

Enfield Family Contact Centre

Safeguarding Policy

At Enfield Family Contact Centre we believe that children and young people need a safe environment in which to develop and grow in confidence.

We are committed to working towards meeting the objectives defined in “working together to safeguard children” (HM Government December 2023)

We recognise the difference between **child protection** and **safeguarding**, namely:-

Child protection is the process of protecting children identified as at risk of significant harm, resulting from abuse or neglect. It involves recognising signs and symptoms of physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect, and acting on them. (see annex 1)

Safeguarding involves keeping children and young people safe from a much wider range of potential harm and /or danger and looks at preventative action rather than just reactive actions.

We recognise that child abuse occurs in all religions, all cultures and all social classes. We can never say “It won’t happen here”.

All volunteers will undertake safeguarding training **every year as a mandatory requirement**

We recognise that safeguarding and child protection are emotive issues that need to be handled sensitively and carefully.

We have a recognised procedure for contact centre volunteers to report allegations of/or suspected child abuse.

Everyone has a duty of care and any response is about the best interest of the child.

Confidentiality issues will be overridden by the need to act for the welfare of the child.

Where there is an allegation of, or suspected child abuse, the interests of the child/children involved must come first. This means that if there is a conflict of interest between the child and the parent, the interests of the child should always be put first.

There are four key steps to take if you suspect abuse or if a child discloses abuse.

1. **Recognise** – any signs of abuse eg physical, emotional, sexual, neglect
2. **Respond** – by listening well and then telling the duty coordinator as soon as possible
3. **Record** – make a note of what you have been told. Sign and date that note.
4. **Report** – give the written record to the duty coordinator as soon as it has been completed.

If a child discloses something to you;-

- Do not promise confidentiality (or that you will keep it a secret)
- Stay calm
- Look at the child directly
- Remain neutral and non- judgemental
- Accept what the child says
- Be aware that the child might have been threatened
- Tell the child that s/he is not to blame

- Do not ask leading questions or press for information (this may jeopardise social service or police enquiries)
- Reassure the child that they are right to tell you and tell them what you need to do next, who you have to tell and what might happen.
- Tell the designated person (duty coordinator)

The Centre's coordinators will be responsible for all aspects of the centres work in relation to safeguarding and child protection. Support will be given to the coordinators by the Chair and members of the Management Committee.

The coordinators are responsible for :-

- Ensuring that the centre is operating in accordance with local safeguarding and child protection services
 - Ensuring that volunteers have access to any phone numbers they may need to contact outside agencies. These are all displayed on the poster displayed on the wall during contact sessions.
- (Also see end of policy)

Accepting referrals from families.

We ask the parent requesting contact with his/her child to complete a referral form, accessible on our website. This form includes the name and contact details for the resident parent, the solicitor, social worker of CAFCAS officer involved with the family and a copy of any court order granting contact, if available.

If we are able to meet the needs of the family, we contact the resident and non- resident parent to set up separate pre visits where we discuss the rules of the centre and expectations in terms of confidentiality etc.

Once the pre visits have been completed contact can start between the non- resident parent and his/her child/children.

Appointing volunteers

Volunteers need to complete an application form and supply the name of two referees.

References will be requested, by our volunteer administrator, and once received the volunteer is required to complete a DBS application. This is an on- line application with Due Diligence Checking and the lead coordinator is the verifier for this process.

Once the DBS check comes back clear, all volunteers have to complete an induction session with the volunteer administrator and attend two 'shadowing' visits before being put on the rota within their own right.

DBS checks are renewed every three years.

All volunteers have to agree to attend annual safeguarding training.

Every volunteer is given a copy of the safeguarding policy to keep and have to sign and return the statement of commitment to adhere to the principles contained therein, acknowledging the importance of implementing them in their capacity as a volunteer.

Safeguarding policy and procedures are reviewed and, if necessary, up-dated annually.

Useful phone numbers:

Police 999

Enfield social services : 020 8379 5212

NACCC safeguarding team 07540 703577

NSPCC 0808 800 5000

Enfield MASH (multi agency safeguarding hub) 020 8379 5555

Appendix 1

Signs and symptoms of abuse.

Type of abuse	Definition of abuse	Signs and symptoms
Physical abuse	A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child	Bruising, scars, burns, broken bones Children not wanting to be touched, flinching from adults. Children withdrawn. Wearing long sleeves and long trousers even in extremely hot weather
Emotional abuse	Sometimes called psychological abuse and can seriously damage a child's emotional health and development. It can be anything from trying to scare or humiliate a child to isolating and ignoring them.	Children have low esteem. Children withdrawn, not confident in engaging with other children and adults. Children being cruel to other children or animals
Sexual abuse	There are two types of sexual abuse 1. Contact abuse 2. Non- contact abuse Contact abuse is as it sounds- inappropriate touching, penetration, use of objects to penetrate vagina or anus. It includes making a child touch another person in an inappropriate way Non-contact abuse is when children are exposed to sexual activities by others, grooming, on-line abuse, allowing someone to make, view or distribute child abuse images, showing pornography to children and sexually exploiting a child for money, power or status.	Children behaving in an inappropriate age related way Children using language you would not expect from a child of that age Children uncomfortable when sitting down Children having inappropriate boundaries when engaging with other children and adults
Neglect	A failure to meets the child's basis needs – lack of food, clothes, heat, affection, bed, attention.	Children unwashed. Clothes dirty or too small. Always hungry. Attention seeking. Not wanting to leave the centre with resident parent

Policy agreed: October 2025

Review required: October 2026