

# Healthwatch Hillingdon

## Safeguarding Children Policy

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## **1. SCOPE**

- 1.1 This policy applies to all board members, staff, and volunteers and sets out to safeguard and promote the well-being of children. It should be read in conjunction with policies 'Working together to Safeguard Children' 2013 (Appendix A - HWH016a) and 'Guidance for Safe Working Practice for Adults' who Work with Children and Young People (HWH017).

## **2. POLICY STATEMENT**

- 2.1 Healthwatch Hillingdon (HWH) recognises the importance of its support services to families, children, young people and adults and its particular responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of those who are vulnerable or at risk.

This requires us to:

- Listen to, value, encourage and support those we work with
  - Provide clear internal procedures for identifying and dealing with concerns about possible abuse, and ensure their implementation
  - Provide effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training
  - Adopt a Code of Conduct for employees (Employees Code of Conduct - HWH022)
  - Include continuous risk assessment within our work with families
  - Recruit Safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
  - Share information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff, students and volunteers
  - Develop and maintain effective information sharing with statutory services and other agencies, involve children and parents as appropriate
  - Work collaboratively with local safeguarding children boards
- 2.2 Any allegation or concern about abuse must be responded to. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everybody's business although our individual roles in the process may be different.
  - 2.3 Any concern for the welfare of a child must be discussed with the Line Manager and if necessary the CEO, without delay and further action taken as necessary.

- 2.4 HWH believes that the welfare of children is paramount and that all children have the right to protection from abuse, regardless of their age, culture, disability, gender, racial origin, language, religious belief or sexual orientation.
- 2.5 A child for the purposes of this policy, as defined by the Children Act 1989 and 2004, is anyone who has not yet reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- 2.6 Every effort will be made to ensure that all staff, including volunteers, recruited to work for HWH are suitable to do so and will undergo adequate training for their post. Those who are responsible for appointing staff will be trained in safe recruitment practices. All references will be robustly scrutinised and other checks sought at the appropriate level e.g. Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) etc.

### **3. THE LEGAL AND PROCEDURAL FRAMEWORK FOR SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN**

- 3.1 All of the following provide the legal and procedural framework for safeguarding children and young people:
  - The Children Act 1989
  - The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (ratified by UK Gov.1991)
  - The Human Rights Act 1998
  - The Protection of Children Act 1999
  - Equality Act 2010
  - Every Child Matters 2003
  - The Sexual Offences Act 2003
  - What to do if you're worried about a child. DOH 2003
  - The Children Act 2004
  - National Service Framework for Children, Young People & Maternity Services 2004
  - Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People 2005
  - Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013 (Appendix A - HWH016a) - the most recent legislation which promotes:
  - 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;
  - Taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.

For further information see Appendix B.

#### **4. HEALTHWATCH HILLINGDON'S ACCOUNTABILITIES FRAMEWORK**

- 4.1 Safeguarding is the responsibility of us all. When dealing with the concerns discussed in this policy the lines of accountability for responding appropriately apply to all staff, including volunteers.
- 4.2 Staff and volunteers are expected to consult their Line Manager/mentor when they have any concerns for the welfare of a child. The Line Manager/mentor will consult with the CEO when necessary.
- 4.3 If a staff member has concerns about the attitudes and/or behaviours of a HWH colleague or volunteer, they have a duty to comply with the HWH Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure (HWH007).
- 4.4 It is the responsibility of the CEO to review the Safeguarding Children Policy and align with that of the Local Safeguarding Children Board and ensure all staff, including volunteers are fully aware and informed of the current policy.

