Safeguarding Policy

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## Policy Statement Purpose (and Scope)

Hereford Learning Hub is committed to providing the highest standard of safeguarding. We are committed to protecting the safety of our users including pupils that attend, staff and parents/carers. We take all reports seriously and manage them in an accountable and transparent process. HLH has developed best practice safeguarding arrangements. Working within an independent governance process we collaborate with third-party safeguarding experts to ensure our policies and protocols remain accountable and transparent. All records about safeguarding concerns are held securely in a concern management system trusted by our organisations.

Hereford Learning Hub has an all staff, child-centred and holistic approach to all aspects of our educational provision. We aim to provide a culture where our pupils feel that they are safe and that they can tell us anything. As a whole unit, all staff and pupils know that we are trustworthy, collaborative and committed to maintain a child-centered approach to safeguarding. We are also committed to our responsibilities when working with staff, visitors, parents and other adults who may be vulnerable.

This policy outlines our commitment to our legal duties to safeguard children, the responsibilities of all staff and the specific roles and responsibilities of our key safeguarding leads and governance. Its purpose is to:

* Ensure pupils who receive services from Hereford Learning Hub are protected from harm.
* Outline the process and rationale for our responses to any allegations/concerns relating to the welfare of the pupils for whom HLH provides tutoring services to.
* State the ongoing training that HLB will undertake to ensure that the safeguarding protocols are up-to-date and understood by all.

This policy covers all safeguarding related concerns including:

* the wellbeing of someone at Home Learning Hub, including safeguarding concerns about abuse, neglect or exploitation
* the conduct of a team member at Hereford Learning Hub(staff or volunteers), including allegations of harmful behaviour toward participants
* how a safeguarding concern is being managed (this is often called Whistleblowing)

This policy will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis, or earlier, if there is a change in safeguarding protocols.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Most recently reviewed on: | **15th November 2024** |
| Next review due:  | **November 2025** |

This policy is available on the website and in the entrance to HLH. They are also available on request to parents and visitors at any time. All staff and peripatetic teachers are given a copy in their induction pack. The policy is implemented by HLH owner and Head Teacher, Zoe Rose alongside Andy Churcher Keep Equip.

## Important safeguarding contacts

**The Designated Safeguarding Lead**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Role** | **Name** | **Contact Details** |
| **Designated Safeguarding Lead Person (DLP)** | Zoe Rose | **herefordlearninghub@gmail.com** |
| **Wellbeing first aider** | Zoe Rose | **herefordlearninghub@gmail.com** |

 More details about the responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead can be found in the *Safeguarding Governance within Hereford Learning Hub*section

**Non organisational Contact Details**

*Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership*

MASH – 01432 260800

referralsCYPD@herefordshire.gov.uk

Emergency Duty Team 01905 768020 (MASH out of hours)

*Police* 999

If you think a child is in immediate danger, please call the police on 999 straight away.

*Children’s help and Advice Team* (CHAT) 01432 260261

*Alternatively, safeguarding concerns can be reported to the NSPCC*

NSPCC Helpline:0808 800 5000, emailing help@NSPCC.org.uk or [completing their report abuse online form](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/report/report-abuse-online/).

## Policies relating to Safeguarding

1. Safeguarding policy;
2. Child Protection policy,
3. Health, Safety policy,
4. e-Safety policy;
5. Prevent Strategy;
6. Behaviour Support Policy;
7. Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) policy,
8. Anti-bullying policy,
9. Whistleblowing policy,
10. Off-site Visits policy,
11. Attendance policy.
12. Touch and Physical Contact policy,
13. Intimate Care policy.
14. Attendance policy,
15. First aid policy,
16. Supporting learners with medical conditions policy,
17. Bereavement policy,
18. Safer recruitment policy,
19. Code of conduct for employee’s policy
20. Learner voice and Learner Charter

All are policies are published on the school’s website (www.herefordlearninghub.co.uk)

## Legislation and Law

This policy is based on the Department for Education’s (DfE’s) statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2), the [Maintained Schools Governance Guide](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/governance-in-maintained-schools/) and [Academy Trust Governance Guide](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/-governance-in-academy-trusts). We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners (see section 3).

