

RJ WORKING CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of RJ Working is to strengthen and support the children and young people of Cornwall, it follows that our organisation is wholly committed to their safety and welfare. We are committed to child-centred practice and we seek to understand children's lived experience through listening carefully to children and young people. This commitment is confirmed by the DfE guidance 'Listening to and involving Children and Young People' (2014). We promote the safety and welfare of children and young people through our work in schools, who are pivotal to safeguarding, and with staff who work in health and education. RJ Working CIO may be in a position to contribute to a culture of co-ordination and co-operation, and support communication and shared learning to promote children's safety and welfare. In particular our work seeks to support young people's lasting and trusting relationships with each other and the adults in their lives. We understand our responsibility to follow the lead of our Local Safeguarding Partnership (between the Local Authority, Health and the Police) in terms of local arrangements for co-ordination and co-operation. We understand that strong multi-agency and multi-disciplinary working is vital to identifying and responding to the needs of children and families. Successful outcomes for children depend on strong multi-agency partnership working across the whole system of help, support and protection including effective work from all agencies with parents, carers, and families.

THE SCOPE OF THIS POLICY

This Policy applies to all work undertaken on behalf of RJ Working CIO by team members, whether Restorative Practitioners, Trainers, Volunteers and our Board of Directors. We are committed to following the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) and Keeping Children Safe in Education (updated yearly), Our Safeguarding Children Partnership (OSCP) for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, and Information Sharing Advice for Safeguarding Practitioners (2024). We recognise our responsibilities as a voluntary / independent sector organisation. We are using the definitions provided in Keeping Children Safe in Education and Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance which we have reproduced at Appendix 1.

RJ Working has adopted the following principles in relation to Child Safeguarding:

- The welfare, safety, and best interests of the child are paramount considerations.
- Anyone under the age of 18 is considered a child for the purpose of this Policy.
- All children – whatever their age, cultures, disability, gender, racial origin, language and/or religious beliefs have the right to protection from abuse.
- All allegations and suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately. They will not be ignored.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting the child's welfare.

The purpose of this Policy is to:

- Provide protection to the children in contact with RJ Working, including the children of staff, sessional workers and volunteers.
- Provide guidance to all of our organisation's staff, sessional workers and volunteers about what to do if they suspect a child may be experiencing, or be at risk of experiencing, harm. Application of Safer Recruitment principles (in our separate Policy) and enhanced DBS checks for all staff, sessional workers and volunteers supports this Policy.

Policy Review - This policy will be reviewed annually, or as required by changes in Local Multi-Agency policies and working, by RJ Working CIO, or by further national legislation.

We will ensure that all those working on behalf of RJ Working CIO:

- Understand their personal responsibility for protecting and safeguarding the wellbeing of children with whom they work.
- Are able to take appropriate action if a child is suffering, or likely to suffer from harm; or is in immediate danger.
- Are informed & able to respond helpfully to children who allege or disclose that abuse is happening.
- Are fully supported where they act in good faith to report a concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.
- Have opportunities to discuss and manage the feelings and emotions that are associated with protecting children.

RJ Working will work to safeguard children and young people by:

- Listening to, valuing and respecting them.
- Noticing when things are troubling them.
- Creating an environment where they are comfortable about speaking out if anything is worrying them.
- Being aware that we have duties under the Equality Act 2010. Children may find it difficult to always speak about what they need, what is happening to them or what has happened to them – and may need special provisions to support them.
- Acting in their best interests.
- Adopting and enforcing Safeguarding guidelines and procedures and a code of conduct for staff, sessional workers and volunteers.
- Working with Local Area Safeguarding Partners in accordance with the needs of the child, and cooperating with Local Area safeguarding arrangements if named as a Relevant Partner.
- Ensuring that, where RJ Working works with partners, they have appropriate and effective Child Safeguarding policies and procedures in place.
- Ensuring effective management of staff, sessional workers and volunteers through induction, supervision, support and training, all including child protection responsibilities and procedures to be followed if anyone has any concerns about a child's safety or welfare.
- Distinguishing between i) allegations ii) concerns about quality of care/practice & iii) complaints.

