

Harlow & Chelmsford Jewish Community

Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

1. Introduction

Harlow & Chelmsford Jewish Community (HCJC) makes a positive contribution to a strong and safe community and recognises the right of every individual to stay safe.

HCJC comes into contact with children and / or vulnerable adults through the following activities:

- During religious services (generally held every 2 weeks)
- Educating adults about the religion (during monthly study sessions)
- Educating children about the religion (during weekly religious school/cheder)
- Pastoral care and outreach within the HCJC

The above are regulated activities. **All volunteers/staff** (paid or unpaid) involved in these activities are to be enhanced DBS checked

This policy seeks to ensure that HCJC undertakes its responsibilities with regard to protection of children and / or vulnerable adults and will respond to concerns appropriately as well as the staff and volunteers. The policy establishes a framework to support paid and unpaid staff in their practices and clarifies the organisation's expectations.

2. Legislation

The principal pieces of legislation governing this policy are:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Education Act 2002
- Counter Terrorism & Security Act – March 2015
- UN Rights of the Child (UK law from 1992)
- Childcare Act 2006
- Local Authority Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Online Safety Act 2023
- Keeping Children Safe in Education –2024 (DfE)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children – 2023 (DfE)
- Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners – 2024 Guidance
- Changes to Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 - arising from the Serious Crime Act 2015
- Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021

3. Definitions

Safeguarding is about embedding practices throughout the charity to ensure the protection of children and vulnerable adults wherever possible. In contrast, child and adult protection is about responding to circumstances that arise.

Abuse is a selfish act of oppression and injustice, exploitation and manipulation of power by those in a position of authority. This can be caused by those inflicting harm or those who fail to act to prevent harm. Abuse is not restricted to any socio-economic group, gender or culture.

It can take a number of forms, including the following:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological or Emotional abuse
- Neglect or Omission to act
- Financial or material abuse
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Modern Slavery
- Self Neglect
- Domestic Abuse
- Institutional Abuse
- Discriminatory Abuse
- Harassment
- Radicalisation

Definition of a child:

A child is under the age of 18 (as defined in the United Nations convention on the Rights of a Child).

Definition of a vulnerable adult:

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm or from being exploited. This may include a person who: Is elderly and frail; Has a mental illness including dementia; Has a physical or sensory disability; Has a learning disability; Has a severe physical illness; Is a substance misuser; Is homeless.

Definition of a Regulated Activity:

This term used to describe certain job functions carried out by an employee as defined by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). These requirements are important as they determine eligibility for an Enhanced Level DBS check and a check of the DBS Barred Lists.

4. Responsibilities

All volunteers/staff (paid or unpaid) have responsibility to follow the guidance laid out in this policy and related policies, and to pass on any welfare concerns as described in this policy.

All volunteers/staff (paid or unpaid) are expected to promote good practice by being an excellent role model, contribute to discussions about safeguarding and to positively involve people in developing safe practices.

Additional specific responsibilities

Trustees have responsibility to ensure:

- The policy is in place and appropriate
- The policy is accessible
- Liaison with and monitoring the Designated Safeguarding Lead's work

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Alex Aronberg. This person's responsibilities are:

- The policy is implemented
- The policy is monitored and reviewed
- Promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults
- Ensure volunteer/staff (paid and unpaid) have access to appropriate training/information
- Receive volunteer/staff concerns about safeguarding and respond to all seriously, swiftly and appropriately
- Keep up to date with local arrangements for safeguarding and DBS
- Take forward concerns about responses

If the DSL is not available or away then an alternative person to raise concerns is either the Rabbi or member of council.

5. Implementation Stages

5.1 Safe recruitment

HCJC ensures safe recruitment through the following processes:

- Providing the following safeguarding statement in recruitment adverts or application details – 'recruitment is done in line with safe recruitment practices.'
- Job or role descriptions for all roles involving contact with children and / or vulnerable adults will contain reference to safeguarding responsibilities.
- There are person specifications for roles which contain a statement on core competency with regard to child/ vulnerable adult protection/ safeguarding
- Shortlisting is based on formal application processes/forms and not on provision of CVs

- Interviews are conducted according to equal opportunity principles and interview questions are based on the relevant job description and person specification
- DBS checks will be conducted for all staff (paid or unpaid) working with children and vulnerable adults. It is a criminal offence for individuals barred by the ISA to work or apply to work with children or vulnerable adults in a wide range of posts.
- No formal job offers are made until after checks for suitability are completed (including DBS and 2 references).
- A check is undertaken to confirm the person is allowed to work in the UK

5.2 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Gap Management

The organisation commits resources to providing DBS records check on volunteers/staff (paid or unpaid) whose roles involve working with children and /or vulnerable adults.

Enhanced DBS checks are required for the following roles:

- Rabbi (who is leading religious services and religious adult education)
- volunteers/staff (paid or unpaid) teaching in the religious school (cheder)
- volunteers/staff (paid or unpaid) undertaking pastoral care

The DSL will maintain a list of individuals undertaking the above roles and confirmation that DBS checks are in date and will review the list yearly to avoid DBS gaps. DBS checks are to be rechecked every 3 years.

5.3 Working with Vulnerable Adults (pastoral care and outreach within HCJC)

- Lone working should be avoided wherever possible. If this is not possible then meet in a public place. Only attend a person's house alone if you have been before and have had regular contact with the person in the past. There is to be no visiting a person alone if it is the first time visiting them or you have only had infrequent contact with them.
- A record is to be kept of the visit/meeting (including those present, date, location and reason for visit/meeting). Safeguarding records are to be held securely, whether electronically or on paper.
- Those undertaking pastoral care will undertake initial safeguarding training. This will be complemented by annual refreshers comprising of an on-line refresher training course and reading this policy. Confirmation that the yearly refresher has been undertaken will be via email confirmation to the DSL (the DSL will provide yearly reminders including providing necessary access to on-line training if required)

5.4 Working with Children (cheder)

- An adult working alone with the cheder children is to be avoided. An additional adult, generally this is a parent, is to be present. In circumstances where this is not possible the cheder lesson will be cancelled.

