# AIMS.Guide Mentorship Programme Code Of Conduct And Safeguarding Policy

## Introduction to AIMS.Guide

AIMS.Guide (Access Into Medical School.Guide) is an initiative that hopes to empower students of a 'widening participation' background to apply to medicine by providing resources and 1:1 mentorship.1 We want to bring the excitement of medicine to young people that are currently underrepresented in medical student cohorts - for free. Having identified areas of potential support for applicants with significant socio-economic context, we are offering the following services to help maximise the potential of their application whilst inspiring and encouraging them throughout.

* **Free mentorship scheme:** medical students will serve as role models for students in Years 12 and 13, offering first-hand experience and facilitating sessions from our devised curriculum. We provide both didactic teaching and personalised mentorship sessions.
* **Student outreach:** workshops that support students from all backgrounds into higher education. We give information about university and medical school, tailored to the appropriate key stage.
* **Teacher support:** resources and meetings for teachers who are interested in learning more about the medical school application process and how they can support their students.
* **Admissions calculator:** a free, online tool that allows users to input their academic performance, alongside socio-economic and other factors, to produce a list of medical schools for which they do/do not meet the entry criteria. It also highlights medical schools that will utilise contextual data to alter their offers.
* **Blog articles:** informal, anecdotal pieces from medical students that attempt to prove to applicants that there *are* people similar to them who have been accepted.
* **Application guides:** a key information pack about the application process and tips/tricks to succeed. This will simplify the process of applying.

## Definitions

### Definition of ‘safeguarding’:

AIMS.Guide has defined the term ‘safeguarding’ based  on statutory guidance found in in ‘Working together to safeguard children’ (2018) as:

* Protecting children and young people from maltreatment.
* Preventing impairment of children’s and young people’s health or development.
* Ensuring that children and young people are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
* Taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.2

### Definitions of the roles:

* **Mentors**: Our mentors are medical students who volunteer without remuneration to support medical applicants (mentees) through the AIMS.Guide mentoring programme. Modalities of contact with mentees will include virtual and face-to-face teaching (COVID-19 permitting). Our mentors will also participate with outreach visits to schools.
* **Mentees**: School/college students within years 12 and 13 who are applying to medical school. Modalities of contact with mentors will include virtual and face-to-face teaching (COVID-19 permitting).
* **Students**: These are school students (in years 9-13) that we engage with on outreach visits to schools. Modalities of contact with mentors will include virtual and face-to-face teaching (COVID-19 permitting).
* **Volunteers and visiting educators**: These will be external volunteers with particular expertise who are invited to teach a certain session. Any visiting educator session will be supervised by a member of the core mentoring team throughout their visit.
* **Safeguarding leads**: These are team members responsible for ensuring all safeguarding practices are maintained within AIMS.Guide and to regularly review the AIMS.Guide safeguarding policy. The safeguarding leads are also responsible for leading and resolving any safeguarding queries and concerns.

## Intentions and scope of this document

This policy sets out how all young people and mentors will be protected whilst participating in our mentoring programme. This includes any mentoring sessions (either virtually or face to face) and outreach visits to schools. This policy is based on existing guidance from the NSPCC and legislation provided on safeguarding from the UK government.2,3,4

We believe that children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind and that it is everyone’s responsibility to safeguard against any abuse that children or young people may encounter. We endeavour to protect the welfare of all children and young people involved with our organisation, so that they may have a positive experience of mentorship.

## Safeguarding training for all mentors

This policy is geared towards safeguarding young people (aged between 13-24) but we also enforce the same priority for safeguarding for all mentees who are outside of this age range, in line with adult or children's safeguarding legislation.3-7

All AIMS.Guide mentors are required to undertake NSPCC Safeguarding training (‘Introduction to Safeguarding and Child Protection Training’).8 We expect all mentors to attend refresher training as required by the AIMS.Guide Safeguarding leads every 12 months. We will regularly monitor mentors’ safeguarding training to ensure it is up to date through a yearly safeguarding audit at the beginning of August of each year. It will be the responsibility of the nominated safeguarding leads to maintain this.

