

Safeguarding and child protection policy

Key safeguarding information

Name of designated safeguarding lead	Michelle Harvey
Name/s of deputy designated safeguarding lead/s	Gabrielle Barton
Date of policy	01.09.2026
Date to be reviewed	31.08.2027

Rushmere Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

1. Introduction

Rushmere has a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and young people who access our provision. We are committed to providing a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment where all children are respected, valued and supported.

We recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Rushmere is part of a wider safeguarding system that includes the setting in which we operate, local safeguarding partners and national safeguarding frameworks. We work collaboratively with relevant agencies to ensure that children receive the right support at the right time.

We maintain an attitude of **"it could happen here"** and approach all safeguarding matters with an open mind. In all decisions relating to children, we consider their wishes, feelings, views and best interests.

Rushmere recognises that children may experience abuse or harm from adults or from other children. We are committed to creating a culture of safety that reduces opportunities for abuse, including all forms of child-on-child abuse, through effective training, education, safer working practices and robust safeguarding procedures.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- Providing help and support to meet children's needs as soon as concerns emerge.
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether this occurs within or outside the home, including online environments.
- Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Child protection is a specific part of safeguarding and refers to the actions taken to protect children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

For the purposes of this policy, a child is defined as any person under the age of 18.

2. Aim of this Policy

The aim of this safeguarding and child protection policy is to:

- Promote safeguarding and child protection and provide clear information about how Rushmere works to keep children safe.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Provide staff and volunteers with the information required to identify concerns and respond appropriately.
- Ensure children are protected from maltreatment, abuse, neglect and harm.
- Promote a culture where safeguarding concerns are recognised, reported and acted upon promptly.

Where Rushmere operates on a school site, we will have due regard to the safeguarding arrangements and procedures outlined in the host school's safeguarding and child protection policy.

3. Nature of Provision

Rushmere provides supplementary education for children and young people. Our provision focuses on supporting children's educational development, social skills and emotional wellbeing.

We work closely with young people to develop their confidence, independence and personal skills, while offering opportunities to achieve accredited qualifications.

Rushmere operates Monday to Friday, with young people attending for up to three days per week between **9:30am and 2:00pm**.

The provision is delivered by a team of paid staff and volunteers who work directly with children and young people.

Provision address:

Rushmere Academy
20 Francis Street

Northampton
NN1 2NZ

The nature of our work means that staff and volunteers have regular contact with children and may support children with a range of needs and circumstances. Safeguarding is therefore central to everything we do.

4. Safeguarding Team

The safeguarding team is responsible for ensuring safeguarding procedures are followed and that concerns are acted upon appropriately.

Role	Name	Contact
Group Leader	Michelle Harvey	Michelle.harvey@rushmereacademy.co.uk
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Michelle Harvey	Michelle.harvey@rushmereacademy.co.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Gabrielle Barton	gabi.barton@rushmereacademy.co.uk

All staff and volunteers must report safeguarding concerns immediately to the DSL or deputy DSL. Concerns must never be ignored or delayed.

5. Safeguarding Guidance and Legislation

Rushmere's safeguarding procedures have been developed with regard to the following guidance and legislation:

- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)*.
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)*.
- *Right Help, Right Time* guidance, including local safeguarding thresholds and pathways.
- Guidance from Northamptonshire Children's Trust.
- The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

This policy should be read alongside Rushmere's other relevant policies, including:

- Staff Code of Conduct.
- Behaviour Policy.
- Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Online Safety Policy.

- Health and Safety Policy.
 - Complaints Procedure.
 - Safer Recruitment Procedures.
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6. Safeguarding Training

Training for all staff and volunteers

All staff and volunteers receive safeguarding training appropriate to their role. Safeguarding training is refreshed annually and includes:

- The identity and contact details of the DSL and deputy DSL.
- How to report safeguarding concerns.
- The signs and indicators of abuse and neglect.
- Child-on-child abuse, including harmful sexual behaviour.
- Online safety risks.
- Mental health concerns.
- Safeguarding children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- Safer working practices.
- Procedures for concerns about adults working with children.
- How and when to make referrals to children's social care.
- The importance of professional boundaries.

