

## SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 RAFA Kidz support the right of all children to be protected from harm and recognise that safety and welfare are paramount. RAFA Kidz is committed to ensuring that all children are protected and kept safe from harm whilst engaged in services provided by RAFA Kidz.
- 1.2 Whilst not responsible for establishing individual cases, RAFA Kidz does have responsibility to ensure that all allegations or suspicions of abuse or significant harm to any child, are reported to the Social Care Services Department or relevant Local Authority.
- 1.3 The purpose of this document is to outline RAFA Kidz' policy on responding to concerns regarding the safeguarding and protection of children and young people ages less than 18 years. Special consideration is given to those within vulnerable groups. This policy, combined with the associated procedures, provides guidance to all employees who may come across concerns of this nature within the context of their work for RAFA Kidz.
- 1.4 RAFA Kidz has a linked policy and procedure for responding to concerns regarding the protection of vulnerable adults. Whilst the legislative and policy base is different when responding to the safeguarding needs of vulnerable adults, most of the principles and procedures for employees will be the same.
- 1.5 RAFA Kidz has a linked procedure for responding to concerns regarding the protection of children and young people under the PREVENT duty (2015). While the legislative and policy base is different when responding to the needs of children and young people, most of the principles and procedures for employees will be the same.

### 2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all members of RAFA Kidz workforce, volunteers, Board Members and those that deliver services on behalf of RAFA Kidz.

### 3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 **Child or young person** – anyone who has not reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- 3.2 **Parent** – a generic term to represent parent, carer or guardian.
- 3.3 **Special Educational Needs or disability** – A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.
- 3.4 **Peer on peer abuse** – any form of abuse or bullying from one peer group to another.
- 3.5 **Female genital mutilation** – it is a legal requirement to report any suspected mutilation of a female's genitals, this includes circumcision and piercing.

3.6 **Internet abuse** – Staff **MUST** understand the risks posed by adults or learners who use technology, including the internet to bully, groom, radicalise or abuse children or learners and the impact of having access to inappropriate material.

The following definitions are taken from **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)**

3.7 **Abuse and Neglect** – abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. This includes failure to act to prevent harm.

3.8 **Emotional Abuse** – the persistent emotional maltreatment, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on emotional development. This may involve conveying to the child they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or values only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed. These may include interactions that are beyond developmental capability, as well as over protection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing participation in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another, serious bullying, causing the child to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment, though it may also occur alone.

3.9 **Neglect** – the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs which is likely to result in the serious impairment of health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy because of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent/carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing or shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment), failing to protect from physical and emotional harm or danger or failure to ensure supervision, including the use of inadequate care-takers or ensuring access to medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to a child's basic needs.

3.10 **Physical Abuse** – any act that can cause physical harm to a child.

3.11 **Sexual Abuse** – involves the forcing or enticing of a child to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether the child is aware of what is happening or not. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may also include non-contact activities, i.e. children looking at, or in the production of pornographic material, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to act in sexually inappropriate ways.

3.12 **Radicalisation** – defined as the act or process of making a person more radical or favouring of extreme or fundamental changes in political, economic or social conditions, institutions or habits of the mind.

3.13 **Extremism** – defined in the Prevent Strategy (2011) as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. The definition of extremism also includes the calls for death of members of the British Armed Forces, whether in this country or not.

**Safeguarding is:**

- Protection of children from maltreatment.
- Prevention of impairment of children's health or development.
- Ensuring the children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Undertaking the role to enable those children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully.

#### 4. PRINCIPLES

4.1 RAFA Kidz will ensure that appropriate measures and best practice to safeguard and promote the welfare of children are in place and that matters requiring attention are reported to the relevant authorities.

4.2 RAFA Kidz will create safe and healthy environments for children across all our services, avoiding situations where abuse or allegations of abuse may occur.

4.3 At whatever level we identify risks; we will highlight them and seek to ensure that appropriate steps are taken to safeguard the children concerned. We will engage with the Early Help Offer.

4.4 RAFA Kidz places the needs of a child as a first concern and will always act to ensure their safety and protection.

4.5 RAFA Kidz recognises that the best results for children are achieved in partnership with their parents/carers and RAFA Kidz are committed to working in this way always unless this would cause a child further harm.

4.6 RAFA Kidz will co-operate effectively between different agencies and professionals, working openly and flexibly with them along with parents/carers and children. This ensure the best interventions for the family.

4.7 RAFA Kidz will ensure that it fulfils its responsibilities to work jointly with others to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, and where necessary, bring justice to the perpetrators of crimes against children.

