

Child Protection Policy

The purpose of this Child Protection Policy and its procedures is to ensure that all concerns about the care and protection of children/young people are effectively managed. All staff are required to implement these procedures, both paid and volunteers and not solely those who work with children and young people under the age of 18 years.

All staff at Noah's Ark Centre should remain vigilant to any circumstances at work where concerns about the abuse of a child may come to light.

Section1: Introduction

In working with children and young people, Noah's Ark Centre (NAC) recognises and believes that:

- The welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take, and they must be protected from harm at all times.
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender reassignment, language, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Every child should be valued, safe and happy and we want to make sure that children we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm. We want children who use or have contact with Noah's Ark Centre to enjoy what we have to offer in safety and want children and parents who use or attend Noah's Ark Centre to be supported to care for their children in a way that promotes their child's health and wellbeing and keeps them safe. Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues and that extra safeguards may be needed to keep children who are additionally vulnerable safe from abuse.
- This will be achieved by working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies to promote children and young people's welfare as well as by implementing an effective child protection procedure that follows and holds us responsible under the law and guidance of England (*Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2024*) and local procedures (Calderdale Safeguarding Children Partnership).
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately. If we discover or suspect a child is suffering harm, we will notify Calderdale's Multi-Agency Screening Team (MAST) and/or the Police in order that they can be protected if necessary.
- This child protection policy and our child protection procedure apply to all staff, volunteers and users of Noah's Ark Centre and anyone carrying out any work for us or using our premises. All staff (paid/unpaid) have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate named Designated

Safeguarding Leads and/or Designated Safeguarding Officers, whoever is most accessible and on duty.

Section 2: Child Protection Policy Statement

In implementing this child protection policy Noah's Ark Centre will:

- Ensure that staff and volunteers are selected and recruited following principles of safer recruitment, making sure that all necessary checks are made. In addition to an Enhanced DBS check, all staff & volunteers will need to provide references, a checkable work record and complete the current/applicable safeguarding e-learning module/s (appropriate for working in Calderdale).
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers understand their legal and moral responsibility to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and exploitation.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers understand their responsibility to work to the standards and procedures noted in this policy, and work at all times towards maintaining high standards of practice.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of Calderdale Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP) interagency safeguarding procedures and are confident in how to work within these guidelines.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers understand their duty to report concerns that arise about a child or young person, or a worker's conduct towards a child/young person, to the Noah's Ark Centre's Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection or their Deputy or Designated Safeguarding Officers as appropriate.
- Ensure that there is a named Designated Safeguarding Lead and Designated Safeguarding Officers who understand their responsibility to refer any child protection concerns to the statutory child protection agencies (i.e. Calderdale's Multi-Agency Screening Team and/or Police);
- Ensure that any procedures relating to the conduct of staff and volunteers are implemented in a consistent and equitable manner.
- Provide opportunities for all staff and volunteers to develop their skills and knowledge, particularly in relation to the welfare and protection of children and young people.
- Provide effective management, support for staff and volunteers through regular supervision, training and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and codes of conduct confidently and competently.
- Ensure that children and young people are valued, listened to and respected, and are enabled to express their ideas and views on a wide range of issues.

- Ensure that parents/carers and young people are encouraged to be involved in the work of Noah's Ark Centre, are provided information about safeguarding and good practice in line with our services, where to access further support or where to go if they have a concern, and when requested, have access to all guidelines and procedures.
- Ensure that we record, store and use information professionally and securely, in line with current data protection legislation and guidance (see the Information Commissioner's Office [For organisations | ICO](#) for more information).
- Ensure that we have in place and adhere to effective complaints and whistleblowing policies and measures, Equality & Diversity policies and Data Protection and Confidentiality policies (our privacy statement and notices can be viewed on the Noah's Ark Centre website).
- 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.
- Ensure that our staff and volunteers working for Noah's Ark Centre in other settings in the community, e.g. schools or family hubs, are aware of that settings safeguarding policies and procedures and are enabled to work with these.
- Endeavour to keep up to date with national developments relating to the welfare and protection of children and young people. We have utilised [NSPCC Learning | Safeguarding and child protection](#) in putting together this policy document and will continue to do so when reviewing it.
- Build a safeguarding culture where staff and volunteers, children, young people and their families, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.
- Ensure we review our child protection policy and procedures annually to make sure they are still relevant and effective.