- Ensuring that RJ Working staff, sessional workers, volunteers and directors undertake appropriate Child Safeguarding training within the first year of their involvement with RJ Working, and regularly review their practice to ensure development of skills and expertise.
- Knowing the indicators of abuse and neglect for specific safeguarding issues such as child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation.
- Being vigilant, as multiple safeguarding issues will overlap with one another.
- Being prepared to identify children who may benefit from Early Help.
- Appointing Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Lead members of staff with relevant expertise from RJ Working to respond to concerns, and collate Child Safeguarding data.
- Sharing information about Child Safeguarding and good practice with children, parents, staff, sessional workers and volunteers.
- Ensuring that appropriate recording and monitoring systems are in place & that information about 3 concerns is shared with agencies who need to know, involving parents and children appropriately.
- Ensuring that partners, users and workers are aware of RJ Working policies and procedures, and the role of the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Deborah Mitchell deborah@rjworking.co.uk
07535656007 Registered Social Worker SW120353 BASW member 111888/104949

Deputy Safeguarding Lead is Nicky Abrahams nicky@rjworking.co.uk 07842250100 Registered Social Worker SW2184

This Policy is reviewed and updated 25th February 2026, ratified by the Board of Trustees and signed by the Chair, Yasmin Fosu.



RJ Working Child Safeguarding Process / Procedure

It is not the responsibility of anyone working for RJ Working in a paid or non-paid capacity to decide whether or not abuse of a child has taken place or investigate the matter. However, everyone has a responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting these to our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), our Deputy DSL or the appropriate Local Authority or Police colleagues. Where there is actual or suspected abuse - report this to the RJ Working Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy as soon as possible, by the end of the working day. The DSL or DDSL will then make a referral to MARU. If neither is available, make a referral directly using the referral form you can obtain from the MARU or on the Cornwall Council website: <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/childrensservices/child-protection-and-safeguarding/>

Follow the guidance accompanying the MARU referral form. Complete the form and send it to The Multi Agency Referral Unit (MARU) without delay; keeping a copy.

If the Child Protection matter is urgent telephone the MARU in the first instance and follow this up by sending a completed referral form without delay. Or call the Police on 101 or 999 (using When to Call the Police guidance).

Multi Agency Referral Unit, 3 North, County Hall, Truro. TR1 3AY Telephone: 0300 1231 116
Email: multiagencyreferralunit@cornwall.gov.uk Out of Hours telephone: 01208 251300.

If there has been an allegation about, or concerns relating to, a person who works with children it must be reported to the RJ Working Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy as soon as possible, by the end of the working day. The DSL or DDSL will then contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. An allegation may relate to a person who works with children who has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Local Authority Designated Officer for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly telephone: 01872 326536.

Remember to:

- Recognise that children may disclose abuse in a number of ways. This includes directly, indirectly, behaviourally and non-verbally.
- Listen carefully to any disclosure and take it seriously.
- Reassure victims they will be supported and kept safe. They shouldn't be made to feel ashamed for making a report or given the impression they are creating a problem.
- Do not touch or clear away any evidence.
- Do not agree to keep any secret.
- Do not ask leading questions.
- Do not contact any alleged abuser.
- Do not talk to anyone else (outside the alert process) about information shared with you.

Keep accurate and detailed notes on any concerns you have about a child. This will need to be shared with RJ Working's DSL or DDSL. Include: the child's details (name, age, address); what the child said or did that gave you cause for concern (if the child made a verbal disclosure, use

their words); any information the child gave you about the alleged abuser; the circumstances and anyone else who was there at the time.

Where there is a complaint about a member of staff, sessional worker or volunteer there may be: a)Criminal investigation b)Child Protection investigation c)Internal disciplinary / misconduct investigation. All available information will be used to reach decisions and removal of a paid or voluntary individual because the person poses a risk of harm to children will trigger a DBS referral.

For further information please see the following documents online:

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for Practitioners 2015

Preventing and Tackling Bullying updated 2017

When to call the Police

Information Sharing Advice for Safeguarding Practitioners 2024

Serious harm is defined as potentially life-threatening injury OR serious or likely long-term impairment of physical or mental health or physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.

Appendix 1 Definitions

The definitions and signs of abuse are described in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) and Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) and the most relevant items are summarised here:

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge.
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe & effective care.

Child Protection

Part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Abuse

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear, or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or extra-familial contexts by those known to them or, more rarely, by others.

Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Physical abuse

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child so as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or making fun of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), 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 maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts, such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge for example through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. CSE can affect any child who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children do not realise they are being exploited and may believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- provide suitable education.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Extremism

Extremism is defined in the Prevent strategy as the 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. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces. County Lines As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy published by the Home Office, a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line'. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money, and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons. This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK; no specified distance of travel is required. For further information see 'Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines' guidance.

