

Eccleston Equestrian Centre

Safeguarding Policy



<i>Last reviewed on:</i>	01/01/2026
<i>Next review due by:</i>	01/01/2027

Safeguarding Policy

This safeguarding policy is relevant for every person onsite and directly associated with Eccleston Equestrian Centre (EEC), Loewe Leisure, Changing Lives Through Horses (CLTH), EEC pony club, and any other events held on the premises.

What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding means protecting people from harm, including abuse, neglect, exploitation and preventable risks. It applies in settings where individuals may be vulnerable, such as education, care, healthcare, social services, community organisations, and online environments.

Policy Owner

The current owner of this policy is the Safeguarding Officer, Karen Norris (Proprietor), who is responsible for reviewing the policy every year from date of last approved version.

A confidential log of all concerns raised will be kept by the Safeguarding Officer and anyone involved in any concern raised will retain all relevant correspondence until after the completion of an investigation and all escalation routes have been exhausted, and the outcome of any investigation has been reported to the person who raised the concern.

EEC Aims

Eccleston Equestrian Centre aims to create and maintain a safe, enjoyable environment for everyone, including children and young people. Our centre implements policies and procedures for safeguarding, including emotional and physical well-being of all visitors, staff, children and young people. All staff members are aware of their responsibility with regards to safeguarding and are trained in recognising safeguarding issues.

Law & Guidance

This policy has regard to all relevant legislation, statutory and non-statutory guidance including, but not limited to:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Education Act 2002
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by the Serious Crime Act 2015)
- Apprenticeships, Children and Learning Act 2009
- Equality Act 2010
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021

EEC Responsibility

All staff onsite at EEC undertake regular safeguarding training (on induction and an internal refreshment annually, led by Designated safeguard lead). Staff also hold safeguard training certificates and refresh every 2 years, to ensure they are up to date with awareness of abuse indicators, neglect and exploitation. Staff members understand that children can be at risk of harm both inside and outside of EEC and home, and online.

- Be proactive and always consider and act in the best interests of the child/young people.
- Ensure all children have opportunities to communicate and know that they are listened to and understood.
- Establish effective, supportive, and positive relationships with parents, carers, and other professionals.
- Establish and maintain mutually respectful relationships with children/young people.
- Maintain a vigilant attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.
- Be aware of the role and identity of the DSL and deputy DSLs and seek them for advice if required.
- Understand the expectations and responsibilities relating GDPR.
- Be aware of, and understand, the process for making referrals to Children's Social Care, understanding that anyone can make a referral.
- Understand the process for reporting concerns over staff or adult conduct.
- Understand the process for reporting allegations against staff.
- Politely challenge visitors and contractors if they do not comply with safeguarding procedures.

All visitors, livery owners, volunteers and contractors

- In the main reception, we have a display board of safeguarding practices, which is updated as necessary.
- Around the yard is clear signage including any out of bound areas for the visitors, livery owners and contractors.
- We hold a strict no photography/videography policy. If schools/authorities require evidence of progression, this should be agreed in advance with CLTH staff, with no additional people in the background.
- Visitors are not permitted to roam around the yard or grounds unsupervised.
- Visitors for riding lessons are to wait at reception until accompanied by a member of staff.
- Any dogs onsite must always be kept on short leads and away from other animals.
- Visitors, livery owners and contractors are not permitted to enter classrooms without prior permission from a member of staff.

Roles & responsibilities of the Designated Safeguard Lead (DSL)

DSL: Karen Norris, Proprietor, BHSII & BHS Assessor.

The roles and responsibilities of the DSL include:

- Take responsibility for safeguarding and child protection and creating a culture of safeguarding throughout EEC.
- Be up to date on training and relevant policies, including safeguarding, emergency and fire procedures.
- Provide advice, support and expertise to other staff on child welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters
- Ensure all staff receive appropriate safeguarding training at induction, including online training & GDPR expectations. Ensure staff are updated regularly and always hold a valid safeguarding certificate.
- Be available during all hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns
- Refer cases where necessary immediately and within 24 hours to:
 - *Referring school/organisation DSL/local authority.*
 - *Children's Social Care where abuse and neglect are suspected, and support staff who make referrals to CSC.*
 - *Channel programme where radicalisation concerns arise, and support staff who make referrals to the Channel Programme.*
 - *The DBS where a person is dismissed or has left due to harm, or risk of harm, to a child*
 - *The police where a crime may have been committed, in line with the National Police Chief's Council (NPCC) guidance.*
- Act as a point of contact with the multi-agency partners.
- Contribute to the assessment of children, and/or support other staff to do so.
- Be aware of the local early help process and understand their role in it.
- Be fully aware of the importance of mental health in relation to safeguarding and that all staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- Ensure effective communication and information sharing (when appropriate) between Deputy DSLs/EEC/CLTH staff.
- Taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes for children, by understanding the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, knowing the safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on their attendance, engagement and achievement at school. This includes:
 - *Ensuring the CLTH staff know which children have or had a social worker.*
 - *Understanding the academic progress of these children*
 - *Maintaining a culture of high aspirations for these children*
 - *Supporting staff to make reasonable adjustments to help these children reach their full potential*
- Ensure that child protection files are kept updated and secure, monitoring the quality and accuracy of logs