#### **5. LINKS TO OTHER HEALTHWATCH HILLINGDON POLICIES**

All staff involved with safeguarding and child protection work, need to bear in mind the other organisational policies which support their work and provide guidance:

- Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Policy (HWH002)
- Grievance Policy and Procedure (HWH003)
- Working with Vulnerable Groups Policy (HWH004)

- Confidentiality Policy - Working with Young People (HWH005)
- Data Protection Policy and Procedure (HWH006)
- Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure (HWH007)
- Complaints Policy and Procedure (HWH008)
- Communications Policy (HWH009)
- Managing Volunteers Policy and Procedure (HWH011)
- Health and Safety Policy and Procedure (HWH015)
- Guidance for Safe Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People (HWH017)
- Volunteers Code of Conduct Policy (HWH020)
- Trustees and Board Members Code of Conduct (HWH021)
- Employees Code of Conduct Policy (HWH022)

N.B. HWH will endeavour to understand the potential effect of its policies and practices on the staff, volunteers and communities, particularly those from 'protected' characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 section 149.

APPENDIX B

**National Legislation and Policy Frameworks**

<p><b>Children Act (1989)</b></p>	<p>Emphasises the importance of putting the child first whilst cooperating and sharing parental responsibilities.</p> <p>Key aspects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welfare of the child is paramount</li> <li>• Delay is not in the child's best interests and to be avoided</li> <li>• Children's wishes to be taken seriously</li> </ul>	<p><i>Promotes:</i></p> <p>Principles of working together and in partnership</p> <p>Skills enhanced by multi agency learning</p>
<p><b>Protection of Children Act (1999) POCA</b></p>	<p>Changed the route by which employers can check whether an actual or potential employee has criminal offences against children and whether they are unsuitable to work with children.</p>	<p><i>Promotes:</i></p> <p>Safe recruitment</p>
<p><b>Sexual Offences Act (2003)</b></p>	<p>Sets out a new legal framework to protect children from sexual abuse, covers internet pornography, grooming &amp; exploitation. Puts restrictions on convicted sex offenders.</p>	<p><i>Promotes:</i></p> <p>Internet Safety</p>
<p><b>Children Act (2004)</b></p>	<p>Emphasises reform within children services</p> <p>Key aspects</p>	<p><i>Promotes:</i></p> <p>Culture of co-operation and working</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New role of children commissioner for England</li> <li>• Duty of local authorities to promote</li> <li>• Cooperation between agencies</li> <li>• Establish Local Safeguarding Children's Boards</li> <li>• Develop local arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children</li> <li>• Develop index/data base to hold basic info on children and families</li> <li>• Establishment of new post of Director of Children's Services</li> </ul>	<p>together between agencies and organisations</p> <p>Development of common knowledge, skills and competences within the children's workforce</p> <p>Develop single C &amp; YP plan</p> <p>Develop single inspection framework</p>
<b>Education Act (2002)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasises duty to make arrangements for the safeguarding and promoting of the welfare of children</li> <li>• Ensures training and pastoral support</li> <li>• Identifies designated staff to coordinate and manage child safeguarding practice</li> </ul>	<p><i>Promotes:</i></p> <p>Policies and procedures to safeguard children</p> <p>Work in partnership with other agencies</p> <p>Training and development</p>
<b>Working Together to Safeguard Children: a guide to interagency working.... (2013)</b>	<p>Contains statutory and non-statutory guidance</p> <p>National frameworks for</p>	<p><i>Promotes:</i></p> <p>Safeguarding training must be consistent</p>

	<p>policies and procedures</p> <p>Outlines the responsibilities of Local Children’s Safeguarding Boards</p> <p>Sets out principles for learning and improvement frameworks</p>	<p>with common core</p> <p>Individual agencies are responsible for ensuring staff competence &amp; confidence to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities</p>
<p><b>Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment (2006)</b></p>	<p>Combines three documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safeguarding children in education 2004</li> <li>• Safer Recruitment 2005</li> <li>• Dealing with Allegations 2005</li> </ul>	<p><i>Sets timescales for:</i></p> <p>Regular initial and refresher training on safeguarding training</p> <p>Training for designated and lead professionals</p>
<p><b>Every Child Matters: Change for children (2004)</b></p>	<p>Focuses on a shared programme of national change to provide services “around the needs of children &amp; young people”</p> <p>Integrated services</p> <p>Achieving better outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be healthy</li> <li>• Stay safe</li> <li>• Enjoy and achieve</li> <li>• Make a positive contribution</li> <li>• Achieve economic wellbeing</li> </ul>	