Child criminal exploitation

As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others. Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation, as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to. It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Domestic abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduced the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse (section 1 of the Act). The statutory definition is clear that domestic abuse may be a single incident or a course of conduct which can encompass a wide range of abusive behaviours, including a) physical or sexual abuse; b) violent or threatening behaviour; c) controlling or coercive behaviour; d) economic abuse; and e) psychological, emotional, or other abuse. Under the statutory definition, both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be “personally connected” (as defined in section 2 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021). The definition ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex -partners and family members. All children can experience and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members, including where those being abusive do not live with the child. Experiencing domestic abuse can have a significant impact on children. Section 3 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children (0 to 18), as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as teenage relationship abuse. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of domestic abuse (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding

procedures should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 also defines:

Child on child abuse

Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’).
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse).
- Sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence).
- Sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos¹¹ (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery).
- Upskirting which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm.
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

So-called ‘honour’-based abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)

So-called ‘honour’-based abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.

Abuse committed in the context of preserving ‘honour’ often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, & individuals & groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

Forced marriage

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some perpetrators use perceived cultural practices to coerce a person into marriage. Modern Slavery Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs.

Online safety

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. An whole organization approach to online safety empowers the protection and safety of children and young people, in addition to ensuring everyone is educated about these risks. The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable and ever evolving, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
- conduct: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying, and
- commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

Many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks (i.e. 3G, 4G and 5G). This access means some children sexually harass, bully, and control others via their mobile and smart technology, share indecent images consensually and non-consensually (often via large chat groups) and view and share pornography and other harmful content. RJ Working supports all school and college policies to manage this on their premises and will work in partnership. In addition, we utilize our own risk assessments and support when supporting children and young people and such risks are identified.

Appendix 2: Child Protection and Safeguarding Online process/procedure

RJ Working recognises that training remotely through live online sessions presents a different setting for its work. The policy and procedures outlined above apply in their entirety to all work carried out by RJ Working, including online sessions. Online safety is the collective term for safeguarding involving the use of electronic devices and applications to communicate and access the Internet; often referred to as Information & Communications Technology. This procedure was developed during the challenges experienced as a result of Covid-19.

The online world provides everyone with many opportunities, however it can also present risks and challenges. We have a duty to ensure that all children, young people and adults involved in our organisation are protected from potential harm online. We also have a responsibility to help keep children and young people safe online, whether or not they are using RJ Working's network and devices. We recognise that working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare and in helping young people to be responsible in their approach to online safety. All children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.

Technology:

- RJ Working member of staff, sessional worker or volunteer will liaise with school/college partners to ensure that students have adequate access to technology and WiFi, without incurring additional costs to the young person or their family.
- A third member of staff from either the RJW team or school technical staff will be on hand to ensure glitches can be addressed.
- RJ Working staff, sessional worker or volunteers will utilise company log-ins for online platforms only.

Staffing and conduct:

- All online sessions will involve 2 staff members, either both from RJ Working or one RJ Working colleague co-training with one school colleague.
- 1:1 interactions online will be limited to specific staff.
- Professional conduct expectations remain the same as in face-to-face training sessions, with no sharing of personal contact details.
- RJ Working and all young people will adhere to schools' online safety policy.
- Staff take responsibility for establishing a safe, calm, respectful online space for young people and establish clear ground rules for this at the start of each programme.
- Small group work (maximum 12) enables best practice to be upheld at all times.
- Recordings of group sessions should only be made for clear and stated reasons; feedback can be sought from young people with their consent and recorded with due care for personal data.
- School staff will carry out pre-training calls to young people, obtaining agreement and ensuring a clear message about selecting a suitable background setting in their home.
- RJ Working trainers will deliver against a neutral background.
- All communications with young people prior to and following the training will happen through school staff.

- RJ Working require all school partners to sign and return an Online Protocol Statement for their work with us.

Platforms

Zoom:

- Meeting ID and passwords/links for entry will be generated by RJ Working and shared via school staff.
- Waiting-room feature to be enabled with a welcome message: one trainer checks off each participant as they enter the space.
- Only host can share screen (advanced sharing).
- Each meeting will be locked once each session has begun (participants tab).
- RJ Working will turn off file-transfer in the group (user management, group management).
- Disable private chat facility between members.