All staff and volunteers complete High Speed Training safeguarding training every September.

All staff and volunteers receive a copy of Rushmere's Code of Conduct and confirm annually that they have read and understood it.

7. Training for Group Leader(s)

The Group Leader completes the Department for Education training course:

"Safeguarding in Out of School Settings e-learning."

The Group Leader also completes local safeguarding training, including:

"Right Help, Right Time" training, which supports professionals to understand local safeguarding thresholds and pathways in West Northamptonshire.

8. Training for the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL and deputy DSL undertake advanced safeguarding training at least every two years.

DSL training covers:

- The role and responsibilities of the DSL.
- Referral processes to children's social care.
- Working with safeguarding partners.
- Managing safeguarding records.
- Responding to disclosures.
- Safer recruitment and managing allegations.
- Child protection procedures.

Training includes specific safeguarding issues, including:

- Bullying.
- Physical abuse.
- Emotional abuse.
- Neglect.
- Child sexual abuse.
- Child-on-child abuse, including harmful sexual behaviour.
- Child criminal exploitation.
- Child sexual exploitation.
- Mental health.
- Online safety.
- Substance misuse.
- Extremism and radicalisation.
- Honour-based abuse.
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).
- Forced marriage.
- Domestic abuse.
- Serious violence.

The DSL understands:

- What abuse and neglect may look like.
- How to identify children who may require additional support.
- How to make referrals to children's social care.
- What to expect following a referral.
- How to challenge and escalate decisions where necessary.

9. Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Rushmere recognises that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) may face additional safeguarding challenges and may require additional support to ensure they are protected from harm.

Children with SEND may experience increased vulnerability due to:

- Assumptions that indicators of abuse, such as changes in behaviour, mood or physical presentation, are related to a child's disability without further investigation.
- Increased risk of isolation from peers.
- Increased vulnerability to bullying, abuse or exploitation.
- Communication barriers that may make it more difficult for a child to report concerns.
- Difficulties understanding online risks, including distinguishing between appropriate and inappropriate online content.
- Repeating language, behaviours or online content without understanding potential consequences.
- Dependence on adults for care, support or communication.

Rushmere ensures that:

- Staff and volunteers receive safeguarding training that highlights the additional vulnerabilities experienced by children with SEND.
- Individual children's communication needs are understood and supported.
- Children are provided with accessible opportunities to share worries or concerns.
- Staff do not make assumptions about the cause of changes in behaviour or presentation.
- Appropriate adjustments are made to ensure all children can safely access our provision.
- Safeguarding concerns involving children with SEND are taken seriously and responded to appropriately.

10. Keeping Children Safe During Activities

Rushmere is committed to ensuring that all activities are planned, delivered and reviewed with children's safety as a priority.

Risk Assessments

Risk assessments are completed for all activities, including routine activities and any additional events or visits.

Risk assessments consider:

- The age, needs and abilities of the children attending.
- Any additional vulnerabilities or support needs.
- Staffing levels and supervision arrangements.
- Physical risks associated with activities.
- Safeguarding risks.
- Emergency procedures.
- The suitability of the environment.

Where activities involve external providers, Rushmere will review and consider any third-party risk assessments to ensure that appropriate safeguarding measures are in place.

Risk assessments are reviewed regularly and updated where circumstances change.

11. Online Safety

Rushmere recognises that children may be vulnerable to risks online, including:

- Cyberbullying.
- Online abuse.
- Grooming.
- Sexual exploitation.
- Exposure to inappropriate content.
- Harmful online challenges or trends.
- Misuse of social media.
- Sharing personal information.

We promote safe and responsible use of technology and ensure children receive appropriate guidance about online safety.

