Child Safeguarding Policy

Version 3.0

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Document Control

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Child Safeguarding Policy	3.0	Approved	Wendy Jones
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Target audience:	General		

Version Control

Date	Author	Version	Reason for Change
29 July 2026	Wendy Jones	3.0	Review cycle. Moved to new template style (including non-material text changes).
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Content

1. Purpose and Scope 4
2. Definitions 4
3. Detailed Description 5
4. Roles and Responsibilities 8
5. Training 9
6. Further Information 9
7. Associated Legislation 9
8. References and Associated Documents 10
9. Review Cycle 10
Appendix 1 11

1. Purpose and Scope

Hampton & Hampton Hill Voluntary Care (H&HHVC) makes a public commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and young people who come into contact with our organisation. We recognise our duty to act promptly, proportionately and appropriately whenever concerns arise, and to work in partnership with statutory agencies to protect children from harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

This policy aims to:

- Protect children from harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- Ensure staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities.
- Provide clear procedures for responding to concerns and disclosures.
- Ensure designated safeguarding contacts are visible and accessible.
- Promote safe working practices and reduce risk.

This policy applies to all H&HHVC employees, volunteers and trustees. It covers:

- Children and young people under 18 who use our services, volunteer with us, or are present in our buildings.
- Safeguarding concerns involving staff, volunteers, trustees or members of the public.

Where concerns relate to staff or volunteers, the internal Grievance, Disciplinary, or Whistleblowing procedures will be followed.

This policy should be read alongside the Adult Safeguarding Policy, Confidentiality Policy, DBS Policy, and Recruitment Policy.

2. Definitions

A Child is:

Anyone under the age of 18.

Safeguarding Children

Protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of health or development, ensuring safe and effective care, and enabling children to have the best outcomes.

Child Protection

Actions taken when a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.

Significant Harm

The threshold for statutory intervention under the Children Act 1989.

Types of Abuse

Abuse may be a single incident or repeated acts. It includes:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Domestic abuse
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Child criminal exploitation (CCE)
- Online abuse
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Forced marriage
- Trafficking & modern slavery
- Bullying & cyberbullying
- Fabricated or induced illness

See Appendix 1 (Indicators of Abuse) for more information.

3. Detailed Description

Children may come into contact with H&HHVC through:

- Young volunteers seeking work experience or community award placements.
- Relatives of clients supported under the Neighbourhood Care project.
- Children attending classes or activities held at Greenwood Community Centre (managed by external organisations with their own safeguarding policies).
- Children present during community events or activities.

Core Safeguarding Principles

H&HHVC adopts the principles of the Children Act 1989 & 2004, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023), and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

3.1 Child-Centred Practice

- A child or adolescent under 18 is not an adult.
- Approaches must reflect differences in age, maturity, legal competence, parental responsibility, confidentiality, and exposure to risk.
- The welfare of the child is paramount.

3.2 Voice of the Child

- Children's views must be sought, listened to, and given weight according to age and maturity.
- Children should be supported to express their wishes freely.

3.3 Partnership & Multi-Agency Working

- H&HHVC will cooperate fully with local authorities and statutory agencies.
- Protocols for liaison and joint working will be followed.
- A multi-agency approach is essential to protect children effectively.

3.4 Best Practice & Legal Compliance

- Staff and volunteers must operate within the current legal framework.
- H&HHVC will ensure awareness of national and local safeguarding guidance.

Consent, Confidentiality & Information Sharing

Children cannot give consent to withhold safeguarding concerns.

- Information will be shared when necessary to protect a child.
- Parents/carers will be informed unless doing so increases risk.
- Records must show what information was shared, with whom, and why.
- UK GDPR and Children Act 2004 information-sharing duties apply.
- Confidentiality guidance is displayed on the internal H&HHVC notice board.

Responding to a Child's Disclosure of Abuse

When a child discloses abuse:

- Stay calm; do not express shock or disbelief.
- Stop other activity and focus on the child.
- Listen carefully; allow the child to speak at their own pace.
- Use minimal open questions (e.g., "How did that happen?").
- Do not promise to keep secrets.
- Tell the child they are not to blame.

