

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements:	
Policy Name:	Child Protection Policy
Policy creation date:	September 2020
Last review:	September 2023 (ongoing in line with government guidance)
Next review:	September 2024
Owner:	Children’s Service Manager Adopted by The Board of Trustees
Related Documents:	Appendix 8 Safeguarding Policy Child Protection Procedure Behaviour Policy and Procedure ICT Policy Staff Behaviour Policy and Procedure Allegation Against Staff Policy and Procedure Whistle Blowing Policy and Procedure

Policy Aim:

This policy applies to all staff, including the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers or anyone working on behalf of The Rainbow Centre.

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.

We make every effort to provide a safe and welcoming environment underpinned by a culture of openness where both children and adults feel secure, are able to talk and believe that they are being listened to.

We maintain an attitude of “it could happen here” where safeguarding is concerned. The purpose of this policy is to provide staff, volunteers and trustees with the framework they need in order to keep children safe and secure in our centre, and to inform parents and guardians how we will safeguard their children whilst they are in our care.

Specific guidance is available to staff within the procedure documents.

Legal framework:

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

- The Protection of Children Act (1999)
- Data Protection Act (2018)
- The Childrens Acts (1989 and 2004)
- Every Child Matters (2003)
- Childcare Act (2006 and 2018)
- Children, Schools and Families Act (2010)

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Working together to safeguard children (2018)
Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015)
Disqualification under the Childcare Act (2006)
Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)
SEND Code of Practice (2015)

Definitions

Within this document:

Child protection is an aspect of safeguarding but is focused on how we respond to children who have been significantly harmed or are at risk of significant harm.

The term **staff** applies to all those working for or on behalf of the centre, full time or part time, in either a paid or voluntary capacity. This also includes parents and trustees.

Child refers to all young people who have not yet reached their 18th birthday. On the whole, this will apply to children in our centre; however the policy will extend to visiting children and students from other establishments.

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults in a parenting role for example adoptive parents, step-parents, guardians and foster carers.

Abuse could mean neglect, physical, emotional or sexual abuse or any combination of these. Parents, carers and other people can harm children either by direct acts and / or failure to provide proper care. Explanations of these are given within the procedure document.

Aims

- To provide staff with the framework to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children and in so doing ensure they meet their statutory responsibilities.
- To ensure consistent good practice across the school.
- To demonstrate our commitment to protecting children.

Our commitments for safeguarding children are:

- We are committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of service delivery.
- We are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in the following legislative documents: **'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused?' (March 2015)**, **'Working together to safeguard children' (July 2018)** and **'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2023)**.
- We are committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout training for staff and volunteers.
- We are committed to empowering young children, through the **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (September 2021)**, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.
- Under the **Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015** we also have a duty *"to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism"* (see *British Values Policy Statement*).

Principles and Values:

- Children have a right to feel secure and cannot learn effectively unless they do so.
- All children have a right to be protected from harm.
- All staff have a key role in prevention of harm and an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may indicate a child is at risk of harm, either in our setting or in the community, whilst taking into account any contextual safeguarding.
- We acknowledge that it is essential that we work in partnership with other agencies that protect children and reduce risk and so we will engage in partnership working throughout the child protection process to safeguard children.
- Whilst we will work openly with parents as far as possible, the Centre reserves the right to contact Children's Social Care or the police, without notifying parents, if this is believed to be in the child's best interests.
- All adults working within the Centre should maintain professional curiosity if they are concerned about a child.
- Promoting children's rights to be strong, resilient, and listened to by:
 - creating an environment in our setting that encourages children to develop a positive self-image.
 - committing to anti-discriminatory practice by including their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their languages spoken at home, their religious beliefs, cultural traditions, sexuality and home background.
 - encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence.
 - enabling children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.
 - recognising the additional needs of children from minority ethnic groups and disabled children and the barriers they may face, especially around communication.
 - helping children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships with their families, peers and other adults.
 - working with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the principles of safeguarding all our children.

Confidentiality:

At The Rainbow Centre, we maintain that all matters in relation to child protection are to be treated as confidential. As such, matters will only be shared as per the "Working together to safeguard children" guidance (July 2018). Information will only be shared with agencies that we have a statutory duty to share with. Internally, information will only be shared on a 'need to know' basis. All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child that their disclosure will be kept confidential. We maintain that all matters relating to child protection are to be treated as confidential and only shared as per the 'Information Sharing Advice for Practitioners' (DfE 2015) guidance. There is a lawful basis for child protection concerns to be shared with agencies that have a statutory duty for child protection. All staff are aware that they cannot promise a child to keep a disclosure confidential.

Leadership and Management:

At The Rainbow Centre, we recognise that staff anxiety surrounding child protection can affect good practice, so we have clear lines of accountability and training to support the process. At this setting, any person can contact the **Early Years Designated Safeguarding Lead** (henceforth referred to as **EYDSL**) if they have any concerns about a young person.

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Our EYDSL is Enikő Kocsis and Zsuzsi Olexa.

