

FARMSPACE BARNSELEY CIC

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy



Status: Statutory Policy

Applies to: All employees, volunteers, directors, trustees, contractors, students on placement, agency staff and visitors.

Policy Lead: Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Nicola Brearley

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Kelly Richardson

Date Adopted: September 2026

Review Date: September 2027 (or sooner if statutory guidance or local procedures change)

Introduction

Farmspace Barnsley CIC is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child and young person who attends our provision.

Safeguarding is embedded within every aspect of FarmSpace's culture, ethos and daily practice. It underpins every decision we make and every interaction we have with children, families, colleagues and partner agencies. The safety, welfare and best interests of the child are our highest priority and take precedence over all other considerations.

Many children attending FarmSpace have experienced adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), trauma, disrupted education, anxiety, neurodiversity, social, emotional and mental health needs, school avoidance or other vulnerabilities. We recognise that these experiences may increase safeguarding risks and affect how children communicate, behave and engage with learning. FarmSpace provides a nurturing, trauma-informed and relationship-based environment where children feel safe, valued, respected and listened to. We believe that positive, trusting relationships enable children to thrive and are fundamental to effective safeguarding.

This policy should be read alongside FarmSpace Barnsley CIC's:

- Behaviour Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Online Safety Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Positive Behaviour and Physical Intervention Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Attendance Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection (UK GDPR) Policy

This policy should also be read alongside the current versions of:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
 - Working Together to Safeguard Children
 - Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures
 - Relevant legislation and statutory guidance relating to child protection and safeguarding.
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1. Policy Statement

Farmspace Barnsley CIC believes that every child has the right to grow up safe, protected, respected and free from abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination.

We are committed to creating an environment where children feel safe, know they are valued and are confident that any concerns they raise will be listened to and acted upon.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Every adult working within Farmspace has an individual and collective duty to safeguard children, promote their welfare and act immediately if they have any concern about a child's safety or wellbeing.

Farmspace's Safeguarding Responsibility

Many children attend Farmspace Barnsley CIC following referral from schools, academies, local authorities or other professionals.

Whilst these organisations retain important responsibilities for the child's education and wider support, **Farmspace Barnsley CIC accepts full responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child whilst they are attending our provision.**

Safeguarding responsibilities are not transferred or reduced because another organisation has referred a child to Farmspace.

Where safeguarding concerns arise, Farmspace will always act in the best interests of the child. We will:

- take immediate action where a child may be at risk of harm;
- make referrals directly to Children's Social Care, the Police, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Prevent or any other appropriate safeguarding agency where necessary;
- work openly and collaboratively with referring schools, parents/carers and partner agencies wherever it is appropriate and safe to do so;
- share relevant safeguarding information promptly and lawfully;
- never delay action to protect a child whilst awaiting another organisation to respond.

The welfare of the child will always remain our paramount consideration.

2. Aims

This policy aims to:

- protect children from abuse, neglect and exploitation;
- promote children's physical, emotional and mental wellbeing;
- ensure children learn and develop within a safe, nurturing environment;
- establish clear safeguarding responsibilities for every adult working within Farmspace;
- ensure concerns are recognised, recorded and acted upon promptly;
- support early identification of children who may benefit from additional help;
- promote a culture of professional curiosity, openness and accountability;

- ensure effective partnership working with families and external agencies;
- ensure all safeguarding decisions place the child's welfare at the centre;
- maintain robust safer recruitment, staff supervision and safeguarding training arrangements;
- ensure compliance with all relevant safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance.

3. Legislative Framework

This policy has been developed in accordance with current legislation and statutory guidance, including but not limited to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Education Act 2002
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent Duty)
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- The Prevent Duty Guidance
- Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures

Farmspace Barnsley CIC will review this policy whenever statutory guidance changes or local safeguarding arrangements require amendment.

4. Our Safeguarding Ethos

Safeguarding is not simply a statutory requirement; it is fundamental to everything we do. At Farmspace we believe:

- every child deserves to feel safe;
- every child has the right to be heard;
- every child should be treated with dignity and respect;
- children's voices should influence safeguarding decisions;
- positive relationships protect children;
- early intervention improves outcomes;
- trauma-informed practice supports recovery and resilience;
- safeguarding is everyone's responsibility;
- professional curiosity saves lives;
- effective safeguarding depends upon strong multi-agency working.

We recognise that abuse can affect any child regardless of their:

- age;
- disability;
- sex;
- gender identity;
- ethnicity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sexual orientation;
- family circumstances;
- socio-economic background.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), children with mental health needs, children who are looked after or previously looked after, young carers, children experiencing disadvantage and those who have experienced trauma may face additional barriers to recognising abuse or making a disclosure.

All staff are expected to remain particularly vigilant when supporting vulnerable children and must never assume that changes in behaviour or presentation are solely related to a child's additional needs or previous experiences.

5. Safeguarding Responsibilities

Safeguarding is the responsibility of every adult working at or on behalf of Farmspace Barnsley CIC.

This policy applies equally to:

- Directors and Trustees;
- the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL);
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads;
- teachers and tutors;
- learning mentors;
- support staff;
- volunteers;
- agency staff;
- students on placement;
- contractors;
- visiting professionals;
- regular visitors.

Every adult working within Farmspace must:

- maintain an attitude of "it could happen here";
- remain professionally curious;
- recognise indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation;
- listen carefully to children;
- act immediately upon concerns;
- report concerns without delay;
- never assume somebody else has taken action;
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries;

- protect confidential information;
- participate in safeguarding training;
- contribute to a culture where safeguarding is openly discussed and continuously improved.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, but accountability for protecting children rests with every individual working within Farmspace.

6. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Farmspace Barnsley CIC has appointed a suitably trained Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who holds overall responsibility for child protection and safeguarding across the organisation.

The DSL is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements remain effective and compliant with statutory guidance.

The DSL will:

- provide strategic leadership for safeguarding;
- manage child protection concerns;
- make referrals to Children's Social Care;
- contact the Police where appropriate;
- make referrals to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO);
- contribute to Prevent and Channel referrals where appropriate;
- liaise with referring schools, local authorities and partner agencies;
- attend Child Protection Conferences, Core Groups, Team Around the Child meetings and other multi-agency meetings;
- oversee Early Help assessments;
- maintain confidential safeguarding records;
- support and advise staff;
- oversee safeguarding training;
- monitor vulnerable children;
- undertake safeguarding audits;
- ensure statutory responsibilities are fulfilled.

The DSL has the authority to make safeguarding decisions independently where necessary to protect a child.

Whilst Farmspace will work collaboratively with referring schools and other agencies wherever appropriate, safeguarding action will never be delayed whilst awaiting another organisation to respond.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will undertake advanced safeguarding training at least every two years and will update their knowledge regularly in line with statutory guidance. Farmspace has appointed a trained Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead to provide safeguarding leadership and local safeguarding developments.

7. Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Farmspace Barnsley CIC has appointed a trained Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead to provide safeguarding leadership whenever the DSL is unavailable.

