



HMR Circle Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

V3 APRIL 2024



POLICY UPDATES

Version Number	Date Updated	Amended / reviewed	Pages/Sections Updated
1	01/03/2023	ISSUED	ALL
2	03/04/2024	AMENDED	Sign off section - added Board Chair Sign off
3			



HMR Circle Children Safeguarding Policy

Index of Policy contents

1. Statement of purpose
2. Legislative framework
3. Definitions
4. Application and review of this policy
5. Safe working practices for all paid staff and volunteers
6. Safe selection and recruitment
7. Safe management
8. Responding to concerns about poor practice within HMR Circle
9. Responding to concerns about poor practice when working with a group or organisation
10. Suspicions, allegations and disclosures of abuse
11. Reporting abuse
12. Useful Contacts
13. Appendices

1. Statement of purpose

- 1.1 HMR Circle makes a positive contribution to a strong and safe community and recognises the right of every individual to stay safe. The welfare of children is everyone's responsibility, particularly when it comes to protecting them from abuse.
- 1.2 All people, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity, have the right to protection from, bullying, neglect, physical, emotional or sexual abuse.
- 1.3 This policy seeks to ensure that HMR Circle undertakes its responsibilities with specific reference to the protection of children and will respond to any concerns appropriately.
- 1.4 It recognises that all the staff of HMR Circle hold, to varying degrees, a position of trust with the community of Heywood, Middleton, Rochdale and surrounding areas. As part of a wider commitment to the safety and wellbeing of our employees and volunteers it establishes a framework to support staff in their safe practices by
 - clarifying what is expected from everybody in terms of safe practice
 - explaining what to do when employees and volunteers have concerns.



Circle

2. Legislative framework

- 2.1 The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 was passed because of the Bichard Inquiry arising from the Soham murders in 2002, when the schoolgirls Jessica Chapman and Holly Wells were murdered by Ian Huntley (their school caretaker). Recommendation 19 of the Inquiry Report highlighted the need for a single agency to vet all individuals who want to work or volunteer with children or vulnerable adults and to bar unsuitable people from doing so.
- 2.2 The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 protects whistleblowers from detrimental treatment from their employers.
- 2.3 The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 extends provisions to combat DV and created a new offence of causing or allowing the death of a child or adult at risk.
- 2.5 Health and Social Care Act 2008 was created to ensure that health and social care settings are safe and of quality, and so the Care Quality Commission was established to inspect these settings.
- 2.6 Mental Capacity Act 2005 has 5 key principles: ultimately, it's about not assuming a person is mentally incapable of making the best/safe decision for themselves and being given all practicable help before they are considered not to be able to make their own decisions. If it has been assessed and found that someone doesn't have the mental capacity to make a safe decision/choice, then the adult at risk is encouraged to be involved and participate as much as possible in the safeguarding process, informed at every stage of any process, and everything is carried out in the least intrusive way possible with their best interests at the forefront of any decision. Professionals and other staff have a responsibility to ensure they understand and always work in line with the Mental Capacity Act 2005.
- 2.7 Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) aims to make sure that people in care homes are looked after in a way that doesn't inappropriately restrict their freedom.

3. Definitions

- 3.1 For the purposes of this policy a child is defined as someone who is under 18.

4. Application and review of this policy

- 4.1 The director of HMR Circle is responsible for ensuring that all paid staff/ volunteers adhere to this policy.



- 4.2 HMR Circle values the resilience of all individuals and communities and seeks to empower people to be able to build on the massive contribution they are already making to ensure that children enjoy the same rights as others. We will actively listen to the wishes and feelings of those we work with and will ensure that our safeguarding policy reflects this. Policies only make a difference if they are put into practise. Monitoring and reviewing this policy and the associated procedures will happen on a regular basis.

5. Safe working practices for all paid staff and volunteers

- 5.1 It is everyone's responsibility to follow the guidance laid out in this policy:
1. To promote safe practices by being an excellent role model
 2. Encourage open communication by treating all people equally with respect and dignity
 3. Share information appropriately with others and recognise that there are times when confidentiality is essential – verbal or written.
 4. Provide access to learning opportunities/signposting, and empower others to share in decision making
 5. Positively involve people in developing safe practices wherever possible.
 6. When planning any public event ensure that risk assessments take account of the safety of any attending children.
 7. Always working in an open environment, avoiding private or unobserved situations
 8. Maintain a safe and appropriate distance with service users
 9. Keep up to date with training, qualifications and insurance.
 10. Report concerns about poor practice and abuse as laid out in this policy

