

## SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Policy name	Safeguarding Policy
Document number	
Issue number	
Applicable to	Trustees, employees, volunteers and secondments including placements
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Other references	Recruitment Policy; Disclosure and Debaring Service Policy; Confidentiality Policy; Whistleblowing Policy; Lone Working Policy; Disciplinary Policy

### 1. Introduction and definitions

1.1 Howgill Family Centre (Howgill) makes a positive contribution to a strong and safe community and recognises the right of every individual to stay safe.

1.2 Howgill has a duty of care to safeguard and promote children and young people's welfare, safety, health and guidance by fostering an honest, open, caring and supportive climate and by ensuring strict adherence to guidelines.

The child or young person's welfare is of paramount importance in all circumstances. Howgill aims to ensure that every child:

- has a positive and enjoyable experience of activities at Howgill in a safe and child centred environment
- is protected from abuse during participation in any activity provided by Howgill, or outside the activity.

1.3 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

### 2. Policy Statement

2.1 This policy seeks to ensure that Howgill undertakes its responsibilities with regard to the protection of children and/or vulnerable adults and will respond to concerns appropriately. The policy establishes a framework to support employees and volunteers in their practices and clarifies the organisation's expectations.

2.2 As part of its safeguarding policy Howgill will:

- promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and young people
- ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people
- ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse, and support is provided to any individual who raises or discloses the concern

- ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored
- prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals
- ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation.

2.3 The Board of Trustees is responsible for the policy and will conduct annual reviews to ensure that it is maintained, particularly in relation to its legal responsibilities, and amendments will be made as necessary. The Chief Executive has responsibility for ensuring that the policy is implemented and that appropriate procedures are established to ensure compliance.

2.4 Everyone associated with Howgill is responsible for safeguarding – Trustees, employees and volunteers – and all must play their part, for example by raising any concerns they may have about a child immediately they arise, and by keeping informed of the latest guidance on safeguarding. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

### **3. Framework**

3.1 Howgill does not operate in isolation. The welfare of children is a corporate responsibility of the entire local authority, working in partnership with other public agencies, the voluntary sector and service users and carers. The overarching multi-agency partnership with statutory responsibility for children and young people's safety within Copeland is the Cumbria Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

3.2 Cumbria LSCB has adopted the principles outlined in the government document 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015' as the foundation for its work with children and their families to safeguard and promote their welfare. This is available at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/419595/Working\\_Together\\_to\\_Safeguard\\_Children.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419595/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children.pdf) .

This document states that effective safeguarding arrangements should be underpinned by the following principles:

- safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. For services to be effective, each professional and organisation should play their full part, and
- a child-centred approach; for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children.

3.3 Howgill adheres to these principles and the policies, procedures and guidelines adopted by the Cumbria LSCB, including the Conflict Resolution policy.

### **4. Actions**

4.1 Howgill will protect children from unsuitable people by strict adherence to Safer Recruitment guidelines (see Recruitment Policy). Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are mandatory for all Trustees, employees and volunteers (see DBS Policy).

4.2 Howgill will designate a Lead Safeguarding Person whose responsibilities include:

- recognising signs of abuse and knowing when it is appropriate to make a referral e.g. to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub
- referring cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies
- acting as a source of support, advice and expertise within the organisation when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies
- taking advice from others, especially the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and keeping them informed of relevant developments
- liaising with line managers over any issues and ongoing investigations

- attending and supporting others to attend Child Protection Case Conferences and contributing effectively
- ensuring that all employees and volunteers are kept up to date with changes in safeguarding regulations, have access to safeguarding training and are able to recognise and report any concerns immediately they arise
- ensuring that service users have access to and understand the purpose of this Safeguarding Policy
- advising service users of Howgill's duty to make referrals of safeguarding concerns and the organisation's role in this process, to avoid conflict later
- ensuring that, when service users leave services, relevant information is passed to the new Provider as soon as possible so that vulnerable people continue to be protected.

Howgill will also designate one or more Deputy Lead Persons to ensure that Trustees, employees and volunteers can access advice and report concerns at all times.

4.3 Howgill will keep records of all concerns raised about service users, and will ensure that this information is shared with others as appropriate (see Confidentiality Policy).

4.4 Howgill will learn from Serious Case Reviews and adapt practices appropriately.

4.5 Howgill will take active steps to ensure that the voice of the child is promoted at every opportunity.

## **5. Expectations of employees and volunteers**

5.1 All Howgill employees and volunteers are expected to:

- keep themselves up to date on the latest guidance on safeguarding, primarily through frequent reference to the LSCB website: [www.cumbrialscb.com](http://www.cumbrialscb.com)
- promote good practice by being an excellent role model, contribute to discussions about safeguarding and to positively involve people in developing safe practices.

5.2 All employees and volunteers are required to raise concerns at the earliest opportunity, including concerns about a colleague (see Whistleblowing Policy).

5.3 All employees and volunteers should be alert to potential disclosure and must take active steps to ensure that Howgill listens and responds to the voice of the child.

5.4 All employees and volunteers must follow procedures to keep themselves safe from harm and protected from unjustified complaints (see Lone Working Policy).

5.5 There are occasions when it is practical, appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with children and young people, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. For guidance on appropriate physical contact see the organisation's Safeguarding Procedures.

5.6 Howgill will follow the LSCB guidance where an allegation is made against an employee or volunteer-see [http://cumbrialscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p\\_alleg\\_against\\_staff.html](http://cumbrialscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_alleg_against_staff.html) .

Allegations against an employee or volunteer will be dealt with in accordance with Howgill's Disciplinary Policy and may result, depending on the specific nature of the allegation, in suspension from work. Howgill has a duty to refer to the DBS if an individual (paid worker or unpaid volunteer) is removed from work, or would have done had the person not left first, because the person poses a risk of harm to children.

5.7 This Policy should be read in conjunction with Howgill's Safeguarding Procedures, which set out important details including names and contact details for the organisation's Lead Person and Deputy Lead Persons, and the Local Authority Designated Officers.