The Deputy DSL will:

- undertake all responsibilities delegated by the DSL;
- support staff with safeguarding concerns;
- contribute to referrals and multi-agency working;
- maintain safeguarding records where required;
- ensure continuity of safeguarding provision.

A trained safeguarding lead will always be available during Farmspace operating hours. Overall accountability for safeguarding arrangements remains with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

8. Staff Responsibilities

Safeguarding children is a shared responsibility. Every person working at Farmspace Barnsley CIC has a duty to protect children, promote their welfare and act immediately where concerns arise. Staff must understand that safeguarding is not the sole responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The DSL provides leadership, advice and coordination, but every adult has a personal responsibility to identify concerns and report them.

All staff, volunteers and contractors must:

- maintain a child-centred approach;
- place the child's welfare above all other considerations;
- understand that "it could happen here";
- remain alert to signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation and vulnerability;
- listen carefully to children and take their views seriously;
- report concerns immediately;
- record concerns accurately and promptly;
- never assume another person has reported a concern;
- maintain professional curiosity;
- challenge explanations where concerns remain;
- maintain professional boundaries;
- protect confidential information;
- follow Farmspace safeguarding procedures at all times.

Staff must recognise that children communicate their experiences in different ways. Changes in behaviour, presentation, attendance, relationships, emotional wellbeing or engagement may indicate that a child is experiencing difficulties or may be at risk of harm.

Farmspace promotes a trauma-informed approach. Staff should seek to understand:

"What has happened to this child and what support do they need?"

rather than:

"What is wrong with this child's behaviour?"

However, staff must also understand that trauma, SEND, neurodiversity or previous experiences must never be used as explanations that prevent further safeguarding consideration. Every concern must be considered on its own circumstances.

9. Safeguarding Training and Induction

Farmspace Barnsley CIC ensures that all staff receive appropriate safeguarding training before they begin working with children.

No individual will work unsupervised with children until they have completed safeguarding induction and understood their responsibilities.

Safeguarding induction will include:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
- Staff Code of Conduct;
- Whistleblowing Policy;
- Online Safety Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Health and Safety procedures;
- First Aid procedures;
- Missing Child procedures;
- Positive Behaviour and Physical Intervention procedures;
- Professional boundaries;
- Confidentiality and information sharing;
- How to report safeguarding concerns.

All staff must receive safeguarding updates regularly and at least annually.

Training records will be maintained by Farmspace and monitored by the DSL.

Staff training will reflect the specific safeguarding environment of Farmspace, including:

- alternative provision;
- children with SEND;
- trauma-informed practice;
- outdoor learning;
- animal-assisted learning;
- online risks;
- child exploitation;
- mental health;
- child-on-child abuse.

10. Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) Requirements

Farmspace Barnsley CIC ensures that safeguarding practice reflects the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

All staff who work directly with children must:

- read the required sections of KCSIE before working unsupervised with children;
- understand their safeguarding responsibilities;
- complete safeguarding training;
- understand how to report concerns;
- understand the role of the DSL.

Staff will sign a declaration confirming that they have read and understood the required safeguarding guidance.

Safeguarding knowledge will be updated whenever statutory guidance changes.

11. Professional Curiosity

Professional curiosity is an essential safeguarding practice at Farmspace.

Staff must not simply accept information at face value where concerns exist. They should respectfully explore, question and follow up concerns to understand a child's lived experience.

Professional curiosity may involve:

- noticing changes in behaviour;
- recognising patterns over time;
- asking appropriate questions;
- seeking further information;
- sharing concerns;
- challenging explanations where necessary.

Examples of situations requiring professional curiosity may include:

- repeated unexplained injuries;
- sudden changes in behaviour;
- increased anxiety or withdrawal;
- unexplained gifts or possessions;
- changes in relationships;
- persistent tiredness or hunger;
- concerning comments from a child;
- inconsistent explanations from adults.

Staff should remember that safeguarding concerns are rarely isolated incidents. Small concerns may become significant when viewed together.

12. Listening to Children and Children's Voice

Farmspace recognises that children are experts in their own experiences.

Children are encouraged to:

- express their feelings;
- share worries or concerns;
- identify trusted adults;
- contribute to decisions affecting them;
- feel confident that adults will listen and respond.

Staff will:

- create safe opportunities for children to talk;
- listen without judgement;
- avoid dismissing concerns;
- take disclosures seriously;
- explain what may happen next.

Children will never be expected to manage safeguarding concerns alone.

13. Artificial Intelligence and Emerging Online Risks

Farmspace recognises that technology and artificial intelligence create emerging safeguarding challenges.

Staff must understand risks including:

- AI-generated sexual images;
- deepfake content;
- AI-assisted grooming;
- online impersonation;
- sextortion;
- harmful chatbot interactions;
- misinformation;
- manipulation of vulnerable children.

Any concern involving AI or technology must be reported immediately to the DSL.

Children will be supported to develop safe and responsible digital behaviours, including understanding:

- online privacy;
- consent;
- digital footprints;
- online relationships;
- misinformation;
- reporting harmful content.

14. Online Safety

Online safety forms part of Farmspace's wider safeguarding responsibilities.

Staff must remain alert to risks including:

- cyberbullying;
- online harassment;
- grooming;
- sexual exploitation;
- inappropriate content;
- online radicalisation;
- gaming-related risks;
- livestreaming risks;
- sharing of indecent images;
- online scams and manipulation.

Farmspace will provide age-appropriate support to children regarding safe technology use. Filtering and monitoring arrangements will be reviewed regularly to ensure children using Farmspace technology are appropriately protected.

Any inappropriate content, safeguarding concern or failure of filtering systems must be reported immediately.

15. Mobile Phones and Personal Devices

Farmspace maintains a safe and focused learning environment where mobile technology is managed appropriately.

Children

Children are expected to hand mobile phones or personal smart devices to staff on arrival unless an agreed exception applies.

Exceptions may be made where:

- a medical need exists;
- a risk assessment identifies a requirement;
- the DSL authorises continued access.

Devices will be stored securely and returned at the end of the session.

Unauthorised use of mobile phones during Farmspace activities is not permitted.

Staff

Staff personal mobile phones must:

- remain stored securely during teaching sessions;
- not be used while supervising children except in emergencies or where authorised;
- never be used to photograph or record children.

Staff must never:

- communicate with children using personal messaging accounts;
- share personal contact details;
- store safeguarding information on personal devices;
- use personal social media to communicate with pupils.

Only Farmspace-approved devices may be used for photographs, videos or safeguarding purposes.

16. Early Help

Farmspace Barnsley CIC believes that early identification and intervention can significantly improve outcomes for children and families.

Not all safeguarding concerns require statutory intervention. Where a child may benefit from additional support, the DSL may work with:

- parents and carers;
- referring schools;
- local authorities;
- Early Help services;
- health professionals;
- other relevant agencies.

Early Help support may include:

- emotional wellbeing support;
- attendance support;
- family support;
- parenting support;
- mental health support;
- assistance with social or practical difficulties.

Staff must share concerns with the DSL rather than making their own judgement about whether support is required.

