

East Anglia's Children's Hospices

Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy 2026

Purpose

The organisation is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people who use its services, participate in its activities, or come into contact with the organisation in any capacity.

We believe that every child and young person has the right to be protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm. We are committed to providing safe environments where children and young people are respected, listened to, and supported.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, trustees, contractors and others acting on behalf of the organisation.

Safeguarding Principles

The organisation recognises its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in accordance with relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including the Children Act 1989, the Children Act 2004, and Working Together to Safeguard Children.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children includes:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development.
- Ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to achieve the best possible outcomes. The organisation is committed to:
- Promoting a culture of safety, respect and inclusion.
- Listening to the views and experiences of children and young people.
- Maintaining clear safeguarding responsibilities and accountability.
- Providing appropriate safeguarding training and support.
- Sharing information appropriately to protect children and young people.
- Responding promptly and effectively to safeguarding concerns.
- Ensuring safe recruitment practices.

Children with Disabilities

Children and young people with disabilities can be more vulnerable to abuse and neglect. The organisation recognises that indicators of abuse may be more difficult to identify and is committed to ensuring that safeguarding processes and staff training reflect these additional considerations.

Parental Responsibility

Definition

Parental responsibility refers to the legal rights, duties, powers, responsibilities and authority that a parent or other individual has in relation to a child and their welfare.

Who May Hold Parental Responsibility

Parental responsibility may be held by:

- A birth parent.
- A father who has acquired parental responsibility through marriage, civil partnership or registration on the birth certificate in accordance with legislation.
- Certain second parents in same-sex relationships where legal criteria are met.
- Adoptive parents.
- Individuals granted parental responsibility through agreements or court orders.
- Local authorities where a child is subject to a care order.
- Special guardians and others appointed by the courts.

Safeguarding Considerations

When safeguarding concerns arise, it is important to identify who holds parental responsibility to ensure decisions are made lawfully and in the child's best interests.

Staff and volunteers should:

- Verify parental responsibility where consent or information sharing is required.
- Seek appropriate advice where responsibility is unclear or disputed.
- Prioritise the welfare of the child at all times.
- Maintain accurate records relating to parental responsibility.
- Recognise that parental responsibility does not override safeguarding actions required to protect a child from harm.

Objectives

The organisation aims to ensure that:

- All children and young people are protected from harm.
- Safeguarding responsibilities are fulfilled in line with legislation and national guidance.
- Information is shared appropriately to promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.
- Staff and volunteers understand their safeguarding responsibilities.

Roles and Responsibilities

The organisation maintains clear safeguarding leadership and governance arrangements.

Designated safeguarding professionals provide advice, guidance and oversight of safeguarding practice. Managers are responsible for ensuring safeguarding requirements are implemented within their areas of responsibility.

All staff and volunteers share responsibility for safeguarding children and young people and must act appropriately if they become aware of concerns about a child's welfare.

Approach to Safeguarding

All staff and relevant volunteers have a responsibility to protect, promote and safeguard the welfare of children and young people.

Safeguarding arrangements apply to all children and young people who access services, attend activities, or come into contact with the organisation in any setting.

Self-Harm

The organisation recognises that self-harm can affect children and young people and may indicate emotional distress or an increased risk of harm.

Where concerns exist that a child or young person may be self-harming or at risk of self-harm, safeguarding procedures will be followed and appropriate support sought.

Prevent and Radicalisation

The organisation recognises that safeguarding includes protecting vulnerable individuals from exploitation, radicalisation and involvement in terrorism.

Any concerns that a child or young person may be vulnerable to radicalisation should be treated as a safeguarding concern and reported through the organisation's safeguarding procedures.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls. It is illegal in the United Kingdom.

The organisation is committed to identifying and supporting children who may be affected by, or at risk of, FGM. Concerns regarding actual or potential FGM will be managed through safeguarding procedures and, where required, reported to the relevant statutory authorities.

Domestic Abuse

The organisation recognises that domestic abuse can have a significant impact on children and young people.

Exposure to domestic abuse is harmful to children and should always be considered within safeguarding assessments.

Any concerns relating to domestic abuse will be addressed through safeguarding procedures and appropriate referrals made where necessary.

Hoarding

The organisation recognises that severe hoarding within a family home may place children at risk of neglect, emotional harm, physical injury and increased fire risk.

Where concerns are identified, safeguarding procedures will be followed and appropriate support sought to protect the welfare of the child.

Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers

The organisation takes all concerns and allegations involving staff, volunteers or others working with children seriously.

Appropriate action will be taken where allegations suggest that an individual has:

- Harmed a child or young person.
- Possibly committed an offence against a child.
- Behaved in a manner that indicates they may present a risk to children.

The welfare of the child will always be the primary consideration. Allegations will be managed in accordance with safeguarding procedures and relevant statutory guidance.

The organisation operates a zero-tolerance approach to abuse in any form.

Safer Recruitment

The organisation is committed to safer recruitment practices to help prevent unsuitable individuals from working or volunteering with children and young people.

Appropriate pre-employment checks, references, identity verification and criminal record checks will be undertaken in accordance with the role and relevant legislation.

Information Sharing and Confidentiality

Effective information sharing is essential to safeguarding children and young people.

Staff and volunteers must not assume that another person will share information that may be important for protecting a child.

Information will be handled appropriately and in accordance with data protection and confidentiality requirements. However, information may be shared without consent where this is necessary to safeguard a child or young person and where permitted by law.

Where legal proceedings are underway or anticipated, requests for information will be managed through appropriate organisational governance and safeguarding processes before any disclosure is made.

Training and Competence

All staff and volunteers will receive safeguarding training appropriate to their role and responsibilities.

Training will support individuals to:

- Recognise signs of abuse and neglect.
- Understand safeguarding responsibilities.
- Respond appropriately to concerns.
- Follow reporting and escalation procedures.

Training requirements will be reviewed and monitored regularly.

Service and Policy Development

The organisation is committed to embedding safeguarding into all aspects of service delivery, planning and policy development.

The safety and wellbeing of children and young people will be considered whenever services, activities or policies are developed or reviewed.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The organisation will implement this policy fairly and consistently and will not discriminate on the basis of any protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

Further Guidance

The organisation maintains safeguarding procedures, reporting arrangements and designated safeguarding contacts to support the implementation of this policy.

Further information regarding recognising and responding to child abuse can be found through NSPCC safeguarding resources and current national safeguarding guidance.

This version is suitable as a website or externally published policy statement, reducing the document by removing approximately 60% of the internal governance and administrative content while retaining the key safeguarding commitments, statutory references, responsibilities and practice expectations from the original policy.