

Agreed by: Steering Committee

Date: July 2025

Name: Natalie Sadler

Signature: Signed electronically on Gov Hub

## Highfield Nursery School and Children's Centre

### Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

#### 1. PURPOSE

The **staff** of Highfield Nursery School and Children's Centre have a zero tolerance approach to the abuse of **children** and **vulnerable adults**. It is committed to promoting wellbeing, harm prevention and to responding swiftly and effectively when concerns are raised. This purpose of this policy is to lay out responsibilities at all levels and the actions required in three sections;

General Safeguarding;

Safeguarding Children and Young People;

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults;

in order to ensure that all staff, contractors and building users know what is required of them and the actions that they must take if they become aware of a safeguarding concern.

The policy applies to all staff, visitors, hirers, contractors and building users. Our safeguarding statement (see page 8) is displayed at strategic points around the building and it is the responsibility of the member of office staff on duty to ensure that the attention of hirers, contractors and building users is drawn to this.

#### **STAFF**

For the purposes of this document Staff is taken to mean all staff, full time or part time, paid or voluntary.

#### **CHILDREN**

In safeguarding terms, a child is any individual under the age of 18; including unborn children.

#### **VULNERABLE ADULTS**

Any person aged 18 or over and at risk of abuse or neglect because of their need for care and support (the Care Act 2014). This includes mental health issues, physical, sensory and/or learning disabilities, age, illness, older or frail people who are substance or alcohol dependent; or family carers providing assistance to another vulnerable adult.

#### 2. GENERAL SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding is everybody's business - If you know or suspect that a child or vulnerable adult is being abused, you are **required** to act in accordance with this policy. There are no excuses for not taking all reasonable action to protect vulnerable adults or children from abuse, exploitation, radicalisation and mistreatment. All citizens of the United Kingdom have their rights enshrined within the Human Rights Act 1998. Under the Children Act 1989 and 2004, and the Vulnerable groups ACT 2006, there is a duty to ensure that the functions of all organisations are discharged having regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children/young people. This includes all services directly provided and commissioned by the local authority.

Date reviewed: September 2025

Review Date: September 2026

### **WHAT IS ABUSE?**

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other persons(s) or group of people; this may be single or repeated acts of:

**Physical abuse   Psychological and Emotional abuse   Sexual Abuse**

**Neglect or acts of omission   Financial/material abuse   Discriminatory   Organisational**

An explanation of these terms can be found on (page 9) along with a list of other safeguarding issues.

### **HOW MIGHT WE BECOME AWARE OF ABUSE?**

Our level of concern about an individual or individuals may be raised in a number of ways, for example:

- A direct disclosure by the individual adult or child.
- A complaint or expression of concern raised by a member of staff, a carer, a member of the public or relative.
- An observation of changes in behaviour of the individual adult or child.
- An observation of injuries/unexplained or repeated injury, injuries which are at odds with the explanation.

### **DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE:**

Dealing with a disclosure is likely to be a challenging event for any member of staff. It helps to remember that if someone chooses to tell you, it is likely that they have chosen you because they trust you and feel that you will be able to help. Because of this it is really important that you:

#### **Do -**

Stay calm,  
Listen carefully  
Offer reassurance  
Record what you have been told  
Refer/seek advice

#### **Do not –**

Show shock or disbelief  
Ask leading questions  
Promise to keep secrets  
Comment on the allegation  
Approach the alleged perpetrator

### **RECORDING.**

It is vitally important that safeguarding concerns are recorded appropriately, on CPOMS online recording system. This record must show the following:

- Location
- Time
- Who was present (you, the person disclosing anyone else)
- What was said – using the disclosers own words
- And or what was observed in the case of an injury etc.
- What action has been taken.
- Sign and date.

Record only the facts, avoid opinions or assumptions. Use the TED principles to help you talk .

TED Principles:

- Tell me
- Explain to me
- Describe to me

They should then be given to the Senior safeguarding professional on site

Date reviewed: September 2025

Review Date: September 2026

## **REPORTING OF SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS**

If you are worried about a child, or vulnerable adult talk to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Ruth Coleman) to discuss your concerns at the earliest opportunity.