6. Safe selection and recruitment

- 6.1 It is the responsibility of the organisation to:
- Ensure that the recruitment procedures for staff are consistent with the Richard Inquiry Report in particular regarding a minimum of two documented verbal referee checks for each applicant and establishing clear evidence to justify any employment gaps in an applicant's Curriculum Vitae.
 - Assess what level of contact the role requires with children and vulnerable adults.
 - To ensure that the core competencies required for this role are taken into consideration.
 - To ensure appropriate safeguarding checks, including DBS checks as defined below, are considered when the role description is agreed.
 - Undertake open and transparent selection and recruitment processes for all paid staff/ volunteers
 - Check necessary identification – address, qualifications, criminal convictions
 - Take up two references which request information regarding safe practices
 - Ensure all paid staff and volunteers adopt and abide by the appropriate practices and procedures outlined within this document
 - Ensure all staff have access to related policies and procedures



Circle

6.2 What level of DBS check is appropriate?

- Standard checks are appropriate for workers who have the trust of the community and have access to groups working with children (as defined in Section 3)
- Enhanced DBS checks should be undertaken where there is regular/ lone contact with children (where eligible)

6.3 A person who is barred from working with children will be breaking the law if they work or volunteer, or try to work or volunteer, with those groups. An organisation which knowingly employs someone who is barred to work with those groups will also be breaking the law.

7. Safe management

7.1 It is the responsibility of managers to:

- Require staff and sub-contractors to adopt and abide by this Child Protection Policy.
- Train and support staff to adopt best practice in the conduct of projects in relation to safeguarding and protecting children involved in a project or event.
- Ensure HMR Circle staff members are briefed on their responsibilities relating to Child Protection on appointment.
- Ensure paid staff/ volunteers are clear about their responsibilities with regard to safe practices and procedures
- Support staff/volunteers to apply safe working practices, particularly when this is difficult. Protection from abuse is a sensitive subject for everyone and difficult decisions must be made. HMR Circle provides access to counselling, if required.
- Ensure that they have the necessary skills and knowledge required to be effective in their roles, through induction and ongoing development.
- Ensure that their probationary review assesses their competent application of safe practices
- Ensure that staff/ volunteers have access to other related procedures- grievance and disciplinary procedures, whistle blowing
- Provide appropriate guidance and learning opportunities, throughout induction and
- Ensure that all paid staff/ volunteers have access to regular support/ supervision
- Review the role, with regard to safe practices, should there be any changes to the level of contact that the paid staff/ volunteer has with children.
- Ensure Photography, video and sound recordings of children (16 years of age or younger) are only to be undertaken with their informed written consent and children under 16 years of age require the written informed consent of their parent or guardian. The names of children are not to be revealed in photographs, videos or sound recordings. Utilisation of photography, videos and sound recordings beyond the requirements of the project will require the express written consent of children (16 years of age or older) or children (under 16 years of age) their parent or guardian as appropriate. Children



must be fully clothed at all times in any videos or photographs that are taken.

8. Responding to concerns about poor practice within the organisation

- 8.1 As a general rule, all concerns are to be discussed with your line manager. The concern may be easily resolved but it is important that safety issues are dealt with promptly. If you are not comfortable raising these with your manager, or your concerns relate to your manager, you should raise them with another manager or directly with the Director.
- 8.2 If there are issues of unsafe practise or abuse that must be taken further the manager must ensure that HMR Circles's policies and procedures are adhered to.

9. Responding to concerns about poor practice when working with a group or organisation

- 9.1 All concerns must be discussed with your manager and the discussion should be recorded.
- 9.2 Where necessary, managers should seek advice from the appropriate body. Where the concern involves children, managers should talk to the Lead Area Designated Officer (LADO) and where the concern involves vulnerable adults, the Adult Safeguarding Co-ordinator (details for both these contacts are in Section 12) to clarify areas of responsibility in dealing with the concern.
- 9.3 The group/ organisation should be involved in the early discussions about the course of action, to enable them to make informed decisions. This should be followed up by clear, written information and guidance and summary of agreed course of action to the group / organisation.
- 9.4 A written summary of how the concern was dealt with should be forwarded to the appropriate safeguarding officers (LADO/ Adult Safeguarding Co-ordinator). If there are any queries/ concerns left outstanding, then these should also be raised with the relevant officer so that resolution can be sought.
- 9.5 Consideration should be given to holding a debriefing for those HMR CIRCLE staff, the group and other agencies involved (if deemed appropriate). Safeguarding issues can be emotionally distressing, and it allows HMR CIRCLE to reflect and 'learn lessons' to inform future situations and practice.

10. Suspicions, allegations and disclosures of abuse

- 10.1 Guidance for interaction with children
- Demeaning or suggestive remarks should never be made to or in the presence of children.