Where children use digital devices as part of Rushmere activities:

- Children will not have unsupervised access to the internet while in our care.
- Staff will supervise children when using online resources.
- Devices used by children will have appropriate filtering and monitoring arrangements in place.
- Staff will follow Rushmere's Online Safety Policy and acceptable use procedures.
- Any concerns regarding online activity will be reported through safeguarding procedures.

Children are encouraged to speak to trusted adults if they experience anything online that makes them feel worried, uncomfortable or unsafe.

Where Rushmere uses devices or online systems provided by a host school, we will ensure that appropriate arrangements are agreed with the school regarding filtering, monitoring and safe use.

12. Mobile Phone and Personal Device Use

Rushmere recognises that mobile phones and personal devices are widely used by children and adults. To ensure safeguarding, clear expectations are in place.

Staff and volunteers must:

- Use personal devices appropriately and in accordance with the Code of Conduct.
- Not take photographs or videos of children using personal devices.
- Not communicate with children through personal social media accounts.
- Maintain professional boundaries at all times.

Children may bring personal devices to Rushmere where this has been agreed with parents/carers. However:

- Devices must not be used inappropriately during sessions.
- Children must not access unsuitable content while attending Rushmere.
- Staff will address any concerns regarding misuse of devices.
- Any safeguarding concerns arising from device use will be recorded and reported.

13. First Aid and Medical Arrangements

Rushmere ensures that appropriate first aid arrangements are in place to support children's health and safety.

We ensure that:

- Appropriate numbers of staff have completed relevant first aid training.
- First aid equipment is available and regularly checked.
- Accidents and incidents are recorded appropriately.
- Parents/carers are informed where required.
- Medical information and emergency contacts are collected through consent forms.
- Individual healthcare needs are identified and managed appropriately.

Where children require medication or specific medical support, this will be managed in line with Rushmere's health and safety procedures.

14. Health and Safety

Rushmere is committed to maintaining a safe environment for children, staff and visitors.

We ensure that:

- Premises and equipment are suitable and safe.
 - Hazards are identified and managed.
 - Staff understand emergency procedures.
 - Fire safety procedures are followed.
 - Accidents and incidents are recorded and reviewed.
 - Children are supervised appropriately.
 - Health and safety responsibilities are communicated clearly to staff and volunteers.
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15. Preventing Unauthorised Access

Rushmere takes appropriate steps to ensure that children are protected from unauthorised individuals accessing the provision.

Arrangements include:

- Visitors signing in and out.
- Visitors being appropriately identified.
- Visitors being supervised while children are present.
- Staff challenging unknown or unauthorised individuals.
- Children not being allowed to leave the provision without appropriate permission.
- Secure arrangements for entrances and exits.

Any concerns regarding unknown individuals accessing the provision will be reported immediately to the DSL.

16. Collection Procedures and Children Leaving the Provision

Children's arrival and departure arrangements are agreed with parents/carers through consent forms.

Rushmere ensures that:

- Parents/carers provide clear collection arrangements.
 - Any permission for children to leave independently is recorded.
 - Staff know which children are authorised to leave unaccompanied.
 - Changes to collection arrangements are confirmed by parents/carers.
 - Children are not released to unauthorised adults.
 - Any concerns about collection arrangements are reported to the DSL.
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17. Behaviour Management

Rushmere promotes positive behaviour through clear expectations, respectful relationships and consistent support.

Our approach aims to:

- Encourage children's emotional development.
- Promote kindness, respect and inclusion.
- Support children to understand the impact of their actions.
- Address behaviour concerns fairly and consistently.

Staff will never use physical punishment, humiliating language, threatening behaviour or any form of emotional harm.

Any behaviour that may indicate a safeguarding concern, including repeated aggression, concerning language or harmful behaviour towards others, will be reported to the DSL.

18. Bullying and Child-on-Child Abuse

Rushmere recognises that children can experience harm from other children.

Child-on-child abuse may include:

- Bullying.
- Cyberbullying.
- Physical abuse.
- Sexual harassment.
- Sexual violence.
- Harmful sexual behaviour.

- Initiation or hazing rituals.
- Violence or intimidation.

