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| HACRO CIO LOGO | HACRO 62-72 Victoria StreetSt Albans Herts, AL1 3XHTel. 01727 854727E-mail: hacro.office@zen.co.uk |

**HACRO: Safeguarding Policy**

**1. Introduction**

1.1 HACRO is committed to safeguarding all children, young people and adults that it comes into contact with. Whilst the organisation has a statutory obligation it also has a moral duty to ensure it functions in a way that safeguards and promotes the welfare of its staff, customers, service users and learners.

**2. Purpose / Aim of policy**

2.1 The purpose of this policy and its subsequent procedures are to outline a clear framework to protecting and safeguarding children, young people and adults so that all staff and those working on behalf of HACRO are aware of their roles and responsibilities in identifying concerns, sharing information, and taking prompt action.

**3. Scope**

3.1 We expect everyone to have read, understood and adhere to this policy and its related procedures.

**4. Governing Legislation and Frameworks**

4.1 The principle pieces of legislation and inter-agency frameworks governing this policy and procedures are:

* The Care Act 2014
* The Equality Act 2010
* Mental Capacity Act 2005
* The Children’s Act 1989 & 2004
* The Education and Skills Act 2008
* Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
* Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015
* Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2015
* Safeguarding Disabled Children: Practice Guide 2009
* Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
* Prevent Duty Guidance 2015
* New General Data Protection Regulation 2016

**5.      Safeguarding Children & Young People**

5.1 HM Government ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ (2018) inter- agency guide defines safeguarding and promoting children’s welfare as:

Protecting children from maltreatment

Preventing impairment of children’s health or development

Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provisions of safe and effective care

Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

5.2  A child is defined as anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday. Children are therefore seen as children and young people.

**6. Principles to Safeguarding Children & Young People**

6.1 The ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ guide also highlights effective safeguarding arrangements in every local area should be underpinned by two key principles:

* Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility – each professional and organisation should play their full part.
* A child centered approach – services should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of young children.

**7. Safeguarding Adults**

7.1 Safeguarding means protecting an adult’s right to live safely, free from abuse and neglect. The Care Act 2014 places specific safeguarding duties to an adult who:

has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs);

is experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect and;

as a result of those care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of abuse or experiencing abuse or neglect.

7.2 An adult with care and support needs may be:

an older person

a person with physical disabilities, a learning difficulty or a sensory impairment

someone with mental health needs, including dementia or a personality disorder

a person with a long-term health condition

someone who misuses substances or alcohol to the extent that it affects their ability to manage day to day living.

**8. Principles to Safeguarding Adults**

8.1 The six principles below have been incorporated into the Care Act 2014 statutory guidance and should inform all safeguarding practice:

**Empowerment** – people being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and give informed consent.

**Prevention** – it is better to take action before harm occurs.

**Proportionality** – the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.

**Protection** – support and representation for those in greatest need.

**Partnership** – local solutions through services working with their communities.

**Accountability** – transparency in delivering safeguarding.

**9. Expectations of Staff**

Everyone working for HACRO has a responsibility to familiarise themselves with this safeguarding policy and the procedures that go with it. They must maintain a proper focus on the safety and welfare of children and vulnerable adults in all aspects of their work.

Anyone who works for HACRO must inform their manager if they or any adult living in their household become(s) the subject of an allegation involving a safeguarding concern or abuse against a child or vulnerable adult, If anyone is in doubt whether the situation or allegation is relevant they should:

* Refer to the definitions of safeguarding and protection of vulnerable adults

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-safeguarding-policy/ofsted-safeguarding-policy#definitions>)

* Seek advice from the HACRO designated safeguarding lead or their deputy.

9.1    HACRO believes that all individuals have an equal right to protection from abuse, regardless of their age, gender, race, religion, ability, language, background or sexual identity and consider the welfare of the individual as paramount.

9.2    HACRO will take every reasonable step to ensure that children, young people and adults are protected. We will safeguard individuals by:

* valuing them, listening to and respecting them
* providing a safe environment for children, young people and adults
* identifying individuals who are suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm, and report concerns swiftly to relevant agencies
* working in partnership with other relevant agencies to support multi-agency safeguarding work
* responding effectively to any circumstances giving grounds for concern, or where formal complaints or expressions of anxiety are relayed
* providing safeguarding training to all staff to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities and are knowledgeable of the types and signs of abuse
* recruiting all staff safely by ensuring that all the necessary checks are made
* regularly monitoring and evaluating how our policies, procedures and practices are working to safeguard children and adults.