- Ensure that a child's child protection file is transferred as soon as possible, and within five days, when transferring to a new school, and consider any additional information that should be shared to support a child's journey.
- Undergo DSL training and update this training with refresher training at least every two years to remain compliant.
- Safeguarding policy is reviewed annually, and procedures are updated and reviewed regularly.
- Any staff member will discuss any specific training requirements or gaps in knowledge or understanding with the DSL.
- Detailed records will be held of staff safeguarding training and ensure that no training becomes out of date.
- Staff are aware of recording and reporting procedures such as in the case of positive handling, health and safety and first aid.

Safer recruitment

EEC will conduct safe recruitment procedures, such as supplication forms, references, enhanced DBS clearance, Proof of identity/address, relevant academic qualifications.

Induction and training

Upon induction, and to proactively promote a culture of safeguarding, all staff and volunteers will receive the following training during induction and receive subsequent safeguarding training, including emergency and fire procedures at least annually.

Induction training will consist of:

- Safeguarding policy
- Staff code of conduct
- Part one and Annex A & C of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KSCIE 2024)
- EEC Behaviour policy
- EEC Attendance policy, including the safeguarding response to children who have unexplained absences or go missing from education.
- Information about the role and identity of the DSL
- First aid for EEC
- Emergency and fire procedures
- How to record or report concerns
- Records will be kept of inductions

Regular safeguarding training will consist of:

- Safeguarding policy
- Prevent duty
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

- Child-on-child abuse
- Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE)
- Online safety
- Safer recruitment (DSL)
- Updates and changes in policy/law
- Emergency and fire procedures
- Staff code of conduct
- Recording and reporting concerns

Handling disclosures by a child

If a child makes a disclosure of abuse, staff should:

- Give the child full attention.
- Reassure the child and listen carefully.
- Not ask leading questions such as “did they hit you or touch you?”, instead ask “is there anything else you would like to tell me?”.
- Never promise to keep things a secret and explain that you have a responsibility to tell people who can help.
- Following a disclosure immediately report directly to the DSL.
- If staff are informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or observe physical signs which appear to show an act of FGM has been carried out (not for medical/mental health purposes), you must personally report this to the police. This is a personal duty which requires the individual professional who becomes aware of the case to make a report; the responsibility cannot be transferred. You must also notify the DSL.

Handling allegations towards staff, volunteers, livery owners and contractors

Everyone should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and know that such concerns will be taken seriously. Allegations towards staff, volunteers, livery owners and contractors of abuse must be reported immediately to the DSL. If the allegation is against the DSL, this should be reported immediately to the BHS Safeguarding Manager.

If there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter, this should be reported directly to the local authority designated officers (LADOs).

Recognising abuse

The warning signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect can vary from child to child. Disabled children may be especially vulnerable to abuse, because they may have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse. They may have speech, language and communication needs which may make it difficult to tell others what is happening.

By understanding the warning signs, you can respond to problems as early as possible. It is important to recognise that a warning sign does not automatically mean a child is being abused. There are several warning indicators which might suggest that child may be being abused or neglected.

If staff notice signs or have concerns that a child is being abused, or at risk of abuse, this must be reported immediately to the DSL.

Be aware – anyone can make a referral to the Children's Social Care or the police if a child is at immediate risk or harm.

Definitions of abuse

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect

Physical Abuse

This is deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of different forms including hitting, pinching, shaking, poisoning, throwing, burning, drowning, suffocating a child. Physical abuse can happen in any family and can occur outside the family environment. Children may be more at risk if their parents have problems with drugs, alcohol and mental health, or if they live in a home where domestic abuse happens. Babies and disabled children also have a higher risk of suffering physical abuse. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent/carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Physical abuse can occur in equestrians by allowing a child to ride or encounter animals which are known to cause harm, have aggressive temperaments or prone to poor and unpredictable behaviour which puts a child at risk.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of physical abuse:

- Children with frequent injuries
- Children with unexplained or unusual fractures or broken bones
- Children with unexplained bruises, cuts, burns, bite marks

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is sometimes called psychological abuse, and it can have a severe and persistent adverse effect on a child's emotional development. Although the effects of emotional abuse might take longer to be recognisable, practitioners will be able to observe it. Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless or unloved and inadequate. It may also include not giving a child opportunities or withholding them.