Rushmere does not tolerate child-on-child abuse and will:

- Take all concerns seriously.
 - Provide support to children affected.
 - Record and investigate concerns appropriately.
 - Consider the needs of both the child affected and the child displaying harmful behaviour.
 - Follow safeguarding referral procedures where necessary.
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19. Complaints Procedure

Rushmere is committed to listening to concerns and responding appropriately.

Parents, carers, children, staff or members of the public can raise concerns through our complaints procedure.

Safeguarding concerns will always take priority and will be dealt with immediately through safeguarding procedures rather than waiting for the outcome of a complaints process.

Any concerns about safeguarding practice should be reported to the DSL, deputy DSL or appropriate safeguarding authority.

20. Photographs and Sharing Images

Rushmere recognises the importance of protecting children's privacy and ensuring images are shared safely.

Parents/carers will be provided with consent forms annually regarding:

- The use of photographs.
- The sharing of images.
- The use of CCTV where applicable.

Rushmere ensures that:

- Images are only taken and shared where appropriate consent has been obtained.
- Children are not identifiable where photographs are shared publicly unless agreed through consent procedures.
- Social media photographs will have children's faces blurred.

- Images are stored securely and used only for agreed purposes.

Staff and volunteers must not take photographs of children using personal devices.

21. Visitors and Visiting Speakers

Occasionally Rushmere may invite visitors or speakers to enhance children's experiences.

Before any visitor attends, Rushmere will:

- Consider whether the visitor's purpose and content are suitable.
- Complete appropriate risk assessments.
- Inform the host school where provision takes place on a school site.
- Ensure the visitor's views and values are consistent with Rushmere's ethos.
- Provide safeguarding expectations and relevant policies.
- Ensure visitors sign in and out.
- Ensure visitors are supervised at all times.
- Never allow visitors unsupervised access to children.

These arrangements apply to all visitors, including parents, carers and external professionals.

22. Educational Visits and Activities Away From Rushmere

Where Rushmere organises educational visits or activities away from the provision, we will ensure:

- Activities are suitable for the age and needs of children attending.
- Appropriate risk assessments are completed.
- Staff and volunteers have completed required safer recruitment checks.
- Children are never left unsupervised with adults who have not completed appropriate checks.
- Parent/carers consent is obtained.
- Emergency contact details are available.
- Staffing arrangements provide appropriate supervision.

Before residential visits or overnight stays, parents/carers will be provided with information regarding:

- The purpose of the visit.

- Accommodation arrangements.
- Safety measures.
- Contact details.
- Emergency procedures.

Rushmere will ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to safeguard children during activities outside the provision.

23. Concerns About Children

Rushmere recognises that early identification and action are essential in protecting children from harm.

Any member of staff, volunteer, parent/carer or member of the public who has a concern about a child's welfare must report this concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as soon as possible.

Where the DSL is unavailable, concerns must be reported to the Deputy DSL without delay.

If, in exceptional circumstances, neither the DSL nor Deputy DSL is available, this should not prevent appropriate action being taken to safeguard a child. Staff and volunteers should consider contacting children's social care, the police where appropriate, or seek advice from the local safeguarding partnership.

Although anyone can make a safeguarding referral, staff and volunteers should discuss concerns with the DSL wherever possible.

All staff and volunteers must remain alert to signs that a child may be experiencing abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Concerns that must be reported immediately include:

- A concern or suspicion that a child has suffered an injury that cannot reasonably be explained through normal play or activity.
- Changes in a child's behaviour, mood, emotional wellbeing or presentation.
- Concerning comments, drawings, stories, language or disclosures made by a child.
- Significant changes in attendance or engagement.
- Signs that a child may be experiencing child-on-child abuse, including:
 - bullying;
 - cyberbullying;
 - physical abuse;
 - sexual harassment;
 - sexual violence;
 - harmful sexual behaviour;
 - initiation or hazing-type behaviours.
- Concerns about an adult or another person who may pose a risk of harm to a child.
- Any disclosure of abuse or neglect.