**Acting on safeguarding concerns**

No one working for HACRO should investigate concerns about individual children or vulnerable adults who are or may be being abused or who are at risk. However, that does not mean that they should do nothing when they learn of a concern. We all have a responsibility to make sure that concerns about children and vulnerable adults are passed to the agency that can help them without delay.

If anyone is concerned that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of being abused or neglected, they should not ignore their suspicions and should not assume that someone else will take action to protect that person.

Concerns about children should be referred to the children’s social care department of the local authority where the child lives. Similarly, concerns about vulnerable adults should be referred to local authority adult services. Our processes for referrals are set out in HACRO’s internal guidance **‘Handling Safeguarding Concerns about Children and Vulnerable Adults’**.

If anyone working for HACRO is in any doubt about what to do, they should consult the safeguarding lead or their deputy.

Anyone working for HACRO who has concerns about the behaviour of a colleague must always raise this with the safeguarding lead or deputy as soon as possible.

**10.    Recording and Information Sharing**

10.1    All safeguarding concerns, decisions and actions will be recorded promptly and saved securely. This includes retaining a copy of a referral and evidence of prompt completion of any agreed actions to protect a child or adult.

10.2   Information sharing decisions will be recorded whether or not the decision is taken to share.  Reasons to share should also include what information has been shared and to whom.

10.3   Consideration must be given about what information to share and the impact of disclosing information on the individual or any third party. Any information shared must be proportionate to the need and level of risk. It must also be accurate, relevant, and adequate to the purpose of sharing the information.

10.4   From the outset of identifying safeguarding concerns we will be open and transparent with the individual about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared. We will also seek their agreement to share information, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.

10.5   All information should be shared in a timely manner to reduce the risk of harm, and in an appropriate and secure way.

**11.    Training and Caseload Review Meetings.**

11.1    All HACRO employees are required to undertake children and adult safeguarding training relevant to their role.

11.2    Safeguarding leads will attend appropriate training to support them in fulfilling their duties. Where required this training will be sourced externally.

11.3    Safeguarding training will be repeated as required and whenever changing legislation and responsibilities requires it. All operational staff and safeguarding leads must attend / complete at least one safeguarding training event every two years.

**12.    Safer Recruitment**

12.1    HACRO will have in place safer recruitment practices to ensure those recruited are the best candidates for the role and are suitable to work with children and adults with care and support needs.

12.2    HACRO will also adhere to safer recruitment procedures to utilise sessional, volunteers ~~and~~ agency workers and volunteers. This includes undertaking the appropriate level of vetting and referencing.

**13.    Types of Abuse and Neglect**

**Physical abuse** - such as hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint, hair pulling.

**Physical harm** - may also be caused when a parent or carer pretends the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This is known as fabricated or induced illness by carer.

**Inadvertent physical abuse** - arising from poor support or care e.g., bruising from poor moving and handling is classified as ‘neglect’.

**Restraint** – using force or threatening to use force to make a person do something they are resisting, or where a person’s freedom of movement is restricted.

**Sexual abuse** – Includes rape, indecent exposure, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, harassment and subjection to sexual pornography or witnessing sexual acts.

**Domestic abuse** – violence or abuse by someone who is or has been an intimate partner or family member regardless of gender or sexuality. It includes ‘honour’ based violence, stalking behaviours\*, emotional, sexual, financial, psychological and physical abuse.

**Psychological abuse** – emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, humiliation, deprivation of contact from others, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, blaming and controlling.

**Financial or material abuse** – coercion, theft, and fraud, possessions or benefits.

**Discriminatory abuse** – verbal abuse, unequal treatment, inappropriate use of language, slurs, treating a person in a way that is inappropriate to their age and /or culture background, deliberate exclusion.

**Organisational abuse** – neglect and poor care practice.

**Neglect and acts of omission** – failure to provide access to appropriate needs, care and support or educational services, ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs.

**Self-neglect** – either unable or unwilling to provide adequate care for themselves, or obtain necessary care to meet their needs, declining essential support.

13.1    Any or all these types of abuse may be perpetrated as a result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance.  More often adults with care and support needs and children are abused by someone who is known to them.  An abuser may be a paid carer or volunteer, a partner, relative, friend or child, a care worker or other professional or another adult who is receiving services.