Some signs of emotional abuse are:

- Children who are excessively withdrawn, fearful or anxious about doing something wrong
- Parents or carers who withdraw their attention from their child, giving the child 'the cold shoulder'
- Parents or carers blaming problems on their child
- Parent or carers who humiliate the child

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is any sexual activity with a child. It may include physical contact including assault by penetration (such as rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. It may include non-contact activities such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Be aware that many children and young people who are victims of sexual abuse do not recognise themselves as such. A child may not understand what is happening and may not even understand that it is wrong. Sexual abuse can have a long-term impact on mental health. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males, women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Some signs of sexual abuse:

- Children who display knowledge or interest in sexual acts inappropriate to their age
- Children who use sexual language or have sexual knowledge that you wouldn't expect them to have
- Children who ask others to behave sexually or play sexual games
- Children with physical sexual health problems including soreness in the genital and anal areas, sexually transmitted infections or underage pregnancy.

Neglect

Neglect is the pattern of failing to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be inadequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter. It is likely to result in serious impairment of a child's health or development. Children who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse.

It is important that staff remain alert and do not miss opportunities to take timely action. Whilst you may be concerned about a child, neglect is not always straightforward to identify. Neglect can occur if a parent becomes physically or mentally unable to care for a child. A parent may also have an addiction to drugs or alcohol, which could impair their ability to keep a child safe or result in them prioritising buying drugs/alcohol over food/clothing/warmth for the child. Neglect may occur during pregnancy because of maternal drug or alcohol abuse.

Some signs of neglect:

- Children living in a dirty or unsafe home.
- Children who are left hungry or dirty.
- Children left with inadequate clothing, for example, no winter coat.
- Children living in dangerous conditions, such as drugs, violence, alcohol.
- Children who are often angry, aggressive or self-harm.
- Parents who fail to seek medical treatment for their child.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is defined as all procedures involving the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse. All staff will be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of FGM or already having suffered FGM. If staff are worried about someone, they must share this information with CSC and/or the police. Teachers are legally required to report to the police any discovery, whether through disclosure or visual evidence of FGM on a student under 18. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should also consider and discuss with the DSL. Please note – this does not apply to anybody over the age of 18. In such cases, local safeguarding procedures should be followed.

Indicators that a child/student may be at heightened risk of undergoing FGM include:

- The socio-economic position of the family and their level of integration in the UK society
- The child coming from a community known to adopt FGM
- Any girl with a mother or sister who has been subjected to FGM
- Any girl withdrawn from PSHE
- Travel abroad or a long holiday with relatives to a country known to practise FGM

FGM is included in the definition of honour-based abuse (HBA) which involves crimes that have been committed to defend the honour of the family and/or community. All forms of HBA are forms of abuse and will be treated and escalated as such. Staff will be alert to the signs of HBA, consult with the DSL who will activate local Safeguarding procedures if concern arise.

Home-educated children

Parents may choose elective home education (EHE) for their children. In some cases, EHE can mean that children are less visible to the services needed to safeguard and support them. Where children are removed from a school roll for Elective home education and there are safeguarding concerns, EEC will ensure that concerns are shared with the local Authority.

Looked after Children (LAC/Care Experienced)

Children most become looked after because of abuse and/or neglect. Because of this, they can be potentially at greater risk in relation to safeguarding. Previously LAC also known as care leavers, can also remain vulnerable after leaving care.

EEC will ensure that the appropriate staff will have the information they need, such as:

- Looked after legal status, i.e. whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents, or on an interim or full care order.
- Contact arrangements with parents or those with parental responsibility
- Care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the pupil

SEND Children

When managing safeguarding in relation to children with SEND, EEC staff will be aware of the following:

- Certain indicators of abuse, such as behaviour, mood and injury, may relate to the child's disability without further exploration; however, it should never be assumed that a child's indicators relate only to their disability
- Children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by issues such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers may exist, as well as difficulties in overcoming these barriers
- When reporting concerns or making referrals for children with SEND, the above factors will always be taken into consideration. When managing a safeguarding issue relating to a pupil with SEND, the DSL will liaise with the school's DSL/SENCO to ensure that the child's needs are met effectively.

