



Westwood House Child Contact Centre

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NACCC Member No 282/1

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

FOR

Westwood House Child Contact Centre

1. Introduction

In accord with NACCC's Mission Statement, Westwood House Child Contact Centre aims to 'promote safe child contact within a national framework of Child Contact Centres and Services'.

2. Accountability

Two copies of this policy and its accompanying Statement of Commitment will be given to all volunteers of the Centre.

They will be required to retain the first copy, initial and return the second copy, and sign and return the Statement of Commitment to the Co-ordinator.

3. Basic principles – Westwood House Child Contact Centre

Believes that children and young people need safe environments in which they can grow and develop in confidence.

Recognises that organisations working with and supporting children and young people have a duty to keep them safe.

Places Safeguarding children and young people and Child Protection at the centre of its activities.

Works in accord with the guidance as set out in the document: 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (Department for Education & Skills 2018).

Believes that children and young people should not be exposed to negligence or avoidable risks.

Recognises that Safeguarding and Child Protection are emotive issues that need to be handled both sensitively and carefully.

Is committed to creating and implementing policies and procedures that will ensure where risks need to be taken regarding children and young people they are both calculated and carefully managed.

Recognises the difference between Child Protection and Safeguarding, namely:

- Child Protection is the process of protecting individual children identified as either suffering or likely to suffer significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect. It involves recognising signs and symptoms of physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect and acting upon them.

- Safeguarding involves keeping children and young people safe from a much wider range of potential dangers and/or harm. It looks at preventative action rather than just reactions.

Recognises that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. No single person can have a full picture of a child or young person's needs or circumstances, and thus if children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

Understands that effective safeguarding is child-centred. This means having the needs of the children and young people using the centre as a paramount concern, and involves listening to what they say, taking their views seriously, and working with them collaboratively when deciding how to support their needs. This approach is supported by current legislation for children and families, the Equality Act 2010, and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

Is committed to ensuring that all its volunteers, including the members of the Management Committee, are aware of, kept up to date with, and operate in accordance with good practice in relation to Safeguarding and Child Protection. Centrally this involves the ability to enact the following procedure when a Safeguarding or Child Protection issue arises.

- Recognise
- Respond
- Report
- Record
- Refer

4. Intentions

4.1 Managing safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

Westwood House Child Contact Centre will have one volunteer who will be responsible for ensuring that the Safeguarding Policy and its processes are implemented and adhered to. This person is the Co-ordinator/Deputy Co-ordinator(s).

This person will be responsible for ensuring:

- The Centre is aware of and operating in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Board's policies and procedures in relation to Safeguarding and Child Protection.
- That volunteers have access to the phone numbers, forms and procedures they need to report allegations or concerns relating to Safeguarding or Child Protection to Children's Services and/or the Police.
- That they themselves or another named volunteer passes accurate information relating to Safeguarding or Child Protection both directly and quickly to the statutory agency responsible for investigating it.

The Centre will also have one named volunteer serving on the Management Committee who will be responsible for overseeing and reviewing all matters pertaining to Safeguarding and Child Protection. This person is Helen Barnes.

The Centre will establish timely contact and advice-seeking from NACCC if they have any concerns about Safeguarding, Child Protection, or inappropriate referrals.

4.2. Recruitment

Westwood House Child Contact Centre will have a clearly defined and standardised recruitment process for its volunteers including volunteers who comprise the Management Committee. The process will include application forms, checking ID, interviews, checking references, induction procedures and probationary periods.

There are a number of requirements to be met by candidates when first applying to join the organisation and if engaged as volunteers, at subsequent points in their service in the Centre. These are set out in the Centre's Recruitment Policy.

Westwood House Child Contact Centre will also adhere to thorough and standardised procedures for making appropriate checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), at the point of application for the role of volunteer with the Centre and if engaged, at every three years thereafter. These procedures are set out in the Centre's DBS Policy.

4.3 Education and Training

Westwood House Child Contact Centre will operate the NACCC induction process which includes "Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children" training for all volunteers. This is mandatory.