- Staff should always consider the appropriateness of being with a child on their own.
- Staff should always be able to justify any physical contact with a child in any situation.

10.2 Receiving a disclosure of abuse

- When a child is disclosing details of abuse to a member of the team, it is important that they know how to respond. This is in the child's best interests not only at the time of disclosure but also in order to promote their ability to deal with the abuse and the consequences of the disclosure.

10.3 What you should do if someone discloses abuse to you:

- React calmly
- Reassure the person that they were right to tell
- Keep questions to an absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said.
- Don't ask about explicit details
- Reassure but do not promise confidentiality, which might not be feasible in the light of subsequent developments
- Inform the person what you will do next
- Make a full and written record of what has been said/heard as soon as possible and advise the Director of HMR Circle immediately.
- Respond in a timely manner to any allegations of misconduct or abuse of children consistent with this policy in conjunction with the partner local authority or safeguarding authority.
- Report any allegations made to a member of the team in respect of abuse of a child or to the point of contact in the safeguarding authority/Rochdale Council as soon as practicable.

11. Reporting abuse

11.1 However, if you receive information about alleged or potential abuse you must report this without delay.

- All suspicions, allegations or disclosures of abuse must be reported to the Director, or in his absence they must be reported to the Director's nominated deputy
- All reports will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately in line with legislative guidance. It is not HMR Circle's responsibility to investigate allegations of abuse - the appropriate agencies will be contacted immediately
- If you have any concerns that this guidance is not being followed you must contact a member of the board of trustees, who is not the Chair.

12. Useful contacts



Circle

- 12.1 If you are worried and do not feel comfortable talking to anyone from HMR CIRCLE, the following are useful contacts
- 12.2 If you are unsure that a child/children may be at risk of suffering and are worried, contact:
- Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub 0300 303 0440
 - Lead Area Designated Officer:
Louise Hurst =- : louise.hurst@rochdale.gov.uk Tel : 0300 303 0350
 - NSPCC Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 5000.
- Alternatively you can call Greater Manchester Police on 0161 872 5050.

13. Appendices

- **Appendix 1 - Procedure for Responding to Suspicions and/or Allegations of Abuse of a Child**
- **Appendix 2 – Definitions of Abuse – Children**

Appendix 1: Reporting allegations or suspicions of abuse

The designated person within HMR Circle who should immediately and always be informed of any concerns about a child or vulnerable adult being abused is:

Safeguarding Designated Person Details

Name: Kim Ho
Job/Role/Title: Special projects Co-Ordinator
Address: Suite F4, Lock 50 Business Centre, Oldham Rd, Rochdale. OL16 5RD
Telephone no: 01706 751 165
Email address: kim@hmrcircle.org.uk

Appropriate contacts outside the organisation:

Child Safeguarding Contacts

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub

Oldham - Email: child.mash@oldham.gov.uk; Tel: 0161 770 7777
Rochdale – Tel: 0300 303 0440/ 0300 303 8875 (out of hours)
Tameside – Tel: 0161 342 4101 or Tel: 0161 342 2222

Rochdale Children's Social Care

Hours: 8am – 4.45pm - Tel: 0300 303 0440
Out of Hours service: Hours: 5pm – 8am & weekends - Tel: 0300 303 8875

Emergency no.

