

Home-Start Bracknell Forest

Policy: Safeguarding/Child Protection

Policy Statement

Safeguarding/Child Protection and promoting the welfare of children* is defined as protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of their health or development, ensuring that they are growing up receiving safe and effective care and acting to enable children to have the best outcomes.

The purpose of this policy is:

- to protect children who receive Home-Start services
- to provide trustees, staff, volunteers with overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection

Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy Statement

This policy has been adopted by the scheme to signify its commitment to safeguarding/child protection and promoting the welfare of children. This policy applies to all trustees, staff, volunteers or anyone working on behalf of the scheme.

Home-Start believes that a child should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all our children and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

Legal Framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children.

Home-Start maintains an up-to-date awareness of national and local guidance and follows appropriate local safeguarding procedures.

Home-Start recognises that:

- the welfare of the child is paramount as enshrined in the Children Act 1989
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues

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- working in partnership with children their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of children

Home-Start will seek to keep children safe by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- adopting safeguarding/child protection practices through procedures and a code of conduct for trustees, staff, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of Home-Start
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers
- sharing concerns with agencies who need to know and involving parents and children appropriately

Home-Start is committed to reviewing the Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy and good practice annually.

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Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy Appendix One:

Procedures

1. Recruitment, selection, induction and training procedures for trustees, staff and volunteers

Home-Start takes all possible steps to ensure that children are kept safe through:

- safer recruitment processes for all trustees, staff and volunteers
- planned induction of all trustees, staff and volunteers, to include signed and dated confirmation of their understanding and acceptance of the safeguarding/child protection policy and procedures and code of conduct
- clear safeguarding/child protection procedures to inform trustees new to Home-Start, staff and volunteers about the appropriate action to take in the event of concerns about a child
- volunteers' attendance at the Home-Start Course of Preparation in full; all volunteers accessing safeguarding/child protection refresher training, in accordance with HSUK guidance
- staff attendance at mandatory HSUK safeguarding/child protection training, and accessing ongoing and refresher training in accordance with Home-Start guidance
- trustees accessing effective guidance, training and support to ensure that they are able to work within these procedures

2. Ongoing support and supervision for staff and volunteers

Home-Start ensures that all volunteers and staff, including the senior worker, access regular, recorded support and supervision in line with Home-Start guidance, and are clear about their role and responsibilities, through:

- the implementation of the Home-Start standards and methods of practice and safeguarding/child protection code of conduct for trustees, staff and volunteers
- Identifying personnel to hold the Strategic Lead and designated responsibilities within Home-Start. (see Appendix 2 below)
- procedures to structure the management of any allegations of abuse against trustees, staff or volunteers

3. Information Sharing

Home-Start has clear expectations of all trustees, staff and volunteers for sharing information about families, parents, children and young people:

- all families supported are made aware of Home-Start's safeguarding/child protection and confidentiality policies
- a factual dated record of contact with the family and of any concerns about a child(ren) in families supported are kept in line with Home-Start's record keeping and record retention procedures
- Home-Start recognises the importance of sharing information to protect children and normally the disclosure of the confidential information to any other person may only be undertaken with the expressed permission of the parents for the

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purpose of assisting the family *however* where it is considered necessary for the welfare and protection of a child, information will be shared with the appropriate authority and families will be kept informed of Home-Start's actions unless to do so would put the child at greater risk of harm

4. Local Partnerships and Procedures

Protecting children is a shared responsibility. In order to fulfil its responsibilities in promoting the welfare and safety of children Home-Start:

- maintains effective links with organisations working with children and their families within the community
- participates in local partnership arrangements designed to protect children and promote their wellbeing
- takes part in local multi-disciplinary training and integrated working in order to maintain an up- to- date understanding of local processes and to take up appropriate opportunities for professional development
- is aware of, holds current information on and works within the requirements of the local procedures followed by statutory and voluntary agencies
- identifies a local child protection/safeguarding adviser to support and advise the scheme with regard to local issues and procedures for protecting children. In some schemes this adviser is a nominated trustee who undertakes local and HSUK training in order to fulfil that role.

