



Child Protection Policy

Statement of Commitment

The Seeds of Change KMD Ltd ("TSoC") is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people who access our provision.

We believe every child has the right to be protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm and to grow up in a safe, supportive environment where they can achieve their full potential.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff, volunteers, contractors, trustees, visitors and professionals working on behalf of The Seeds of Change share a collective duty to safeguard children and act in their best interests.

As an Alternative Provision offering equine-assisted learning, therapeutic interventions, outdoor education and personalised educational programmes, we recognise that our unique environment requires robust safeguarding arrangements and effective risk management.

We adopt a child-centred approach at all times and seek to ensure that every decision made reflects the best interests of the child.

Legal and Statutory Framework

This policy operates in accordance with:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Education Act 2002
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent Duty)



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- Sexual Offences Act 2003
 - Serious Crime Act 2015
 - Children and Social Work Act 2017

The Seeds of Change works in partnership with the relevant Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships (LSCPs), Local Authority Designated Officers (LADOs), Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASHs), schools, social care and other statutory agencies.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- Employees
- Casual and agency staff
- Volunteers
- Students on placement
- Trustees and directors
- Contractors
- Visitors
- External professionals

It applies during:

- Equine-assisted learning sessions
- Classroom-based activities
- Outdoor education
- Therapeutic programmes
- Outreach work
- Transport arrangements
- Off-site visits
- Remote communication and online contact

Safeguarding Principles

The Seeds of Change is committed to ensuring:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- Children are listened to and taken seriously.
- Safeguarding is embedded within the culture of the organisation.
- Early help is provided whenever concerns emerge.
- Children receive support as soon as concerns are identified.
- Diversity, equality and inclusion are promoted.
- Safe recruitment procedures are rigorously followed.
- Effective information sharing supports child protection.
- Multi-agency working is central to safeguarding practice.

Definitions of Abuse

Safeguarding encompasses protecting children from:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect

We also recognise safeguarding concerns including:

- Child-on-child abuse
- Criminal exploitation
- County lines activity
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Child criminal exploitation (CCE)
- Domestic abuse
- Honour-based abuse

- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Forced marriage
- Radicalisation and extremism
- Online abuse and grooming
- Mental health concerns
- Serious violence
- Attendance concerns and children missing education
- Modern slavery and trafficking

Roles and Responsibilities

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The organisation will appoint a suitably trained Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

The DSL is responsible for:

- Managing safeguarding concerns and referrals.
- Liaising with external agencies.
- Maintaining safeguarding records.
- Advising staff.
- Ensuring safeguarding training is completed.
- Monitoring vulnerable children.
- Supporting safer recruitment practices.
- Reporting safeguarding trends to leadership.

Deputy DSL

A Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will be appointed and trained to the same standard as the DSL.

All Staff

All staff must:

- Read and understand Part One of KCSIE.

- Recognise safeguarding concerns.
- Report concerns immediately.
- Maintain professional curiosity.
- Support children in a child-centred manner.
- Understand local safeguarding procedures.
- Maintain accurate records.
- Follow staff code of conduct requirements.

Recognising and Responding to Concerns

All concerns, however small, must be passed to the DSL without delay.

Staff should be alert to:

- Physical injuries
- Changes in behaviour
- Signs of neglect
- Mental health difficulties
- Self-harm indicators
- Disclosures of abuse
- Attendance concerns
- Indicators of exploitation
- Online risks

If a Child Makes a Disclosure

Staff should:

- Stay calm.
- Listen carefully.
- Reassure the child they have done the right thing.
- Never promise confidentiality.
- Avoid leading questions.



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- Record the disclosure verbatim.
 - Report immediately to the DSL.

Staff must never investigate concerns themselves.

Early Help

The Seeds of Change recognises that many safeguarding concerns can be addressed through timely early intervention.

