



CHESS Homeless
Opening doors to independence

Section 1: Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

1. Introduction

This Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy outlines the charity's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

It is aligned with the principles and guidance set out by the Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB) and the UK legislation, including the Children Act 1989, the Care Act 2014, the Sexual Offences Act 2003, and the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

2. Policy Statement

The charity is committed to:

- Promoting the welfare of children and young people.
- Protecting children and young people from harm, including radicalisation.
- Creating a safe and supportive environment for children and young people.
- Responding appropriately to concerns about a child's welfare.
- Working in partnership with other agencies to safeguard children and young people.

3. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for safeguarding children and young people within the charity, particularly in situations where staff may encounter them during their work with single homeless adults.

4. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, and contractors working on behalf of the charity. It covers all activities undertaken by the charity, including outreach services, accommodation provision, and any other relevant activities.

5. Commitments

The charity commits to:

- Ensuring that all staff, volunteers, and trustees are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Providing regular safeguarding training to all staff, volunteers, and trustees.
- Having clear procedures in place for responding to concerns about child welfare.
- Working in partnership with other agencies to safeguard children and young people.
- Regularly reviewing and updating this policy.

6. Implementation



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The DSL for Children and Young People will be responsible for implementing this policy. They will:

- Develop and implement a training plan for all staff, volunteers, and trustees.
- Ensure that all staff, volunteers, and trustees understand their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of the policy.

7. Recruitment

CHESS have in place a Safer Recruitment policy to ensure an individual is suitable to for the role they have applied for.

8. Training

All staff, volunteers, trustees and agency staff

All staff, volunteers, trustees and agency staff will receive safeguarding training. Training will be provided on induction and every 2 years, or more frequently if necessary.

Training should cover the following topics:

- Child protection legislation and guidance.
- Signs and indicators of abuse for all types of abuse.
- How to report concerns.
- Safeguarding policies and procedures.
- The charity's Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures

Managers and Coordinators

In addition to the above, managers and coordinators will undertake additional training in Safer Recruitment. This will be updated every two years or sooner.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for Children and Young People, any deputies and Trustee with safeguarding responsibilities should undergo level 3 Designated Officer training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. The training should be updated every two years.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

The designated Safeguarding Lead for Children and Young People will-

Conduct regular reviews of safeguarding practices to identify areas for improvement and ensure compliance with policies and procedures.



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Implement a system for learning from safeguarding incidents, including conducting thorough investigations, reviews and implementing corrective actions.

10. Definition of a child/young person at risk

A child is considered to be at risk of harm if they are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

11. Safeguarding Duties

All staff, volunteers, and trustees have a duty to safeguard children and young people. This includes:

- Taking steps to protect children from harm.
- Reporting concerns about child welfare to the DSL for Children and Young People.
- Following the charity's safeguarding procedures.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for Children and Young People (DSL) has specific responsibilities, including:

- Developing and implementing the charity's safeguarding policy and procedures and reviewing annually.
- Providing regular safeguarding training to all staff, volunteers, and trustees.
- Responding to and investigating safeguarding concerns and ensuring detailed and confidential record keeping
- Be approachable for staff to discuss any concerns that may need escalating
- Liaising and collaborating with external agencies to ensure effective safeguarding.
- Monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of safeguarding practices and implementing changes to the Children and Young People safeguarding policy and procedures as needed.
- Create annual reports for the trustees on safeguarding incidents involving Children and Young People.
- Keeping up to date with safeguarding training and relevant legislation that would affect CHESS Safeguarding policies and procedures.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for Children and Young People is- Emma Belcher Tel- 07869 153228

The Deputy Safeguarding lead for children and young people is- Joanna Jardine, Tel- 07795 621004

The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for safeguarding within the charity. This includes:

- Ensuring that the charity has a robust safeguarding policy and procedures in place.
- Overseeing the implementation of the safeguarding policy.
- Ensuring that adequate resources are allocated to safeguarding.



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- Approving the appointment of the DSL for Children and Young People.

- Reviewing the DSL's annual report on safeguarding.

