

# CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING POLICY

## **1. Definition and legal requirements**

A child in law is any person who has not reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Children and young people under 18 years of age are an especially vulnerable group and therefore the law requires they must be specially protected from harm. Rochdale Training staff are therefore to act with common sense and care to ensure that children are protected from harm.

The key laws and statutory guidance documents are:

- Children's Act 1989
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Working together to Safeguard Children 2018 (updated 2020)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
- The Children's act 2004
- Children & Social Work Act 2017

All organisations including vocational training companies are expected to comply with the government inter-agency statutory guidance **Working together to Safeguard Children 2018 (updated 2020)**, 'unless exceptional circumstances arise'.

The law requires that professionals and organisations protecting children need to reflect on the quality of their services and learn from their own practice and that of others. Good practice should be shared so that there is a growing understanding of what works well. Conversely, when things go wrong there needs to be a rigorous, objective analysis of what happened and why, so that important lessons can be learnt, and services improved to reduce the risk of future harm to children.

## **2. Safeguarding**

Safeguarding is a term which is broader than 'child protection' and relates to the action taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from **harm**. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Safeguarding is defined in **Working together to Safeguard children 2018 (Updated 2020)**:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health and development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

**Harm** is explained here:

Any person has committed an offence in law if they have:

Harmed a child or an adult in need, through their actions or inaction (relevant conduct). This means a person has done something which may lead to harm or has failed to take action to prevent harm.

Staff will receive training on recognising the signs and indicators of abuse, neglect and radicalisation. Staff will be actively vigilant for these signs and indicators and if they form a concern about the safety of a learner, report to the Safeguarding Officer without delay. (See flowchart 1 referral of concerns)

If you are aware of a child being in danger of harm, or who is being harmed you must act by reporting this to a Safeguarding Officer immediately. You cannot tell a child that everything will be kept quiet to protect them or person connected to them otherwise the harm or risk of harm may continue.

Harm should be considered in a wider context than just physical and can take numerous forms.

Types of harm relating to children can include (but are not limited to):

- **Emotional / Psychological** - Action or inaction by others that causes mental anguish.
- **Physical** - Any intentional physical contact that results in discomfort, pain or injury.
- **Sexual** - Any form of sexual activity with a child under the age of consent.
- **Neglect** - Failure to identify and/or meet care needs.
- **Child on Child abuse (see separate child on child abuse policy)**

### **Domestic Abuse:**

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development and ability to learn.

Any reports of domestic abuse must be reported to a safeguarding officer immediately (see separate Domestic Abuse Policy).

Staff working with vulnerable groups, including children, must always **act in their best interests** and ensure they take all reasonable steps to prevent harm to them. Having safeguards in place within an organisation not only protects and

promotes the welfare of children but also it enhances the confidence of staff, volunteers, parents/carers and the general public.

These safeguards should include a child protection policy and procedures for dealing with issues of concern or abuse and a safeguarding team headed by a senior safeguarding officer who liaises with the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for Greater Manchester.

Rochdale Training operates a "whole organisation approach to Safeguarding; safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

### **3. Striving to Protect Children**

**Children shall not receive or come to harm or be placed at risk of harm by any act of neglect, failure to act, inadequate staff training or management or for any other reason within our control.**

This policy is a statement of intent that demonstrates a commitment to safeguard children coming into contact with Rochdale Training, from harm. Key factors are:

- The welfare of the child is paramount – you must do your very best to protect them
- No child or group of children must be treated any less favorably than others in being able to access our services which meet their particular needs
- All children without exception have the right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs
- This policy is reviewed, approved and endorsed by Rochdale Training Chief Executive annually or when legislation changes
- The policy applies to all staff and volunteers and relevant connected persons including those with sub-contracts or service level agreements
- Children and parents are to be informed of the policy and procedures as appropriate and a list of parent or guardian (in loco parentis) addresses and contact details will be kept.
- All concerns, and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously by the safeguarding team and all managers, staff and volunteers and responded to appropriately - this may require a referral to children's social care services, the independent Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for allegations against staff, trustees and other volunteers, and in emergencies, the police (see safeguarding contact information and safeguarding LADO information)

We are committed to safe recruitment, selection and vetting

- We will abide by the principles, legislation and guidance that underpin the policy
- We will continuously review the policy and its procedures and forms
- All staff will comply with the associated policies and procedures which promote children's safety and welfare e.g. with regards to health and safety and anti-bullying

This Policy is amplified by a separate document entitled:

**Rochdale Training – Child Safeguarding Procedure and should be read in conjunction with:**

- Online Safety Policy
- Sexual Violence and Harassment
- Child on Child Abuse
- Staff Conduct Policy
- As well as the supporting documents named throughout the policy