Child Safeguarding Policy

1 Policy Information

04.0	Feb.26	HB	No changes	February 2026
Next review date	February 2027			
Distribution	All Trustees, staff, students, volunteers, service users and supporters.			
Other relevant policies	Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy, Complaints Policy			

2 Scope and Aim of the Policy

The aim of this policy is to:

- Protect children and young people up to age 18, who receive our services. This includes the children of adults using our services.
- Provide everyone working on behalf of Rainbow Haven, as well as children and young people and their families, with the principles that guide our approach to child protection.

This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers, Trustees, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff, students and anyone working on behalf of Rainbow Haven, including those from other organisations delivering services in partnership with Rainbow Haven. Our policy relates to issues of concern that occur both within Rainbow Haven premises and that we are made aware of happening off site.

The policy covers:

- Preventing abuse while in contact with Rainbow Haven services.
- Identifying and responding to wider concerns about a child/young person's wellbeing.

Safeguarding means:

- Protecting children from abuse and maltreatment.
- Preventing harm to children's health or development.
- Ensuring children grow up with safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is part of the wider safeguarding process. It focuses on protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

3 Legal Framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance intended to protect children in England. A summary of the key legislation and guidance is available from nspcc.org.uk/childprotection.

4 We Believe That….

- Children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practice in a way that protects them. We are committed to ensuring the welfare of all young

people and children involved in our activities, and aim to ensure a safe, happy and secure environment for all children.

- We recognise that:
    - The welfare of children/young people is paramount in all the work we do and the decisions we take.
    - Working in partnership with children, young people, parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting children's wellbeing
    - All children and young people, regardless of age, disability, gender (re)assignment, racial heritage, religion or belief or sexual orientation, have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse
    - Some children and young people are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues. Extra safeguards may be needed to keep these children/young people from abuse.

We actively promote the five outcomes that are key to children's and young people's well-being:

- Stay safe.
- Be healthy.
- Enjoy and achieve.
- Make a positive contribution.
- Achieve economic well-being.

5 We Will Seek to Keep Children and Young People Safe By:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting them.
- Appointing a Safeguarding Lead and a Lead Trustee/Board member for safeguarding.
- Making safeguarding central to all our work, with a clear procedure for what to do when a concern is raised and who should be informed.
- Adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Developing and implementing an effective online safety policy and related procedures.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers and relevant others, through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all staff and others know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently.
- Recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.
- Recording, storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance.
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, their families, staff and volunteers via leaflets, posters, group work and one-to-one discussions.
- Making sure that children, young people and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern.
- Using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately.
- Using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately.
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have policies and procedures to deal effectively with any bullying that does arise.
- Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place.

- Ensuring 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.
- Building a safeguarding culture, where staff, volunteers and relevant other workers, children, young people and their families treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.

Rainbow Haven is attended by children and young people who accompany their parents. Whilst at Rainbow Haven, all these children remain the responsibility of their parents, unless they are registered with and attending the on-site crèche. However, it is the responsibility of all staff, volunteers, students and others working on behalf of Rainbow Haven to prevent and report the neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse of any young people and children involved in its activities. If there are serious concerns about the welfare of any child the matter must be immediately referred to the Local Authority which has a statutory duty to investigate the concern. We on occasion see young separated asylum seekers and will work with them accordingly.

6 What is Abuse?

See Appendix 1 for an explanation of each area of abuse listed here. These are some of the key areas of abuse or neglect, not an exhaustive list.

- Physical abuse.
- Emotional abuse.
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect.
- Child sexual exploitation.
- Female Genital Mutilation.
- Extremism and radicalisation.
- Forced marriage.
- Human trafficking.

7 Designated Safeguarding Responsibilities

Overall responsibility for ensuring good practice around safeguarding rests with Rainbow Haven Operations Manager with delegated responsibility to the Safeguarding Lead officer for all day-to-day operational purposes.

The Safeguarding Lead officer is responsible for minimising the risk of child abuse and ensuring appropriate arrangements for identifying and responding to any child abuse or other safeguarding concerns.

There will be a designated member of the Trustee Board with lead responsibility for safeguarding who will liaise with the staff team.

All staff and students on placement and advice volunteers are expected to read and understand this policy.

All partners will be checked to ensure have their own safeguarding policy and know how to raise concerns if they are delivering services at Rainbow Haven.

All volunteers are informed about this policy at induction, volunteer forums and training sessions.

Confidential records of all safeguarding concerns are kept confidential records concerns are kept in a designated folder in the Safeguarding Lead's office.

In the absence of the Safeguarding Lead, concerns should be taken to one of the Safeguarding Level 2 Casework Coordinators.

All staff and volunteers are responsible for notifying the Safeguarding Lead or Casework Coordinators of any safeguarding concerns relating to children attending Rainbow Haven, or where information is provided to them that raises concerns about children in other settings.

8 Prevention - Recruitment and Induction Procedures

In order to minimise the risk of child abuse, proper vetting procedures are in place when staff and volunteers are recruited. These include:

- Using application forms.
- Taking up appropriate references.
- Interviewing applicants.
- Checking employment history.
- Ensuring that gaps in employment history are explained.
- Undertaking DBS checks where appropriate, and, if deemed appropriate, enhanced DBS checks.

Upon appointment, staff and volunteers must undertake an induction that includes policies and procedures relating to the prevention and detection of child abuse. Further training opportunities are encouraged.

All former staff, volunteers, trustees, sessional workers and partners working at Rainbow Haven should avoid entering into personal relationships with any current clients, or former clients after leaving their position at Rainbow Haven. Any such relationship could be perceived to have started while they were working in a position of trust and could therefore potentially be perceived as grooming, putting the staff member's professional reputation and career at risk.