Privately Fostering

Where a period of UK homestay lasts 28 days or more for a child aged under 16, or under 18 for a child with SEND, this may amount to private fostering under the Children Act

Where EEC becomes aware of a child being privately fostered, we will notify CSC as soon as possible to allow the Local Authority (LA)/CSC to conduct any necessary checks

Children with family members in prison

EEC expects referring schools/organisations/parents to notify us if a child has a family member in prison. EEC expects the referring school/organisation to provide the child with a copy of 'Are you a young person with a family member in prison?' from Action for Prisoners' Families where appropriate. If the child is home educated EEC will offer the child a copy of 'Are you a young person with a family member in prison?' from Action for Prisoners' Families where appropriate.

Early Help

Early help means providing support as soon as the need emerges, at any point in a child's life and any professional can provide early help. EEC DSL and CLTH AP Lead have oversight on the needs of all children in their care. Regular discussions with the CLTH team help to identify children who need early help. Strategies and adaptations are then used appropriately to support the child's needs, and this may be raised with referring schools/parents/LA. Any child or family may benefit from early help, but staff will be alert to the potential need specifically for early help for children who:

- Are disabled, have certain health conditions, or have specific additional needs
- Have SEND, regardless of whether they have a statutory EHC plan
- Have mental health needs
- Are young carers
- Show signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- Are frequently missing or going missing from care or from home
- Are at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, or sexual or criminal exploitation
- Are at risk of being radicalised
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol
- Have family members in custody, or are affected by parental offending
- Are in a family circumstance presenting challenges for them, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health problems, or domestic abuse
- Have returned home to their family from care
- Are at risk of HBA, such as FGM or forced marriage
- Are privately fostered

- Are displaying harmful sexual behaviours which may pose a risk to other children and themselves.
- Are persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day, or not in receipt of full-time education.
- Show any other early signs of abuse, neglect any other identified reason not listed above that requires extra support or intervention to improve outcomes for families and children.
- Have experienced multiple suspensions and are at risk of, or have been, permanently excluded from school, alternative provision or a PRU.
- Have experienced bereavement.
- Viewing problematic or inappropriate online content or developing inappropriate relationships online.

Multi-agency Working

EEC will ensure that they contribute to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'.

[Working together to safeguard chilhttps://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children-2dren - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children-2dren)

Online Safety

EEC/CLTH are aware abuse can occur online as well as in person. Children do not have access to internet accessible devices at CLTH, and personal mobile devices are not permitted to be kept on a student whilst learning. When EEC/CLTH become aware of an online safety issue that has occurred outside of CLTH, it will be reported to the referring school, organisation or parent.

Mobile Devices/Phones/Smart Watches

EEC/CLTH have a strict no photography, videoing policy for safeguarding purposes to protect the vulnerable children who attend EEC. Therefore, children who attend CLTH AP are not permitted to bring a mobile phone or smart watches onto EEC premises. If a RO, parent or carer wishes a child to have a mobile phone/smart watch so they are contactable before or after the hours of agreed education the phone/watch must be given to staff on entry to EEC premises. The mobile phone/watch will be locked away and returned to the child at the end of the day on leaving EEC premises. EEC/CLTH accept no responsibility for any device whatsoever for theft, loss, damage or health effects (potential or actual) relating to mobile devices. It is the responsibility of parents and children to ensure mobile devices are properly insured.

Children who use their phone as a tool for monitoring diabetes levels may keep their mobile phone switched on and, on their person, with the guidance of the DSL. If a child breaches the rules, the device will be confiscated and passed to CLTH AP Lead who will return the device at the end of the day. Referring school or parents will be notified.

EEC/CLTH will therefore ensure that:

- Informed parental consent is obtained to take and use photographs and/or videos of children, for use in school, to market the school or to share on social media / internet.
- Staff, visitors, livery owners, volunteers and students do not use their own mobile phones or devices to take or record any images of children.
- Staff, parents or carers who accompany children and wish to take photographs or videos to evidence progress should agree this in advance with EEC/CLTH.

Key Contacts and Information

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Karen Norris – Proprietor, BHSII, BHS Assessor

Tel: 01772 600093

Email: karen@equestrian-northwest.co.uk

BHS Safeguarding Manager

Ellie Vajcovec

Tel: 02476840746

Email: safeguarding@bhs.org.uk

BHS Safeguarding Coordinator

Karen Ryder

Tel: 02476840746

Email@safeguarding@bhs.org.uk

Local Children's Services Contacts

Lancashire County Council – Children's Social Care

Tel: 0300 123 6720

Out of hours: 0300 123 6722

Email: safeguarding@preston.gov.uk

LADO – Local Authority Designated Officer

Tim Booth, Donna Green, Shane Penn

Tel: 01772 536694

Email: LADO.admin@lancashire.gov.uk

MASH – Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub

Tel: 0300 123 6720

Between 5pm-8am: 0300 123 6722

National Help

Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP): <https://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/>

NSPCC: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>