Where concerns indicate that a child may be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, Farmspace will follow child protection procedures and make appropriate referrals.

17. Responding to Concerns About a Child

When a safeguarding concern arises, staff must:

1. Recognise the concern.
2. Listen carefully to the child.
3. Remain calm and supportive.
4. Allow the child to speak freely.
5. Take the concern seriously.
6. Avoid leading questions.
7. Avoid investigating.
8. Explain that information cannot be kept secret.
9. Record the concern accurately.
10. Report immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL.

Staff must never:

- promise confidentiality;
- ask investigative questions;
- confront an alleged perpetrator;
- dismiss a child's disclosure;
- delay reporting.

The priority is always the safety and wellbeing of the child.

18. Recognising Abuse, Neglect and Safeguarding Concerns

Farmspace Barnsley CIC recognises that abuse, neglect and exploitation can happen to any child and may occur in any family, community or setting.

Abuse is often complex. Children may experience more than one form of abuse at the same time, and concerns may emerge gradually through changes in behaviour, emotional wellbeing, relationships, attendance or presentation.

Staff must remember that safeguarding concerns are not always obvious. Children may:

- not recognise that they are being harmed;
- feel frightened to disclose concerns;
- believe that abuse is normal;
- feel responsible for what is happening;
- communicate distress through behaviour rather than words;
- withdraw or avoid discussing concerns.

Farmspace promotes a trauma-informed approach. Staff should seek to understand the reasons behind a child's behaviour and experiences while remaining professionally curious about possible safeguarding concerns.

A child's:

- diagnosis;
- SEND needs;
- neurodiversity;
- emotional difficulties;
- previous trauma;
- behaviour presentation;

must never be used as a reason to overlook possible abuse or neglect.

Every concern must be considered carefully, recorded and discussed with the DSL.

19. Types of Abuse

The four recognised categories of abuse are:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect

Abuse may be committed by:

- family members;
- peers;
- professionals;
- trusted adults;
- strangers;
- online contacts.

Abuse can occur:

- in the home;
- in education settings;
- in the community;
- online;
- through exploitation;

- through coercive or controlling relationships.

20. Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is the deliberate use of physical force that causes, or is likely to cause, harm to a child.

Physical abuse may include:

- hitting;
- shaking;
- throwing;
- poisoning;
- burning;
- scalding;
- drowning;
- suffocation;
- inappropriate restraint;
- fabricated or induced illness.

Possible indicators may include:

- unexplained injuries;
- repeated bruising;
- injuries inconsistent with explanations provided;
- injuries in unusual locations;
- fear of going home;
- flinching when approached;
- wearing clothing inappropriate for the weather to cover injuries;
- reluctance to participate in activities involving changing clothes;
- changes in behaviour following contact with certain individuals.

Staff should remember that some children may minimise injuries or provide explanations that do not reflect their lived experience.

Any concern must be reported to the DSL.

21. Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child which causes serious and lasting effects on their emotional development.

Emotional abuse may include:

- humiliation;
- rejection;
- intimidation;
- threats;
- constant criticism;
- controlling behaviour;
- unrealistic expectations;

- exposure to domestic abuse;
- preventing a child from developing independence;
- serious bullying or cyberbullying.

Possible indicators may include:

- low self-esteem;
- anxiety;
- withdrawal;
- emotional distress;
- excessive reassurance seeking;
- difficulty forming relationships;
- fearfulness;
- aggression;
- self-harm;
- developmental delay;
- difficulty regulating emotions.

Farmspace staff should recognise that children affected by emotional abuse may communicate distress through behaviour.

Behaviour should be understood as communication, while safeguarding concerns are still explored appropriately.

22. Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to participate in sexual activities, whether or not the child understands what is happening.

Sexual abuse can involve:

Contact abuse

Including:

- sexual assault;
- inappropriate touching;
- rape;
- sexual exploitation.

Non-contact abuse

Including:

- exposing a child to sexual material;
- encouraging sexualised behaviour;
- grooming;
- online sexual abuse;
- sharing indecent images;
- sexual harassment.

Possible indicators may include:

- sexualised behaviour inappropriate for age;
- knowledge or language inappropriate for developmental stage;
- sudden behaviour changes;
- withdrawal;
- anxiety;
- self-harm;
- running away;
- changes in relationships;
- fear of certain individuals;
- unexplained gifts or possessions.

Staff must understand that grooming often involves building trust, giving attention, offering gifts or creating a sense of loyalty before abuse occurs.

23. Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and emotional needs.

Neglect may involve failure to provide:

- adequate food;
- appropriate clothing;
- safe accommodation;
- supervision;
- medical care;
- education;
- emotional support;
- protection from harm.

Possible indicators include:

- persistent hunger;
- poor hygiene;
- unsuitable clothing;
- untreated medical needs;
- tiredness;
- poor attendance;
- developmental delays;
- lack of supervision;
- unmet emotional needs.

Staff should consider patterns over time rather than isolated incidents.

24. Domestic Abuse

Farmspace recognises that children who experience or witness domestic abuse are victims in their own right.

Domestic abuse may include:

- physical abuse;

- emotional abuse;
- psychological abuse;
- coercive control;
- controlling behaviour;
- financial abuse;
- threats and intimidation.

Children may experience significant harm through:

- witnessing violence;
- hearing abuse;
- experiencing fear and instability;
- being used as part of controlling behaviour;
- attempting to protect others.

Possible indicators include:

- anxiety;
- changes in behaviour;
- emotional withdrawal;
- aggression;
- difficulties concentrating;
- increased vulnerability;
- fearfulness.

Concerns relating to domestic abuse must be shared with the DSL.

25. Children Experiencing Mental Health Difficulties

Farmspace recognises that mental health difficulties may be a safeguarding concern where there is risk of harm.

Staff should remain alert to:

- self-harm;
- suicidal thoughts;
- eating difficulties;
- severe anxiety;
- depression;
- emotional withdrawal;
- significant changes in behaviour.

Mental health concerns alone do not automatically indicate child protection concerns. However, where there is evidence of risk, neglect, abuse, exploitation or inability to keep a child safe, safeguarding procedures must be followed.

Any concerns must be discussed with the DSL.

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

Farmspace recognises that children with SEND may face increased vulnerability to abuse and neglect.

Some children may:

- have communication difficulties;
- find it difficult to explain experiences;
- rely heavily on adults;
- have reduced awareness of danger;
- experience barriers to disclosure;
- communicate distress through behaviour.

Staff must ensure that:

- children have appropriate opportunities to communicate concerns;
- behaviours are not automatically attributed to SEND;
- reasonable adjustments are made;
- safeguarding concerns are explored fully.

Farmspace recognises the importance of listening carefully to children whose communication methods may differ.

27. Vulnerability and Increased Safeguarding Risk

Some children may face increased safeguarding risks due to circumstances including:

- previous trauma;
- being looked after or previously looked after;
- family difficulties;
- disability;
- mental health needs;
- social isolation;
- exploitation risks;
- discrimination;
- disadvantage;
- caring responsibilities.