The safeguarding representative on the Board of Trustees is: Susan Bayford

We comply with the “Disqualification under the childcare act 2006” guidance issued in 31 August 2018.

Training:

All staff at The Rainbow Centre are expected to be aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and must be able to respond appropriately. Training is provided as required, but at least half termly, inhouse. The EYDSL will attend training at least every other year to enable them to fulfil their role.

Any update in national or local guidance will be shared with all staff in briefings. This policy will be updated during the year to reflect any changes brought about by new guidance.

Trustees training is provided as required by KCSiE 2023

In-house training will be provided on an ongoing basis during staff meetings, all relevant service staff will have their safeguarding training updated every two years, with separate training to all new staff upon appointment. Any update in national or local guidance will be shared with all staff in meetings, via e-bulletin or relevant reading. This policy will be updated during the year to reflect any changes brought about by new guidance.

We seek out training opportunities for all service staff involved, ensuring that they are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, exploitation and neglect, and how to respond appropriately. We ensure that all staff knows the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns (**Appendix 8**) and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.

Planning and Curriculum:

- The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. It is our intention that no child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being visible and audible to others.
- We introduce key elements of child protection into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be ‘strong, resilient and listened to’ and so that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- We create a culture of value and respect for the individual, having positive regard for children’s heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

Referral:

Staff will raise concerns with the EYDSLs. Following that, the EYDSLs will assess the situation as to whether significant harm has occurred or there is a risk of occurrence. In the event that the evidence suggests the threshold of significant harm, or risk thereof, has been reached, the EYDSL will contact children’s social care. If the EYDSL is not available or there are immediate concerns, the staff member will refer directly to children’s social care.

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In most cases, the EYDSL will inform the parents prior to making a referral, however, there are some situations where this may not be appropriate or possible.

Liaison with other bodies:

- We work within the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership guidelines.
- We have a copy of **'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused?' (March 2015)** and **'Working together to safeguard children' (July 2018)** for parents and staff.
- All service staff are aware that, if they have concerns, they must speak with the EYDSL or deputy EYDSL.
- We have procedures for contacting the Local Authority on safeguarding/child protection issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy for the setting and social services to work well together in any emergency.
- We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of children – we notify the Health and Safety Executive when appropriate.
- Details of the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) contacts are also kept and are available to all staff.
- If a referral is to be made to the local authority social services department, we act with the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership in deciding whether we must inform the child's parents at the same time.

Roles and responsibilities within The Rainbow Centre:

1. The Board of Trustees

The **board of trustees** must ensure that they comply with their safeguarding duties under legislation. They must ensure that the policies, procedures, and training in The Rainbow Centre are effective and comply with the law at all times. The responsibilities placed on the boards of trustees include:

- Ensure the centre has effective safeguarding policies and procedures including a Child Protection Policy, a Staff Behaviour Policy or Code of Conduct, a Behaviour Policy and a response to children who go missing from education.
- Ensure HSCP is informed in line with local requirements about the discharge of duties via the annual safeguarding audit.
- Recruitment, selection and induction follows safer recruitment practice, including all appropriate checks.
- Allegations against staff are dealt with by the Operation Executive Director. Allegations against the Operation Executive Director are dealt with by the Chair of Governors.
- A member of the Senior Leadership Team is appointed as Early Years Designated Safeguarding Lead (EYDSL) and has this recorded in their job description, and ensures that they undergo child protection training every two years.
- Staff have been trained appropriately and this is updated in line with guidance.
- Any safeguarding deficiencies or weaknesses are remedied without delay.
- A nominated governor for safeguarding is identified.
- Contributing to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance
- Having due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism in accordance with the **Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015**.
- Prioritising the welfare of children and learners and creating a culture where staff are confident to challenge senior leaders over any safeguarding concerns.
- Making sure that children and learners are taught how to keep themselves safe.

- Adhering to statutory responsibilities to check staff who work with children and young people are safe to do so and trained appropriately and is updated in line with the guidance.
- Making sure that there are procedures in place to handle allegations against other children or learners.
- Ensure that allegations against members of staff and volunteers are referred to the local authority's designated officer(s) involved in the management and oversight of allegations against people who work with children.

2. Senior Management:

- Contribute to inter-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 guidance.
- Provide a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified.
- Ensure staff are alert to the various factors that can increase the need for early help (KCSiE 2023).
- Working with Children's Social Care, support their assessment and planning processes including the centre's attendance at conference and core group meetings.
- Carry out tasks delegated by the trustees such as training of staff, safer recruitment and maintaining a single central register.
- Provide support and advice on all matters pertaining to safeguarding and child protection to all staff regardless of their position within the centre.
- Treat any information shared by staff or children with respect and follow agreed policies and procedures.
- Ensure that allegations or concerns against staff are dealt with in accordance with guidance from Department for Education (DofE), Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) and Hampshire County Council (HCC).

