



Safeguarding Children – Overview

Safeguarding is a term which is broader than 'child protection' as it also includes prevention.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Whilst local authorities play a lead role, safeguarding children and protecting them from harm is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play.

We consider that the welfare of the child is paramount. Members of staff, Trustees and volunteers commit to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for children. We do this by responding promptly and appropriately when safeguarding concerns are raised in accordance with our child Protection Policy. We also develop the following areas;

- Building a culture of safety.
- Raising awareness of child abuse issues.

Noah's Ark works with children, their families, other agencies and the community taking all reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to children's welfare are minimised; and to give them the very best start in life. Where there are concerns about children and young people's welfare, we will take appropriate action to address those concerns, working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other local agencies.

We recognise that safeguarding children is vital for registered childcare providers, as part of the legal requirements of their Ofsted registration, and for charities, as charity trustees have a duty of care towards the children with whom they have contact. We know that having safeguards in place within an organisation not only protects and promotes the welfare of children but also it enhances the confidence of staff, volunteers, parents/carers, management or trustees and the general public.

For the purposes of child protection legislation the term 'child' refers to anyone up to the age of 18 years. A young person is defined as aged 16-19 years old. At Noah's Ark they may be a student, worker, volunteer or parent. An adult at risk is defined as a person who is or may be in need of community care by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation. (No Secrets DoH 2015)

We believe children have a right to play and be safe. We take steps to promote their safety.

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Policies and framework

Our Child Protection Policy is central to this, but there are many areas that contribute to creating a safe environment. Our Child Protection Policy should be read in conjunction with **all our policies and procedures**

There are many areas that contribute to creating a safe environment, these include:

- Child protection policy
- Safe recruitment and selection policy and procedure (including suitability)
- Staff and volunteers are inducted and supervised
- Staff Behaviour Policy
- Mobile phone, camera and e-safety
- Management checked for suitability
- Training
- Health and Safety policy and procedures
- First Aid
- Fire Procedures
- Risk assessments
- Secure premises
- Managing Behaviour
- Child registration information
- Arrival and departure procedure
- Deployment of staff
- Trip procedures
- Procedures for meeting the needs of disabled children and others with specific needs
- Listening to concerns from children, parents and carers
- Keeping Ofsted up to date with any changes to the registration of your service

Some of these are considered in more detail below.

Building a Culture of Safety

Noah's Ark is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery.

Through consistent practice we will provide a safe and secure environment to foster positive mental health.

1. Working with children

We believe in equipping children with a range of skills, information and confidence that will help them to protect themselves in the community. Staff will act as role models and listen to children. We will discuss in an age appropriate way:

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- Choices
- Setting rules
- Values
- Expressing feelings
- Rights of a child
- Healthy relationships
- Friendships
- Appropriate touch
- Keeping safe online
- Recognising and assessing risk
- Problem solving and decision making
- How and where to get help when needed

2. Staff and Volunteers

We ensure all staff are trained to understand our safeguarding policies and procedures and that parents are made aware of them too. All staff are familiar with their duties and obligations under the Prevent Duty and our planning and learning is guided by our **Prevent Duty** document. All staff are confident to ask questions in relation to any safeguarding concerns and know not to just take things at face value but can be respectfully sceptical. Staff training forms part of the induction and is updated regularly. We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children. We work at a higher ratio of staff to children than the legal minimum and the layout of the rooms allows constant supervision of all children. Unqualified volunteers do not work unsupervised.

The Trustees have appointed a Child Protection Officer (a Trustee), a Designated Senior and Deputies to take the lead responsibility for safeguarding children within the setting and to liaise with local statutory children's services agencies as appropriate. They must attend a multi-agency child protection training course, to be updated at least every 3 years. The Child Protection Officer will receive reports from the Designated Person of any occasions when there are concerns or issues of Child Protection.

Staff, volunteers and Trustees recognise that they need to conduct themselves in an appropriate, open and transparent way to ensure a safer environment for all. One of the ways of ensuring this is by following Noah's Ark policies and procedures. Including our **Staff Behaviour Policy**. We operate a **Supervision Policy** to ensure that concerns of staff can be discussed and any concerns can be addressed.

In addition, staff use "Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People" as a tool to develop setting-specific guidance for staff and volunteers. Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings <https://www.saferrecruitmentconsortium.org/GSWP%20Sept%202019.pdf>

3. Visitors

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We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting. We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children. All visitors are required to report to the Noah's Ark office on arrival at the setting and to sign the Visitors Section on the Register indicating their time of arrival and departure. There is a security lock on the internal door leading to the rest of the church building and a CCTV camera covering the entrance to the setting. We have a high ratio of staff to children and all staff are aware of the need to be vigilant in supervising children in the setting.

Raising Awareness of Child Abuse Issues

Noah's Ark is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training and learning programmes for adults. It is also committed to empowering young children, through its early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

1. Training

We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the setting to ensure they receive regular updates relating to safeguarding and are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse (including child sexual exploitation) and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals. Updates are conveyed to members of staff through staff meetings where Safeguarding is a regular item on the agenda.

We ensure that all members of staff receive training at least once a year and designated persons receive training every two years and their knowledge is refreshed at least annually.

We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording any concerns they may have about the provision.

2. Curriculum

We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be strong, resilient and listened to and so that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.

We create within the setting a culture of value and respect for individuals, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.

We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

3. Support to families

We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group. We make clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, information sharing, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local children's social care team.

We will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse. We follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the child's social care worker in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their family, subsequent to any investigation.

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Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the **Confidentiality Procedure** and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Bristol Safeguarding Children Board.

Prepared by Kathy Kilgour ... 18 September 2018.....(date)

Approved by the Trustees (Signature of Trustee)

.....(date)

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.....(date)

For Further Information

- *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018*
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942454/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_inter_agency_guidance.pdf
- Recruitment and selection of charity trustees requirements are set out in guidance, Finding new trustees, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/finding-new-trustees-cc30/finding-new-trustees> available from the charity commission
- South West Child Protection Procedures – provide detailed online information on all aspects of child protection – <https://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp/>
- EYFS 2017 Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements -
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/596629/EYFS_STATUTORY_FRAMEWORK_2017.pdf