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/section/175), which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils

[The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2009/2680/contents/made), which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least 1 person conducting an interview to be trained in safer recruitment techniques

Part 3 of the schedule to the [Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3283/schedule/part/3/made), which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school

Part 1 of the schedule to the [Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/728/schedule/made), which places a duty on non-maintained special schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school

[The Children Act 1989](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41) (and [2004 amendment](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children

Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/9/part/5/crossheading/female-genital-mutilation), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18

[Statutory guidance on FGM](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM

[The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/53), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children

Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/schedule/4), which defines what ‘regulated activity’ is in relation to children

[Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance), which explains schools’ duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism

[The Human Rights Act 1998](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/contents), which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the [European Convention on Human Rights](https://www.echr.coe.int/Pages/home.aspx?p=basictexts&c) (ECHR)

[The Equality Act 2010](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents), which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take

positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils (where we can show it’s proportionate). This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there’s evidence that they’re being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment

[The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/guidance/public-sector-equality-duty-psed), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil outcomes. Some pupils may be more at risk of harm from issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination

The [Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2018/794/contents) (referred to in this policy as the “2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations”) and [Childcare Act 2006](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/21/contents), which set out who is disqualified from working with children

This policy also meets requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2)

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## Definitions

In line with statutory definitions for safeguarding in education, Hereford Learning Hub defines **safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** as:

* providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
* protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
* preventing the impairment of children’s mental and physical 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

It includes the actions we take:

* to protect anyone who may, in any way, be vulnerable (including but not exclusively anyone under the age of 18 and adults with care and support needs) from abuse, bullying, neglect and exploitation, which causes distress or may cause the impairment of mental and physical health or development; and
* to prevent these situations developing.

All staff are familiar with the wide range of procedures we have to keep our children safe and promote their well-being.

***‘Early Help’*** *is a term used in Herefordshire that refers to a wide range of interventions offered by various organisations and partner agencies, as well as services within the County Council and beyond. The primary early help service in Herefordshire is known as "Families First" which is in place to help professionals and families find early help and information as soon as problems emerge to prevent issues from getting worse. Support and interventions under the Families First umbrella can help coordinate additional support to that which is available from a family’s usual support network as well as more targeted and short pieces of interventions.*

***The Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership*** *and the* ***Children's Help and Advice Team (CHAT)*** *uses the Right Help Right Time Levels of Need framework**to agree on how the relevant organisations in Herefordshire will cooperate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and ensure effectiveness.*

***Child in Need:*** *Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are under a general duty to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. A child in need is defined under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired without the provision of services, or a child who is disabled. To fulfil this duty, practitioners undertake assessments of the needs of individual children, giving due regard to a child’s age and understanding when determining what, if any, services to provide.*

***Child Protection:*** *Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives or is found in their area is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to make such enquiries as it considers necessary to decide whether to take any action to safeguard or promote the child’s welfare. Such enquiries, supported by other organisations and agencies, as appropriate, should be initiated where there are concerns about all forms of abuse, neglect, and exploitation whether this is taking place in person or online, inside or outside of the child’s home. There may be a need for immediate protection whilst an assessment or enquiries are carried out. Schools are required to cooperate with children’s social care when carrying their inquiries and therefore we have a duty to share information when requested to do so.*

***Significant Harm*** *is the threshold for a child protection response to support and or protect children. Harm is defined in the Children Act 1989 as the ill-treatment of a child or the impairment of their health or development. This can include harm caused by seeing someone else being mistreated, for example by witnessing domestic abuse. The phrase ‘significant harm’ was introduced by the Children Act 1989. The Act does not define ‘significant’. The question of whether or not harm is ‘significant’ relates to its impact on a child’s health or development.*

***Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)*** *is a partnership of Children’s Services, which comprise Health, Police, and Probation. Advisory support is provided by Independent Domestic Violence Advocates and satellite partners, these agencies work together to identify the need of children and their families and signpost to the appropriate agency or resources where threshold is met. The main aim of a MASH is to improve the quality of information sharing when making decisions between agencies at the earliest opportunity.*

***Abuse*** *is all forms of maltreatment of a child and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children maybe abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.*

***Neglect*** *is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development.*

***Exploitation*** *is a risk to children and young people that takes place outside of their families. Extra familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation. NB the terms abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.*

***Children Looked After****: A child is ‘looked after’ (in care) if they are in the care of the Local Authority for more than 24 hours. Children can be in care by agreement with parents or by order of a court. The placement providing the care can be a connected person to the child or a Local Authority approved foster carer.*

***Kinship Care*** *refers to a type of care where a child who cannot be looked after by their birth parents is cared for by relatives or friends. The government in England has launched a Kinship Care Strategy to improve kinship carers’ financial stability, education, training, and partnership with local authorities and other agencies.*

*These arrangements can be known as either family and friends care or private fostering.*

*-* ***Family and Friends Carers****: If you’re a grandparent, aunt, uncle, brother, sister, or family friend looking after a child who can’t be cared for by their birth parents, you’re known as a family and friends carer. Sometimes these carers will be given Parental Responsibility for the children through a Child Arrangements or Special Guardianship Order.*