Where appropriate, the DSL will:

- Liaise with parents and carers.
- Participate in Team Around the Family meetings.
- Contribute to Early Help Assessments.
- Work collaboratively with schools and support services.

Child Protection Referrals

When there is concern that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, the DSL will:

- Contact Children's Social Care immediately.
- Consult MASH where appropriate.
- Contact the police if a crime may have occurred.
- Record all decisions and actions.

Parents will normally be informed unless doing so places the child at additional risk.

Child-on-Child Abuse

The Seeds of Change recognises that children can abuse other children.

This may include:

- Bullying
- Cyberbullying
- Sexual harassment

- Sexual violence
- Physical aggression
- Initiation or hazing behaviours
- Coercive or controlling behaviour
- Image-based abuse

Such behaviour will never be dismissed as banter, horseplay or part of growing up.

Both the victim and alleged perpetrator will be supported appropriately.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Staff understand that mental health difficulties can be:

- A safeguarding concern.
- An indicator of abuse or neglect.
- A consequence of trauma.

Where concerns arise regarding emotional wellbeing, self-harm or suicidal ideation, staff must inform the DSL immediately and follow safeguarding procedures.

Children Missing Education and Attendance

The Seeds of Change recognises that poor attendance may indicate abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Staff will:

- Monitor attendance patterns.
- Share concerns with referring schools.
- Escalate safeguarding concerns where attendance risks are identified.
- Support children to engage positively with education.

Online Safety

The Seeds of Change recognises that safeguarding extends to online activity.

Risks may include:

- Cyberbullying
- Grooming
- Sextortion
- Exposure to harmful content
- Radicalisation
- Online exploitation
- Abuse involving artificial intelligence and digitally manipulated imagery

Children will be taught online safety through appropriate discussions and support.

Staff will only use approved communication systems and devices.

Safeguarding Within the Equine and Outdoor Environment

Specific safeguarding measures include:

- Appropriate supervision ratios.
- Dynamic risk assessments.
- Safe handling of horses and equipment.
- First aid arrangements.
- Secure site boundaries.
- Clear arrival and collection procedures.
- Lone working controls.
- Appropriate staff visibility during activities.

All activities are designed to balance therapeutic benefit with safety and welfare.

Allegations Against Staff, Volunteers and Contractors

Any allegation that an adult has:

- Harmed a child,
- May have harmed a child,
- Committed a criminal offence against a child, or



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- Behaved in a manner indicating risk to children,

will be reported immediately to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

No internal investigation will begin without LADO advice.

Low-Level Concerns

The Seeds of Change promotes a culture of openness and transparency.

Low-level concerns may include behaviour that:

- Is inconsistent with professional standards,
- Causes a sense of unease,
- Falls short of harm thresholds.

All low-level concerns will be:

- Recorded,
- Reviewed,
- Managed proportionately,
- Used to identify patterns of concern.

Safer Recruitment

The Seeds of Change follows safer recruitment procedures including:

- Enhanced DBS checks with Barred List checks.
- Identity verification.
- Reference checks.
- Qualification checks.
- Employment history scrutiny.
- Right-to-work checks.
- Safeguarding-focused interviews.



Whistleblowing

All staff have a duty to report concerns about unsafe practice.

Staff may:

- Raise concerns internally.
- Contact the LADO.
- Contact Children's Services.
- Contact the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line.

Individuals raising concerns in good faith will be protected from victimisation.

Information Sharing and Confidentiality

The Seeds of Change will:

- Maintain secure safeguarding records.
- Share information on a need-to-know basis.
- Follow Data Protection legislation.
- Ensure safeguarding concerns are shared promptly where necessary to protect a child.

The safety and welfare of the child will always take precedence.

Training

All staff will receive:

- Safeguarding induction training.
- Child protection training.
- Prevent awareness training.
- Online safety awareness.
- Regular safeguarding updates.

DSLs will complete accredited advanced safeguarding training and maintain their professional knowledge through ongoing updates.



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