All safeguarding concerns must be taken seriously and acted upon promptly.

24. Responding to a Child Who Discloses Abuse

If a child tells a member of staff or volunteer that they have experienced or are experiencing abuse, the adult receiving the disclosure must respond calmly and sensitively.

The member of staff or volunteer should:

- Listen carefully and allow the child to speak freely.
- Remain calm and show that they are taking the child seriously.
- Accept what the child says without judgement.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by speaking out.
- Explain that the information cannot be kept secret and must be shared with people who can help keep them safe.
- Avoid making promises that cannot be kept.
- Ask only questions needed to clarify understanding.
- Avoid leading questions or suggesting answers.
- Avoid criticising or making negative comments about the alleged person responsible.
- Record the disclosure accurately.
- Pass the information to the DSL immediately.

Staff and volunteers must not:

- Investigate the concern themselves.
- Ask detailed questions designed to establish facts.
- Promise confidentiality.
- Delay reporting the concern.

The priority is to ensure the child feels listened to, supported and protected.

25. Recording Safeguarding Concerns

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions and actions must be recorded in writing.

Records must be:

- Clear.
- Accurate.
- Factual.

- Dated and timed.
- Stored securely.

Where a child makes a disclosure, the member of staff or volunteer should record:

- The date, time and location of the conversation.
- Who was present.
- The child's exact words where possible.
- Any noticeable behaviour, emotions or non-verbal communication.
- Details of any injuries or relevant observations.
- Any actions taken following the disclosure.

Records should:

- Separate facts from opinions or assumptions.
- Avoid interpretation or speculation.
- Include a clear summary of the concern.
- Record decisions made and the reasons for those decisions.
- Include details of referrals, advice received and outcomes.

Original notes must not be destroyed, as they may be required as part of future safeguarding enquiries or legal proceedings.

All records must be passed promptly to the DSL. Staff and volunteers must not keep copies of safeguarding records.

Rushmere uses the following recording process:

1. Staff/volunteers complete a **"My Concern" safeguarding form**.
2. The form is sent securely to the DSL.
3. The DSL reviews the information and decides the appropriate action.
4. The DSL considers whether information needs to be shared with:
 - the child's home school;
 - Northamptonshire Children's Trust;
 - the police;
 - other relevant safeguarding partners.
5. All safeguarding actions and decisions are recorded on Rushmere's safeguarding communication log for the individual child.

26. Referrals to Children's Social Care and Other Agencies

Where there are concerns that a child may be suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, the DSL will consider whether a referral is required.

The DSL will make referrals to the appropriate agencies, including:

- Northamptonshire Children's Trust Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).
- The police where a crime may have been committed.
- The Channel programme where there are concerns relating to radicalisation.

If a member of staff or volunteer makes a referral directly, they must inform the DSL as soon as possible.

Following a referral:

- The DSL or person who made the referral will record the referral details.
- The outcome of the referral will be followed up where required.
- If concerns continue or the child's circumstances do not improve, Rushmere will use appropriate escalation procedures to ensure the child receives the support needed.

27. Safeguarding Contacts

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Telephone:

0300 126 7000 (Option 1)

Online referral:

MASH online referral form

Out of Hours Children's Social Care Duty Team

Telephone:

0300 126 7000

Police

Emergency:

999

Non-emergency:

101

NSPCC Helpline

Telephone:

0808 800 5000

Reporting Online Sexual Abuse

CEOP Safety Centre:

<https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>

28. Safer Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers

Rushmere is committed to safer recruitment practices to ensure that unsuitable individuals are prevented from working with children.

We follow safer recruitment procedures by:

- Carrying out appropriate recruitment checks before staff or volunteers begin working with children.
- Verifying identity.
- Obtaining appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.
- Checking qualifications and experience where relevant.
- Following appropriate recruitment procedures.
- Identifying and managing any concerns regarding suitability.
- Maintaining ongoing oversight of staff and volunteer conduct.