9 Identifying and Recording Safeguarding Concerns/Possible Abuse

It is not the responsibility of Rainbow Haven staff themselves to investigate any safeguarding concerns or complaints about abuse or other inappropriate behaviour. Any concerns or disclosure of abuse must be reported to the Local Authority who will investigate.

Anyone concerned about a child's welfare/possible abuse should tell the Safeguarding Lead or Operations Manager. Any concerns must be kept confidential and should not be discussed with anyone other than the Safeguarding Lead who must make a referral to the Local Authority. The Safeguarding Lead will determine who else may need to be informed or included in exploring what has happened, on a needs-to-know basis, and will inform the Operations Manager. If a child discloses abuse, they should be reassured they have done the right thing in reporting it and assured that that abuse is never their fault. Never promise a child that what they have disclosed will be kept secret; instead, explain that it is essential to share what they've told you with someone who will be able to help. It is also important to avoid situations where a child or young person has to repeat their full account on a number of different occasions.

The nominated Safeguarding Lead officer, or in her absence, trained Caseworker, must record details of the concern or disclosure as soon as possible. All concerns should be recorded and securely stored in a locked cabinet. All records must be signed and dated, and ongoing notes should be made until the situation is referred on or resolved. Information relating to individuals and safeguarding is strictly confidential. Records will be kept secure and separate from other project documents.

In most situations it will be appropriate to inform the child, young person and parents or carers when a referral to the Local Authority is going to be made, to explain the reasons for this and to offer support to the young person through the resulting investigation, unless this places the child at greater risk or places the member of staff concerned at risk.

Many children attending Rainbow Haven are young and pre-verbal. Special care must be taken with these children and their families to ensure appropriate and respectful interactions whilst putting the needs of the children first.

If anybody reports a safeguarding concern outside of Rainbow Haven, support will be given to that individual to raise the concern with a statutory agency.

10 Training

All relevant staff and volunteers and trustees should be given appropriate safeguarding training to ensure that roles, responsibilities and procedures are understood by the whole workforce.

11 Further Information and Contact Details

If someone is in immediate danger, call 999 and ask for the police.

11.1 Nominated Safeguarding Lead Officer

Sisay Kahin:

- Phone/email: 07985 884043/sisay@rainbowhaven.org.uk

In the absence of safeguarding lead contact:
Mati Adem:

- Phone/email: 07925 565946/mati@rainbowhaven.org.uk

11.2 Trustee Safeguarding Lead

Hazel Batchelor

Concerns relating to safeguarding, abuse or neglect must be reported to Manchester City Council. Concerns can be reported anonymously if necessary:

- Phone: 0161 234 5001 (24 hour/7days a week service)
- Email: mcsreply@manchester.gov.uk

11.3 Other Sources of Help

- NSPCC: call 0808 800 5000 (free 24-hour service).

- Childline: call 0800 1111 (free 24 hour service) for young people under 19.

- Greater Manchester Police, 0161 872 5050, www.ceop.police.uk
- Child Exploitation and Online Protection.
- NSPCC has a range of resources for staff and trustees:
    - https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection
- NSPCC information on child trafficking:
    - https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/child-trafficking-and-modern-slavery
- NSPCC guidance on inter-agency working in safeguarding enquiries:
    - https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

12 Appendix 1: Definitions

12.1 Categories of Abuse and Neglect

The following definitions are taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and Keeping Children Safe in Education.

12.2 Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of or deliberately induces illness in a child.

12.3 Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is a form of significant harm which involves the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to the child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them of 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capacity as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, or cyber bullying, causing children to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or in the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

12.4 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is a form of significant harm which involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact including penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at or in the production of sexual images, watching sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse, including via the internet. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males; women can also commit acts of sexual abuse as can other children.

12.5 Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and /or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health and development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse.

Once a child is born neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food and clothing, shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment).
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
- Ensure adequate supervision.
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

12.6 Child Sexual Exploitation

The sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person(s)) receive something (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of performing and/or others performing on them, sexual activities. Both boys and girls can be exploited.

12.7 Female Genital Mutilation

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. FGM is illegal in the UK. A mandatory reporting duty for FGM requires regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales to report known cases of FGM in under 18 year olds to the police. The FGM duty came into force on 31.10.2015.

12.8 Extremism and Radicalisation

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremism.

Children and young people can be drawn into violence or they can be exposed to the messages of extremist groups by many means. These can include through the influence of family members or friends and/or direct contact with extremist groups and organisations or, increasingly, through the internet. This can put a young person at risk of being drawn into criminal activity and has the potential to lead to the child suffering significant harm.

This may take the form of a "grooming" process where the vulnerabilities of a young person are exploited to form an exclusive friendship which draws the young person away from other influences that might challenge the radical ideology. The risk of radicalisation is the product of a number of factors and identifying this risk requires that practitioners exercise their professional judgement, seeking further advice as necessary. It may be combined with other vulnerabilities or may be the only risk identified.

Online content, in particular, social media, may pose a specific risk in normalising radical views and promoting content that is shocking and extreme; children can be trusting, not necessarily appreciate bias that can lead them to being drawn in to these groups, and adopt their extremist views.

12.9 Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities or reduced capacity, cannot) consent to the marriage as they are pressurised, or abuse is used to force them to do so. It is recognised in the UK as a form of domestic or child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights.

12.10 Human Trafficking

Modern slavery or human trafficking is the movement of a person from one place to another (this could be country to country, town to town or even as simple as one room in a building to another) into conditions of exploitation, using deception, coercion, abuse of power or the abuse of the person's vulnerability.