4.8 RAFA Kidz respects and promotes the rights, wishes and feelings of children. Safeguards will be put in place to maximise a child's right to protection and ensure the children know they have a right to:

- **Be Safe** – Teach children that everyone has rights. Inform children that no one should take their right away to be safe.
- **Protect their own bodies** – Children need to understand their body belongs to them.
- **Say no** – Teach children it is their right to say no to anyone that attempts to do something to them they feel is wrong.
- **Get help against bullying** – Inform children to enlist the help of friends or say no without fighting and inform an adult.
- **Tell** – Children will be assured that regardless of incident, an adult will listen and help.

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- **Be believed** – Children need to understand they will be believed and supported.
- **Not keep secrets** – Teach children that some secrets should never be kept.

4.9 **Staff will be made aware that** additional barriers may exist when recognising the signs of abuse and neglect of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

4.10 Service users will be protected and helped to keep themselves safe from any form of discrimination.

4.11 The setting must have appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place to protect learners and children from harmful or inappropriate online material. Children and learners will be supported to develop their own understanding of these risks, and in learning how to keep themselves and others safe. Leaders will oversee the safe use of technology when children and learners are in their care and act immediately if they are concerned about bullying or children's well-being.

4.12 Leaders of the setting must implement the required policies regarding the safe use of mobile phones, cameras and any recording devices in the setting.

4.13 RAFA Kidz will make information about safeguarding issues available to service users to help raise awareness and provide advice and guidance.

4.14 RAFA Kidz will recruit, train, support and supervise staff, elected members and volunteers and adopt best practice in all these areas to safeguard and protect children from abuse, as well as minimise the risk to any individual.

4.15 RAFA Kidz's **Code of Conduct** includes statements about appropriate boundaries to behaviour and makes it clear that discriminatory, offensive or violent behaviour is unacceptable, and that any complaint will be acted on.

4.16 RAFA Kidz will ensure that all employees, and those who undertake work on our behalf maintain a proper focus on safeguarding children and young people, and that this is reflected both in sound individual practice and in our internal policies and guidance. All permanent and contracted staff working with children and young people **MUST**:

- Give highest priority to children's welfare.
- Recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people, including Child Sexual Exploitation.
- Respond appropriately to disclosures of abuse by a child or young person.
- Respond appropriately to allegations against employees, other adults and against themselves.
- Act appropriately during work activities and understand safe practice in carrying out their duties.
- Be alert to the risks which abusers or potential abusers may pose.
- Be aware of the importance of the role of the group in promoting the welfare of children.

- Contribute as necessary to all stages of the groups safeguarding and protection processes.

4.17 All incidents of alleged poor practice, misconduct and abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately in line with this policy and associated procedure, and Local Area Safeguarding Board guidance.

4.18 RAFA Kidz recognises that the law permits the disclosure of confidential information to safeguard a child in the public interest.

4.19 RAFA Kidz will share all relevant information with the respective statutory child protection agencies (Children's social care and/or police) without delay and within the LSCB protocols.

4.20 This policy and associated procedure applies to all children and young people irrespective of disability, race, age, gender identity and/or expression, sexual orientation, religion/belief or civil/marital status.

4.21 RAFA Kidz has a nominated Safeguarding Lead (Rory O'Connor) who has overall responsibility for safeguarding across the group and to whom complaints about safeguarding within the business should be addressed.

4.22 The setting has a nominated safeguarding group, consisting of safeguarding practitioners and a safeguarding lead. This group is responsible for:

- Co-ordinating the implementation of the policy and procedures and associated staff training/briefing sessions.
- Monitoring compliance with the policy.
- Undertaking an annual Section 11 Audit using the Safe Network self-assessment.
- Ensuring that procedures, advice and guidance work effectively and are revised as needed.
- Consider and advise on the review and development of work practices by individual directorates to ensure that safeguarding issues are adequately addressed.
- Develop arrangements for utilising and collating safeguarding evidence arising from inspections.
- Report to the Safeguarding Lead on matters relating to Safeguarding.

4.23 There must be a designated person for safeguarding available at all times that the setting is open for concerns to be discussed.