These factors do not mean a child is experiencing abuse, but staff should remain alert and consider whether additional support or safeguarding action is required.

28. Safeguarding and Behaviour

Farmspace recognises that behaviour is often a form of communication.

Children may communicate distress through:

- anger;
- withdrawal;
- avoidance;
- refusal;
- emotional outbursts;
- difficulty regulating emotions.

Staff will respond using trauma-informed approaches while remaining alert to possible safeguarding explanations.

A child's behaviour should never be viewed in isolation.

Where behaviour represents a significant change, causes concern or suggests possible harm, staff must share concerns with the DSL.

29. Safeguarding Response

Where any member of staff has concerns about a child's welfare, they must:

- report concerns immediately;
- record information accurately;
- avoid making assumptions;
- avoid investigating;
- allow the DSL to coordinate safeguarding action.

Farmspace will always prioritise the child's safety and will take appropriate action, including referral to external agencies where required.

30. Specific Safeguarding Issues

Farmspace Barnsley CIC recognises that safeguarding concerns can take many forms and that children may experience multiple risks at the same time.

Staff must be aware of wider safeguarding issues and understand that these concerns may:

- occur inside or outside the home;
- happen online or offline;
- involve adults or other children;
- develop gradually over time;
- present through changes in behaviour, relationships or emotional wellbeing.

All safeguarding concerns must be reported to the DSL.

31. Child-on-Child Abuse

Farmspace recognises that children can abuse other children.

Child-on-child abuse is never acceptable and will never be dismissed as:

- "banter";
- "just a joke";
- "part of growing up";

- "boys being boys";
- "children being children".

All concerns will be taken seriously.

Child-on-child abuse may include:

- bullying;
- physical abuse;
- sexual violence;
- sexual harassment;
- harmful sexual behaviour;
- sharing of nude or semi-nude images;
- coercive behaviour;
- intimidation;
- online abuse;
- discriminatory abuse;
- initiation or hazing activities.

Staff must recognise that both the child experiencing harm and the child displaying harmful behaviour may require safeguarding support.

Farmspace will consider:

- the safety and wellbeing of the child affected;
- the needs of the child displaying harmful behaviour;
- the context of the behaviour;
- any underlying vulnerabilities;
- appropriate external support.

32. Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Farmspace recognises that some children may display harmful sexual behaviour due to:

- previous trauma;
- exposure to inappropriate material;
- exploitation;
- unmet emotional needs;
- developmental difficulties;
- vulnerability.

Harmful sexual behaviour will always be treated as a safeguarding concern.

Staff must:

- report concerns immediately;
- avoid investigating;
- maintain appropriate supervision;
- record concerns accurately.

The response will consider the needs and safety of all children involved.

33. Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence

Farmspace has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and sexual violence.

This includes:

- unwanted sexual comments;
- sexual jokes;
- sexualised language;
- unwanted touching;
- sharing sexual images;
- pressure or coercion;
- assault.

Children will be supported to understand:

- respect;
- consent;
- healthy relationships;
- personal boundaries;
- how to seek help.

Any allegation will be taken seriously and managed in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

34. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child Sexual Exploitation occurs when a child is manipulated or coerced into sexual activity in exchange for something they need or want, such as:

- affection;
- attention;
- money;
- gifts;
- status;
- accommodation;
- protection.

Children may not recognise that they are being exploited.

Indicators may include:

- unexplained gifts or possessions;
- relationships with significantly older individuals;
- changes in behaviour;
- missing episodes;
- sexualised behaviour;
- secrecy;
- emotional distress;
- involvement with risky situations.

Staff must report concerns to the DSL immediately.

35. Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Child Criminal Exploitation occurs when children are manipulated, coerced or controlled into criminal activity.

This may include:

- drug supply;
- theft;
- violence;
- carrying weapons;
- county lines activity;
- involvement with gangs.

Indicators may include:

- unexplained money;
- expensive items;
- changes in friendships;
- increased secrecy;
- missing episodes;
- carrying multiple phones;
- relationships with older individuals;
- sudden changes in behaviour.

Farmspace recognises that children involved in exploitation are victims and require safeguarding support.

36. County Lines

County Lines involves organised criminal groups exploiting children to transport drugs, money or other items.

Children may be controlled through:

- threats;
- violence;
- debt;
- intimidation;
- manipulation;
- promises of belonging or status.

Possible indicators include:

- going missing;
- travelling unexpectedly;
- receiving excessive calls or messages;
- having multiple mobile phones;
- unexplained money;

- changes in peer groups;
- anxiety or fear.

Concerns must be reported immediately.

37. Cuckooing

Cuckooing occurs when criminals take over the home of a vulnerable person to use it for criminal purposes.

Staff should remain alert to disclosures involving:

- vulnerable family members;
- unsafe home environments;
- criminal activity around a child's family.

Any concerns must be passed to the DSL.

38. Serious Violence

Farmspace recognises that children may be vulnerable to involvement in serious violence.

Indicators may include:

- unexplained injuries;
- carrying weapons;
- changes in behaviour;
- association with harmful peer groups;
- threats or intimidation;
- unexplained money or possessions.

Staff must report concerns promptly.

39. Children Missing from Education, Home or Care

Missing episodes may indicate safeguarding concerns.

A child going missing may be linked to:

- exploitation;
- neglect;
- family difficulties;
- abuse;
- mental health concerns;
- unsafe relationships.

Farmspace will follow agreed procedures where a child:

- fails to attend unexpectedly;
- leaves a session without permission;

- cannot be located.

Concerns will be shared with appropriate agencies, including the referring school, parents/carers and statutory services where required.

40. Domestic Abuse

Farmspace recognises domestic abuse as a safeguarding issue affecting children directly.

Children may experience harm through:

- witnessing abuse;
- hearing threatening behaviour;
- living with fear and instability;
- experiencing controlling behaviour;
- being used within abusive relationships.

Domestic abuse includes:

- physical abuse;
- emotional abuse;
- psychological abuse;
- coercive control;
- controlling behaviour;
- economic abuse.

Staff must report concerns to the DSL.

41. Radicalisation and Extremism (Prevent Duty)

Farmspace has a legal responsibility to protect children from the risk of radicalisation.

Staff should be aware that children may become vulnerable through:

- exposure to extremist views;
- online influence;
- manipulation;
- isolation;
- exploitation.

Indicators may include:

- increased intolerance;
- expressing extremist views;
- attempts to influence others;
- withdrawal from usual relationships;
- accessing concerning online content.

Concerns must be discussed with the DSL.

Where appropriate, referrals may be made to:

- Prevent;
- Channel Panel;
- Children's Services.

42. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is illegal and is a form of child abuse.

FGM includes procedures involving injury or alteration of female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

Possible indicators include:

- discussion of a planned trip overseas;
- fear of returning home;
- changes in behaviour;
- difficulty walking or sitting;
- concerns about family pressure.

Any concerns must be reported immediately to the DSL.

Where a teacher becomes aware that FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18, they have a statutory duty to report directly to the Police.

43. Forced Marriage

Forced marriage occurs where a person is pressured, threatened or forced into marriage without their full and free consent.

