.

To ensure we achieve these aims, all staff recruitment is completed in accordance with the following procedures:

- All offers of employment are made following an interview that explores attitudes, motivation, temperament, and personal qualities, as well as skills and experience relevant to the role.
- Dependant on the level of the role, employment/work are conditional to satisfactory references and an appropriate Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check.
- Dependant on the level of the role, employment/work are conditional to a three year work history check and a social media check and five year residential check
- Dependant on the role and the level, offers of employment/work are conditional to a financial probity check.
- All offers of employment/work are conditional to a right to work check.
- All appointments are subject to the Fera Recruitment and Screening Policy and processes
- Where candidates are recruited from overseas, extra care is taken in pursuing references and carrying out the relevant checks. Where appropriate, advice from the DBS Overseas Information Service is obtained
- All staff are made aware of Fera's Safeguarding and Prevent policy and procedures, and their obligations regarding safeguarding as part of their induction.

### **Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) Checks**

All offers of employment/work are conditional to an appropriate vetting process, including Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check. The level of DBS checks required

is dependent on the role being recruited, but this may be completed at Basic, Standard or Enhanced level and is dependent on the type of activity and contact that is associated with the role.

## 9. Prevent Staff Training

- There is a requirement for all staff involved with work experience students to attend this training.
- Understand their role in delivering safeguarding and providing a culture of vigilance to support all staff.
- Have a working knowledge of the safeguarding issues faced by all and are aware of the potential signs that people may be at risk or experiencing difficulties.
- Understand the referral/reporting process for raising concerns, and can provide accurate, high-quality information to support the referral.
- Receive alerts and updates relating to updated guidance and processes.

## 10. Reporting a Concern

All concerns relating to safety or welfare should be considered as a safeguarding concern and reported to the safeguarding team at the earliest opportunity.

When considering a potential concern, it is important to remember that the context surrounding safeguarding issues is often complex and that the information identified might be part of the picture. To ensure we provide the highest possible standard of safeguarding it is, therefore, expected that anyone identifying a potential concern should consider that that this might be part of a wider context, and should refer this concern irrespective of how small they might perceive it to be including not promising confidentiality to students.

## Contacting the Safeguarding Lead

Fera offer safeguarding support during normal working hours (Monday to Friday: 9am to 5.30pm). During these hours, staff can contact the safeguarding team as follows:

Role	Contact Details
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Chief People Officer

Should a concern arise outside of normal working hours then this may be reported to the local police authority or to an alternative external support agency.

Please Note: If the concern potentially involves an imminent harm/risk to life, or a serious

Prevent incident occurs, you can also contact the following organisations out of hours:

Type of Concern	Organisation	Contact
Potential harm or risk to life	Police	999
Prevent related concern	National terrorist Hotline	0800 789321

## Concerns Identified by Staff

If a staff member has any concern regarding the safety or welfare of a member of staff, they must take the following action:

- The staff member must contact the duty safeguarding officer using the relevant Safeguarding contact details as above.
- Following contact with the safeguarding team, the concern must be recorded in writing using the safeguarding referral process

Staff must only gather sufficient information to establish and record that there is concern but should not consider it their responsibility to investigate the concern prior to reporting it to the safeguarding team

## Concerns identified by Third Parties

To help us ensure the safety and welfare of our staff we are committed to responding to information received from 3rd parties (persons other than those directly involved with Fera). Any concern identified by a 3rd party should be referred to their nominated contact at Fera or through direct contact with the safeguarding team via the details above.

Information received from a third-party regarding a safeguarding concern cannot be ignored and should be referred to the safeguarding team by the member of staff receiving this information (in a similar way to all other concerns). Where possible, anyone receiving details of a concern from a third party should confirm the following:

- The nature of their concern(s) and when the concern arose
- How and why their concerns have arisen
- What involvement the 3rd party has or have had with the staff member
- Whether the person referring the concern can be contacted by the safeguarding team or would prefer to remain anonymous.

Any Fera staff receiving details of such a concern should contact the duty designated safeguarding officer to refer the concern as soon as possible.

## 11. Confidentiality Statement and Information Sharing

Fera will operate on the premise that all information imparted to a member of staff will be treated in confidence. All staff may trust a member of staff with issues of a personal nature and wherever possible their confidences should be respected. Staff must not make promises on confidentiality which they may be unable to keep.

Furthermore, staff should always make individuals fully aware of any situation where a duty of care deems that confidentiality cannot and must not be maintained.

This would be the case in child and vulnerable adult protection situations. Staff may disclose information that is difficult for the member of staff to deal with without further advice/support. In such cases, the staff member should be told that the situation will be discussed with a specialist Staff member.

Any decision to break confidentiality should always be preceded by informing the individual of what is about to happen and the reason for the decision.

Fera are committed to sharing information for the purposes of Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (Updated 2020) and considerations of The General Data Protection Act 2018.

## **Monitoring and Review**

The Director of Operations is responsible for monitoring this Policy. To support the monitoring of this policy, the Designated Safeguarding Officer will provide regular updates on the safeguarding context (including the number of reported concerns, any emerging themes, and national/local updates) and the operational effectiveness of all safeguarding processes. Details from these updates will be presented to the Board during each scheduled meeting

This policy and the associated guidance and procedures is made available to all staff and is reviewed annually by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Operational Director and Board.