Section 3: Management and Supervision of Staff / Volunteers

Noah's Ark Centre is committed to the appropriate management and supervision of staff and/or volunteers working with children and/or young people to ensure that appropriate lines of accountability are in place with respect to their work.

Section 4: Safe Recruitment

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012) introduced significant changes in how we safeguard children and vulnerable adults from those who are unsuitable to work with them.

It is Noah's Ark Centre policy to ensure that all new and existing employees and volunteers have had an Enhanced DBS check, and that any relevant history is followed up. DBS checks are arranged through a

partnership with Calderdale Council who are the counter signatories of Noah's Ark Centre DBS applications.

If Noah's Ark Centre has any concerns that one of its staff members should not be working with children, they will refer their concern and talk to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

DBS checks are intended to improve the vetting of those working with children and vulnerable adults but there is no perfect system, and people will continue to seek and gain employment with a view to abusing positions of trust and power. As such, we must all remain **vigilant** when making decisions that will give people access to children and vulnerable groups.

All staff and volunteers who work closely with children will be subjected to a thorough recruitment and selection process including application and interview process, take up of two employment and/or character references, identity checks, employment history and qualifications.

This will include checking official documents such as birth certificate, driving license, passport, qualifications and seeking references from previous employers etc. All applicants should be asked to declare any convictions, cautions or bind-overs. On receipt of DBS certificates all Noah's Ark Centre staff and volunteers are required to sign up to the online DBS update service. Noah's Ark Centre will perform an annual check of all staff and volunteers on the update service to ensure compliance. This process has superseded the renewal of DBS every 3 years.

All staff who have direct contact with children will be subjected to a probationary period of three months.

Section 5: Guidelines and Procedures - Training

The Noah's Ark Centre Child Protection procedures detail the steps which will be followed where there are concerns that a child or young person could be experiencing abuse and/or neglect. The procedures will help to ensure a speedy and effective response for dealing with such concerns.

Noah's Ark Centre is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all young people, by taking all reasonable steps to protect them from neglect, physical, emotional and sexual harm and exploitation. Noah's Ark Centre believes that safeguarding and protecting the welfare of all the young people we work with is the responsibility of everyone, paid staff (full and part-time) voluntary staff, seasonal or contractual staff, our trustee board and our service users.

All Trustees, staff and volunteers must undergo relevant training and to refresh this training every 3 years. For advice on the current and relevant safeguarding training contact Calderdale Safeguarding Children Partnership on 01422 394074 or visit [Training and development – Safeguarding Calderdale](#).

The mandatory courses all staff must complete are:

1. Safeguarding Everyone Level 1
2. Radicalisation and Extremism (Prevent) Level 1
3. E-Safety

It is expected that staff will progress to the next level of safeguarding training when they refresh their training.

Trustees will also be expected to undergo training specifically to do with their role and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding.

Section 6: Recognition of Abuse or Neglect

All staff members, whether paid or unpaid, should recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and undertake training to gain an appropriate awareness of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and of Calderdale Safeguarding Children's Partnership's interagency procedures.

"Child abuse is when a child is intentionally harmed by an adult or another child – it can be over a period of time but can also be a one-off action. It can be physical, sexual or emotional and it can happen in person or online. It can also be a lack of love, care and attention – this is neglect." NSPCC, [Understanding child abuse: types, signs, and support | NSPCC](#)

Visit the NSPCC website noted above for a breadth of information on types of abuse, spotting the signs of abuse, effects of abuse, example stories, reporting child abuse and neglect and support for parents.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family, in an institutional or community setting, online while not in the presence of others, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Please read the definitions for the following different types of abuse at [Understanding child abuse: types, signs, and support | NSPCC](#)

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect
- Sexual abuse
- Domestic abuse
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Bullying and Cyberbullying
- Grooming
- Criminal exploitation and gangs
- Child Trafficking
- Online abuse
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Non-recent abuse

Concerns about a child or young person's safety can come to light in many ways. For example:

- A child or young person alleges that abuse has taken place or that they feel unsafe.

- A third party or anonymous allegation is received.
- A child or young person's appearance, behaviour, play, drawing or statements cause suspicion of abuse and/or neglect.
- A child or young person reports an incident(s) of alleged abuse which occurred some time ago.
- A report is made regarding the serious misconduct of a worker towards a child or young person.

Disclosures could be made by children working with staff and volunteers when engaged in various activities.

