



SAFEGUARDING / DBS REFERRAL POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

Rural Enterprises CIC is firmly committed to the belief that all children and young people have a fundamental right to be protected from harm, and fully recognises its responsibility for child protection. The safety and protection of all children and young people that Rural Enterprises CIC supports is paramount, and has priority over all other interests.

The purpose of this Child Protection Policy is to ensure at all times the maximum protection from any kind of harm for all young people involved in any way with Rural Enterprises. For the purposes of this policy Rural Enterprises CIC have defined harm as:

- neglect
- physical abuse
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse
- self-harming behaviour

This policy forms part of the Terms and Conditions of Employment or contract and applies to all paid workers, volunteers and work experience placements. Its purpose is to protect the personal safety of all children and young people using the facilities, resources and activities provided by Rural Enterprises CIC by actively promoting awareness, good practice and sound procedures.

Rural Enterprises CIC agrees to comply with the safeguarding policies that are in place in the individual schools that we work with.

POLICY PROCEDURES

Personnel/Recruitment

- All or any paid workers and volunteers may be required to provide references, which would be verified.
- All paid workers and regular volunteers working directly with children or vulnerable adults will have enhanced criminal record checks. All CRB checks will be replaced by the new DBS checks.
- Should the need arise then all new paid workers and volunteers are supervised until references have been verified and DBS checks received.
- All or any paid workers and volunteers will receive, and will be required to read the Child Protection Policy both as part of their induction, and annually thereafter.
- All or any paid workers and volunteers all receive regular support in their work with children and young people.

Responsibilities

- All those working on behalf of Rural Enterprises CIC will accept responsibility for the welfare of the children and young people who come into contact with the organisation in connection with its tasks and functions.
- All those working on behalf of Rural Enterprises CIC have a duty to ensure that any suspected incident, allegation or other manifestation relating to child protection is reported using the procedures detailed in this policy.
- Rural Enterprises CIC has a Designated Safeguarding Lead who is responsible for child protection and the implementation of this policy. It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to take appropriate action following any expression of concern and make referrals to the appropriate agency.
- All those working on behalf of Rural Enterprises CIC will be made aware of the DSL and how to contact them.
- If Rural Enterprises CIC during the course of its normal activities take photographs of children and young people participating in activities and events, at all times permission from parents/schools will be obtained before any photographic material is used in the public domain.

Good Practice

- All staff and volunteers will undergo regular in-house training to ensure that good practice is maintained throughout regarding Child Protection and Safeguarding including annual updates.

We will ensure staff read and work in line with KCSIE 2025 updates regarding:

- Statutory attendance
- Alternative Provision reviews
- Online Safety
- Virtual schools' heads
- Other updates

Reporting Procedures

- Any suspicion or allegation must be reported as soon as possible on the day of the occurrence to one of the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Disclosure or evidence for concern may occur in a number of ways including a comment made by a child, physical evidence such as bruising, a change in behaviour or inappropriate behaviour or knowledge.
- It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead in charge to liaise with other relevant agencies where necessary and seek clarification from Social Services if there is any concern about the validity of any concern.
- Any suspicion or allegation of abuse must be recorded by the observer/s on the appropriate incident reporting form.
- All stages of the reporting procedure must be documented, marked CONFIDENTIAL and stored securely.

Allegations against paid workers/volunteers

- When any form of complaint is made against an employee or a volunteer, regardless of whether the complaint is made by a colleague, a parent of a child or a young person involved with Rural Enterprises CIC or by a child or a young person, it must be taken seriously. The complaint should initially be dealt with by a member of the committee on site at the time the complaint is made.
- The member of the committee must report the complaint immediately to the Chair of Rural Enterprises CIC, giving details of the circumstances.
- The Chair will attend the site of the allegation to gain an initial account of what has occurred from all relevant parties, including the person against whom the allegation has been made, where possible.
- The Chair will have the right to suspend from duty and /or the premises, any person who is a party to the allegation until a full investigation has been made. This applies to a paid worker, a volunteer and the complainant.

This action does not imply in any way that the person suspended is responsible for, or is to blame for any action leading up to the complaint. The purpose of any such suspension is to enable a full and proper investigation to be carried out in a totally professional manner.

- It is the responsibility of the Chair to make the decision as to whether to inform the Police and/or Social Services, depending on the nature of the allegation.
- Rural Enterprises will co-operate fully with the Police, Social Services and all other parties involved.
- The Chair will ensure that the Rural Enterprises CIC Committee is fully briefed. An agreed statement will be prepared for the purpose of accurate communication with external sources and for the protection of the legal position of all parties involved.
- The Chair will make a full written report of the incident and the actions taken. This report will be stored securely following appropriate data protection legislation

Signed *Heather Wilson* date: 1/11/25 Director

Signed *Deborah Barton* date: 1/11/25 Director

To be reviewed annually – Last review date 1st November 2025