Children may experience:

- emotional pressure;
- threats;
- violence;
- restriction of freedom;
- family coercion.

Staff must never attempt mediation between families where forced marriage is suspected.

Concerns must be reported immediately.

44. Honour-Based Abuse

Honour-based abuse includes violence, threats, intimidation or controlling behaviour carried out to protect perceived family or community honour.

It may include:

- forced marriage;
- FGM;
- physical violence;
- emotional abuse;

- restrictions on freedom.

Staff must treat concerns as safeguarding matters.

45. Online Abuse and Digital Safeguarding

Technology forms part of children's everyday lives and creates both opportunities and risks. Online safeguarding concerns may include:

- grooming;
- cyberbullying;
- sexual exploitation;
- sextortion;
- sharing of indecent images;
- harmful content;
- online radicalisation;
- fake identities;
- manipulation.

Staff should encourage children to seek help if something online makes them feel unsafe.

46. Artificial Intelligence and Emerging Technology Risks

Farmspace recognises that artificial intelligence creates new safeguarding challenges. Risks include:

- AI-generated sexual images;
- deepfake videos;
- AI voice cloning;
- impersonation;
- AI-assisted grooming;
- manipulation through chatbots.

Children should be supported to understand:

- responsible technology use;
- privacy;
- consent;
- online identity;
- reporting concerns.

Any suspected misuse involving AI must be reported to the DSL.

47. Children Experiencing Homelessness or Family Hardship

Farmspace recognises that financial hardship, housing instability and family difficulties may increase vulnerability.

Staff should remain alert to:

- unmet basic needs;
- lack of stability;
- emotional distress;
- changes in presentation;
- barriers to accessing support.

Where appropriate, Farmspace will work with families and partner agencies to identify support.

48. Young Carers

Some children attending Farmspace may have caring responsibilities within their family.

Young carers may experience:

- emotional pressure;
- tiredness;
- difficulty attending regularly;
- reduced opportunities;
- anxiety.

Staff should consider whether additional support is required.

49. Looked After and Previously Looked After Children

Farmspace recognises that children who are looked after or previously looked after may have experienced trauma, disruption or significant adversity.

Staff will work sensitively with:

- schools;
- local authorities;
- carers;
- designated professionals.

Safeguarding concerns relating to these children will be managed in the same way as all other children.

50. Safeguarding Response to Specific Issues

Regardless of the type of safeguarding concern, Farmspace Barnsley CIC will:

- listen to the child;
- record concerns accurately;
- inform the DSL;
- take appropriate action;

- work with partner agencies;
- prioritise the child's welfare.

Where necessary, Farmspace will make direct referrals to safeguarding agencies.

The involvement of another organisation, including a referring school, will never prevent or delay action required to keep a child safe

51. Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

Farmspace Barnsley CIC operates a culture where safeguarding concerns are welcomed, taken seriously and acted upon promptly.

Any member of staff, volunteer, contractor or visitor who has a concern about a child must report it immediately.

A concern may arise from:

- something a child says;
- something a child does;
- changes in behaviour or presentation;
- information shared by another person;
- observations of interactions between children or adults;
- information received from another agency.

Staff must remember:

You do not need to prove that abuse has occurred before reporting a concern.

It is the responsibility of trained safeguarding professionals to assess information and decide what action is required.

Staff must never:

- investigate allegations themselves;
- ask leading questions;
- confront an alleged perpetrator;
- wait for additional evidence;
- assume another person has reported the concern.

52. Responding to a Child Disclosure

If a child tells a member of staff that they are experiencing harm or abuse, staff should:

Listen

- remain calm;
- give the child time to speak;
- allow them to explain in their own words;
- show that they are being taken seriously.

Respond

Staff should:

- reassure the child that they have done the right thing by speaking;
- explain that the information must be shared with people who can help keep them safe;
- avoid making promises they cannot keep.

Record

Staff must:

- record the disclosure as soon as possible;
- use the child's own words wherever possible;
- include the date, time and circumstances;
- record any actions taken.

Report

The concern must immediately be passed to:

- the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL); or
- the Deputy DSL if the DSL is unavailable.

Staff must not:

- promise confidentiality;
- ask "why" questions;
- suggest answers;
- express shock or disbelief;
- investigate the allegation;
- contact parents/carers without guidance from the DSL where safeguarding concerns exist.

53. Recording Safeguarding Concerns

All safeguarding concerns must be recorded promptly.

Records must be:

- factual;
- accurate;
- clear;
- objective;
- dated and timed;
- signed or attributable to the person making the record.

Records should include:

- what was observed;
- what was said;
- the child's exact words where possible;
- who was present;
- actions taken;

- decisions made;
- who information was shared with.

Staff must distinguish clearly between:

Fact:

"The child stated, 'I do not want to go home.'"

and

Opinion:

"The child appeared frightened about returning home."

Both may be relevant, but they must not be confused.

Safeguarding records are confidential and must only be accessed by those who require the information to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.

Records will be stored securely in accordance with:

- UK GDPR;
- Data Protection Act 2018;
- Farmspace Data Protection Policy;
- safeguarding record retention requirements.

54. Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead in Managing Concerns

The DSL is responsible for coordinating safeguarding responses at Farmspace.

The DSL will:

- review safeguarding concerns;
- assess risk;
- decide appropriate action;
- seek professional advice where required;
- make referrals;
- liaise with external agencies;
- maintain safeguarding records;
- ensure appropriate follow-up.

The DSL has authority to make safeguarding decisions on behalf of Farmspace.

Whilst Farmspace values partnership working with schools, parents/carers and other professionals, safeguarding decisions will always prioritise the immediate welfare of the child.

55. Safeguarding Referrals

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child:

- is suffering significant harm;
- is likely to suffer significant harm;
- is at risk of abuse or exploitation;

Farmspace Barnsley CIC will make an appropriate referral without delay.

Referrals may be made to:

- Children's Social Care;
- Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH);
- South Yorkshire Police;
- Prevent;
- Channel Panel;
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO);
- other relevant safeguarding services.

Farmspace retains responsibility for ensuring concerns are acted upon.

A referral will not be delayed because:

- the child attends through another school;
- the referring school has not responded;
- additional information is awaited;
- staff are uncertain whether the concern meets a threshold.

Where there is immediate danger, emergency services will be contacted.

56. Working with Referring Schools and Partner Agencies

Farmspace Barnsley CIC recognises the importance of effective partnership working.

Many children attend Farmspace through referral from:

- schools;
- academies;
- local authorities;
- other educational providers.

Farmspace will work collaboratively with referring organisations by:

- sharing relevant safeguarding information;
- contributing to reviews and meetings;
- supporting agreed plans;
- communicating concerns promptly;
- participating in multi-agency arrangements.

However:

Safeguarding responsibility during a child's attendance at Farmspace remains with Farmspace Barnsley CIC.

Where action is required to protect a child, Farmspace will act immediately and inform relevant professionals as soon as it is safe and appropriate.

Farmspace will not rely solely on another organisation to safeguard a child.