In addition to this, we will require all mentors to undertake the NSPCC course ‘Child protection training for tutors’ to yield support for safeguarding our mentees online.9

We require all mentors to show completion of the Level 2 “Adult and Child” safeguarding training on a yearly basis through the e-Learning for Health platform provided by Health Education England.

We expect all our mentors to be able to recognise the signs of any safeguarding concerns, document them appropriately, and refer them to the correct bodies or people for investigation. This will include liaising with safeguarding leads at schools, within AIMS.Guide and following correct protocols.

All mentors are enhanced DBS checked and the reference numbers for our mentors will be available to schools at their request.

## Safeguarding expectations of mentors

It is expected that all mentors remain up to date with their safeguarding training and respond in a timely manner to any requests for completion of training.

All mentors have a duty to report any safeguarding concerns they have using the *‘reporting an incident’* policy detailed in this document. They will not be expected to carry out any investigation into the concerns they have raised.

We place significant importance on the AIMS.Guide experience being conducive for learning for mentees, and we expect our mentors to foster this environment. There is a zero-tolerance policy for any inappropriate behaviour towards our mentees or mentors (this includes but is not limited to any form of bullying, harassment, sexually inappropriate behaviour). Any reports of mentors behaving inappropriately will result in their immediate suspension from contact with mentees and a formal investigation. If concerns are withheld following a formal investigation, professional concerns may be forwarded to relevant professional bodies such as the General Medical Council.

## Safeguarding expectations of volunteers and visiting educators

Any volunteers or visiting educators working with AIMS.Guide must sign an agreement to adhere to our safeguarding policy. They, like our mentors, have a duty to behave appropriately to mentees and to raise any safeguarding concerns they may have. Visiting educators are likely to be senior clinicians or academics with significant experience in their field and safeguarding young people. This implies that educators may already be in possession of an enhanced DBS certificate, but we will not require submission of this form for our sessions as no visiting educator will be left unsupervised with any young people.

At every session with a visiting educator, whether this be online or in-person, an AIMS.Guide mentor with comprehensive safeguarding training will be present to supervise and ensure the session runs smoothly and that there are no concerns.

## Working with schools to safeguard our mentees

AIMS.Guide recognises the importance and value of working with schools in the interests of safeguarding our mentees.

All mentees will be required, upon enrolment to the AIMS.Guide mentoring scheme, to register with a confirmed referee from within their school/college. This will be a teacher designated to support their application. For the purposes of safeguarding, this reference will provide a link to the school/college should it be necessary to share safeguarding concerns raised about a mentee to their school/college. When contacting the referee, no details relating to the concerns will be shared initially (apart from the mentee’s name) and the reference will be given the opportunity to refer/include the concern to the school’s safeguarding lead (or similar) to further discuss the case. Decisions to share concerns with schools are on a case-by-case basis.

## Working with parents and carers to safeguard our mentees

AIMS.Guide hopes to work with parents and mentees to ensure a safe learning environment and beneficial experience. However, we understand that some of our mentees may have unstable home situations and the necessity for contact with parents/carers will be considered on a case-by-case basis if the young person discloses any discomfort with this.

AIMS.Guide will require parent/carer contact details for a young person to engage in our mentorship programme. This is to ensure:

* Parental/ carer consent for the young person to participate in the programme.
* For optional regular progress updates
* Contact if any safeguarding concerns arise if it is felt to be appropriate to notify the parent/carer. Consent from the young person will be sought before notification but if there is a danger of harm to you, young person, or another member of the public, this will not be mandatory.
* If there is lack of engagement from the mentee, the parent/carer may be notified to screen for any safeguarding concerns.

## Reporting an incident

It is everyone's responsibility at AIMS.Guide to report a concern to the safeguarding leads. However, it is not the responsibility of the mentors or mentees to investigate any potential safeguarding concern.

If you are concerned about the welfare of a young person engaged with AIMS.Guide, you should document these concerns on the official AIMS.Guide Incident Report Form which can be found as a document in appendix 1, as well as on the ‘My AIMS.Guide’ dashboard. This should be sent to one or both of the designated safeguarding leads, whose contact details are available at the bottom of this policy.

