

# Ringsfield Hall Trust

## **POLICY FOR SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & VULNERABLE ADULTS**

September 2017

<b>Policy Statement</b>
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**Ringsfield Hall Trust exists to provide a safe place of welcome for people of all ages. Though staff members do not usually have a direct Duty of Care for children and young people, the Trust expects all employees and volunteers to act with the well-being, wholeness and development of every individual in mind, and to ensure the protection of children and young people from significant harm.**

In order to provide a safe and secure environment The Ringsfield Hall Trust will:

- Take up references for all staff and volunteers;
- Follow Disclosure procedure for all staff and volunteers, including an Enhanced DBS check for those given access to children, according to current legislation;
- Ensure staff read this policy, understand what the working policy entails, and what is appropriate behaviour, based on sensitivity and respect.
- Provide regular appropriate Safeguarding Training for all staff.
- Ensure that all provision and facilities are maintained to the highest standard and conforms with current legislation.

**RESPONSIBLE PERSON:**

Simon Paylor, Centre Director  
[centredirector@ringsfield-hall.co.uk](mailto:centredirector@ringsfield-hall.co.uk)  
Tel: 01502 713020

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## POLICY FOR SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

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## Policy Statement

Ringsfield Hall Trust exists to provide a safe place of welcome for all people of all ages. Although staff do not usually have direct duty of care (since Children from schools are in the care of their teachers/leaders), the Trust is concerned with the well-being, wholeness and development of every individual, and the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults from significant harm. The guidance in this policy is no substitute for appropriate regular training, but will at least provide a reference point for swift action.

## SECTION 1 Providing and creating a safe and secure environment

### 1A Staff and Volunteers

#### a) Recruitment and awareness

- References will be taken for all staff members
- All staff will complete a declaration form
- All staff will read the safeguarding document and understand:-
  - (i) what the working policy entails, and
  - (ii) what is appropriate behaviour and good practice in these circumstances, based on sensitivity and respect,
  - (iii) what causes significant harm,
  - (iv) the signs of abuse,
  - (v) how to deal with disclosure,
  - (vi) the procedure for referral if abuse is observed or reported.

#### (b) Working Policy

- Staff should avoid being alone with individual children and young people in the following circumstances:
  - (i) in bedrooms and wash/toilet areas
  - (ii) in areas indoors or outdoors, not readily visible to others
  - (iii) in vehicles
- It is recommended that staff use appropriate contact with children or young people only according to the child or young person's need, and then only in a public situation.
- Children and young people should not enter staff accommodation, unless there is an acknowledged reason, and another adult present.
- Staff should not engage in rough, physical games with children.
- Staff should take care that their behaviour is non-threatening and does not set a bad example.
- Staff should note that it is the responsibility of each individual member of staff to ensure that they do not put themselves in a situation where allegations could be made against them.

### 1B Physical Environment

- The provision of a safe and secure environment is one of the main duties of Ringsfield Hall Trust:
  - (i) All property and equipment will be maintained and operated according to Health and Safety Guidelines and our H & S Policy.
  - (ii) Every effort will be made to ensure that the grounds are safe and secure and that the security of the property is of the highest standard.

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- (iii) All food preparations will be carried out in a hygienic way according to Food Safety Regulations and all dietary requirements met.
- (iv) Staff are required to report to the Centre Director or Trustees of any practices or situation that they consider would prejudice the safety of anyone staying at Ringsfield Hall.

## **Section 2 How to respond to evidence or allegations of harm / abuse**

### **2A What to do if a child discloses details of harm/abuse**

- Allow the child to speak without interruption, accepting what is said.
- Accept what they tell you, keep calm, give your full attention, do not push for information or ask leading questions, it could jeopardise any further investigations.
- Reassure the child that they were right to tell you, alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation; be aware the child may have been threatened.
- Advise that you will offer them support but you will need to tell someone else. Do not promise secrecy.
- Let the child know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens
- Make notes as soon as possible afterwards; record dates and times.
- Ensure the child is safe and handed over to an appropriate adult who has care of them.

### **2B What to do if you suspect a child is being harmed or abused**

- Staff at Ringsfield Hall would not ordinarily be in close enough proximity to children and their carers to suspect harm or abuse in the short time groups spend time here, but if serious concern were ever to arise they should alert the Centre Director.

### **2C How to proceed with reports or incidents of harm/abuse**

- Immediately contact the Centre Director who will liaise with School / Organisational contacts. If the Centre Director is unavailable, the Education Coordinator may be in a position to liaise with the appropriate contact, or the Chair of Trustees ([trustees@ringsfield-hall.co.uk](mailto:trustees@ringsfield-hall.co.uk)).
- Do not question the victim or the alleged perpetrator.
- Write down facts, including what was said, as soon as possible and give to the Centre Director (as above)
- Ensure that the child has access to an independent adult
- Ensure there is no immediate danger to the child
- The Centre Director/Chair of Trustees should inform Social Services if the child makes an allegation about one of RHT staff. Evidence is not required before informing Social Services, it is sufficient to have reasonable cause for your concern. The Headteacher / Child Protection Officer of the relevant school group should be informed.
- Be clear about what is being referred – names, ages, addresses, nature of complaint and where you received the information.