The Centre will deliver training using the NACCC training modules to volunteers, including a module on Safeguarding and Child Protection. These are mandatory for volunteers in the Centre, and the module on Safeguarding and Child Protection is also mandatory for members of the Management Committee. All volunteers including members of the Management Committee are required to undertake this training every three years, and to attend annual updates.

The Centre will also ensure all volunteers are made aware of legislation, guidelines and directives updates as and when they are issued by NACCC.

It will further ensure all volunteers are made aware of NACCC's advice line and a dedicated Saturday safeguarding helpline which can be accessed for guidance and support with Safeguarding or Child Protection concerns.

4.4 Support and Supervision

Westwood House Child Contact Centre will ensure that its volunteers receive the supervision and support they require when they are working with Safeguarding and Child Protection incidents or concerns. This includes:

- Pre- and de-briefing in Contact sessions
- Follow-up supervision and support in the event of a Safeguarding or Child Protection concern in the Centre.
- The Coordinator receives quarterly supervision from the Chair of the Management Committee.

In addition volunteers receive an annual appraisal with the Coordinator where safeguarding training and concerns are included.

4.5 Sharing Information

Westwood House Child Contact Centre will observe procedures ensuring that every Safeguarding or Child Protection issue coming to the attention of volunteers within the Centre is responded to correctly. This will include following procedures concerned with:

- Appropriate information sharing within the Centre.
- Recording all relevant information on the appropriate forms.
- Ensuring that information is shared correctly with all relevant agencies.

4.6 Providing Advice and Support

Westwood House Child Contact Centre will ensure that Safeguarding is a rolling agenda item in Management Committee Meetings and is recorded in the minutes, and that safeguarding awareness is always practiced in the regular work of the Centre

The Centre understands that failure to follow or non-compliance with recognised procedures and good practice in relation to Safeguarding, Child Protection and promoting the welfare of children will result in a response from NACCC involving one or a combination of the following actions, as appropriate and reasonable:

- Enhanced support, information and training for the Centre.
- Agreement for future action by the Centre.
- Suspension or permanent removal of NACCC accreditation status.
- Notification of the Local Safeguarding Board.

In more serious cases involving individual volunteers, the people involved could be removed from their roles in the Centre.

4.7 Distribution of Westwood House Child Contact Centre’s Policy for Safeguarding and Child Protection

Copies of this policy will be:

- Included in the Guidance Notes given to volunteers, including volunteers sitting on the Management Committee.
- Made available to referrers, families using the Centre, and other organisations upon request where appropriate.

Copies of the NACCC Step by Step Guide and information to guide decisions when using the Guide will be included in the Centre’s Safeguarding File.

4.8 Review of Westwood House Child Contact Centre Policy for Safeguarding and Child Protection

This will take place annually.

Additional changes to take account of new legislation and practice directions will also be made as and when required.

Copies of the Policy will be made available to all volunteers in their volunteer packs, to referrers on request, and to families using the Centre by way of an information pack containing all Centre Policies that can be accessed during all contact sessions. All new parents attending the Centre are informed at preliminary interview that we have a Safeguarding Policy and operate within this and that the policy is available to read.

Date Policy Reviewed.5th March 2024

Next Review Date March 2025

Signed-Helen Barnes. Chair of Management Committee.

Statement of Commitment to Westwood House Child Contact Centre’s Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

This form must be read and understood by all volunteers.

Name:(insert name)

I have read and understood the standards and guidelines outlined in Westwood House Child Contact Centre’s Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. I agree with the principles contained therein and accept the importance of implementing them in my capacity as a volunteer of Westwood House Child Contact Centre.

Signature:

Date:

This policy shall be reviewed on an annual basis by Westwood House Child Contact Centre Management Committee and amended accordingly if required. A record of the annual review will be recorded in the Management Committee Minutes which will be signed and dated by the Chair of the Management Committee. Subsequent new policies will only be published if amendments are made at annual review.

This policy has been updated and approved by the Management Committee at their meeting of March 5th 2024.

Next review due March 2025.