Police station Oldham, Rochdale and/or Tameside Police Station



Circle

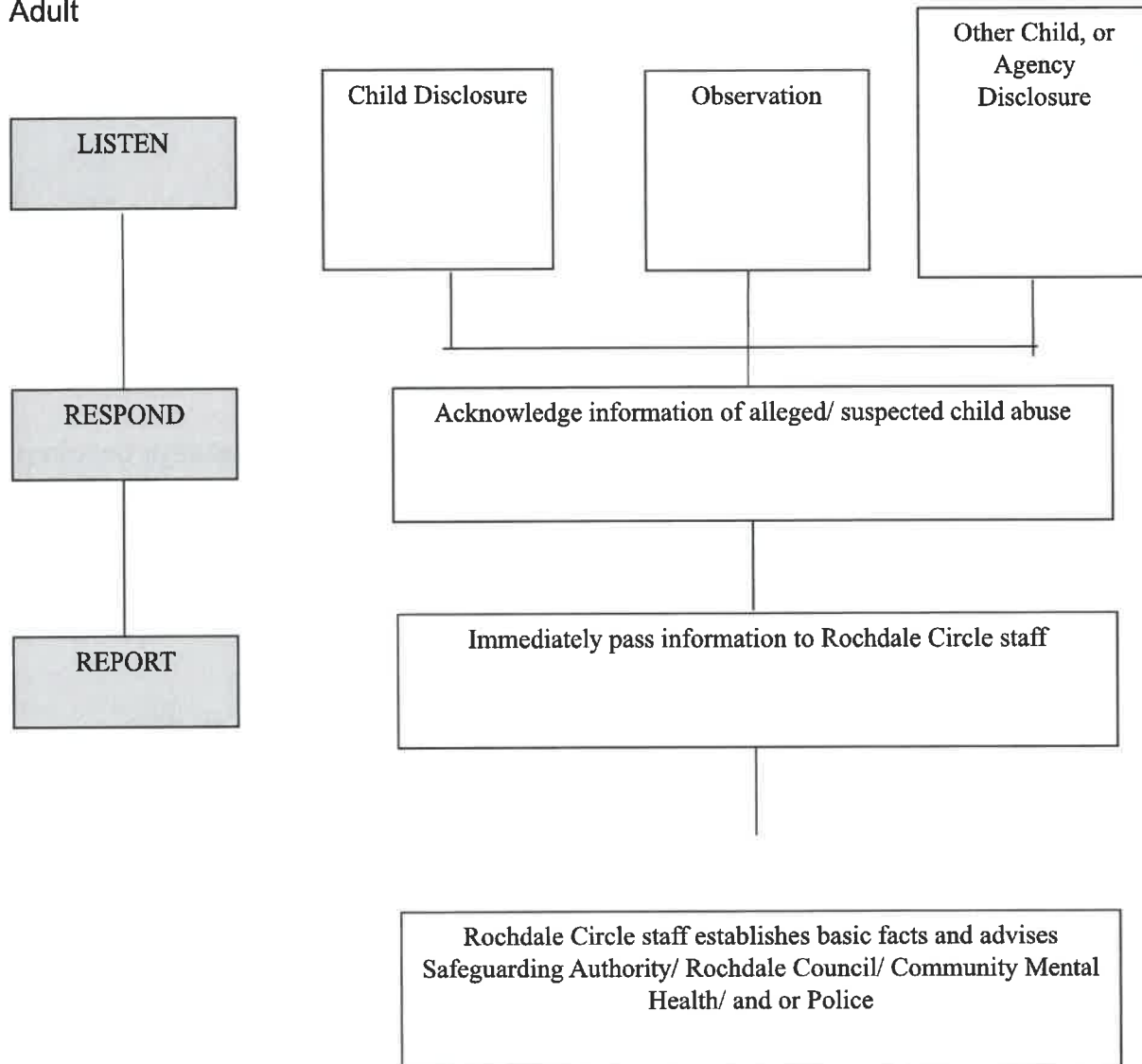
Address: Rochdale Police Station, The Holme, The Esplanade, Rochdale OL16 1AG

Telephone no: 0161 856 8530, 101 or 999

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline 0808 800 5000

Appendix 1

Procedure for Responding to Suspicions and/or Allegations of Abuse of a Child or Vulnerable Adult





Appendix 2 – Definitions of Abuse - Children

What is Abuse and Neglect regarding Children

Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm.

Abuse (also called Significant Harm) can happen to a child at any age. Abusers can be adults but not just parents or carers, abuse often occurs within a relationship of trust e.g. a teacher, carer, family friend or youth leader.

There are four types of abuse and these are **Physical, Emotional, Sexual and Neglect.**

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is deliberately causing physical harm to a child. This might involve punching, kicking, biting, burning, scalding, shaking, throwing or beating with objects such as belts, whips, or sticks. It also includes poisoning, giving a child alcohol or illegal drugs, drowning or suffocation.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of illness in a child.

In pregnancy an unborn child can be harmed by domestic abuse.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is where repeated verbal threats, criticism, ridicule, shouting, lack of love and affection causes a severe adverse effect on a child's emotional development. It includes conveying to children that they are worthless, unloved, and inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

Emotional abuse may include not giving a child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature inappropriate expectations being imposed on a child, over protection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from taking part in normal social interaction.

It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another person. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of children, or it may occur alone

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This may involve physical contact including penetrative sex, oral sex, masturbation, kissing, rubbing, or touching outside of clothing, or it may involve non-contact activities such as involving children in watching sexual activities, producing or looking at sexual images, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Abusers can be men, women or other children.



Circle

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect is when a parent or carer fails to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment), medical care, or protection from physical and emotional harm or danger.

It also includes failure to ensure access to education or to look after a child because the carer is under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

In pregnancy neglect may occur as a result of misusing alcohol or drugs.

Rochdale Circle CIC Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy Approval & Sign Off

Policy approval:

Approved By:

Signature	Name / Position	Date
	Mark Wynn Director	
	Dianne David Chair – Board of Directors	18.06.2024

Next review: March 2025