### **2D How to deal with allegations against someone at Ringsfield Hall**

- Inform the Centre Director, or if about the Centre Director then the Chair of Trustees
- Record facts, including what was said.
- Ensure no one is compromised further.
- The Centre Director and the Chair will decide, based on the seriousness of the allegations, what further action will be taken.
- Do not speak to other members of staff until a statement is made to all by the Chair.
- If serious allegations are made the person accused will not be informed but sent home. Such informing could lead to the child or young person feeling threatened, or evidence being destroyed.

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- Parents are similarly not told until consultation with and clearance by Social Services or Police. Any delay in reporting incidents to Social Services or Police is unhelpful and can cause greater suffering
- Support and advice will be given and within the constraints of investigation you will be advised of how things are proceeding.
- The Centre Director and Chair will ensure that a statement is prepared in the event of media attention.

## Section 3 Significant Harm

### 3A What is Significant Harm?

Significant harm consists of:

1. Treatment which includes

- (i) *physical abuse – injury which is non-accidental or not treated*
- (ii) *sexual abuse – use of a child or young person for sexual gratification either without their consent or even with so called consent or acquiescence*
- (iii) *other abuse e.g. neglect or verbal abuse*

2. Impairment of health, physical or mental, by:

- (i) *putting at risk*
- (ii) *not treating illness or injury*
- (iii) *not protecting children of young people*

3. Impairment of development – physical, social, intellectual, emotional, and behavioural – severe adverse effect on any aspect of development caused but persistent or severe ill treatment or rejection or neglect.

### 3B Signs of Harm/Abuse

The following list is not exhaustive but is intended to raise awareness of the possibility of abuse. Physical abuse and neglect can be difficult to hide. Sexual abuse can be almost impossible to identify – many signs can point to abuse, but there may be other explanations. It is important to be aware but not to jump to conclusions.

A child may:

- Have unexplained injuries – bites, burns, scalds, bruises, fracture, or have explanations for injuries which raise suspicion or concern
- Confuse affection with sexual behaviour, or seek secretive relationships with adults
- Display sexualised behaviour through words, actions, play or writing, appear to have sexual knowledge beyond their age or be preoccupied with sexual matters
- Experience sleep disturbances, fears and phobias
- Be unresponsive, nervous, watchful, lethargic or demanding and aggressive
- Behave like a much younger child
- Harm themselves
- Begin to underachieve
- Begin to run away, steal, lie
- Interact negatively e.g. with put downs criticism, scapegoating.

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POLICY REVISED IN SEPTEMBER 2017  
DUE FOR RENEWAL IN SEPTEMBER 2018

## Appendix 1 - Child Protection Reporting Form

You may receive information that suggests a young person is at significant risk or harm, if this happens **you MUST contact the Centre's Child Protection Officer or your direct line manager IMMEDIATELY (or within 1 hour)**. This form must be completed within 24 hours of disclosure.

Name of Worker completing report: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: / / Time:

Position of the person who is disclosing:

Young Person concerned		Parent of Young Person	
Another Young Person		Young Person at significant risk of harm to self	
Another Agency		Young Person at significant risk to others	
Ringsfield Staff/ Volunteer		<b>Is the complaint <u>against</u> a Ringsfield Staff Member / Volunteer? * **</b>	

\* **If against Staff or Volunteer then the Centre Director must be informed IMMEDIATELY**

\*\* **If against the Centre Director, the Chair of Trustees MUST be informed IMMEDIATELY instead.**

Name of Person giving disclosure: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Young Person information is about: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: / /

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**Full details of incident / disclosure:** (Factual descriptive account, use words of the young person as much as possible. Avoid interpretation or analysis. Attach a further sheet of A4 paper if necessary.)

**Action already taken:**

When disclosure occurred: **Date:** / / **Time:**

Where incident/ disclosure occurred: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME	POSITION	TIME OF CONTACT	CONTACT DETAILS

**Those who have been notified:**

**Are there any other documents to support this report? YES / NO**

If so, please attach and give details:

**Worker's signature:**

**Date:** / /

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**THIS FORM MUST BE SENT TO THE CENTRE DIRECTOR WITHIN 24 HOURS TO:  
centredirector@ringsfield-hall.co.uk or Centre Director, Ringsfield Hall, Hall Road, NR34 8JR**

**Child Protection Officer's comments and agreed actions:**

- If Social Services/ Police informed, has it been followed up in writing within 48 hours?
- Has Centre Director / Management Team been informed?
- Form is filed in CP report file kept by Child Protection Officer.