All reports will be dealt with in complete confidence and within 24 hours a safeguarding lead. Due to potential for harm to the young person and others, we do not guarantee to the young person that the information will not be shared with relevant external safeguarding bodies, but the young person will be informed of this before doing so.

A dedicated email mailbox is reserved for the receipt, investigation, and follow-up of all safeguarding incidents. These entries are accessible only by the Safeguarding Leads and all attempts to maintain privacy are made. The storage of this data is subject to our Data Protection Policy.

If you are unsure about whether a situation requires a formal safeguarding report, please refer to your training information and contact one of the safeguarding leads for advice about how to proceed. Information from these meetings will be written up and stored securely, even if a decision is made that there are no current significant concerns.

## Code of practice for face-to-face and online mentoring

Teaching through our mentoring programme is delivered in four main ways:

* **1:1 mentoring:** These are structured sessions between a mentee and their designated mentor where the mentor can give their personal insights of a topic pertinent to applying to and studying medicine. Each mentee will get a set number of sessions with their mentor, but the mentor can add sessions at their discretion. These sessions will be arranged at a mutually agreed time through the ‘My AIMS.Guide’ platform. No face-to-face meetings between mentees and mentors are permitted.
* **Small group sessions:** These are structured sessions facilitated by two mentors and a small group of mentees (approximately 6-8 mentees). This is where didactic content is delivered alongside providing a platform for case-based discussions and social interaction between mentees where appropriate. These are delivered virtually.
* **Whole-cohort workshops:** These are sessions that constitute didactic teaching and include elements such as the launch event and medical lectures from our ‘visiting educators’. At least two mentors will be in attendance for all these sessions to supervise and ensure safeguarding policies are upheld. These are delivered virtually.
* **In-person teaching**: These include sessions where there is a defined and reasonable benefit for in-person teaching to occur. This includes in-person mock interview sessions. To ensure all participants are safe an AIMS.Guide risk assessment form will be completed for each individual session (see *Appendix 2*). All sessions will be planned with the provision of a virtual backup, in case of local COVID-19 restrictions that do not allow in-person teaching events.

Within the school outreach sessions, teaching will be delivered either face-to-face or via online sessions. Any face-to-face sessions will be delivered by a minimum of two mentors. An AIMS.Guide risk assessment is to be completed for the encounter (see *Appendix 2*). We will also comply with any relevant local risk assessments or safeguarding policies in any schools we deliver sessions to.

When delivering virtual teaching, mentors and visiting educators should ensure that:

* All sessions with more than one mentee / member of staff in attendance at all times.
* The background to the session does not show any personal or identifying aspects of the mentors home. Good practice would include the backdrop of a plain wall, bookshelf, or other appropriate non-distracting and professional backgrounds. Virtual sessions occurring on personal property should not take place in areas identifiable such as bathrooms or bedrooms or with visible photographs visible or personal items.
* Sessions must not be recorded without the written or recorded consent of all participants.

## Ensuring safety within online teaching, communication, and data protection.

The My AIMS.Guide platform, used solely for the online delivery of the mentorship programme, is a secure interface for mentors and mentees. All communication between mentors and mentees should only occur through this platform. Users are protected and held accountable when using its features to communicate with each other, such as email, Talk, file-sharing, comments, and E-learning platform. Inappropriate use of any service can be flagged for investigation immediately (either by mentee, mentor, or moderator) by emailing a Safeguarding Lead. These incidents are taken seriously, and full account histories will be obtained for review.

If any concerns are raised in relation to young people's safety online, these concerns will be reported using the incident report form (see *appendix 1*) and guidance from the ‘Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command’ service.

The mentorship programme’s online platform is installed on servers managed by AIMS.Guide to ensure General Data Protection Regulation compliance and data protection. Restrictive user permissions, active monitoring, and our privacy policy also ensures young people are safe.