Section 7: Named Persons for Child Protection

Noah's Ark Centre has an appointed individual (Designated Safeguarding Lead) who is responsible for dealing with any child protection concerns, however child protection concerns should be raised with the staff member(s) on duty at the time whose role is also that of Designated Safeguarding Officer.

The responsibilities of the Named Person(s) are:

- To ensure that all staff are aware of what they should do and who they should go to if they are concerned that a child/young person may be subject to abuse or neglect.
- Ensure that any concerns about a child/young person are acted on, clearly recorded, referred on where necessary and, followed up to ensure the issues are addressed.
- The Named Person(s) will record any reported incidents in relation to a child/young person or breach of Child Protection policies and procedures. This will be kept in a secure place and its contents will be confidential.

Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection (Named Person)

Alosa Kaimacuata (Therapeutic Services Manager)

01422 300457 / alosa@noahsarkcentre.org.uk

Deputy Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection

Natalie Wilkins - Young People's Service Counselling Coordinator

01422 300457 / yp@noahsarkcentre.org.uk

Designated Safeguarding Officer Andrea Wadsworth (Children's Service Coordinator) 01422 300457 / rainbows@noahsarkcentre.org.uk	Designated Safeguarding Officer Natalie Jackson (Integrated Wellbeing Service Coordinator) 07732 453 341 / iws@noahsarkcentre.org.uk	Designated Safeguarding Officer Michelle Noirmot (Adult Service Coordinator) 01422 300457 / counselling@noahsarkcentre.org.uk	Designated Safeguarding Officer Andrew Sykes (Money Advice Service Manager) 01422 364664 / debt@noahsarkcentre.org.uk
Nominated Safeguarding Officer on the Board of Trustees Chris Smith, nominated July 2022 01422 300457			

Section 8: Stages to follow if you have concerns about a child or young person

The following section should provide clear guidelines for staff and volunteers (paid or unpaid) in Noah's Ark Centre to follow if they have concerns about a child or young person.

Noah's Ark Centre recognises that it has a duty to act on reports or suspicions of abuse and believes that the safety of the child should override any doubts, hesitations, or other considerations (such as the potential to have a negative impact on professional relationships with a family).

Stage 1

- Initially talk to the child/young person about what you are observing. It is okay to ask questions, for example: "I've noticed that you don't appear yourself today, is everything okay? But never use leading questions;
- Listen carefully to what the young person has to say and take it seriously;
- Never investigate or take sole responsibility for a situation where a child/young person talks about matters that may be indicative of abuse;
- Always explain to children and young people that any information they have given will have to be shared with others, if this indicates they and or other children are at risk of harm;
- Record what was said as soon as possible after any disclosure and discuss with Designated Safeguarding Officers;
- Respect confidentiality and file documents securely and as appropriate;

- Notify Noah's Ark Centre's Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection directly or via Noah's Ark Centre's Designated Safeguarding Officers (see flow chart in Section 5 above);
- If there is an immediate safeguarding risk at a session and/or activity taking place within an alternative community setting (Integrated Wellbeing Service) e.g. family hub or community centre, it may be more appropriate to notify a Designated Safeguarding Officer within this setting and then report to and discuss with a Designated Safeguarding Officer within Noah's Ark Centre afterwards, or for the staff member/volunteer themselves to follow these procedures.
- If there is a risk of suicide, staff are to follow Noah's Ark Centre's guidance and procedures in consideration of this.

Stage 2

- The Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) will take immediate action if there is a suspicion that a child has been abused or likely to be abused. In this situation the DSO will contact Calderdale Social Care, Multi-Agency Support Team (MAST) telephone number: 01422 393336 and/or Police. For out of hours referrals contact the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) contact number: 01422 288000.
- If a referral is made direct to Calderdale Social Care this must be followed up in writing within 48 hours.
- N.B. Parents/Carers will need to be informed about any referral to Calderdale Social Care unless to do so would place the child at an increased risk of harm.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Designated Safeguarding Officers can also seek advice and clarity about a situation that is beginning to raise concern through the NSPCC National Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 5000 as well as seeking advice from Calderdale MAST on 01422 393336.
- How to report on-line harmful content: UK Safer Internet Centre has produced [Report Harmful Content - We Help You Remove Content](#). Each report button will guide you through the reporting process and offer appropriate advice. They aim to respond to your enquiry within 72 hours.
- The Designated Safeguarding Officer will record the concern and any actions taken formally on Noah's Ark Centre's Safeguarding Log so that concerns can be tracked and monitored.