*-* ***Private Fostering****: You’re a private foster carer if you’re not a close relative and you’re looking after a child who’s under 16 (or under 18 if they’re disabled) for more than 28 days in a row.*

***Victim*** *is a widely understood and recognised term, but we understand that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described that way. When managing an incident, we will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels most comfortable with.*

***Alleged perpetrator(s) and perpetrator(s)*** *are widely used and recognised terms. However, we will think carefully about what terminology we use (especially in front of children and their parents and carers) as, in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator too. We will decide what is appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis*

## Responsibilities of all staff and volunteers

Hereford Learning Hub has shared responsibilities that all tutors and peripatetic tutors hold. Hereford Learning Hub is responsible for the safety and wellbeing of all pupils and includes

* a DBS check each year.
* appropriate safeguarding training at least once every two years.
* keeping up to date with any new safeguarding and child protection and updating this policy accordingly to any changes.
* Reporting any safeguarding concerns correctly in line with the procedures outlined below and to Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership if they feel that is necessary.

## Safeguarding Governance at Hereford Learning Hub

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Hereford Learning Hub Director*: Zoe Rose (with independent support provided by Keep Governance and Safeguarding* | Oversee and Assure |
|  |  |
| Hereford Learning Hub safeguarding lead: *Zoe Rose* | Manage and Resolve |
|  |  |
| All employed and sessional (peripatetic) staff and volunteers | Identify, Report and Record |

**Responsibilities of the Safeguarding Lead**

Some of these responsibilities are shared with Keep Governance and Safeguarding through Hereford Learning Hub’s partnership although ultimate responsibility for ensuring they are completed remains with the safeguarding lead.

**Operational Responsibilities**

* To make all staff are aware of this policy and procedures when first appointed and whenever the policy is updated.
* To record any concern reported to them via the online form on the safeguarding page of Hereford Learning Hub’s website, if it was not recorded previously.
* To report allegations of significant harm done by a member of staff or volunteer towards a child or vulnerable adult to the school/establishment safeguarding lead. Follow up on any report to ensure it has been taken seriously within 72 hrs of learning about the allegation. If due steps have not been taken report to local authority safeguarding team within 72 hrs of learning about the allegation
* To decide whether to pass safeguarding concerns on to appropriate local safeguarding team contact and to make a record of the reasons for this decision

**Strategic Responsibilities**

* To monitor that this policy and procedures is used by staff.
* To review this policy and procedures at least every year, with every change in legislation and after each incident.
* To ensure a register of all types of concerns is kept securely and in line with the expectations of the Data Protection Act 2018.
* After receiving an allegation of significant harm, a welfare concern or a disclosure of abuse to review Hereford Learning Hub’s practice and to ensure any specific learning is used to improve policy and practice.

## Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

Hereford Learning Hub follows the process below that we will follow if we believe that a pupil is being abused, neglected or exploited or a pupil tells us that this Is happening.

Any concern about the welfare/safety of our pupils, staff or parent/carers should be reported using the following process, and should always be recorded through the link on the Safeguarding page of the HLH website (**www.herefordlearninghub.co.uk**).



Hereford Learning Hub will:

* show that I have heard what they are saying, and that HLH take their allegations seriously.
* encourage the pupil to talk without prompting them or asking leading questions. Hereford Learning Hub will not interrupt when a pupil is recalling significant events and will not make a pupil repeat their account
* reassure the pupil that they can tell me anything that is worrying them, but that I cannot promise not to tell anybody because some things must be passed on in order to keep them safe
* explain the actions that Hereford Learning Hub must take, in an appropriate way
* record what has been said through the reporting tool on the HLH website, as soon as possible and using the exact words used
* make note of the time and date, place, people who were present during the discussion
* DSL Zoe Rose will manage and review safeguarding and welfare concerns.
* all concerns will be reported if the meet the threshold for safeguarding (within the definition)

All safeguarding concerns reported to Hereford Learning Hub will be assessed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead to determine if it meets the threshold for reporting as defined by Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure it is reported to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub.

If HLH staff believe that the pupil is in immediate danger, they will report it to the police by calling 999.

## Concerns about the conduct of Staff and Volunteers

Hereford Learning Hub defines allegations against staff into two categories, in line with the definitions of the Department of Education in Keeping Children Safe in Education:

* Concerns or allegations that may meet the harm threshold
* Concerns or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (known as Low-level concerns)

Concerns or allegations that may meet the harm threshold

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that anyone working in the school, including a supply teacher, peripatetic teacher, volunteer or contractor, has:

* Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
* Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
* Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
* Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place inside or outside of Hereford Learning Hub

We will deal with any such allegation quickly and in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

A ‘case manager’ will lead any investigation. This will be the Deputy headteacher, where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation.