Teams:

- School /college partners will provide RJ Working with organisational log-ins for the purpose of delivering live sessions.
- Blurred background feature to be used by staff and students.
- Lobby feature to be enabled with a welcome message: one trainer checks off each participant as they enter the space.
- Participant screen-sharing to be disabled (settings under 'meeting policies').
- Each meeting will be locked once each session has begun.
- Disable private chat facility between meeting participants

Allowable actions in an incident of misuse:

- Zoom/Teams: the host holds the ability to 'remove' under participants menu. Following conversations with staff, it is permissible for the young person to rejoin the meeting.
- Any incident of harm or misuse will be recorded by RJ Working and this information shared with school staff.

Harmful or upsetting content

RJ Working team members follow usual reporting procedures as well as sharing information with school partners. Staff can also get support by:

- Reporting harmful online content to the UK Safer Internet Centre.
- Advise schools to access the free Professionals Online Safety Helpline which supports the online safeguarding of both children and professionals. Call 0344 381 4772 or email helpline@saferinternet.org.uk. The helpline is open from Monday to Friday from 10am to 4pm.

References used in updating this policy:

<https://swgfl.org.uk/>

<https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/good-practice-guidance/online-children-young-people>

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/resources>

Appendix 3 Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is when someone reports wrongdoing on the basis that it is in the public interest for the concern to be brought to light. This is usually something they've seen at work but not always. The situation or incident that needs reporting might have happened in the past, be happening now, or be something the whistleblower is concerned may happen in the near future.

RJ Working recognises the 2018 requirement for Safeguarding organisations to have a Whistleblowing Policy based on Sir Robert Francis 'Freedom to Speak Up Review' 2015.

We have identified 12 of the 20 Principles proposed for the NHS relevant to RJ Working as a small, independent sector organisation. Please also refer to RJ Working's Whistleblowing Policy.

Principle 1 Culture of safety: Safeguarding organisations should actively foster a culture of safety and learning, in which all staff feel safe to raise concerns.

Principle 2 Culture of raising concerns: Raising concerns should be part of the normal routine business of any well led organisation.

Principle 3 Culture free from bullying: Freedom to speak up about concerns depends on staff being able to work in a culture which is free from bullying and other oppressive behaviours.

Principle 4 Culture of visible leadership: Employers should demonstrate, through visible leadership, that they welcome and encourage the raising of concerns by staff.

Principle 5 Culture of valuing staff: Employers should show that they value staff who raise concerns, and celebrate benefits and improvements made in response to the issues identified.

Principle 6 Culture of reflective practice: There should be opportunities for all staff to engage in regular reflection of concerns in their work.

Principle 7 Raising and reporting concerns: Organisations should have structures to facilitate both informal and formal raising and resolution of concerns. Staff should be encouraged to raise concerns informally and work together with colleagues to find solutions. Organisations should have a clear process for recording all formal reports of

incidents and concerns, and for sharing that record with the person who reported the matter.

Principle 8 Investigations: When a formal concern has been raised, there should be prompt, swift, proportionate, fair and blame-free investigations to establish the facts. Organisations should devise and implement systems which enable such investigations to be undertaken,

Principle 9 Mediation and dispute resolution: Consideration should be given at an early stage to the use of expert interventions to resolve conflicts, rebuild trust or support staff who have raised concerns. Organisations should have access to resources to deploy alternative dispute resolution techniques, including mediation and reconciliation to:

- address unresolved disputes between staff or between staff and management as a result of or associated with a report raising a concern
- repair trust and build constructive relationships.

Principle 10 Training: Every member of staff should receive training in their organisation's approach to raising concerns and in receiving and acting on them.

Principle 11 Support: Organisations should ensure that there is a range of persons to whom concerns can be reported easily and without formality. They should provide staff who raise concerns with ready access to mentoring, advocacy, advice and counselling.

Principle 14 Accountability: Everyone should expect to be held accountable for adopting fair, honest and open behaviours and practices when raising or receiving and handling concerns. There should be personal and organisational accountability for:

- poor practice in relation to encouraging the raising of concerns and responding to them
- the victimisation of workers for making public interest disclosures
- raising false concerns in bad faith or for personal benefit
- acting with disrespect or other unreasonable behaviour when raising or responding to concerns
- inappropriate use of confidentiality clauses.

<http://freedomtospeakup.org.uk/>

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/services/nspcc-helpline?modularPage=whistleblowing>

<https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>