

Welcare Safeguarding Policy

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Welcare recognises the importance of its support services to families, children, young people and adults and its particular responsibilities to safeguard, protect and promote the welfare of those who are vulnerable or at risk. Welcare affirms that the needs of the child are paramount and should underpin all safeguarding work.

Safeguarding goes beyond preventing physical abuse and includes protecting people from harm generally, including neglect, emotional abuse, radicalisation, trafficking, child labour, exploitation, drugs running, involvement in gangs or county lines, online grooming, and the consequences of the misuse of personal data.

Welcare believes that all children have the right to be safeguarded from harm and exploitation whatever their:

- Race, religion, first language, ethnicity or belief
- Gender, sexuality or gender reassignment
- Age
- Health or disability
- Location or placement
- Involvement in criminal behaviour
- Political or immigration status.

This policy applies to all staff, trustees, students and volunteers. Any allegation or concerns **MUST** be responded to in accordance with this policy. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everybody's business. Although our individual roles in the process may be different; we all have a duty of care.

Welcare is committed to ensuring that all staff and volunteers are trained and maintain an up to date working knowledge of safeguarding policies and procedures. This is monitored in the annual appraisal cycle. Staff and volunteers are provided with safeguarding training during the induction period at the level required for their role and staff position. A trustee of the Board is generally a qualified and experienced social worker and has responsibility at Board level for all safeguarding matters. This responsibility includes ensuring that the safeguarding policies are fully implemented, understood, adhered to and monitored throughout the organisation. In providing this overview, the Board member shall challenge and hold to account staff on any aspect of the safeguarding policy. A named manager who is a registered social worker undertakes the role of the Designated Safeguarding Professional. In Welcare, the DSP role is undertaken by the Head of Practice.

Welcare's policies and procedures do not replace Safeguarding responsibilities covered by legislation, regulation, guidance and the local safeguarding partnerships. Safeguarding Partners consist of three main agencies: local authority, integrated care board (health partners), and the police. Other identified agencies will be involved in case reviews and partnership meetings as required. **Policies and procedures of the locality in which the service is located must always be complied with.**

2. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy is based on legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children and young people in England. A child is anyone below the age of 18. A summary of the key legislation and guidance is available from <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system/> .

3. SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES

Safeguarding requires us to:

- Encourage and support those we work with to understand the importance of protecting children.
- Listen to the children and prioritise their voice in all of the work we do.
- Provide clear internal procedures for identifying, reporting and dealing with concerns about possible abuse and ensure they are acted upon.
- Provide effective management support to staff, students and volunteers through regular supervision and training.
- Record, store and use information professionally and securely in compliance with data protection legislation and guidance.
- Adopt a code of conduct for staff which is transparent and embed a safeguarding culture where staff are treated with respect.
- Follow safe recruitment processes ensuring all the necessary checks are made.
- Publicise and share information about child protection and good practice with parents/carers, staff and volunteers.
- Ensure that children, young people and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern.
- Develop and maintain effective information sharing with statutory services, other agencies, professionals and parents/carers as appropriate and on a need to know basis in accordance with GDPR.
- Work collaboratively with the local authorities' Safeguarding Partners.
- Have expertise, qualifications, knowledge, skills, DBS checks and safeguarding training at the level required.
- Enable staff to report concerns via the Whistleblowing policy and procedure contained in the Staff Handbook.
- Manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately.
- Have an effective and publicly available Complaints Policy.
- Notify grant funders of any serious safeguarding concerns or disclosures and report serious incidents to the Charity Commission.

- Protect Vulnerable Adults – see separate Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults policy.
- Have regard to online safety – see separate policy.
- Ensure that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance.

4. LINKS TO OTHER WELCARE POLICIES

All staff involved with safeguarding and child protection work should be familiar with the other organisational policies which support their work and provide guidance:

- Equality and Diversity
- Staff Supervision
- File Recording
- Online Safety
- Recruitment and Selection
- Dignity at Work
- Whistle blowing Procedure
- Confidentiality
- Safeguarding of vulnerable adults
- Codes of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Lone working
- Health and safety
- Complaints
- Disciplinary Procedures
- Crèche
- Mobile Telephone*
- Escalation
- Acceptable Use of IT and Social Media

***Service users/people with lived experiences (PLE) and visitors may bring mobile phones to premises but are not permitted to use them during group sessions. This is to help safeguard vulnerable children and adults and prevent photos from being taken and shared more widely.**

This approach also encourages positive relationships, emotional health and wellbeing and keeps activities child-centered. Visitors are encouraged to step outside the centre if they need to use their mobile phone urgently.