57. Information Sharing and Confidentiality

Effective safeguarding requires appropriate information sharing.

Farmspace understands that protecting children may require information to be shared with professionals and agencies.

Information may be shared with:

- Children's Social Care;
- Police;
- health professionals;
- referring schools;
- local authorities;
- Early Help services;
- safeguarding partners;
- other agencies involved in supporting the child.

Information will be shared:

- lawfully;
- proportionately;
- securely;
- on a need-to-know basis.

The welfare of the child overrides concerns about confidentiality where there is a safeguarding risk. Parents/carers will usually be informed before information is shared unless doing so would:

- increase risk to the child;
- place another person at risk;
- compromise an investigation;
- prejudice safeguarding action.

58. Consent and Safeguarding Information Sharing

Farmspace understands that safeguarding information sharing does not always require parental consent.

Where a child may be at risk of significant harm, information may be shared without consent where lawful and necessary.

Staff should always seek advice from the DSL where unsure.

59. Early Help Assessment and Support

Farmspace believes early support can prevent difficulties escalating.

Where concerns do not meet the threshold for statutory intervention but additional support is required, the DSL may coordinate Early Help support.

Early Help may involve:

- families;
- referring schools;

- local authority services;
- health professionals;
- community organisations.

Support may address:

- emotional wellbeing;
- attendance;
- family relationships;
- behaviour;
- housing;
- financial difficulties;
- additional needs.

Early Help does not replace child protection procedures where a child is at risk of significant harm.

60. Allegations Against Staff, Volunteers or Other Adults

Farmspace takes all allegations against adults working with children seriously.

This applies to:

- employees;
- directors;
- volunteers;
- contractors;
- agency workers;
- students on placement;
- visitors.

An allegation may relate to an adult who:

- has harmed a child;
- may have committed a criminal offence;
- has behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk;
- has behaved in a way inconsistent with safeguarding expectations.

Any allegation must immediately be reported to:

- the Directors; and
- the appropriate safeguarding lead.

Where required, advice will be sought from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

The person subject to an allegation must not be informed until appropriate advice has been obtained.

61. Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

The LADO manages allegations against people who work with children.

Farmspace will cooperate fully with LADO procedures.

This may include:

- providing information;
- supporting investigations;
- attending meetings;
- maintaining confidentiality;
- implementing agreed actions.

62. Low-Level Concerns

Farmspace promotes a culture where concerns about adult behaviour can be raised openly.

A low-level concern is behaviour that does not meet the threshold for referral to the LADO but may indicate poor judgement or behaviour inconsistent with professional expectations.

Examples include:

- inappropriate comments;
- excessive familiarity;
- favouritism;
- inappropriate communication;
- blurred boundaries;
- unnecessary physical contact.

Low-level concerns will be:

- recorded;
- reviewed;
- monitored for patterns;
- addressed appropriately.

A pattern of low-level concerns may indicate a wider safeguarding issue.

63. Whistleblowing

Farmspace encourages all staff to raise concerns about unsafe practice.

Staff must feel confident that concerns will be listened to and investigated.

Concerns may relate to:

- safeguarding failures;
- unsafe practice;
- inappropriate behaviour;
- abuse;
- poor leadership;
- breaches of policy.

Staff should raise concerns through Farmspace procedures initially.

Where concerns cannot be resolved internally, staff may contact appropriate external organisations, including:

- Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership;
- Local Authority Designated Officer;
- NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line;
- Ofsted where applicable.

No person will suffer detriment for raising a genuine safeguarding concern.

64. Safer Recruitment and Selection

Farmspace Barnsley CIC is committed to ensuring that all adults working with children are suitable, safe and appropriately supported.

We recognise that safer recruitment is a fundamental part of safeguarding and helps prevent unsuitable individuals from working with children.

Farmspace follows safer recruitment principles throughout the recruitment and selection process. This includes:

- clear job descriptions and person specifications;
- safeguarding-focused recruitment processes;
- identity verification;
- checking employment history;
- obtaining appropriate references;
- checking qualifications where required;
- assessing gaps in employment;
- carrying out appropriate DBS checks;
- checking the Children's Barred List where applicable;
- confirming right to work;
- considering suitability to work with children.

Recruitment decisions will always consider safeguarding implications.

65. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

Farmspace determines the appropriate level of DBS check based upon an individual's role and level of contact with children.

Checks may include:

- Enhanced DBS checks;
- Children's Barred List checks where appropriate.

No individual will undertake regulated activity with children unless appropriate checks have been completed or appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place.

DBS information will be managed confidentially and in accordance with:

- UK GDPR;
 - Data Protection Act 2018;
 - DBS Code of Practice.
-

66. Single Central Record (SCR)

Where required, Farmspace will maintain a Single Central Record of safeguarding checks. The SCR will be monitored and reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with statutory expectations.

The record will include appropriate information relating to:

- identity checks;
 - DBS checks;
 - recruitment checks;
 - qualifications;
 - safeguarding training;
 - other required suitability checks.
-

67. Safer Recruitment Training

At least one person involved in recruitment decisions will have appropriate safer recruitment training.

Those involved in recruitment must understand:

- the importance of safeguarding-focused recruitment;
 - how to identify potential concerns;
 - how to explore employment gaps;
 - how to ask appropriate safeguarding questions;
 - the importance of professional curiosity.
-

68. Volunteers

Farmspace values the contribution made by volunteers and recognises the importance of ensuring volunteers are appropriately safeguarded.

Volunteers will receive:

- safeguarding induction;
- information about reporting concerns;
- the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
- the Staff Code of Conduct;
- information about professional boundaries.

The level of safeguarding checks required will depend upon:

- the nature of the role;
- frequency of contact with children;

- whether the individual will be supervised.

Volunteers will never undertake unsupervised regulated activity unless appropriate checks have been completed and authorisation has been provided.

69. Contractors and External Professionals

Any contractor or external professional working at Farmspace must understand their safeguarding responsibilities.

This includes:

- maintenance workers;
- visiting professionals;
- specialists;
- external trainers;
- agency workers.

Where appropriate, contractors will:

- provide evidence of suitability checks;
- receive safeguarding information;
- follow Farmspace expectations;
- report concerns immediately.

Visitors and contractors must never place themselves in a position where safeguarding concerns could arise.

70. Visitors

All visitors to Farmspace must:

- sign in on arrival;
- receive appropriate safeguarding information;
- wear identification where required;
- be supervised where appropriate.

Visitors must immediately report any safeguarding concern to a member of Farmspace staff.

Visitors must not:

- access children without authorisation;
 - take photographs;
 - share information about children;
 - engage in inappropriate conversations with pupils.
-

71. Professional Boundaries

Farmspace recognises that strong relationships are central to effective alternative provision. However, professional boundaries must always be maintained.

Staff must ensure relationships with children remain:

- professional;
- appropriate;
- respectful;
- supportive;
- focused on the child's wellbeing.

Staff must never:

- develop inappropriate personal relationships with children;
- communicate with pupils through personal social media;
- exchange personal contact details;
- meet children outside Farmspace without authorisation;
- give inappropriate gifts;
- show favouritism;
- share personal information unnecessarily;
- engage in secretive communication.