Rushmere ensures that:

- Staff and volunteers understand safeguarding responsibilities.
 - Staff and volunteers receive safeguarding induction.
 - Staff and volunteers understand the Code of Conduct.
 - Schools receive confirmation that required safer recruitment checks have been completed for Rushmere staff and volunteers working on their site.
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29. Concerns and Allegations About Adults Working With Children

Rushmere takes all concerns about adults working or volunteering with children seriously.

Any allegation or concern about a member of staff, volunteer or adult working on behalf of Rushmere must be reported immediately to:

- The Group Leader.
- The DSL.

Where there is an allegation that an adult may have harmed a child or may pose a risk of harm, Rushmere will follow local safeguarding procedures and report concerns to the appropriate safeguarding partners.

This may include:

- The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- Children's Social Care.
- The police.

The school site will also be informed where Rushmere operates within a school setting, in accordance with safeguarding requirements.

Concerns must be referred within appropriate timescales and not delayed.

30. Allegations That May Indicate a Risk of Harm

An allegation may relate to an adult who:

- Has behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child.
- Has possibly committed a criminal offence against or relating to a child.
- Has behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.
- Has demonstrated behaviour that raises concerns about their suitability to work with children.

This includes concerns arising from behaviour:

- Within Rushmere.
- During professional activities.
- Outside of work or volunteering.

31. Low-Level Concerns About Adults

Rushmere recognises that low-level concerns are important safeguarding information and should not be ignored.

A low-level concern is any concern, however small, that causes a sense of unease or "nagging doubt" that an adult working with children may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the Code of Conduct; and/or
- Falls below the threshold for an allegation requiring referral to the LADO.

Examples may include:

- Being overly familiar with children.
- Having favourites.
- Using inappropriate language.
- Taking photographs of children using a personal device.
- Spending unnecessary one-to-one time with a child in a secluded area.
- Humiliating or belittling children.

Low-level concerns must always be reported to:

- Michelle Harvey (DSL/Group Leader); or
- Gabrielle Barton (Deputy DSL).

All concerns will be considered, recorded and managed appropriately.

32. Whistleblowing and Concerns About Safeguarding Practice

Rushmere encourages staff and volunteers to raise concerns about safeguarding practice.

Any concerns about safeguarding arrangements, procedures or decisions should be reported to:

- Michelle Harvey.
- Gabrielle Barton.
- The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), where appropriate.

Staff and volunteers may also contact the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line:

Telephone:
0800 028 0285

Rushmere will ensure that concerns raised in good faith are taken seriously and managed appropriately.

33. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Rushmere recognises that effective information sharing is essential to identifying, responding to and preventing abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Safeguarding information will be shared appropriately where there is a lawful reason to do so and where sharing information is necessary to protect a child or promote their welfare.

The safety and wellbeing of children is the priority. Data protection legislation does not prevent information sharing where there is a safeguarding concern.

Rushmere follows the principles of:

- The Data Protection Act 2018.
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).
- Information sharing guidance for safeguarding children.

Information will only be shared with relevant individuals and agencies who need the information to carry out their safeguarding responsibilities.

This may include:

- The child's parent/carers, where appropriate and where doing so does not place the child at increased risk.
- The child's home school.
- Northamptonshire Children's Trust.
- The police.
- Other safeguarding partners.

Staff and volunteers must:

- Maintain confidentiality regarding safeguarding information.
- Not discuss safeguarding concerns with people who do not need to know.
- Share concerns promptly with the DSL.
- Seek advice from the DSL if unsure whether information should be shared.

34. Safeguarding Record Keeping

Rushmere maintains accurate and secure safeguarding records.

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions and actions must be recorded clearly and promptly.

Safeguarding records must include:

- A clear description of the concern.
- Details of any conversations held.
- The actions taken.
- Decisions made and the reasons for those decisions.
- Details of referrals made.

- Outcomes and follow-up actions.

Records must be:

- Accurate.
- Objective.
- Factual.
- Dated and timed.
- Stored securely.

Safeguarding records will be retained in accordance with data protection requirements and Rushmere's record retention procedures.