5. Managing Allegations

Government is clear that all children, no matter what situation they are in, should be protected from abuse. If staff, volunteers or trustees see or hear anything which causes them to have concerns or to suspect that a child is being abused by someone within Home-Start they should follow the procedures

- if the allegation is against a trustee, member of staff or volunteer, the concern should be reported to the appropriate line manager, the scheme's Strategic Lead (normally the senior worker) and the Chair of Trustees immediately and to Home-Start UK
- the scheme's Strategic Lead, if not the subject of the concerns, is primarily responsible for taking all reasonable steps necessary to secure the safety of any child who may be at risk, by, for example, removing the person who is the subject of the allegation from any situation involving children. S/he will be supported by the safeguarding/child protection team and by the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO – England)
- the Chair of Trustees and/or senior member of staff are responsible for liaising with the police/LADO, Children's Social Care about allegations
- it is important to remember the scheme's protocols for confidentiality and only those with a need to know should be privy to the details of the situation. This is particularly so for allegations of sexual abuse
- paper and electronic records relating to the allegation should be made secure to prevent them being removed or changed
- irrespective of the action by Children's Social Care (England or Police, trustees should inform Home-Start UK and follow the appropriate procedure which will normally include without prejudice suspension of the trustee, staff or volunteer

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pending investigation. Following the investigation, disciplinary procedures may need to be invoked. See disciplinary procedures and confidentiality and sharing information. Schemes are also advised to contact DAS.

In the case of a member of staff reporting concerns about a colleague, refer to the Whistle blowing Policy which details the appropriate support which should be provided, i.e. the right to advice and support, and to information about legal representation.

6. Ensuring the Quality of the Home-Start Service

Home-Start complies with Home-Start Quality Assurance standards and undertakes self assessments in order to check and improve its practice.

Home-Start policies and procedures are informed by national guidance and protocols and are regularly updated.

All Mandatory Home-Start UK policies and procedures are adopted and implemented by schemes and are fundamental to effective practice within Home-Start for carrying out responsibilities for safeguarding, protecting and promoting the welfare of children. Schemes should refer to the policy list on the intranet for further information.

Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy: Appendix Two

Roles and Responsibilities within the Scheme

The trustees retain ultimate responsibility for promoting the welfare of children supported by Home-Start. They should agree:

- the member of staff with responsibility for undertaking the **Strategic Lead on Safeguarding/Child Protection**. This is normally the senior staff member. The trustees must ensure that the Strategic Lead receives adequate supervision for their role, in line with Home-Start guidance
- the people within the scheme who carry out the designated role of taking responsibility for safeguarding/child protection issues raised by staff or volunteers and for referring on concerns for the safety of children. It is recommended that each organiser/co-ordinator responsible for managing staff or volunteers supporting families should be a **Designated Safeguarding/Child Protection Person**.

Note: In some schemes both roles may be carried out by one person.

The Scheme's Strategic Lead:

Name Tessa Dove, Scheme Manager

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The role of the Home-Start scheme Strategic Lead is to:

