

ESSEX OUTDOORS - SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Introduction

Local authorities have an overarching duty to safeguard children and vulnerable adults from abuse.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:-

- 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

It is everyone's responsibility to recognise suspected or actual abuse and to take appropriate action. This policy forms part of the safeguarding arrangements for Essex Outdoors and should be read in conjunction with the Essex Outdoors Code of Practice.

Statutory framework

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a statutory responsibility on educational settings to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils of the school.

The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice in Essex are the responsibilities of the Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB) for children and Essex Safeguarding Adults Board (ESAB) for vulnerable adults. In Essex, all professionals must work in accordance with the SET Child Protection Procedures (ESCB 2022)

Essex Outdoors also works in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

Children Act 1989

Children Act 2004

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) Working Together (2018)

Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex (ESCB, 2015)

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015)

Serious Crime Act 2015 (2015)

Sexual Offences Act (2003)

Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006
Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners (2015)
Data Protection Act 2018
Care Act 2014
Mental Capacity Act 2005

Roles and responsibilities

All adults working with or on behalf of children/vulnerable adults have a responsibility to protect them and to provide a safe environment in which they can learn and achieve their full potential. However, there are key people within Centres and the Local Authority who have specific responsibilities under child protection/vulnerable adult procedures.

Each Essex Outdoors Centre [the Centre] will have a Designated Safeguarding Lead and a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead are responsible for managing child/vulnerable adult protection referrals, implementing safeguarding training, and raising awareness of child protection/vulnerable adult policies and procedures. They will also ensure that everyone in the Centre (including temporary staff, volunteers and contractors) is aware of these procedures and that they are followed at all times and will work with the local authority and other agencies as required.

Specific safeguarding issues for children

The four main types of abuse which staff should be aware of are:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual
- Neglect

Abuse and neglect: Staff and volunteers should be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect so they can identify children who may need help or protection and respond appropriately.

Child-on-child abuse: Staff and volunteers should be aware that child-on-child abuse, also known as peer-on-peer abuse, is a safeguarding issue.

Mental health and wellbeing: Everyone working with children should be aware of the signs and symptoms of mental health problems among children and how children experiencing mental health problems may be more vulnerable to harm.

Staff should also be aware of:

- The additional risks and barriers to recognising abuse and neglect among children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- Child Sexual Exploitation, where children are exploited for money, power or status.
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Forced marriage, whereby marriage is entered into without the full consent of one or both parties
- Prevention of radicalisation

Safeguarding Procedures

Recruitment, references and pre-employment checks

The appropriate level of criminal record checks will be carried out before any applicant is appointed to a role. These checks will include ensuring that applicants have the right skill set, proof of identity and the right to work in the UK. Details of previous experience and references will also be requested and checked. Centre managers also undertake 'Safer Recruitment training'.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and childcare disqualification.

All relevant staff will be DBS checked, with those in 'regulated activity' subject to an enhanced check, plus a check of the relevant barred list(s).

Health & Safety

Reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that staff and customers are kept safe when using the Centre. Risk assessments are carried out in accordance with the law and/or Essex County Council requirements, and appropriate First Aid and fire safety measures are in place.

Staff behaviour policy and training

All staff will receive safeguarding training upon appointment which will include a commitment that no staff member should ever inflict physical or psychological harm on a child, plus information on appropriate relationships and the use of social media. In addition, all staff members will receive relevant safeguarding and child protection updates and training as required.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputy) will undertake Level 3 safeguarding training at least every two years.

Reporting

Any member of staff or visitor to the Centre who receives a disclosure or allegation of abuse, or suspects that abuse may have occurred, **must** report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or, in their absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead).

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or their deputy will immediately refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the Family Operations Hub by telephone and in accordance with the procedures outlined in the SET procedures (ESCB, 2022) and in 'Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex' (ESCB, 2015).

Essential information will include the person's name, address, date of birth, family composition, the reason for the referral, whether the child's parents are aware of the referral plus any other relevant information or advice given.

The contact details at the end of this document will be displayed in the Centre to ensure that all staff have access to safeguarding support.

