



# QUICK GUIDE TO DEVELOPING A SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

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## 1. Introduction

Safeguarding is a term which is broader than 'child protection' and relates to the action taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

This guide is intended for private and voluntary organisations who do not currently have a safeguarding children policy or who wish to update their existing policies and practice guidance.

Children and young people have a right to be safely cared for and parents and carers need to have confidence that the organisations to which they entrust their children and young people will provide safe care.

Everyone shares responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, irrespective of individual roles.

Statutory guidance says that safeguarding means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

[\(Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2015: HM Government\)](#)

A safeguarding policy should be part of a suite of comprehensive policies, procedures, standards and guidance that an organisation has in place in order to demonstrate its commitment to:

- safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- enable staff and volunteers to have a clear understanding of what to do if they have concerns about a child or young person
- how allegations against staff and volunteers will be dealt with

2. In **developing your safeguarding policy** it must comply with the [Southend, Essex and Thurrock \(SET\) Child Protection Procedures 2015:](#) and refer to:

- [Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex](#)
- [\(Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2015: HM Government\)](#) statutory guidance
- [What to do if you are worried that a child is being abused \(DfE 2015\)](#)
- [Information sharing guidance \(DfE 2015\)](#)
- [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

3. The following are **key elements that need to be included** in a safeguarding policy:

- the welfare of the child is paramount
- all children without exception have the right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs
- the policy is approved and endorsed through your organisation's relevant process
- who the policy applies to (for example all staff and volunteers)
- children, young people, parents and carers are informed of the policy and procedures as appropriate
- all concerns, and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously by board members, trustees, staff and volunteers and responded to appropriately - this may require a referral to children's services and in emergencies, the Police
- a commitment to safer recruitment, selection, vetting, induction and regular supervision
- reference to principles, legislation and guidance that underpin the policy
- arrangements to review the policy
- reference to all associated policies and procedures which promote children's and young people's safety and welfare e.g. health and safety, anti-bullying, protection of children online, (including mobile technology and social media) and photography etc.

Systems for recording information and dealing with complaints are also needed to ensure implementation and compliance.

4. The policy should **set out clearly**:

- A named person (and deputy) with a clearly defined role and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding, appropriate to the level at which s/he operates
- A description of what child abuse is, and the procedures for how to respond to it where there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare
- Clear link to the Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex document
- Understanding of Child Sexual Exploitation, recognising its signs and symptoms and the referral process to raise concerns
- How to respond to concerns about Honour Based Abuse, Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage and child abuse linked to belief in spirit possession
- Knowledge of signs around children who run away or go missing from home, care and education
- How to respond to concerns about the behaviour or actions of a member of the children's workforce, including volunteers
- Relevant contact details for children's services, police and NSPCC helplines should be available
- The process internally for recording incidents, concerns and referrals and storing these securely in compliance with relevant legislation

- Guidance on confidentiality and information sharing
  - Guidance around On-line safety
  - A complaints / whistleblowing procedure which is an open and well publicised way in which adults and children can voice concerns about unacceptable and/or abusive behaviour towards children.
5. The policy may **include or make reference to** where the documents can be found that address:
- Code of behaviour for staff and volunteers. The consequences of breaching the code are clear and linked to disciplinary and grievance procedures
  - Safer recruitment, selection and vetting procedures that are in line with guidance from the national [Disclosure and Barring Service](#)
  - Appropriate training for all staff and volunteers in accordance with the level of contact they have with children and young people
  - Organisational learning from complaints
  - Lessons learnt from Serious Case Reviews
6. Other **useful local documents**
- [ESCB Safer Recruitment-top tips 2015](#)
  - [Managing Allegations in the Children's Workforce](#)
  - Primary and Secondary Schools - a [model child protection policy](#) is available on schools info link
7. **Practical advice and information**
- The NSPCC has [useful guidance](#) on writing and implementing a child protection policy.
  - The [NSPCC's Child Protection in Sport Unit](#) also has a sample child protection policy and a range of resources for sporting organisations.
  - The national [Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre](#) has a wide variety of resources for young people, parents/carers, professionals and organisations.