- (a) Model and promote Home-Start's commitment to safeguarding/protecting children in all aspects of their work and conduct
- (b) Ensure that the safeguarding/child protection policy and procedures and code of conduct are available and understood by all trustees, staff and volunteers, and that these are integrated into practice
- (c) Ensure the scheme's Policy and Procedures for Safeguarding/Protecting and Promoting the Welfare of Children are updated and reviewed annually in line with Home-Start and national and local guidance
- (d) Ensure appropriate training provision and dissemination of information for trustees, staff and volunteers on safeguarding/child protection issues
- (e) Take a lead responsibility for dealing with safeguarding/child protection issues and providing information, advice and support to trustees, staff and volunteers
- (f) Support the Designated Safeguarding/Child Protection People with their responsibilities in keeping children and young people safe, by:
 - ensuring the provision of regular, recorded supervision
 - maintaining an overview of records of concern and action (ROCA) and referrals to children's social care
 - ensuring that the Safeguarding/Child Protection Adviser or nominated trustee contribute to this overview, in particular where the Strategic Lead is a lone organiser
 - ensuring records are kept appropriately, in line with policy and practice
- (g) Maintain up to date knowledge of national and local safeguarding/child protection procedures and liaise appropriately with local agencies with regard to any issues
- (h) Collate safeguarding/child protection concerns raised by the scheme to identify patterns and inform the development of practice and liaison with other agencies
- (i) Notify and liaise with scheme trustees and Home-Start UK and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) around any allegations of harm or inappropriate behaviour made against staff, volunteers and trustees in accordance with HSUK guidance
- (j) Immediately inform the Chair of Trustees and Home-Start UK in the event of the serious harm or death of a child (see guidance) and liaise with other agencies as appropriate

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(k) Identify and liaise with a local Specialist Safeguarding/Child Protection Adviser (see below)

Designated Safeguarding/Child Protection People

These are the organisers/co-ordinators with responsibility for managing staff or volunteers supporting families.

Names	Contact details
Tessa Dove, Scheme Manager	01344 860025
Val Callan, Family Co-ordinator	01344 860025
(Vacancy) Group Development Co-ordinator	01344 860025

A Designated Safeguarding/Child Protection Person's role is to:

- (a) Model and promote Home-Start's commitment to safeguarding/protecting children in all aspects of their work and conduct
- (b) Take responsibility for dealing with concerns about the safety of children raised by staff or volunteers who they supervise, following the scheme's policies and procedures
- (c) Maintain a clear, factual, dated record of contact with each supported family, in accordance with Home-Start guidance on record keeping
- (d) Inform the scheme's Strategic Lead for Safeguarding/Child Protection of concerns raised and processes followed; ensuring records of concern and action (ROCA) are discussed, signed off and actioned appropriately
- (e) Follow up concerns and safeguarding/child protection issues referred to the relevant agencies
- (f) Liaise with relevant agencies and the Local Safeguarding Children Board where appropriate about concerns, in accordance with Home-Start's confidentiality policy
- (g) Ensure the safeguarding/child protection policy is available to families, including parents/carers and children and young people in Home-Start
- (h) Liaise with the scheme's Strategic Lead for Safeguarding/Child Protection about any concerns, including where there are allegations against trustees, staff and volunteers; in accordance with Home-Start and local child protection policies and procedures

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(i) Immediately inform the scheme Strategic Lead and Home-Start UK in the event of the serious harm or death of a child (see guidance) and liaise with other agencies as appropriate

Local Specialist Safeguarding/Child Protection Adviser to the trustees and staff

Each scheme identifies a local child protection/safeguarding adviser to support and advise the scheme with regard to local issues and procedures. In some schemes this adviser is a nominated trustee who undertakes local and HSUK training in order to fulfil that role.

The local specialist adviser is available to the trustees, strategic lead and designated people as appropriate within the Home-Start scheme and may:

- (a) provide a confidential sounding board if required for the strategic lead to consider the most appropriate course of action to take where there is a safeguarding/child protection concern in a family
- (b) support the strategic lead to use local procedures appropriately (e.g. for referral, for escalation or dispute resolution)
- (c) update trustees and the strategic lead about local safeguarding/child protection developments and changes to procedures, policies and agencies
- (d) contribute to Board discussions about scheme capacity in working with more complex families, including those where there are safeguarding/child protection concerns
- (e) support the Board and strategic lead to monitor and review systems, policy and procedures to ensure good safeguarding/child protection practice within the scheme and compliance with the Home-Start Quality Assurance Standards
- (f) In some schemes, the specialist adviser may agree to undertake 'case load' supervision of the senior worker, at the request of the trustees

Local Safeguarding/Child Protection Specialist Adviser

Hilary Mason, Chair of Trustees, Home-Start Bracknell Forest

Contact details: 01344 860025

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