## Important contacts and places for further support

**Designated Safeguarding Co-Leads:** Robbie Bain and Reece Hill

**Email:** [robbiebain@aims.guide](mailto:robbiebain@aims.guide) , [reecehill@aims.guide](mailto:reecehill@aims.guide)

**NSPCC helpline:** 0808 800 5000

**Childline:** 0800 1111

## References

1. AIMS.Guide. [online]. Available at: <https://aims.guide>.
2. ‌Department for Education (2018). *Working together to safeguard children*. [online] GOV.UK. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>.
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4. ‌Department of Health and Social Care (2016). *Care Act 2014: supporting implementation*. [online] GOV.UK. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance>.
5. ‌Police.uk. (2019). Child Exploitation and Online Protection command. [online] Available at: <https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>.
6. ‌Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU). (n.d.). *Implementation plan template | CPSU*. [online] Available at: <https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/forms/safeguarding-implementation-plan-template/> [Accessed 21 Jun. 2021].
7. ‌NSPCC (2019). *NSPCC*. [online] NSPCC. Available at: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>.
8. ‌NSPCC Learning. (n.d.). *Safeguarding children training courses*. [online] Available at: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/training?levelsDropDown=0&topicsDropDown=2&formatDropDown=0&locationsDropDown=0> [Accessed 21 Jun. 2021].
9. NSPCC Learning. (n.d.). *Child protection training for tutors*. [online] Available at: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/training/child-protection-tutors> [Accessed 21 Jun. 2021].

## APPENDIX 1

**AIMS.Guide Safeguarding Incident Report Form**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Your information** | | | |
| Name |  | | |
| Address |  | | |
| Contact number(s) |  | | |
| Email |  | | |
| Name of organisation |  | Your role |  |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Personal information – Young Person/Mentee** | | | | | |
| Name |  | | | Date of birth |  |
| Gender | Male | Female | Non-binary | Another description (please state) | |
| Is there any information about the young person that would be useful to consider? | | | | | |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Contact information – Teacher reference** | | | |
| Name(s) |  | | |
| Address |  | | |
| Contact number(s) |  | | |
| Email |  | | |
| Have they been notified of this incident? | No |  | Please explain why this decision has been taken |
| Yes |  | Please give details of what was said / actions agreed |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Contact information – Parent/ Carer** | | | |
| Name(s) |  | | |
| Address |  | | |
| Contact number(s) |  | | |
| Email |  | | |
| Have they been notified of this incident? | No |  | Please explain why this decision has been taken |
| Yes |  | Please give details of what was said / actions agreed |

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| **Incident details\*** | | | | | | | |
| Date and time of incident | | |  | | | | |
| Please tick one: |  | I am reporting my own concerns. | |  | I am responding to concerns raised by someone else – please fill in their details: | | |
| Name of person raising concern | | |  | | | Role or relationship to the young person |  |
| Contact number(s) | | |  | | | | |
| Email | | |  | | | | |
| Details of the incident or concerns (include other relevant information, such as description of any injuries and whether you are recording this incident as fact, opinion or hearsay) | | | | | | | |
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\* Attach a separate sheet if more space is required (e.g. multiple witnesses)

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| **Incident details (continued)** | | | | | | | |
| Young persons account of the incident | | | | | | | |
| Please provide any witness accounts of the incident | | | | | | | |
| Name of witness (and date of birth, if a young person ) |  | | Role or relationship to the young person | | | |  |
| Address |  | | | | | | |
| Contact number(s) |  | | | | | | |
| Email |  | | | | | | |
| Details of any person involved in this incident or alleged to have caused the incident / injury | | | | | | | |
| Name (and date of birth, if a young person ) |  | | Role or relationship to the young person | | | |  |
| Address |  | | | | | | |
| Contact number(s) |  | | | | | | |
| Email |  | | | | | | |
| Please provide details of action taken to date | | | | | | | |
| Has the incident been reported to any external agencies? | | | |  | No |  | Yes – please provide further details: |
| Name of organisation / agency | |  | | | | | |
| Contact person | |  | | | | | |
| Contact number(s) | |  | | | | | |
| Email | |  | | | | | |
| Agreed action or advice given | | | | | | | |
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| **Declaration**  *‘All information within this form is accurate and correct to the best of my knowledge’* | |
| Your signature |  |
| Print name |  |
| Today’s date |  |

