



HONEYCOMB
GROUP

Child Protection Policy

Policy owner:	Director of Support & Wellbeing
Policy author:	Head of Domestic Violence and Abuse Services
Team:	All
Date approved:	August 2024
Approved by:	Board of Management/Trustees
Previous review dates	Annually 28 September 2017 27 September 2018 19 th September 2019 17 th September 2020 16 th September 2021 25 August 2022
Next Review Date	May 2025

Policy Statement

This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers and the Board of Trustees, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of Honeycomb Group Ltd (HG) and its subsidiaries.

The purpose of this policy:

- To protect children and young people who receive, or come into contact with, Honeycomb Group services. This includes the children of adults who use our services.
- to provide staff, volunteers, students, the Board of Trustees or anyone working on behalf of Honeycomb Group Ltd (HG) with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection.

Honeycomb Group believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. We are committed to practise in a way that protects them.

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up based on law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Modern Day Slavery Act
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Working together to safeguarding children: a guide to interagency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; February 2024:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>
- Local Safeguarding Board guidance (all local authority areas in which we operate):
[Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)
[Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board](#)
[Cheshire East Local Safeguarding Procedures](#)
[Derby and Derbyshire Local Safeguarding Procedures](#)

This policy will be supported by detailed safeguarding specific procedures/ guidance on:

- Child Protection procedures
- The role of Designated Safeguarding Leads
- Managing allegations against staff and volunteers
- Safeguarding Recording Procedure

The policy will also be used alongside other HG policies, strategies and procedures including:

- Code of Conduct/ Staff Handbook
- Professional Boundaries
- Safeguarding and Risk Escalation Procedure
- Complaints policy
- Data Protection and Retention policy and procedures
- Equality and Diversity policy
- Recruitment & Selection strategy & policy
- Managing Risk
- Whistle Blowing policy
- Health & Safety

- Lone Working

Mental Capacity – Safeguarding Young People

We recognise that young people, aged 16 and over are presumed to have capacity. They can consent to, or refuse, treatment in their own right, including hospital admission. They can refuse access to their medical records and not give consent for clinicians to disclose information to parents.

The Mental Capacity Act does not apply to children under the age of 16.

A referral will be made to the local social care team where there are concerns that a person being abused lacks mental capacity so a Mental Capacity Assessment can be made, and that person will be informed of this referral.

Best Interests

Everything that is done for or on behalf of a young person who lacks capacity must be in that person's best interests. The Mental Capacity Act 2005 provides a checklist of factors that decision-makers must work through in deciding what is in a person's best interests.

Further information can be found on Hive in the document '**Mental Capacity Act – Guidance for staff**'.

Key Principles

We recognise 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 for example domestic abuse or vulnerability to child sexual exploitation
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers, and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare
- children and young people can be criminally exploited through County Lines gangs by being coerced to store drugs and/or money. Other forms of criminal exploitation can include sexual exploitation, trafficking, gangs, and knife crime.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- appointing a Designated Safeguarding Officer, supporting deputies, an Executive Team Lead, and a lead Board member for safeguarding
- adopting child protection and safeguarding practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- developing and implementing an effective e-safety procedure

- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, and quality assurance measures
- ensuring staff are appropriately trained in safeguarding to a level appropriate to their specific role
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made including DBS check and appropriate references (anyone who is only DBS cleared for adults will, if the need for contact with a child(ren) is required, have a Case Manager or other professional with them e.g. Children's Social worker)
- recording and storing information professionally and securely, and sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, their families, staff and volunteers via leaflets, posters, one to one discussions
- using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families, and carers appropriately
- using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately (**Safeguarding and Risk Escalation Procedure**)
- creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance

Contextual safeguarding and cultural sensitivities

We recognise the importance of contextual safeguarding, that children, young persons or adults should not be seen in isolation from the environment around them.

We understand cultural sensitivities and that issues of ethnicity, faith and race can be challenging in safeguarding.

We will ensure that staff:

- Develop cultural competence by educating themselves about the relevant faiths and/or cultures in which they work to effectively protect children and young people and safeguard adults at risk.
- Can identify practice issues regarding cultural sensitivity, community beliefs and religion.
- Undertake assessments using a variety of sources of information to support professional decision-making, including the family, other professional perspectives and historical information.

Responsibilities

The Group Chief Executive - retains the overall corporate responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

Safeguarding Leads - There will be two designated safeguarding leads, one for 'Adult' services and one for 'Children's and Young People's' services who will be the main point of

contacts with local Safeguarding Boards. The Leads will have the appropriate knowledge, training experience and skills to provide help and advice to staff and to act as a lead on safeguarding issues.

Service Managers - At an operational level, responsibility for implementing safeguarding for Adults and Children will be delegated to service managers.

All staff - are responsible for understanding, reporting, and sharing information relating to the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk of abuse and will be briefed and/or trained accordingly.

The Board will include a safeguarding champion.

Monitoring

Incidents of abuse or suspected abuse will be recorded in the case files and the 'Safeguarding log'. Safeguarding leads will review all reported cases each quarter and report any concerns to the Executive Team Safeguarding Lead.

Annually there will be a summary report to Board on safeguarding activity including staff training, number of safeguarding incidents (recorded and referred to safeguarding boards) and lessons learned.

The Executive Team and the Safeguarding Group will lead on safeguarding monitoring and improvement. The Customer Services Committee will review progress on behalf of the Board.

All monitoring and reporting will comply with HG's Data Protection policy.

Training

HG will ensure that all staff and volunteers receive relevant training and development. HG will arrange/ provide information, advice, and training in the form of:

- New staff induction
- On-line training
- Access to specialist safeguarding training courses at all levels
- The policy, procedures and guides available to all on Hive

Staff will be required to follow good practice and participate in local inter-agency partnerships and training.

A training matrix will be used to identify which training is required across the Group. The matrix will be reviewed quarterly by the Safeguarding Leads team to ensure the most appropriate training is given.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed and presented to the Customer Services Committee and the Trustees of Honeycomb Charitable Services Ltd annually or earlier where there are significant changes to legislation or regulation; or improvements are required because of complaints or findings from independent case reviews.

A report on Safeguarding Children and Young People within HG will accompany the policy to the Customer Services Committee.

Contact Details

Please refer HG Safeguarding Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adult Lead Contacts document.

NB: All supporting policies, procedures and guidance can be found on the group intranet 'The Hive'