Access to safeguarding records will be limited to appropriate individuals who require the information to safeguard children.

35. Equality and Inclusion Statement

Rushmere is committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognises that children have different needs, experiences and circumstances.

All children have the right to be protected from harm, regardless of:

- Age.
- Disability.
- Gender.
- Race.
- Religion or belief.
- Culture.
- Sexual orientation.
- Family circumstances.
- Additional needs.

Rushmere recognises that some children may face additional barriers when recognising, reporting or seeking help for abuse.

Additional vulnerabilities may include:

- Children with SEND.
- Children experiencing mental health difficulties.
- Children experiencing domestic abuse.
- Children vulnerable to exploitation.
- Children facing communication barriers.
- Children experiencing discrimination or inequality.

We ensure that:

- All children receive equal protection.
 - Individual needs are considered.
 - Reasonable adjustments are made where required.
 - Staff remain alert to additional safeguarding risks.
 - Children are supported to express their wishes and feelings.
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36. Supporting Children's Voice

Rushmere recognises the importance of listening to children and ensuring their views influence safeguarding decisions.

We encourage children to:

- Speak to trusted adults.
- Share worries or concerns.
- Ask for help when they need it.
- Participate in decisions affecting them wherever appropriate.

Staff and volunteers will:

- Listen respectfully.
 - Take children's concerns seriously.
 - Consider children's wishes and feelings.
 - Ensure children understand what will happen when they share a concern.
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37. Policy Review

This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains effective, accurate and compliant with current safeguarding guidance.

The review will consider:

- Changes to legislation and statutory guidance.
- Updates from safeguarding partnerships.
- Learning from safeguarding incidents.
- Feedback from staff, volunteers and partner organisations.
- Changes to Rushmere's provision or activities.

The policy will be updated where required and all staff and volunteers will be informed of significant changes.

All staff and volunteers are expected to read and understand this policy as part of their safeguarding responsibilities.

Appendix 1: Safeguarding Responsibilities Summary

All Staff and Volunteers

Staff and volunteers must:

- Maintain a child-centred approach.
 - Be alert to signs of abuse or neglect.
 - Report concerns immediately.
 - Record concerns accurately.
 - Maintain professional boundaries.
 - Follow the Code of Conduct.
 - Never promise confidentiality to a child.
 - Seek support from the DSL when unsure.
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Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is responsible for:

- Acting as the main safeguarding point of contact.
 - Managing safeguarding concerns.
 - Making referrals where appropriate.
 - Maintaining safeguarding records.
 - Supporting staff and volunteers.
 - Liaising with external agencies.
 - Ensuring safeguarding training is up to date.
 - Ensuring safeguarding policies and procedures are reviewed.
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Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Deputy DSL supports the DSL and undertakes safeguarding responsibilities when the DSL is unavailable.

Appendix 2: Safeguarding Checklist for Staff and Volunteers

All staff and volunteers should ensure they:

- ☐ Know who the DSL and Deputy DSL are.
 - ☐ Know how to report a safeguarding concern.
 - ☐ Have completed safeguarding training.
 - ☐ Have read the Code of Conduct.
 - ☐ Understand professional boundaries.
 - ☐ Understand the signs and indicators of abuse.
 - ☐ Understand child-on-child abuse risks.
 - ☐ Understand online safety expectations.
 - ☐ Know how to respond to a child disclosure.
 - ☐ Know that safeguarding concerns must be recorded and reported immediately.
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Appendix 3: Key Safeguarding Contacts

Rushmere Designated Safeguarding Lead

Michelle Harvey

Email: Michelle.harvey@rushmereacademy.co.uk

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Gabrielle Barton

Email: gabi.barton@rushmereacademy.co.uk

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Telephone: 0300 126 7000 (Option 1)

Out of Hours Children's Social Care Duty Team

Telephone: 0300 126 7000

Police

Emergency: 999

Non-emergency: 101

NSPCC Helpline

Telephone: 0808 800 5000

Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP)

<https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>