- Any 1-to-1 teaching undertaken in another part of the synagogue is to be undertaken within another area of the open-plan hall (not within a separate room with a closed door).
- When there is a teenager assisting the cheder teacher, they are not to be left unattended with the cheder children
- A record of attendance at cheder is to be kept by the cheder teachers
- The cheder teacher will keep a record of parents confirming they are happy for their children can be photographed/filmed and shared on the cheder WhatsApp group and the HJC newsletter. Specific requested will be obtained from parents when photographs/filming are proposed to be shared on social media (e.g. newspapers and social media platforms)
- Cheder teachers are to undertake initial safeguarding training. This will be complemented by annual refreshers comprising of an on-line refresher training course and reading this policy. Confirmation that the yearly refresher has been undertaken and this policy re-read will be via email confirmation to the DSL (the DSL will provide yearly reminders including providing necessary access to on-line training if required)

6. Communications training and support for staff

6.1 Introduction

HCJC commits resources for induction/training of volunteers/staff (paid and unpaid), effective communications and support mechanisms in relation to Safeguarding

Inductions will include:

- Discussion of the Safeguarding Policy (and confirmation of understanding)
- Discussion of other relevant policies
- Ensure familiarity with reporting process, the roles of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

6.2 Training

All staff who, through their role, are in contact with children and /or vulnerable adults will have access to safeguarding training at an appropriate level. Sources and types of training will include:

- Progressive Judaism Safeguarding training sessions for trustees and DSLs [all trustees to attend online course at least once]
- On-line training by Essex Safeguarding Children Board and Essex Safeguarding Adult Board [Cheder teachers and those undertaking regular pastoral care are to undertake the Level 1 training and then repeat yearly as a refresher]

6.3 Communications and Discussions of Safeguarding issues

Commitment to the following communication methods will ensure effective communication of safeguarding issues and practice:

- Agenda item at the committee meetings (generally every 1 to 2 months)

6.4 Support

We recognise that involvement in situations where there is risk or actual harm can be stressful for volunteer/staff concerned. The mechanisms in place to support staff include:

- Debriefing support for paid and unpaid volunteer/staff so that they can reflect on the issues they have dealt with.
- Seeking further support as appropriate

7. Reporting

The process outlined in Appendix A details the stages involved in raising and reporting safeguarding concerns at HCJC.

In addition to this process, the following are helpful contact numbers:

- Essex Safeguarding Children board, for concerns about a child or young person – 0345 603 7627
- Essex Safeguarding Adult board, for concerns about an adult – 0345 603 7630
- If you are a child or young person and would like to talk to someone in confidence you can call [ChildLine](#) on 0800 1111
- If you would like help and/or advice or wish to speak to someone anonymously about concerns for a particular child you can call the [National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children](#) (NSPCC) on 0808 800 5000
- If you are concerned about a vulnerable adult, you can call the ASKSAL helpline on 03452 66 66 63 (SAL - Safeguarding Adults Line).

You should report to the police if the incident or concern involves criminal behavior.

8. Allegations Management

HCJC recognises its duty to report concerns or allegations against its volunteers/staff (paid or unpaid) within the organisation or by a professional from another organisation.

The process for raising and dealing with allegations is as follows:

- First step: Any volunteer/staff (paid or unpaid) from HCJC is required to report any concerns in the first instance to the DSL. A written record of the concern will be completed by the DSL.
- Second step - contact Essex safeguarding board for advice. For a child/young person call 0345 603 7627 while for adult contact 0345 603 7630.
- Third step – follow the advice provided
- Fourth step – inform the charity commission if it is a serious incident (refer to the charity commission website for a definition)

9. Monitoring

The organisation will monitor the following Safeguarding aspects:

- Safe recruitment practices
- DBS checks undertaken
- References for new staff
- Records made and kept of supervision sessions
- Training – register/ record of staff training on child/ vulnerable adult protection
- Monitoring whether concerns are being reported and actioned
- Checking that policies are up to date and relevant
- Reviewing the current reporting procedure in place
- Presence and action of Designated Safeguarding Lead responsible for Safeguarding is in post

10. Managing Information

Information will be gathered, recorded and stored in accordance with the Jewish Harlow Community Data Protection Policy.

All volunteers/staff must be aware that they have a professional duty to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. The public interest in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults may override confidentiality interests. However, information will be shared on a need to know basis only, as judged by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise the child/vulnerable adult or their families/ carers that they will keep secrets.

All DBS checks and evidence of training to individuals and any safeguarding issues raised will be kept securely for 7 years.

11. Communicating & review the policy

HCJC will make all volunteers/staff working with children and vulnerable adults aware of the Safeguarding Policy as well as all the trustees through the following means verbally briefing the policy, providing an electronic and hard copy of the policy. A record will be kept recording who was briefed and that they understood the briefing.

This policy will be reviewed by the Trustees always following a serious incident and at least once a year or when there are changes in legislation.

In addition the community will be made aware of the safeguarding policy by reminders in the monthly newsletter and information available on the noticeboard within the synagogue

Appendix A – Reporting Process

HJC Safeguarding Policy & Procedure – Appendix A Flow chart