Please submit this form on completion to the AIMS.Guide **designated safeguarding Co-Leads:** Robbie Bain and Reece Hill

**Emails:** [robbiebain@aims.guide](mailto:robbiebain@aims.guide), [reecehill@aims.guide](mailto:reecehill@aims.guide)

## APPENDIX 2

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| AIMS.GuideIn-Person Activity Risk Assessment |

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| --- | --- |
| **Title of project or activity** |  |
| **Manager / Responsible person** |  |
| **School** |  |
| **Date of assessment** |  |
| **Location, date and time of activity** |  |

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| **1.1: Brief description of project or activity** |
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| **2.1: Details of hazards, risks and implemented controls** | | |
| Hazard 1 | **Slips, Trips and Falls and General Movement** | |
| Risks | * Risks to AIMS.Guide mentors, students, teachers, and visiting educators * Risk of slips, trips and falls * Risk of lacerations, contusions, fractures and head injuries | |
| Controls | * Provide appropriate slip resistant floor surfaces in areas of wet and dry contamination. * Areas of defect flooring should be isolated with barriers and signage until permanent repairs can be undertaken.  Report defective or damaged flooring to the manager/caretaker of the building immediately. * Correct cleaning procedures established and implemented in the event of any spillages/hazards * Any spilled liquids must be cleaned up immediately and dried.  Where this is not possible the area should be isolated until dry. * Transport hot liquids in suitable containers that prevent spillage, and proceed slowly and with caution, particularly when exiting or approaching doorways, blind corners and on pedestrian walkways. * Good housekeeping and maintenance to ensure clear access to walkways. * Trailing cables from computers, telephones etc, should be protected by trunking or cable tidies.  Use cable protectors where cables pose a temporary hazard. * Lighting should be adequate in all areas. | |
|  | | |
| Hazard 2 | **Fire alarms** | |
| Risks | * Fire alarms going off in the event of a fire in the building | |
| Controls | * Students and mentors will be briefed to the sound the fire alarm makes as well as whether a test is expected during the session. * Students and mentors will be told where the fire escapes are. * A list of session attendees will be given to an assigned person who will be the last person to leave the building after checking the area is clear. | |
|  | | |
| Hazard 3 | **An event requiring evacuation of the building not including fire (see Hazard 2 for fire)** | |
| Risks | * Evacuation of the building is required | |
| Controls | * Students and mentors will be told where the fire escapes/exits are * A list of session attendees will be given to an assigned person who will be the last person to leave the building after checking the area is clear. | |
|  | | |
| Hazard 4 | **Coronavirus exposure** | |
| Risks | * Student, teacher, or mentor exposure to someone positive for COVID-19 | |
| Controls | * Before any in-person teaching proceeds, a reminder email will be sent out that the event should not be attended if you are symptomatic for COVID-19 * Mentors have access to regular lateral flow testing through their placement trusts, and we will encourage them to take up this opportunity so they can monitor their COVID-19 status * Mentors are likely to be vaccinated against COVID-19 through their placement trusts. * Social distancing rules will be adhered to at all times * all surfaces will be wiped with disinfectant products before and after the session * Students, teachers, and mentors will be required to wear face masks at all times unless medically exempt * If coming closer than 2m to each other, full level 2 PPE should be worn (surgical mask, plastic gown, gloves) | |
| **2.2: Additional controls to be implemented** | | |
| Controls |  |  |

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| **2.3: Emergency procedures** |
| **Fire:** Evacuate by the nearest available exit and go to the nearest fire assembly point, which will be discussed at the start of the session  **First Aid:** First Aid is available via the venue’s designated first-aider. Mentors are also first-aid trained. |

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| **3.1: Assessor** | | |
| Name: | Signature: | Date |
|  |  |  |
| **3.2: Manager / Responsible person** | | |
| Name Head of School/ Venue | Signature | Date |
|  |  |  |
| Name School Safety Officer/ Venue Safety Officer | Signature | Date |
|  |  |  |