The trustee with Safeguarding Responsibilities is – Julie Ingham, Tel 07921130123

12. Abuse and Neglect

Abuse and neglect can take many forms, including:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Exploitation
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Online abuse
- Domestic abuse
- Radicalisation

13. Signs and indicators of abuse and neglect

It is important to be aware of the signs and indicators of abuse and neglect. These can include:

- Physical abuse: Unexplained injuries, fear of physical contact, withdrawn behaviour, or reluctance to change clothes.
- Emotional abuse: Low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, difficulty forming relationships, or self-harm.
- Sexual abuse: Secretive behaviour, changes in mood or behaviour, difficulty sleeping, or physical signs of abuse.
- Neglect: Poor hygiene, lack of appropriate clothing, constant hunger, or fatigue.
- Exploitation and trafficking: Sudden changes in behaviour, unexplained possessions, or reluctance to go to certain places or people.
- Female genital mutilation (FGM):: Reluctance to participate in physical activities, difficulty sitting or walking, or unexplained bleeding.
- Online abuse: Increased use of technology, withdrawn behaviour, or sudden changes in mood or behaviour.
- Domestic abuse: Witnessing violence, fear of adults, or withdrawing from social activities.



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- Radicalisation: Sudden changes in behaviour, isolation from friends and family, or expressing extremist views.

14. Recording and information sharing

All concerns about child welfare should be recorded in line with the charity's record-keeping policy. Information may need to be shared with other agencies, such as Children's Social Care, in order to safeguard a child.

15. Procedures for Responding to Concerns About Child Welfare

If you suspect abuse / neglect-

1. If the child or young person is in immediate danger, call the police on 999
2. If the child or young person is not in immediate danger discuss your concerns with the Safeguarding officer who will decide if a consultation / referral to social services should be made.
3. If you feel that you have witnessed abuse and it has not been reported by the child / young person, then clarification of the concerns should be made with the child / young person.
 1. For urgent medical attention, call 999 or take the child to the nearest Accident & Emergency department.
 2. Anyone who has concerns about a child's welfare should make a referral to local authority children's social care. Within local authorities, children's social care should act as the principal point of contact for welfare concerns relating to children.

If a child or young person reports abuse-- Listen carefully but do not directly question the child / young person-

1. Give the child / young person time and attention
2. Allow the child / young person to give a spontaneous account / avoid stopping someone who is freely recounting significant events
3. Make an accurate record of the information you have been given taking care to record the timing, setting and people present, child's / young person's demeanour and what has been said. Keep this information safe as it may be needed later as evidence
4. Use the child's / young person's words where possible
5. Explain you cannot promise not to talk to other about the information shared
6. Reassure the child / young person they have not done anything wrong; it is better to share the information and what you will do next
7. Explain that you will need help to keep them safe
8. Do not ask the child / young person to repeat the account of the events to anyone



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9. Consult with DSL for Children and Young People (or the deputy where the DSL is not available): The DSL for Children and Young People will assess the concern and decide on the next steps. This should be undertaken without delay and before the end of the working day.

10. Referral to Children's Social Care: If the concern meets the threshold for a child protection referral, the DSL for Children and Young People will make a referral to Children's Social Care.

Referrals to Essex County Council must be made via the following contact details-

- **Essex County Council Children's Social Care:**
 - **Telephone:** 0345 603 7627
 - **Online:** You can report a concern online through the Essex County Council website.

For out-of-hours emergencies, you can contact the Emergency Duty Team on 0345 606 1212.

16. Record Keeping and storage

All concerns, referrals to Essex Social Care and actions taken must be recorded in detail, including dates, times, names of individual involved, and any decisions made.

Safeguarding records both physical and electronic will be stored securely to protect confidentiality and comply with data protection regulations.



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17. Safeguarding Specific Groups

Pregnant Rough Sleepers

- **Engagement:** Outreach workers will engage with pregnant rough sleepers to assess their needs and offer support.
- **Referral to Services:** Referrals will be made to specialist services for pregnant women, such as maternity services and homeless charities.
- **Practical Support:** Practical support will be provided, such as access to food, clothing, and shelter.
- **Safeguarding Concerns:** Any concerns about the welfare of the unborn child will be reported to the relevant authorities.

Pregnant Residents

- **Risk Assessment:** Risk assessments will be conducted for all pregnant residents or service users to identify vulnerabilities and ensure appropriate support.
- **Referrals:** Referrals to relevant health and social care services will be made where additional support is needed.
- **Staff Awareness:** Staff must be alert to any signs of abuse or neglect that may impact the unborn child and report promptly.
- **Support and Advice:** Pregnant residents and service users will be provided with information and support on pregnancy, childbirth, and parenting and referred to appropriate agencies.
- **Privacy and Dignity:** Staff will respect the privacy and dignity of pregnant residents and service users and will ensure that their needs are met.

Children of Residents (Non-Residents in Accommodation)

- **Staff Awareness:** Staff will be mindful of children who are not residents but are connected to service users or residents.
- **Concern Reporting:** Concerns about the welfare of these children will be reported and managed in line with child protection procedures.
- **Support and Advice:** Staff may offer support and advice to parents or carers of these children, if appropriate.

Young People Found During Outreach

- **Immediate Safety:** If a young person (under 18) is found during outreach, staff will prioritise their immediate safety.
- **Referral to Services:** Efforts will be made to connect them to appropriate child safeguarding services.



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- Emergency Contact: Outreach teams must carry contact information for local child protection services and, if necessary, involve the police or emergency services.

Children or Young People Found in Charity Accommodation

- Immediate Action: If a child or young person is found in charity accommodation without permission or explanation, staff should assess the situation and ensure their safety.
- Contacting Parents or Guardians: Efforts should be made to contact the child or young person's parents or guardians to establish their whereabouts and ensure their safety.
- Involving Authorities: If necessary, the police or children's social care should be involved to ensure the child or young person's welfare.
- Documentation: All incidents involving children or young people found in charity accommodation should be documented and reported to the DSL for Children and Young People.



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Appendix 1: Safeguarding Responsibilities

1.1 Safeguarding Responsibilities

DSL for Children and Young People:

- Develop and implement the charity's safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Provide regular safeguarding training to all staff, volunteers, and trustees.
- Ensure detailed record keeping and storage
- Respond to and investigate safeguarding concerns.
- Liaise with external agencies as necessary.
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of safeguarding practices.

1.2 All Personnel

All personnel must:

- Take steps to protect children from harm.
- Report concerns about child welfare to the DSL for Children and Young People.
- Follow the charity's safeguarding procedures.
- Attend safeguarding training as required.
- Be aware of the signs and indicators of abuse and neglect.
- Follow the charity's safeguarding policies and procedures.

1.3 The Trustee Board

The Trustee Board is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the charity has a robust safeguarding policy and procedures in place.
- Overseeing the implementation of the safeguarding policy.
- Ensuring that adequate resources are allocated to safeguarding.

1.4 Other managers and coordinators

Managers and coordinators are responsible for:

- Ensuring that staff and volunteers under their supervision are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Monitoring staff and volunteers' compliance with safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Taking action to address any concerns about child welfare.

1.5 HR and volunteer coordinators



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HR and volunteer coordinators are responsible for:

- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers receive appropriate safeguarding training.
- Conducting appropriate checks on all staff and volunteers, including DBS checks as required by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- Taking action to address any concerns about staff or volunteer behaviour.

Appendix 2: Internal Case Management Groups

Safeguarding Committee

The charity will establish a Safeguarding Committee, comprising senior staff members and relevant trustees. The committee will be responsible for:

- Overseeing the implementation of the safeguarding policy.
- Reviewing and approving safeguarding procedures.
- Considering and responding to safeguarding concerns and allegations.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of safeguarding training.
- Reviewing and approving the annual safeguarding report.

Appendix 3: Conduct expected of CHESS personnel

All staff and volunteers must ensure adhere to the code of conduct issued to them on engagement, specifically, CHESS personnel must observe:

- Professional Boundaries: Maintain appropriate professional boundaries with children and young people at all times.
- Respect: Treat all children and young people with respect, dignity, and fairness.
- Confidentiality: Maintain confidentiality in relation to any information about children and young people.
- Reporting Concerns: Report any concerns about child welfare immediately to the DSL for Children and Young People or a designated officer.
- Child Protection Training: Attend and complete all required child protection training.
- Appropriate Behaviour: Avoid any behaviour that could be construed as inappropriate or harmful to children and young people.



Document Information

Revision History

[illegible]