Allegations about members of the workforce

Allegations concerning staff or volunteers must be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). LADO give advice and guidance on how concerns or allegations about adults working with children should be investigated. The LADO should be contacted if you have concerns or receive a complaint or allegation that a worker/volunteer has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

There are four LADOs for Essex County Council and they are based within the Children's Safeguarding Team. They can be contacted by phone on **03330 139 797** or by e-mail: lado@essex.gov.uk (Please note this is not a secure address so any information sent must be password protected).

Any referral should be followed up with a referral form. This can be accessed via the [Essex Safeguarding Children Board website](#).

If a concern is raised outside of office hours, and an immediate referral to Social Care is required, this should be made to Essex Social care on 0845 606 1212. The LADO should then be informed at the first available opportunity.

Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is 'making a disclosure in the public interest' and occurs when a worker (or member of the wider Centre community) raises a concern about danger or illegality that affects others, for example children visiting the Centre or members of the public.

All staff are made aware of the duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of staff in line with Essex County Council's Code of Conduct / Whistleblowing policy.

We want everyone to feel able to report any child protection / safeguarding concerns. However, for members of staff who feel unable to raise these concerns internally, they can call the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline on: 0800 028 0285 (line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday) or email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Prevent

The Prevent Duty (Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015) places a number of requirements on Local Authorities to help prevent the risk of people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. This duty covers a number of areas such as staff training, partnership working and communications.

Staff should therefore report any concerns regarding radicalisation or involvement in terrorism to their line manager (or the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their deputy) in the usual way.

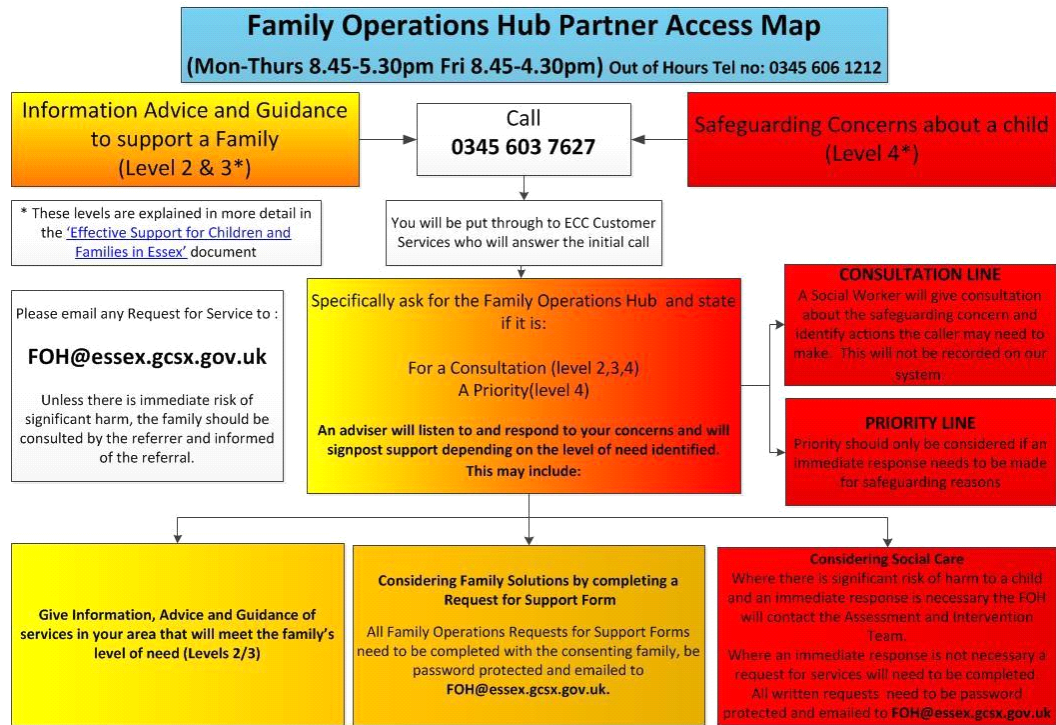
Furthermore, Essex Outdoors has a responsibility to ensure that its facilities are not exploited by radicalisers. This includes a statement within our Terms & Conditions that makes it clear to the hirer that our facilities are not to be used by any groups or speakers in support of any extremist ideology.

For more information, please refer to the Prevent Awareness PDF below.



Prevent
Awareness.pdf

Contact Information



Policy to be reviewed Apr 2025