**Designated Safeguarding lead : Ruth Coleman, Jannice Simpson (Children's Centre), Natasha Trinder, Diane Armstrong (Daycare)**

Alternate Safeguarding lead: Jayde Scripps and Denise Lewis

Safeguarding Governor : Stephen Skeet

### **Making a referral**

To make a referral, you need to use the Suffolk Children's and Young People Portal at

<https://earlyhelpportal.suffolk.gov.uk>

If it is your first time making a referral using this system, you will be required to create a portal account, or log in to an existing account, in order to complete and submit the form.

Please provide as much information as possible to help assess the referral.


### **How long will it take?**

The form will take 10-15 minutes to complete depending on the amount of information you need to provide.

Please be aware that for security reasons, your session will timeout after 20 minutes of inactivity. You can save your form at any point using the 'Save for Later' button at the bottom of the screen. The form will then be available for 30 days in your list of saved forms.

### **Saving a copy of the form**

Once you have submitted the form you will not be able to see a copy unless you have printed or saved a copy locally before submitting.

To print the form, or save a pdf copy locally, use the print icon  at the bottom of the screen. If you need to keep a copy of the completed form, please store it securely.

You can also seek advice from the MASH Professional Consultation Line: [0345 6061499](tel:03456061499) The MASH consultation line is for you to discuss the most appropriate and effective way of providing or obtaining help and support for a child or adult you feel is at risk of abuse. This will include advice and guidance about making a referral where necessary. If you have an IMMEDIATE safeguarding concern you should contact customer first on: [0808 800 4005](tel:08088004005) (24 hours) or in an emergency contact Suffolk police -01473 613500 or call 999

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The responsibilities for dealing with safeguarding lie with the following:

**All Staff:** Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All members of staff are required to report any suspected abuse using the process outlined on the flow charts on pages 6 and 7 and be aware of the appropriate reporting and support procedure for safeguarding.

**Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Alternate:** To ensure that staff and users comply with the Centre policy, and support staff in making referrals, ensure the appropriate referral forms are completed, liaise with formal safeguarding authorities; record concerns and ensure the safety of these recordings. Ensure that all staff are trained to the appropriate level (see below). Schedule policy updates, and ensure that safeguarding is a standing item on the agenda of all staff and governor meetings.

Date reviewed: September 2025

Review Date: September 2026

**Safeguarding Governors:** To ensure compliance with Centre policy at all levels, to support the safeguarding lead in making referrals where needed and in dealing with formal safeguarding authorities; To address whistleblowing concerns and ensure that all staff understand the Allegations Management Procedure (Whistleblowing)– see below

The Head Teacher and Governors will also ensure that there is:

- a clear line of accountability with regard to all aspects of safeguarding, and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults – including centre staff
- a designated lead to take leadership responsibility for safeguarding arrangements;
- a culture of listening to centre users and acting on concerns
- a clear allegations management strategy (whistleblowing procedures)
- an understanding of the boundaries for information sharing procedures with other professionals and with the Local Safeguarding Partnership;
- a designated professional lead for safeguarding.
- safe recruitment practices for all appointments (paid and voluntary)
- appropriate supervision and support for staff, including undertaking safeguarding training:
- ensuring that staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults
- staff are given a mandatory induction, which includes familiarisation with safeguarding responsibilities and procedures to be followed if anyone has any concerns about the safety or welfare of a child or vulnerable adult;
- clear policies in line with those from the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership for dealing with allegations against people who work with children or vulnerable adults. Allegations Management Procedure (Whistleblowing - See below) Separate procedures for dealing with concerns about the quality of practice or a general complaint about the organisation will be displayed in the centre.

## **TRAINING**

All staff to attend the level standard 1-2 training as prescribed by the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership, and undertake the recommended regular updates; additionally the Designated Lead and Alternates will attend the prescribed 'Designated Person' training 2 yearly and recommended updates.

Updates will be provided for all centre staff through team meetings at least annually. Further updates are sent by regular email to all centre staff.

DSL – Ruth Coleman and Children's Centre Manager, Jannice Simpson undertake annual T4T training to deliver safeguarding training within the centre.