**Concerns or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (known as Low-level concerns)**

A low-level concern is a behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harm threshold, but is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, and may be as simple as causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’. For example, this may include:

* Being over-friendly with children
* Having favourites
* Taking photographs of children on a personal device
* Engaging in 1-to-1 activities where they can’t easily be seen
* Humiliating pupils

Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of work.

All staff should share any low-level concerns they have using the reporting procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy. We also encourage staff to self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted. If staff are not sure whether behaviour would be deemed a low-level concern, we encourage staff to report it.

All reports will be handled in a responsive, sensitive and proportionate way. Staff should use the link on HLH’s website to log and concerns. The link works in partnership with Keep Equip and any concerns will be monitored and stored on MyConcern as well as in HLH’s log book in the locked office.

Unprofessional behaviour will be addressed, and the staff member supported to correct it, at an early stage.

This creates and embeds a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff, while minimising the risk of abuse.

The reporting system provides the opportunity for concerns to be reported anonymously. While this is an important function within the process, it should be noted that this could potentially limit the effectiveness of the triaging and investigation into the concern. As such, it may mean no action can be taken if there is insufficient information and no means to contact the person reporting the concern.

## Training

Hereford Learning Hub will undertake all relevant training necessary regarding safeguarding and child protection. Safeguarding training will take place every two years. Zoe Rose is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (L3). All staff and peripatetic staff will undertake safeguarding training, take ownership of the policy and have a DBS check prior to working with HLH. Staff will also undertake specific training where there is a need such as Prevent and County Lines.

## Safer Recruitment Policy

Hereford Learning Hub has a **Safer Recruitment Policy.** Anyone working with Hereford Learning Hub will have a DBS check prior to starting work with HLH and will be repeated on an annual basis.

Hereford Learning Hub are committed to preventing people who pose a risk of harm from working with children. Our practices reflect our commitment to deterring people who might want to access pupils and adults at risk for the wrong reasons. Hereford Learning Hub creates a safe and positive learning environment and is a continuous process of improvement. All of our tutors and peripatetic tutors are thoroughly vetted through our safer recruitment policy and steps are taken to prevent unsuitable tutors from working at Hereford Learning Hub. All applicants and tutors participate in an induction which covers the topic of child protection.

Hereford Learning Hub minimises the risk of appointing an unsuitable candidate by following procedures that include:

* An application form that meets person specification
* A self-disclosure form
* Two references
* A curriculum Vitae that includes full employment history and qualifications
* Two forms of identity
* A DBS check
* A qualifications check
* A right to work check
* An overseas check
* A face-to-face interview

If any checks reveal concerns, Hereford Learning Hub will assess whether they are suitable to work with children by following the following procedures.

* A vague reference will be checked by contact with the referee
* A caution or conviction will be risk assessed
* A barred DBS applicant will not be given a job

Hereford Learning Hub will be objective and rational when assessing a candidate and consider:

* The nature of the offence, circumstances and seriousness of incident/offence
* The length of time since the offence or sentence
* Whether the offence or incident is of a recurring pattern
* Legal constraints relevant to the role

Once applicant has been confirmed, a confirmation email will be sent to Herefordshire Council and the tutor will receive safeguarding training and its policy. The email will include:

* Full name
* Identity check completed
* Right to work check
* DBS check, issue date, and certificate number, update service
* DfE sanction check
* Qualifications check
* Overseas check

## Information Management, Protection and Security

Hereford Learning Hub is committed to the protection and security of all information.

To ensure our safeguarding practice Is as strong as possible, and accountable, all concerns are reported through a secure form and are stored in a dedicated, purpose-built system called RecordMy. Keep Governance and Safeguarding receives, reviews and manages all reported concerns which will then be acted upon by Hereford Learning Hub. Where necessary physical copies of files may be stored and shared by the DSL (Zoe Rose) at HLH. All private information is kept in a specific folder in the office/staff room at HLH within a locked cabinet and shared according to this policy.

The management of concerns in this way is secure and compliant with data protection law and information reported will be used only for the specific purposes of responding to the concern and improving safeguarding at Home Learning Hub.

All staff have access to safeguarding policies and procedures, reporting and recording concerns information. Access to the webpage and recording concerns are mentioned above.

All staff have a responsibility to use the information available to report concerns to the DSL to lower safeguarding risks.

All staff are committed to treating others fairly regarding safeguarding work. Staff refer to the Code of Conduct for best practice. Fair treatment includes:

* disabilities
* race, background and religion
* gender
* LGBTQ+ identifiers

Hereford Learning Hub