## 5. SAFE STAFFING

5.1 All employees, temporary workers and volunteers are subject to a careful selection and vetting process as follows:

### Recruitment and pre-employment checks

- 5.2 At sift stage, application forms are assessed to ascertain whether the individual has the appropriate skills, knowledge and background to undertake the duties of the post for which they are applying. All applicants are required to complete self-disclosure about any previous convictions. Any gaps in employment or inconsistencies are identified and investigated with the individual. Interviews are conducted with a minimum of two people and specific questions are asked about protection of children/young people/vulnerable adults to ascertain whether the individual has knowledge of potential risks to these groups. Interviewees have appropriate safer recruitment training
- 5.3 Offers of employment are made subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks and occupational reference checks are made simultaneous to the offer of employment. Individuals must provide two referees, one of whom must be their last employer. Where any information is falsely submitted or where information is provided which give cause for concern, withdrawal of conditional offer of employment is considered if necessary.
- 5.4 Other checks include an individual's eligibility to work in the EU, their identity and the validity of their qualifications.
- 5.5 Relevancy assessments for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) are carried out for all who routinely deal with protection issues or who may find themselves alone with children during their duties. Any regulated DBS checks carried out prior to September 2014 and Enhanced DBS checks are routinely repeated every three years. Where any offence is disclosed by the DBS, these are investigated fully, taking into consideration of the Rehabilitation of Offenders 1974 (the **1974 Act**), Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. Offers of employment or placement may be withdrawn: employees or volunteers moved or dismissed where necessary.
- 5.6 Staff members required to have a DBS regulated check will be required to enrol on the DBS update Service.
- 5.7 No unsupervised access to children/young people is allowed until these processes are complete.
- 5.8 In the event of a positive DBS check, a risk assessment will be carried out to assess risk of the individual within the role.

### **Induction and Training**

- 5.9 During a 6-month supervised probationary period, information and training is provided about safeguarding and policies.
- 5.10 All staff through the performance management process (supervision and appraisal system) will be required to meet the specific level of competence as described in the Core Competency Framework.

5.11 Those with specific responsibilities detailed within this policy are provided with specific training interventions associated with their role and responsibilities. This will ensure that they know and understand:

- The signs and symptoms of abuse.
- The signs and symptoms of Child Sexual Exploitation.
- How abusers behave.
- The Local Safeguarding Boards guidelines for dealing with concerns about abuse, including Child Sexual Exploitation.
- The signs and indicators of Extremism.
- Who to contact within Children's Services, to ask for advice and to refer a case without delay where there are protection concerns.

All training is recorded on individual plans in a central training log.

5.12 All staff and leaders will receive regular updates on Safeguarding at least annually, but sooner if there is a change in legislation.

5.13 Designated members of staff for safeguarding need to undertake formal safeguarding training every two years and refresh their knowledge and skills at least annually. (Refer to the Local Safeguarding Children Board for recommended training pathways).

5.14 Staff and other adults will receive regular supervision and support if they are working directly and regularly with children and learners whose safety and welfare are at risk.

### **Allegations of Staff or Volunteers**

5.15 All staff must be aware of the necessity to raise concerns about a member of staff. All staff must report concerns to the Safeguarding Lead who will liaise with each other to coordinate investigations, decisions and any action to be taken, this includes any referral to LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer), Social Services, Police or the DBS referral unit.

## **6. MOBILE PHONE USE AND PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGES**

6.1 Mobile phones play an increasing part in day to day life. RAFA Kidz believe that to fully ensure the protection of the children and young people in its care, certain procedure for mobile phone use needs to be abided by.

6.2 Photographs of children are often used in gathering observations of their achievements, how these are collected, developed and stored are also a consideration of RAFA Kidz to ensure adequate safeguarding.

## **7. INTIMATE CARE**

7.1 No child will be excluded from participating in our services due to them not toilet trained regardless of age. The group will work with parents/carers to ensure we fully meet the needs of the child

7.2 We provide facilities in our setting for children to be cleaned and changed, exercising good hygiene procedures.

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## **9. RESPONSIBILITIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE POLICY**

9.1 Senior Management along with Safeguarding Lead have specific responsibility for effective implementation of this Policy fairly and consistently.

9.2 All employees are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of, understand and comply with this policy and associated procedures.

## **10. ASSOCIATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

- Safeguarding Procedures
- Safeguarding (Vulnerable Adults) Policy
- Core Competency Framework
- Code of Conduct
- Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure
- Induction Procedure
- Data Protection Policy
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Whistleblowing Policy and Procedures
- Complaints Procedure
- Confidentiality Policy
- Lone worker Policy and Procedure
- Internet Use Policy and Procedure
- Health and Safety Policy

## **11. REFERENCES**

- Working together to Safeguard Children 2018.
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

- [www.nspcc.org](http://www.nspcc.org)
- The PREVENT Duty 2011
- Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skill Settings 2016
- The Disclosure and Barring Service

## 12. REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis as part of our safeguarding self-assessment process, or if subject to legislative changes.

Date Originated	MAY 2019	Signature
Date Reviewed		