

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Policy Reference: NC-CH-2.1

Applies to: All Children's Residential Homes

Reviewed: July 2025

Next Review: July 2026

Owner: Designated Safeguarding Lead (Children)

1. Statement of Intent

Nwando Care is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child in our care. We believe that every child has the right to live free from abuse, neglect, and exploitation and to grow up in an environment that promotes their safety, development, and wellbeing.

We operate a zero-tolerance approach to abuse and follow national and local safeguarding protocols. This policy sets out our approach to protecting children and young people and meeting our statutory duties under the Children Act 1989 and 2004, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018), and Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024).

2. Safeguarding Principles

At Nwando Care, we uphold the following key principles:

- The **welfare of the child is paramount**
- **Every child** has the right to protection from all forms of harm
- All staff share **responsibility for safeguarding**
- Children are listened to, respected, and encouraged to speak out
- Safeguarding is embedded in **culture, policies, and daily practice**
- Staff must take **timely and appropriate action** when concerns arise

We are also committed to the principles of **trauma-informed care**, attachment-aware practice, and equality, diversity and inclusion.

3. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all:

- Residential staff
- Management and leadership
- Volunteers, contractors, and agency workers
- Visiting professionals
- External partners involved in care and education

4. Definitions

Child: Anyone under the age of 18

Safeguarding: The proactive work to promote welfare and prevent harm

Child Protection: The response to concerns about actual or likely significant harm

Types of abuse:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual
- Neglect

- Online exploitation
- Child criminal or sexual exploitation (CCE / CSE)
- Domestic abuse
- Bullying (including cyberbullying)

5. Designated Safeguarding Structure

We maintain a clear safeguarding structure:

- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL – Children):** [Insert name & contact details]
- **Deputy DSL(s):** [Insert details if applicable]
- **Nominated Safeguarding Director:** Board-level oversight

DSLs are trained to a higher level and receive annual updates. Staff are made aware of how to contact them at all times.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

All Staff Must:

- Report any concerns **immediately** to the DSL
- Attend mandatory safeguarding training and refreshers
- Record concerns factually and securely
- Model safe, respectful behaviour at all times

DSLs Must:

- Lead on referrals to local authority or police
- Liaise with other professionals and safeguarding boards
- Maintain accurate, confidential records
- Ensure that safeguarding is discussed regularly in supervisions
- Deliver or commission staff training

7. Identifying and Responding to Concerns

All staff are trained to recognise signs of abuse and neglect, including changes in behaviour, injuries, poor hygiene, withdrawn mood, or disclosures.

If a child makes a disclosure:

- Listen without judgement or interruption
- Reassure but do not promise confidentiality
- Report to the DSL immediately
- Record using the child's own words where possible

Concerns must be raised within 1 hour and escalated without delay.

8. Referrals and Thresholds

The DSL follows local safeguarding partnership guidance. Concerns may be:

- Logged for monitoring
- Discussed at a Team Around the Child (TAC) meeting
- Referred to MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub)
- Reported to police in cases of immediate danger

9. Safer Recruitment and Staffing

Nwando Care follows robust safer recruitment practices:

- Enhanced DBS checks for all roles
- At least two references sought and verified
- Gaps in employment explored
- Clear probation and supervision processes

All staff must read this policy during induction and sign to confirm understanding.

10. Allegations Against Staff

Allegations or concerns about staff conduct will be managed in line with the **Working Together 2023** guidance and local LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) procedures.

Immediate steps will include:

- Protecting the child
- Informing the DSL and Registered Manager
- Reporting to the LADO within 1 working day
- Suspension or redeployment if risk is identified
- Full investigation with HR involvement

11. Recording and Confidentiality

Records are:

- Stored securely and separately from the main care file
- Retained in line with data protection and safeguarding law
- Shared only on a need-to-know basis

Young people are informed about how their information is used and stored.

12. Whistleblowing

All staff are encouraged to report unsafe practice or cultural concerns.

We provide protection under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 and operate a confidential whistleblowing channel.

13. Online Safety and Prevent

We ensure young people are protected from online abuse and radicalisation.

This includes:

- Safe internet access in the home
- Appropriate filters and monitoring
- Education about safe online behaviour
- Staff training on online grooming and extremism

14. Training and Review

- Staff receive safeguarding training at induction and annually
- DSLs complete accredited safeguarding leadership training every 2 years
- Safeguarding audits and reflective practice sessions take place regularly
- This policy is reviewed annually or after significant changes or incidents

15. Key Contacts

- **DSL for Children:** [Insert name, mobile and email]
- **Deputy DSL(s):** [Insert]
- **LADO:** [Insert local authority details]
- **Police (non-emergency):** 101
- **Emergency Services:** 999
- **Ofsted:** 0300 123 1231 | enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk