



Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding Responsibilities

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Every adult working at or on behalf of Woodlands has a duty to protect children from harm and to promote their welfare. No member of staff, volunteer, trustee or visitor should assume that safeguarding concerns are someone else's responsibility.

Every concern, no matter how small it may appear, must be taken seriously, recorded accurately and reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or, in their absence, the Deputy DSL.

The welfare of the child will always be the paramount consideration in every safeguarding decision.

Board of Trustees Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for ensuring Woodlands meets its statutory safeguarding duties.

The Board will:

- Ensure safeguarding remains a standing agenda item at trustee meetings.
- Promote a strong safeguarding culture throughout the setting.
- Ensure safeguarding policies are reviewed at least annually or sooner if legislation or local procedures change.
- Appoint a suitably trained Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSL(s).
- Ensure sufficient resources are available to safeguard children effectively.
- Ensure all staff receive safeguarding training appropriate to their role.
- Monitor safeguarding practice through reports, audits and quality assurance.
- Ensure safer recruitment procedures are followed for all appointments.
- Ensure robust whistleblowing arrangements are in place.
- Ensure allegations against staff are managed in accordance with statutory guidance.
- Ensure safeguarding concerns are never influenced by financial or reputational considerations.
- Support the Manager and DSL in fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Ensure learning from safeguarding incidents, audits and inspections is embedded into practice.

The Chair of Trustees will act on behalf of the Board where safeguarding concerns relate to the Manager or DSL.

Manager Responsibilities

The Manager is responsible for ensuring safeguarding arrangements are embedded into the daily operation of Woodlands.

The Manager will:

- Lead by example in promoting a positive safeguarding culture.
- Ensure safeguarding remains central to all decision-making.
- Ensure staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Monitor the quality of safeguarding practice.
- Ensure staffing arrangements support the safety and supervision of children.

- Ensure children are adequately supervised at all times.
- Ensure safer recruitment procedures are fully implemented.
- Support the DSL in managing safeguarding concerns.
- Ensure all safeguarding records are maintained securely.
- Notify Ofsted and other relevant agencies where required by law.
- Ensure appropriate action is taken following safeguarding incidents.
- Ensure staff receive regular safeguarding supervision and opportunities for professional discussion.
- Promote early intervention and partnership working with external agencies.

The Manager must ensure safeguarding is considered during risk assessments, planning, outings, staffing, environment checks and organisational changes.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection within Woodlands.

The DSL must undertake appropriate safeguarding training, including inter-agency training where required, and keep their knowledge up to date through regular professional development.

The DSL will:

- Be the first point of contact for safeguarding concerns.
- Receive and assess all safeguarding information.
- Maintain confidential safeguarding records.
- Make referrals to Suffolk Customer First where appropriate.
- Consult with safeguarding professionals whenever required.
- Liaise with health professionals, social care, police and other agencies.
- Attend child protection conferences, core groups and multi-agency meetings.
- Ensure safeguarding records accompany children where required.
- Monitor vulnerable children and those subject to safeguarding plans.
- Maintain safeguarding chronologies.
- Monitor attendance patterns and unexplained absences.
- Support staff following safeguarding incidents.
- Deliver or coordinate safeguarding updates for staff.
- Ensure safeguarding information is shared appropriately.
- Maintain confidentiality whilst ensuring children's welfare remains paramount.
- Complete safeguarding audits and identify areas for improvement.
- Report safeguarding themes and trends to the Manager and Trustees.

The DSL retains overall responsibility for safeguarding decisions even when specific tasks are delegated.

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)

Deputy DSLs provide safeguarding leadership in the absence of the DSL.

Deputies will:

- Be trained to the same standard as the DSL.
- Act immediately when safeguarding concerns arise.
- Make referrals where necessary.
- Maintain safeguarding records.
- Support staff with safeguarding concerns.
- Ensure continuity of safeguarding leadership during the DSL's absence.

Ultimate responsibility remains with the DSL when they are available.

Responsibilities of All Staff

Every member of staff, regardless of role, must:

- Put children's welfare first.
- Read and understand this policy.
- Complete safeguarding training before working unsupervised with children.
- Attend regular safeguarding updates and refresher training.
- Know who the DSL and Deputy DSLs are.
- Recognise signs and indicators of abuse or neglect.
- Record concerns accurately, factually and promptly.
- Report concerns immediately.
- Never investigate concerns themselves.
- Listen carefully if a child makes a disclosure.
- Never promise confidentiality.
- Maintain professional curiosity.
- Challenge poor or unsafe practice.
- Report concerns about colleagues immediately.
- Follow safer working practice at all times.
- Maintain professional boundaries.
- Protect confidential information.
- Support children with empathy and respect.
- Promote children's emotional wellbeing.
- Model safe behaviour.

Failure to follow safeguarding procedures may result in disciplinary action.

Volunteers, Students and Visitors

All volunteers, students and regular visitors are expected to uphold Woodlands' safeguarding standards.

Before working with children they will:

- Receive safeguarding information appropriate to their role.
- Be informed who the DSL and Deputy DSLs are.
- Understand how to report concerns.
- Work under appropriate supervision until authorised otherwise.

Visitors must:

- Sign in and out.
- Wear identification where appropriate.
- Be supervised unless authorised.
- Never have unsupervised access to children unless all required checks have been completed.

Professional Curiosity

Staff are expected to remain professionally curious.

This means respectfully asking questions, observing patterns, sharing concerns and seeking further information when something does not feel right.

No concern is too small to report.

Professional curiosity is particularly important where there are repeated injuries, changes in behaviour, poor attendance, parental substance misuse, domestic abuse, neglect, or when explanations do not match observations.

Escalation of Concerns

If any member of staff believes a safeguarding concern has not been acted upon appropriately, they have a professional duty to escalate their concern.

Concerns should first be raised with the DSL or Deputy DSL.

If staff remain concerned that appropriate action has not been taken, they must escalate the matter to the Manager, the Chair of Trustees or directly to Suffolk Children's Services, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), the Police or Ofsted, as appropriate.

No employee will suffer detriment for raising safeguarding concerns in good faith.

Accountability

Every adult working at Woodlands is personally accountable for safeguarding children.

Safeguarding responsibilities cannot be delegated or ignored, and all staff are expected to act immediately if they believe a child may be at risk of harm.

Protecting children is the responsibility of every individual within Woodlands.