Staff should always consider:

"Would this action be appropriate if observed by another professional?"

72. Staff Code of Conduct

All adults working at Farmspace must follow the Staff Code of Conduct.

The Code sets expectations relating to:

- professional behaviour;
- relationships with children;
- confidentiality;
- online conduct;
- use of technology;
- physical contact;
- boundaries;
- safeguarding responsibilities.

Failure to follow the Code may result in disciplinary action and may lead to safeguarding referral.

73. Physical Contact

Farmspace recognises that appropriate physical contact may sometimes be necessary.

Examples include:

- providing first aid;
- preventing injury;
- supporting a distressed child;
- assisting with practical activities;
- supporting safe animal handling;
- responding to medical needs.

Physical contact must always be:

- necessary;
- appropriate;
- proportionate;
- respectful;
- child-centred.

Staff should consider:

- the child's age;
- their individual needs;
- communication preferences;
- previous experiences;
- whether another approach could be used.

Any physical intervention must follow Farmspace's Positive Handling Policy.

74. Physical Intervention and Reasonable Force

Farmspace aims to reduce the need for physical intervention through:

- positive relationships;
- predictable routines;
- emotional regulation support;
- trauma-informed approaches;
- appropriate risk assessment.

Reasonable force may only be used where necessary to:

- prevent injury;
- prevent serious damage;
- prevent a criminal offence;
- maintain safety.

Any intervention must be:

- proportionate;
- the least restrictive option;
- recorded;
- reviewed.

Parents/carers and relevant professionals will be informed where appropriate.

75. Personal Mobile Phones and Devices

Technology must be managed carefully to protect children and maintain professional boundaries.

Staff Devices

Staff personal devices must:

- be stored securely during sessions;
- not be used while supervising children unless necessary;
- not be used to photograph or record children.

Staff must never:

- store child information on personal devices;
- communicate with children through personal messaging services;
- share images of children.

Farmspace Devices

Farmspace-approved devices may be used for:

- educational activities;
- safeguarding recording;
- approved photography;
- communication relating to Farmspace activities.

All information must be stored securely.

76. Photography, Video and Images

Photography and video may support:

- educational evidence;
- children's achievements;
- learning records;
- approved promotional activities.

Farmspace will:

- obtain appropriate consent;
- respect children's dignity;
- avoid identifying children unnecessarily;
- store images securely;
- ensure images are only used for agreed purposes.

Images must never:

- be taken on personal devices;
 - be shared on personal social media;
 - be used inappropriately.
-

77. Social Media

Staff must maintain professional standards online.

Staff must not:

- discuss children online;
- share confidential information;
- identify pupils;
- post images of children;
- accept inappropriate social media contact with pupils;
- communicate with children through personal accounts.

Online behaviour may impact professional suitability and may be managed through safeguarding or disciplinary procedures.

78. Confidentiality and Professional Conduct

Staff must respect confidentiality while recognising that safeguarding information must be shared where necessary.

Staff must:

- only access information required for their role;
- discuss children only with appropriate professionals;
- store information securely;
- avoid conversations about children in public areas.

Confidentiality must never prevent information sharing where a child may be at risk.

79. Farm-Specific Safeguarding Responsibilities

Farmspace Barnsley CIC recognises that farm-based education creates unique safeguarding opportunities and responsibilities.

Working with animals, outdoor environments and practical activities provides significant benefits, including:

- confidence building;
- emotional regulation;
- responsibility;
- communication skills;
- therapeutic support.

However, these activities require careful management.

Children may be involved with:

- livestock;
- poultry;
- gardening equipment;

- tools;
- woodland areas;
- water features;
- cooking activities;
- fires;
- outdoor environments.

All activities will be supported by:

- appropriate risk assessments;
- suitable supervision;
- clear instructions;
- trained staff;
- consideration of individual children's needs.

No child will be forced to participate in an activity that causes significant distress or places them at unnecessary risk.

80. Animal Interaction and Safeguarding

Animals are central to the Farmspace experience.

Staff recognise that animal interaction can provide therapeutic benefits but must always be managed safely.

Children will:

- receive safety guidance;
- be supervised appropriately;
- learn respectful animal handling;
- use protective equipment where required;
- follow hygiene procedures.

Staff should remain aware that animal interaction may sometimes trigger emotional responses or disclosures, particularly for children who have experienced trauma.

Any safeguarding disclosure must be responded to in accordance with this policy.

81. Woodland Learning and Outdoor Activities

Outdoor learning is an important part of Farmspace's curriculum.

Before activities take place, staff will ensure:

- appropriate risk assessments are completed;
- boundaries are explained;
- supervision arrangements are appropriate;
- emergency procedures are understood.

Children participating in woodland activities may receive guidance relating to:

- tool safety;
- fire safety;
- wildlife;
- boundaries;
- appropriate clothing;
- safe behaviour.

Staff must maintain awareness of both physical safety and children's emotional wellbeing.

82. Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities

Farmspace recognises the value of learning beyond the main site.

Before off-site activities:

- risk assessments will be completed;
- staffing levels will be considered;
- emergency information will be available;
- appropriate permissions will be obtained;
- safeguarding arrangements will be confirmed.

Children remain the responsibility of Farmspace staff during activities unless alternative arrangements have been formally agreed.

Any safeguarding concern arising during an off-site activity must be reported immediately to the DSL.

83. Attendance as a Safeguarding Responsibility

Farmspace Barnsley CIC recognises that attendance is closely linked to safeguarding.

A child's attendance pattern may provide important information about their wellbeing, safety and circumstances.

Changes in attendance may indicate:

- neglect;
- family difficulties;
- emotional distress;
- mental health concerns;
- exploitation;
- bullying;
- unsafe relationships;
- difficulties accessing education.

Farmspace monitors attendance carefully and works closely with referring schools, parents/carers and relevant professionals.

Where a child does not attend as expected:

- attendance will be checked promptly;
- concerns will be recorded;

- the referring school will be informed where appropriate;
- parents/carers will be contacted in accordance with agreed arrangements;
- safeguarding concerns will be shared with the DSL.

Farmspace recognises that children attending alternative provision may already have experienced barriers to education. Attendance concerns will therefore be approached with curiosity, support and a focus on understanding the child's circumstances.

84. Missing Child Procedure

Farmspace has clear procedures to respond if a child goes missing during attendance. If a child cannot be located:

1. Staff will immediately inform the DSL or senior member of staff.
2. A search of the immediate area will begin while maintaining supervision of other children.
3. Staff will check agreed areas and consider known risks.
4. The child's individual risk information will be considered.
5. Parents/carers and the referring school will be informed where appropriate.
6. Emergency services will be contacted if the child cannot be located or there is concern for their safety.
7. The incident will be recorded fully.
8. A review will take place to identify any learning or required changes.

The safety of the child remains the priority throughout.

85. Behaviour and Safeguarding

Farmspace recognises that behaviour is often a form of communication. Many children attending Farmspace may have experienced:

- trauma;
- adverse childhood experiences;
- anxiety;
- disrupted education;
- attachment difficulties;
- unmet emotional needs;
- neurodiversity.

