



The Alice Cross Centre

Children and Young People Safeguarding Policy

Version 1

Date 28 September 2023

Policy Revisions Record

Version	Date	Review due	Version	Date	Review due
1	28 September 2023	September 2024			

Role	Name	Email
Safeguarding Leads	Jackie O'Brien Centre Manager	j.obrien@thealicecross.co.uk

Worried that a child is a risk? If you think it, report it.

If you are concerned about the safety of a child or young person and want to speak to someone, or if you are a child or young person worried about your own safety, you can contact any of the following agencies for support:

<p>MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) Tel 0345 155 1071 email mashsecure@devon.gov.uk</p>	<p>LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) Tel 01392 384964 email childsc.localauthoritydesignatedofficersecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk</p>
<p>NSPCC Website https://www.nspcc.org.uk/ Tel 0808 800 5000</p>	<p>Childline Website https://www.childline.org.uk Tel 0800 1111</p>
<p>If you think a child or young person is at immediate risk, contact the police on 999</p>	

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

1. Safeguarding statement

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. The Alice Cross Centre recognises our responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children and young people are respected, valued, and always feel safe.

2. Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children/young people is defined as:

- protecting children/young people from maltreatment,
- preventing impairment of children/young people's mental and physical health or development,
- ensuring that children/young people grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children/young people to have the best outcomes.

Child Protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children/young people who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Staff/Volunteer refers to all those working for or on behalf of the organisation, full or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity, including self-employed individuals.

Child includes everyone under the age of 18 or 25 if a care leaver.

Parents refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example stepparents, foster carers, adoptive parents and LA corporate parents.

3. Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children/young people, namely:

- Children's Act 1989
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998 and subsequent data protection guidance
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children's Act 2004
- The Mental Capacity Act (2005)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedom Act 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014
- The Care Act (2014)
- The Care Act (2014) Care and Support Statutory Guidance (specifically the safeguarding section of this)

- Special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice: 0 to 25 years – Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children/young people who have special educational needs or disabilities; HM Government (2014)
- Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children/young people, young people, parents and carers; HM Government (2015)
- Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015
- Working together to safeguard children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; HM Government (2015)
- General Data Protection Regulations (European Union) (2017)

4. The purpose of the policy:

- To demonstrate our commitment to safeguarding and child protection to children/young people, parents, staff, volunteers and other stakeholders. We recognise that all staff and volunteers have a duty to protect children/young people from harm and have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child/young person is at risk of harm.
- To provide all staff and volunteers with guidance on the procedures they should adopt if they suspect a child/young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of experiencing, harm. Including (by Safeguarding Leads and supporting agencies) consideration to the use of appropriate assessments and resources.
- To provide clarity and expectations on professional behaviours and ensure all staff and volunteers have been checked as to their suitability, including verification of their identity, qualifications, and a satisfactory DBS check, and that appropriate records are maintained.

We recognise that:

The welfare of the child/young person is paramount:

- All children/young people, regardless of age ability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Some children/young people are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
- Working in partnership with children/young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

We will seek to safeguard children/young people/young people by:

- Appointing a Safeguarding Leads for children/young people.
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.

- Sharing information about safeguarding and child protection measures with staff, volunteers, parents and children/young people and other stakeholders.
- Sharing concerns with other agencies who need to know and involving parents and children/young people appropriately.
- Providing effective support and training for staff and volunteers.
- Drawing on support from other agencies to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers.
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for children/young people and staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance.
- Reviewing our policy and Code of Practice annually.

5. Responsibilities of the Safeguarding Leads

- When there are concerns about the welfare of any child/young person, staff and volunteers are expected to share those concerns with the Safeguarding Leads.
- The Safeguarding Leads are responsible for:
 - Monitoring and recording concerns.
 - Seeking advice and support from other agencies without delay.
 - Liaison with staff and volunteers, parents (where appropriate) and other agencies.
 - Arranging appropriate child protection training for staff and ensuring all necessary checks are in place.
 - Ensuring this policy is implemented; communicated to staff and volunteers, parents and other stakeholders; and reviewed annually.

6. Our Code of Practice

- Inappropriate physical contact with children/young people must be avoided.
- It is not good practice to take children/young people alone in a car on journeys, however short, unless with the prior consent of the child/young person's parent or carer, and then only in exceptional circumstances.
- Do not make suggestive or inappropriate remarks to or about a child/young person, even in fun, as this could be misinterpreted. Inappropriate remarks include innuendo, swearing, and discussing their or your own intimate relationships.
- Other than in exceptional circumstances, do not communicate directly with children/young people by email or text messages and only then with the prior consent of the child/young person's parent or guardian. If electronic communication is necessary, best practice would be to communicate directly with parents or guardians.
- Never communicate with children/young people via Twitter, Facebook or other social media.

- Do not engage in behaviour which could be construed as ‘grooming’ a child/young person (for example giving a child/young person money, presents or favours or talking or behaving in an inappropriate or unprofessional manner towards children/young people).
- Do take a disclosure of abuse from a child/young person seriously. It is important not to deter children/young people from making a ‘disclosure’ of abuse through fear of not being believed, and to listen to what they have to say. Guidance on responding to an allegation of abuse is set out in point 7 of this document. If the allegation gives rise to a child protection concern it is important to follow the procedure for reporting such concerns, and not to attempt to investigate the concern yourself.
- Remember that those who abuse children/young people can be of any age (even other children/young people), gender, ethnic background or class, and it is important not to allow personal preconceptions about people to prevent appropriate action taking place.
- Good practice includes valuing and respecting children/young people as individuals, and the adult modelling of appropriate conduct - which will always exclude bullying, shouting, racism, sectarianism or sexism.

7. Guidance for staff and Volunteers on responding to a child/young person making a disclosure:

- Stay calm.
- Listen carefully to what is said and show that you are taking it seriously.
- Find an appropriate and early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others – do not promise to keep secrets.
- Tell the child/young person that the matter will only be disclosed to those who need to know about it.
- Allow the child to continue at their own pace.
- Ask questions for clarification only and avoid questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Tell them what you will do next, and with whom the information will be shared.
- Make no judgement about what you have heard.
- Record in writing what was said, using the child’s own words as soon as possible – include the date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated.
- Remember that whilst you may have been the first person encountering an allegation of abuse it is not your responsibility to decide whether abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional child protection agencies.

8. How to report your concerns

- Staff and volunteers could have their suspicion or concern raised in several ways, the most likely of which are:
 - The conduct of another member of staff or adult.
 - A disclosure from a child/young person.
 - Bruising or evidence of physical hurt.
 - Unusual behaviour by a child.
- Any concerns should be reported immediately to the Safeguarding Lead, who should seek advice and support from other agencies without delay.
- If a child in your care has suffered a serious injury as a result of abuse, seek medical attention immediately and then inform.

9. Urgent enquiries

- If you believe that urgent action is required, contact the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Tel 0345 155 1071 and give as much information as you can.
- Your information will be passed immediately to a manager who will decide the action needed and will normally respond to you within one hour.
- You must follow up your telephone call by sending a [completed referral form](#) to MASH within 48 hours.
- **If you think a child or young person is at immediate risk, contact the police on 999.**

10. Further guidance and support

- [Devon Education Services](#) publish a series of [One Minute Guides](#) that cover a wide range of pertinent topics and provide a useful resource for staff and volunteers.
- Advice and support can also be accessed via the [NSPCC website](#) or free 24-hour Child Protection Helpline Tel **0808 800 5000**.

This policy is to be reviewed annually.

Signed by a Trustee:

Signature: 

Name: SUE HALFYARD

Date: 2 October 2023