3. Early Years Designated Safeguarding Lead/ Deputy Early Years Designated Safeguarding Lead Responsibilities:

In addition to the role of all staff and the senior management team, the EYDSL will:

- Refer cases to social care, and the police where appropriate, in a timely manner avoiding any delay that could place the child at more risk.
- Assist the Board of Trustees in fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities set out in legislation and statutory guidance.
- Attend appropriate training and demonstrate evidence of continuing professional development to carry out the role.
- Ensure every member of staff knows who the EYDSLs are, have an awareness of the EYDSL role and know how to contact them.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns about a child to the EYDSLs and concerns about an adult to the Adult Service Manager.
- Ensure whole centre training occurs regularly with at least annual updates so that staff and volunteers can fulfil their responsibilities knowledgeably.
- Provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Candidates are informed of the need to carry out 'enhanced disclosure' checks with the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) before posts can be confirmed.
- Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.

- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and DBS checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person/disqualified by association/unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- We abide by the Protection of Children Act requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have lead to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting.
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.

4. Staff Responsibilities:

All staff have a key role to play in identifying concerns early and in providing help for children. To achieve this, they will:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults at the centre who they can approach if they are worried or have concerns.
- Plan opportunities within the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to assess and manage risk appropriately and keep themselves safe.
- Attend training in order to be aware of and alert to the signs of abuse.
- Maintain an attitude of “it could happen here” with regard to safeguarding.
- Record their concerns if they are worried that a child is being abused and report these to the EYDSL as soon as practical that day. If the EYDSL is not contactable immediately, the Deputy EYDSL should be informed.
- Be prepared to refer directly to social care, and the police if appropriate, if there is a risk of significant harm and the EYDSL or their Deputy is not available.
- Follow the allegation procedures if the disclosure is an allegation against a member of staff.
- Follow the procedures set out by the HSCB and take account of guidance issued by the DofE.
- Support pupils in line with their child protection plan.
- Treat information with confidentiality but never promise to “keep it a secret”.
- Notify the EYDSLs of any child on a child protection plan or child in need plan who has unexplained absence.
- Have an understanding of early help and be prepared to identify and support children who may benefit from early help.
- Liaise with other agencies that support pupils and provide early help.
- Ensure they know who the EYDSLs are and know how to contact them.
- Have an awareness of the Child Protection Policy, the Behaviour Policy, the Staff Behaviour Policy (or Code of Conduct), procedures relating to the safeguarding response for children who go missing from education and the role of the EYDSL.

Responding to suspicions of abuse:

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms, such as physical, emotional or sexual abuse and/or neglect. ***Explanations of each form can be found in ‘Working together to safeguard children’ (July 2018), Annex A, page 103.***
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect or exposed to FGM, this may be demonstrated through the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour or their play. Further indicators of abuse can be read on the NSPCC website.

- Staff at the Centre takes care not to influence the outcome either through the way they speak to children or by asking leading questions of children.
- Where such evidence is apparent, the staff member who gathered the evidence makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the EYDSLs, Enikö Kocsis, Zsuzsi Olexa

Allegations against staff:

- We ensure that all parents know how to make a complaint about staff or volunteer action, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We follow the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff when abuse may have taken place or is taking place by a member of staff. The details of any such alleged incident must be recorded.
- **We refer any such complaint immediately to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to investigate and report it to OFSTED within a 24-hour period.**
- Our policy is to suspend the member of staff on full pay for the duration of the investigation; this is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place but is to protect the staff as well as children and families throughout the process.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by social services/LADO in conjunction with the police.
- When an alleged person has resigned, or they have been dismissed because they have harmed or could harm children or vulnerable adults, we immediately notify the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA).

Support to families:

- We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff, volunteers and students in the group.
- We make clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to Safeguarding/Child Protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, providing information, monitoring of the child and liaising at all times with the local social services department.
- We continue to welcome the child and the family while investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
- We follow the Safeguarding/Child Protection Plan as set by the social care department in supporting the child and the family, after any investigation.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared:
 - with the child's parents
 - or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the procedure
 - and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Contact Details for External Support:

Local Authority Designated Officer:

Barbara Piddington / Fiona Armfield / Shona McMinn/Alison Nealis

Tel No: 01962 876364

Email: child.protection@hants.gcsx.gov.uk

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child.protection@hants.gov.uk

Local Safeguarding Children Board:

LSCB, Compliance House, The Walled Garden, Herriard Park Estate, Herriard, RG25 2PL

Email: hscb@hants.gov.uk

Tel No: 01962 876230/01962 876 355

Ofsted:

National Business Unit

Piccadilly Gate

Store Street

Manchester M1 2WD

Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Ofsted Contact Number: **0300 123 1231**

Social Services Emergency Duty Call Number:

Phone 0300 555 1384

Email childrens.services@hants.gov.uk

Out of Hours

Phone 0300 555 1373 (public and professionals)

Email out.of.hours@hants.gov.uk (professionals only).

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

“The guidelines of the Charity Commission document “What to Report?” will be taken into account when implementing this policy and procedure

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>