## **ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE OR MALPRACTICE AGAINST A MEMBER OF STAFF INCLUDING VOLUNTEERS (WHISTLEBLOWING)**

It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a member of staff (see definition page1) who works with children, young people or vulnerable adults are dealt with fairly, quickly, and consistently, in a way that provides effective protection for the child or vulnerable person, and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

This procedure applies to a wider range of allegations than those in which there is reasonable cause to suspect a child or vulnerable person is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. It also includes allegations that might indicate that the alleged perpetrator is unsuitable to continue to work with children in their present position, or in any capacity. This may be due to concerns about the persons conduct in their personal or professional life that might indicate their unsuitability to work with children or vulnerable adults. For example; where a professional seeks to radicalise individuals, promote violence or extreme behaviours or incitement to become involved in illegal activities.

**Allegations Management Procedure:**

Date reviewed: September 2025

Review Date: September 2026

The Allegations Management Procedure must be used in respect of all allegations in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child; or
- possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child; or
- behaved in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

The individual who observes or is informed about practice or behaviour falling into the categories above must report the allegation immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and should record what they have observed/heard using the format in the above section on 'Recording' at the earliest opportunity.

If the allegation is against the Safeguarding Lead, then the allegation must be reported to the Chair of Governors, Sally Evans or the deputy Jenny Auber. The Safeguarding Lead/Alternate or Governor must then (on the same day at least) report the allegation to the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO).

#### **Contact details for LADO's 0300 123 2044**

**Email: [ladocentral@suffolk.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:ladocentral@suffolk.gcsx.gov.uk)**

(Where an allegation involves all senior staff, the individual who observes or is informed about the allegation must go directly to the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) and take advice from them).

The Safeguarding Lead/Chair of Governors should not undertake investigation/question individuals or take other action unless instructed/advised to do so by the LADO. Where an individual poses immediate risk to centre users or staff, they should be asked to leave the premises until invited back. The police should be called if any individual refuses to comply with this request. A referral will be made to the DBS team if a person is dismissed or removed due to Safeguarding concerns

#### **INFORMATION SHARING**

In brief, staff have a responsibility to look after sensitive information in an appropriate manner, this means that staff should not gossip about allegations that they are aware of. Staff do however have a duty to share information with regard to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. This should be done in a safe manner, with other professionals who also have concern for the safety and well-being of the individual concerned, the sharing must not breach data protection guidelines or the human rights of the individual concerned.

#### **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS – what you have to do.**

In simple terms, the law expects that all professionals (this is taken to mean *all staff* – see definition- page 1) will report disclosures, observations and or their concerns or suspicions that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk to the appropriate authorities, and will keep a *record* of the actions they have taken. Failure to comply with this expectation will result in disciplinary proceedings within the organisation and could result in legal proceedings if this failure is judged to have contributed to ongoing abuse. What follows are two standard flow charts for referral, these should be displayed in staff rooms and the main office as they explain the action *required* of you in the event that a disclosure is made to you or you have a concern about the safety of a child or vulnerable person

Date reviewed: September 2025

Review Date: September 2026

## **FLOWCHART FOR REFERRAL FOR ACTUAL OR SUSPECTED ABUSE OF A CHILD**

### **Concerns**

Suspicion and or allegation of abuse raised by: child disclosure, observation, report by another person, anonymous communication

**RECORD what you have seen or heard using the format outlined in this procedure. Ensure that it is signed and dated and kept safe. Then RECORD your decision/actions at every stage and ensure that your record is signed and dated and kept safe**

### **Consult:**

**Speak with Designated Safeguarding Lead (Ruth Coleman) or Alternate**

**Remember: It is not your responsibility to decide if abuse has happened or to investigate. It *IS* your responsibility to report it to the Safeguarding Lead, or appropriate authority.**

### **Action**

#### **DO NOT INVESTIGATE**

The Safeguarding Lead would usually make the referral, however if a delay in contacting the Safeguarding Lead would put a child at risk you should make this referral yourself. And inform the safeguarding lead as soon as possible of the action taken.

**Contact: Customer First 0808 800 4005 or Police 999 if immediate danger**

### **Confirm**

#### **DO NOT INVESTIGATE**

Referrals must be followed up in writing using the Multi-agency Referral Form\* (MARF) on the Early Help Portal within 24 hours. A copy of all notes/referral documents will be held by the Safeguarding Lead in a secure place whilst investigations are ongoing, and then disposed of by shredding.

### **Further commitment**

You may be required to provide other information, as required.  
Remember **all** notes are disclosable should a formal or criminal investigation occur.  
Make sure your notes are dated, professional, separate opinion from fact, use the same words used in the disclosure

Date reviewed: September 2025

Review Date: September 2026

## FLOWCHART FOR REFERRAL FOR ACTUAL OR SUSPECTED ABUSE OF A VULNERABLE ADULT

### Concerns

Suspicion and or allegation of abuse raised by: self-disclosure, observation, report by another person, anonymous communication

**RECORD** what you have seen or heard using the format outlined in this procedure. Ensure that it is signed and dated and kept safe. Then **RECORD** your decision/actions at every stage and ensure that your record is signed and dated and kept safe

### Consult:

**Speak with DSL (Ruth Coleman) or Alternate**

**Remember: It is not your responsibility to decide if abuse has happened or to investigate. It *IS* your responsibility to report it to the Safeguarding Lead, or appropriate authority.**

### Action

#### **DO NOT INVESTIGATE**

The safeguarding Lead would usually make the referral, however if a delay in contacting the Safeguarding Lead would put an individual at risk you should make this referral yourself. And inform the safeguarding lead as soon as possible of the action taken.

**Contact: Customer First 0808 800 4005 or Police 999 if immediate danger**

### Confirm

#### **DO NOT INVESTIGATE**

Referrals must be followed up in writing using the Adult Safeguarding Referral Form\* within 24 hours. A copy of all notes/referral documents will be held by the Safeguarding Lead in a secure place whilst investigations are ongoing, and then disposed of by shredding.

### Further commitment

You may be required to provide other information, as required.  
Remember **all** notes are disclosable should a formal or criminal investigation occur.  
Make sure your notes are dated, professional, separate opinion from fact, use the same words used in the disclosure

The Adult safeguarding referral form can be found at [Report abuse of an adult | Suffolk County Council](#)

Date reviewed: September 2025

Review Date: September 2026

## Highfield Nursery School and Children's Centre

### Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

The staff of Highfield Nursery School and Children's Centre have a zero tolerance approach to the abuse of children and vulnerable adults. We are committed to promoting wellbeing, harm prevention and to responding swiftly and effectively when concerns are raised. If you have a safeguarding concern, please speak to any member of staff who will then take the appropriate action.

The centre safeguarding policy applies to all staff, visitors, hirers, contractors and building users and is available on request from reception.

### Types of Abuse: Recognition

**Physical abuse** in both children and adults may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, suffocating, drowning or otherwise causing physical harm.

**Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing someone to take part in sexual activities, which may involve physical contact or non-contact activities such as the being forced to view pornographic material or being involved in the production of sexual images.

**Emotional or psychological abuse** involves actions such as conveying to children or vulnerable adults that they are worthless, inadequate or unloved; making fun of what they say or how they communicate, humiliation, intimidation, verbal abuse, bullying, cyber bullying.

**Childhood neglect** is defined as the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs, which results in the impairment of the child's health or well-being. **For both children and adults** this would also include failure to provide access to appropriate health or medical care, and withholding medication as well as acts of omission such as failing to change dressings on time, missing home visits etc.

**Financial or material abuse** includes theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs and the misuse/misappropriation of property, possession or benefits

**Discriminatory abuse** relates to harassment or derogatory treatment because of race, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

**Organisational abuse (including institutional abuse)** includes neglect and poor care within an institution or care setting such as a hospital or care home. It can range from one-off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. This also occurs in educational and recreational settings in the form of bullying, exclusion etc.

Date reviewed: September 2025

Review Date: September 2026

**Other current local safeguarding issues include:**

Domestic Abuse

So called 'Honour Based' Violence

Forced Marriage

Female Genital Mutilation

Cyber Bullying

Child Sexual Exploitation

County Lines, gangs and drugs

Knife crime

Homelessness

Faith abuse

Mental health

Trafficking and Modern Slavery

Radicalisation

Self-Neglect

Hoarding

Children missing in education

Peer on peer/child on child abuse

Breast ironing

Knife crime

Sexting

Fabricated or induced illness

Upskirting \*

Forced marriage

\*now covered in the Voyeurism (offences) Act 2019

Suffolk County Council has policies and guidance available on all of these issues through the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership <https://suffolksp.org.uk/>