- Repeat back what you heard to check understanding.
- Ask whether they have told anyone else.
- Explain what will happen next and who the information will be shared with.
- Seek medical treatment if needed.
- Record the disclosure as soon as possible, using the child's own words.
- Note date, time, names mentioned, and who the information was shared with.
- Inform the CEO or senior manager immediately.
- Ask the parent/carer about the disclosure unless doing so increases risk.
- Follow H&HHVC child protection procedures and contact SPA.

Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

Immediate Actions

If you are concerned that a child is experiencing or at risk of abuse:

- Ensure the immediate safety of the child.
- Report the concern to a manager or the CEO within 4 hours.
- Staff must not investigate.
- Seek urgent medical treatment if required.

External Referral

If an alert is required, the manager or CEO must refer immediately to:

Richmond & Kingston Single Point of Access (SPA)

Phone: 020 8547 5008 (Mon–Thu 8am–5.15pm, Fri 8am–5pm)

Out of hours: 020 8770 5000

Online: https://kr.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/web-site-information/safeguarding (kr.afcinfo.org.uk in Bing)

Emergency Situations

If a child is in immediate danger, call 999.

Reporting Suspected Crime

The police must be informed where there is suspected:

- Sexual abuse
- Physical assault

- FGM
- Forced marriage
- Trafficking
- Online grooming
- Domestic abuse involving a child

If the crime is in progress, call 999. Otherwise call 101 after discussing with a manager or the CEO.

Logging & Monitoring

All alerts will be logged by a manager or the CEO.

- Records will be stored securely on the Case Record database.
- Outcomes will be recorded as “upheld” or “unfounded”.
- Access is restricted to managers and the CEO.
- Information will be shared with staff only on a need-to-know basis.

You should speak to the CEO if you require further advice on any aspect of complying with this policy.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

All Staff & Volunteers must:

- Report concerns immediately.
- Record concerns factually.
- Attend safeguarding training.
- Never investigate allegations.
- Complete enhanced DBS checks before working with children.
- Receive appropriate training before commencing any child-facing role.

Managers must:

- Support staff raising concerns.
- Ensure timely referrals.
- Maintain secure records.
- Implement risk-reduction measures (e.g., visiting in pairs).

CEO (Designated Safeguarding Lead) must:

- Oversee all safeguarding matters.
- Liaise with statutory agencies.
- Ensure policy compliance.
- Report concerns to trustees.
- Provide support and guidance to staff and volunteers.

Trustees must:

- Ensure organisational compliance.
- Review safeguarding practice annually.
- Provide oversight and accountability.

If the CEO Is the Subject of a Complaint concerns must be reported directly to the Chair of Trustees, or the Vice Chair in their absence.

5. Training

To help reduce the risk of harm H&HHVC will:

- Ensure all staff and volunteers complete safeguarding training every three years.
- Require enhanced DBS checks for all staff and volunteers.
- Implement risk-reduction measures (e.g., visiting in pairs).
- Promote safe working practices and professional boundaries.
- Ensure staff working with young volunteers have appropriate youth-work skills.

6. Further Information

Richmond & Kingston Safeguarding Children Partnership

7. Associated Legislation

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Data Protection Act 2018 & UK GDPR

8. References and Associated Documents

Related Policies

- Adult Safeguarding Policy
- DBS Checks Policy
- Recruitment Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Staff Training Plan

9. Review Cycle

This policy will be reviewed after 12 months of its issue or following major legislative or organisational change.

Appendix 1

Indicators of Abuse

Physical Abuse

- Bruising, burns, fractures
- Injuries inconsistent with explanation
- Fear of adults

Emotional Abuse

- Low self-esteem
- Over-compliance or aggression
- Developmental delay

Sexual Abuse

- Sexualised behaviour
- STIs or pregnancy
- Pain or bruising around genitals

Neglect

- Poor hygiene
- Inadequate clothing
- Frequent hunger
- Untreated medical needs

Domestic Abuse

- Witnessing violence
- Fearfulness
- Regression in behaviour

Child Sexual Exploitation

- Older “boyfriend/girlfriend”
- Gifts, money, substances
- Going missing

Child Criminal Exploitation

- Carrying weapons
- Unexplained money
- Association with gangs

Online Abuse

- Secretive online behaviour

- Contact with unknown adults
- Distress after using devices

FGM

- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Pain or infection
- Disclosure

Forced Marriage

- Sudden travel abroad
- Family pressure
- Withdrawal from education

Trafficking

- Controlled by others
- Fearful, anxious
- Limited freedom of movement