Section 9: Managing Allegations Made Against a Member of Staff or Volunteer

Noah's Ark Centre will ensure that any allegations made against any members of staff or volunteers will be dealt with swiftly and in accordance with these procedures:

- The worker should listen carefully to what the child says but not ask detailed questions.
- The worker must ensure that that the child is safe and away from the person against whom the allegation is made.

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection should be informed immediately. In the case of an allegation involving the Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection, alternative arrangements should be sought to ensure that the matter is dealt with by another Designated Safeguarding Officer, manager or a Trustee.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead should contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO - based within Calderdale Safeguarding Children Partnership: 01422 394055; ladoadmin@calderdale.gov.uk) for advice on how to proceed with the immediate situation. LADO referral forms can be found here: [Report concerns – Safeguarding Calderdale](#). Outside of working hours the Emergency Duty Team can give advice and/or in the event of an emergency situation, the Police.
- The individual who first received/witnessed the concern should make a full written record of what was seen, heard and/or told as soon as possible after observing the incident/receiving the report. It is important that the report is an accurate description. The Designated Safeguarding Lead within Noah's Ark Centre (if appropriate) can support the worker during this process but must not complete the report for the worker. This report must be made available on request from either the Police and/or Calderdale Social Care.
- Regardless of whether a Police and/or Calderdale Social Care investigation follows, Noah's Ark Centre will ensure that an internal investigation takes place and consideration is given to the operation of disciplinary procedures. This may involve an immediate suspension and/or ultimate dismissal dependent on the nature of the incident. Any actions should be discussed with the LADO to avoid compromising the Police or a child protection investigation.

Section 10: Disseminating/Reviewing Policies and Procedures

This Child Protection Policy will be clearly communicated to staff, trustees, volunteers and service users. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (Named Person) will be responsible for ensuring that this is done.

Noah's Ark Centre's Designated Safeguarding Team will meet to audit safeguarding concerns raised on a quarterly basis. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will provide a summary report of safeguarding figures and issues at each trustees meeting. This policy will be reviewed annually by the Designated Safeguarding Team and will be reported to trustees.

The Designated Safeguarding Team will also ensure that any changes are clearly communicated to staff, trustees and volunteers. Noah's Ark Centre is committed to keeping children and young people safe from harm and acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse.

Copies of the policies and procedures will be clearly accessible to the public on request and will be available on Noah's Ark Centre's website: [Noah's Ark Services - Leaflets](#).

Useful Contact Numbers for Safeguarding Children

- The NSPCC Child Protection Helpline is a free 24-hour service that provides counselling, information and advice to anyone concerned about a child at risk of abuse. Telephone: 0808 800 5000 - Email: help@nspcc.org.uk
- Police – Non-emergency 101 / Calderdale Safeguarding Unit - 01422 337362
- Calderdale Multi-Agency Screening Team (MAST) – 01422 393336
- Calderdale Emergency Duty Team (EDT) – 01422 288000
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) – 01422 394055
- For local safeguarding information visit: [Calderdale Safeguarding Childrens Partnership – Safeguarding Calderdale](#)
- Open Minds (CAMHS) First Point of Contact for Children and Young People's Mental Health Concerns: 01422 300001
- Prevent / Channel Team - if the safeguarding concern is around a child or young person being exploited by radicalisers and subsequently drawn into terrorist related activity, speak with a member of the Designated Safeguarding Team.

For more advice please contact: Shakkela Ajaib-Latif – Prevent Coordinator for Calderdale 07799656464 / Office 01422 337266 or email: prevent@calderdale.gov.uk. For further Prevent guidance visit: [Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales \(2023\) - GOV.UK.](#)

This policy should be read alongside Noah's Ark Centre's other organisational policies, procedures, guidance and other related documents, including our Data Protection, Confidentiality, Recruitment of Ex-offenders and our Health and Safety policies and procedures.

This Policy was reviewed and updated by the Noah's Ark Centre Designated Safeguarding Team including the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Safeguarding Trustee Member: Alosa Kaimacuata; Natalie Wilkins; Natalie Jackson, Andrea Wadsworth; Michelle Noirmot; Andrew Sykes and Chris Smith on:

March 2025

The next date for review is:

March 2026