Behaviour will therefore be considered within the context of the child's lived experience. Staff will use approaches based on:

- relationships;
- consistency;
- emotional regulation;
- restorative practice;
- clear boundaries;
- positive reinforcement.

Staff will avoid approaches that may increase distress or re-traumatise children.

A sudden change in behaviour may indicate a safeguarding concern.

Staff should consider:

- What has changed for this child?
- What might this behaviour be communicating?
- Does this indicate that additional support is needed?

Concerns must be shared with the DSL.

86. Positive Behaviour Support

Farmspace promotes a supportive environment where children are encouraged to:

- understand expectations;
- develop self-regulation;
- build confidence;
- repair relationships;
- recognise consequences.

Behaviour management will always be:

- fair;
- consistent;
- respectful;
- appropriate to the individual child.

Children will not be subjected to:

- humiliation;
- degrading treatment;
- inappropriate sanctions;
- responses that undermine their dignity.

87. Positive Handling and Restrictive Physical Intervention

Farmspace aims to prevent situations where physical intervention is required.

Staff will use preventative approaches including:

- understanding triggers;
- adapting environments;
- providing support;
- recognising emotional escalation;
- offering regulation strategies.

Physical intervention may only be used where necessary to prevent:

- injury;
- serious harm;
- significant damage;
- a criminal offence.

Any intervention must be:

- reasonable;
- proportionate;
- necessary;
- recorded;
- reviewed.

The DSL will ensure incidents are monitored and learning is identified.

88. Online Safety

Online safety is recognised as an essential safeguarding responsibility. Farmspace understands that children may experience risks through:

- social media;
- gaming;
- messaging platforms;
- websites;
- artificial intelligence tools;
- online communities.

Risks include:

- grooming;
- cyberbullying;
- exploitation;
- harmful content;
- misinformation;
- radicalisation;
- sexual abuse;
- online manipulation.

Staff will support children to develop:

- safe online behaviours;
- digital awareness;
- critical thinking;
- understanding of privacy;
- confidence to report concerns.

89. Filtering and Monitoring

Where children access technology at Farmspace, appropriate filtering and monitoring arrangements will be maintained.

Systems will be reviewed regularly to ensure they are:

- effective;
- appropriate;
- proportionate;
- aligned with safeguarding expectations.

Staff must report:

- inappropriate content being accessed;
- concerns about online behaviour;
- failures in filtering systems.

90. Artificial Intelligence and Technology

Farmspace recognises that artificial intelligence presents emerging safeguarding considerations.

Children may encounter risks including:

- AI-generated images;
- fake identities;
- impersonation;
- misinformation;
- manipulation;
- inappropriate AI-generated content.

Children will be supported to understand:

- responsible AI use;
- privacy;
- consent;
- digital identity;
- online safety.

Any concern involving AI misuse will be reported to the DSL.

91. Safeguarding Through the Curriculum

Safeguarding is embedded throughout Farmspace learning.

The curriculum supports children to develop:

- confidence;
- resilience;
- independence;
- communication skills;
- emotional awareness;
- healthy relationships;

- personal safety awareness.

Learning opportunities may include:

- animal care;
- horticulture;
- outdoor learning;
- woodland activities;
- practical skills;
- teamwork;
- community activities.

Children will be supported to recognise:

- safe and unsafe situations;
- trusted adults;
- how to ask for help;
- how to respect others.

92. Relationships, Health and Personal Development

Farmspace supports children to develop understanding of:

- respectful relationships;
- consent;
- personal boundaries;
- emotional wellbeing;
- equality;
- diversity;
- online relationships.

Teaching will be appropriate to children's age, needs and development.

93. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Farmspace Barnsley CIC is committed to ensuring every child feels:

- safe;
- valued;
- respected;
- included.

Safeguarding practice recognises that vulnerability may be increased by factors including:

- disability;
- special educational needs;

- mental health needs;
- family circumstances;
- discrimination;
- language barriers;
- identity;
- previous experiences of harm.

No child will experience discrimination or reduced access to support because of who they are.

94. Children with Additional Vulnerabilities

Farmspace recognises that some children may require additional safeguarding consideration. This includes children who:

- have SEND;
- are looked after;
- are care experienced;
- are young carers;
- experience mental health difficulties;
- have experienced trauma;
- have involvement with external agencies.

Staff will work collaboratively with appropriate professionals while maintaining Farmspace's responsibility to safeguard children during their attendance.

95. Safeguarding Monitoring and Quality Assurance

The Directors and DSL will monitor safeguarding effectiveness through:

- regular safeguarding reviews;
- evaluation of incidents;
- review of safeguarding records;
- staff training monitoring;
- supervision discussions;
- feedback from children and families;
- partnership feedback;
- review of risk assessments.

Safeguarding practice will continually improve through reflection and learning.

96. Partnership Working and Accountability

Farmspace Barnsley CIC values partnership working with:

- referring schools;
- local authorities;
- parents/carers;

- health professionals;
- safeguarding partners;
- community organisations.

However, Farmspace recognises that when a child is attending our provision:

The safeguarding of that child is our responsibility.

We will:

- act immediately when concerns arise;
- seek advice where required;
- involve referring organisations appropriately;
- share information lawfully;
- make referrals when necessary;
- never delay action while waiting for another organisation.

Partnership working strengthens safeguarding, but does not replace Farmspace's duty of care.

97. Policy Review

This Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed:

- annually;
- following significant safeguarding incidents;
- following changes to legislation or statutory guidance;
- following recommendations from safeguarding reviews;
- following organisational changes.

The next planned review date is:

September 2027

The DSL will ensure that staff are informed of significant changes.

Appendix A – Safeguarding Reporting Process

If a child is at immediate risk:

1. Contact emergency services where required.
2. Inform the DSL.
3. Ensure the child is safe.
4. Record actions taken.

If a safeguarding concern arises:

1. Recognise the concern.
2. Listen to the child.
3. Do not investigate.
4. Reassure appropriately.
5. Record accurately.
6. Report immediately to the DSL.
7. The DSL will decide further action.

Appendix B – Farmspace Safeguarding Contacts

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Nicola Brearley

Telephone: 07526824567

Deputy Safeguarding Lead

Kelly Richardson

Telephone: 07708931231

Additional contacts:

- Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership
- Barnsley Children's Social Care
- Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
- South Yorkshire Police
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- Prevent/Channel
- Ofsted (where applicable)

Appendix C – Staff Safeguarding Declaration

All staff, volunteers and regular visitors must confirm that they have:

- ☐ Read and understood the Farmspace Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- ☐ Read and understood the Staff Code of Conduct.
- ☐ Read and understood the Whistleblowing Policy.
- ☐ Completed safeguarding induction.
- ☐ Completed required safeguarding training.
- ☐ Understood the procedure for reporting concerns.
- ☐ Understood that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- ☐ Understood that Farmspace retains responsibility for safeguarding children while they are attending our provision.

Signed:

Name:

Role:

Date: