Safeguarding Policy – The Haven Centre				
Document No.	POL-007	**Revision**	C	

1. Policy Statement

At the Haven Centre we aim to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and well. We believe by promoting positive relationships everyone will be able to participate and experience fun and friendship in a safe environment.

The Haven Centre will:

- Provide a safe, caring, and inclusive environment for all participants.
- Take all concerns and allegations of abuse seriously, respond promptly and appropriately.
- Ensure all staff, trustees, and volunteers understand their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Promote a culture of openness and accountability where safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Work in partnership with statutory and voluntary agencies to maintain best practice in safeguarding, as laid out by The Highland Council Child Protection.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all The Haven Centre trustees, employees, contractors, sessional workers, students, and volunteers, and to all activities and services operating out of the centre - including those at The Haven Centre, outreach activities, and community programmes.

The Haven Centre primarily provides accessible facilities and spaces for children, young people, adults with additional support needs and their families, including facilities used by external organisations to deliver their own activities and services.

The Haven Centre does not ordinarily provide direct childcare, personal care or supervised care services, unless specifically agreed and delivered as part of an identified Centre-led activity.

Where external organisations use the premises to deliver their own activities or services, responsibility for the safeguarding, supervision and welfare of participants during those activities remains with the organisation delivering the service.

The Haven Centre retains responsibility for safeguarding arrangements within its own operations, the safety of premises and facilities under its control, and responding appropriately to safeguarding concerns brought to its attention.

These responsibilities do not remove or limit any statutory safeguarding obligations applying to The Haven Centre.

3. Legal and Policy Framework

This policy is informed by Scottish legislation, guidance, and national standards, including:

- Children (Scotland) Act 1995
- Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007
- Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
- National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2021)

- Charity Commission and OSCR Safeguarding Guidance (2024)
- Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) principles

4. Children's Rights and Participation

In accordance with the Children (Scotland) Act 2020, The Haven Centre recognises that all children have the capacity to express views, regardless of age. The Haven Centre supports children in expressing their views through speech, writing, drawing, or via trusted third parties. These views will be considered in all safeguarding decisions affecting them.

5. PVG Scheme Legal Obligations

From 1 April 2025, PVG membership is legally required for anyone in a regulated role involving children or protected adults. From 1 July 2025, it is a criminal offence for individuals to work in regulated roles without PVG membership or for organisations to recruit individuals into such roles without confirming PVG membership. The Haven centre ensures compliance with PVG legal membership.

6. Trustee PVG Requirements

Under the Charities (Regulation and Administration) (Scotland) Act 2023, trustees whose roles involve regulated activity may be subject to PVG checks. The Haven Centre will assess trustee roles and ensure appropriate PVG membership where required.

7. Definitions

- Child / Young Person: Anyone under the age of 18.
- Vulnerable Adult: Anyone aged 18 or over who may be unable to safeguard themselves from harm, abuse, or exploitation due to age, illness, disability, or social circumstances.
- Abuse: Any action (or inaction) that causes harm or distress, including physical, emotional, sexual, or financial abuse, neglect, discrimination, or exploitation.

8. Safeguarding Responsibilities

- Trustees: Have overall accountability for ensuring that The Haven Centre meets its safeguarding duties.
- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Responsible for implementing this policy, providing advice, training, and ensuring that all concerns are managed appropriately.

The Haven Centre Designated Safeguarding Lead: Rona Matheson, The Haven Centre CEO, 07511 808085, rona.matheson@havencentre.org
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Rosie Jardine, The Haven Centre, Trustee, 07979691224, rosie.jardine@havencentre.org

Every staff member and volunteer has a duty to:
- Complete safeguarding training and follow this policy.

- Remain alert to signs of abuse or neglect.
- Report any concerns or disclosures immediately to the DSL.

9. External Organisations and Service Providers

External organisations, charities, professionals and service providers using The Haven Centre's facilities are responsible for ensuring appropriate safeguarding measures are in place for activities they organise and deliver.

As a condition of using the Centre's facilities, external providers are expected to:

- Maintain appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies.
- Ensure staff and volunteers hold appropriate PVG scheme membership where required by law.
- Provide appropriate supervision and support for their participants.
- Undertake suitable activity-specific risk assessments.
- Ensure staff and volunteers are appropriately trained.
- Maintain procedures for reporting safeguarding concerns.
- Notify The Haven Centre promptly of safeguarding incidents relevant to the safety of others or the use of its premises, subject to appropriate information-sharing arrangements.

The Haven Centre may request evidence of these arrangements and reserves the right to restrict or suspend access to facilities where safeguarding concerns arise.

The Haven Centre and external providers will cooperate with statutory agencies where required. The involvement of an external provider does not prevent The Haven Centre from making its own safeguarding referral.

10. Parental and Carer Responsibilities

Where children and young people attend The Haven Centre accompanied by a parent, carer or responsible adult, that individual remains responsible for their supervision, personal care and individual support needs unless alternative arrangements have been expressly agreed with a service provider.

The Haven Centre provides accessible facilities intended to support safe and inclusive participation. The provision of these facilities does not, in itself, constitute a childcare or supervised care service.

Where activities are organised and delivered by external providers, arrangements for supervision and care must be clearly communicated to participants and their families.

All parents, carers and visitors are expected to comply with the Centre's safety guidance and facility-specific rules.

11. Safe Use of Facilities

The Haven Centre is committed to maintaining safe, accessible and inclusive premises for all individuals using its facilities.

The Centre will ensure that appropriate premises risk assessments, maintenance arrangements, equipment safety checks and emergency procedures are in place.

Clear guidance will be provided on the safe use of facilities, including the Play Centre, Haven Suites, Café and shared spaces.

12. Safe Recruitment

The Haven Centre is committed to safe recruitment practices that reduce the risk of harm to children and vulnerable adults.

All prospective employees, trustees, and volunteers who will have regular contact with vulnerable groups must:

- Undergo appropriate PVG Scheme checks.
- Provide satisfactory references.
- Complete a safeguarding induction before starting work.
- Sign and adhere to The Haven Centre Code of Conduct.

13. Code of Conduct

All staff, trustees, and volunteers must:

- Treat all individuals with dignity, respect, and fairness.
- Maintain professional boundaries at all times.
- Never engage in or tolerate any form of abuse, discrimination, or exploitation.
- Report all safeguarding concerns or allegations without delay.
- Uphold the values and ethos of The Haven Centre in all interactions.

14. Recognising and Responding to Concerns

Abuse may take many forms — physical, emotional, sexual, financial, or neglect. It can occur within families, institutions, or communities.

If a child, young person, or vulnerable adult discloses information or you suspect abuse:

1. Listen carefully and remain calm.
2. Reassure the person they are being taken seriously.
3. Do not promise confidentiality — explain that information must be shared to keep them safe.
4. Record what has been said or observed as soon as possible, using their own words where possible.
5. Report immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy).
6. For any external parties who witness a safeguarding issue at the Haven Centre (play centre, cafe, suites or external area of the site) please report to The Haven Centre Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) in the first instance.

15. Reporting and Escalation Procedure

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is the first point of contact for anyone on the Haven site wishing to raise a safeguarding issue.

Where a child or adult is in immediate danger, emergency services must be contacted on 999 without delay.

Where there is a concern that a child is experiencing or is at risk of significant harm, staff must ensure the concern is referred promptly to Police Scotland or the relevant local authority social work service.

Staff, volunteers and external providers may contact statutory safeguarding agencies directly. They must not delay a necessary referral while awaiting the availability or approval of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The Haven Centre will not undertake its own child protection investigation. Its role is to recognise, record, report and respond appropriately to concerns, cooperating with statutory agencies as required.

Where a safeguarding concern relates to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, it should be reported directly to the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead or Chair of Trustees. Where it relates to the Deputy, it should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Chair of Trustees.

- **The Designated Safeguarding Lead will listen carefully, take notes and explain what will happen next.**
  - All concerns will be recorded securely by the Designated Safeguarding Lead
  - The Designated Safeguarding Lead will decide on next steps

- **Determine whether the concern relates to one of the charity's service users -**
  If so, our Designated Safeguarding Lead will notify the relevant registered provider -or/and the Local Authority protection team or child protection team if there is immediate risk of harm.
  - The Designated Safeguarding Lead will contact police Scotland if a crime or immediate danger is suspected.

- **Refer or escalate when necessary**
  - If there is doubt about any service providers response the following organisations can be contacted;
  - Local child protection team
  - The Care inspectorate if a registered care provider is involved
  - The Chair of Trustees or if serious report a Notifiable Event to OSCR

16. Allegations Against Staff, Volunteers, Trustees and External Providers

Any allegation that an individual working or volunteering at The Haven Centre, or using its facilities in a professional capacity, has harmed or may pose a risk of harm to a child or protected adult will be taken seriously.

Immediate steps will be taken to protect those concerned, and appropriate referrals will be made to Police Scotland, social work or other relevant authorities.

Where an allegation involves an employee or volunteer, The Haven Centre will consider appropriate employment or volunteering measures, including temporary adjustments to duties or suspension where necessary.

Where an allegation concerns an external provider, The Haven Centre will cooperate with relevant safeguarding agencies and may restrict the provider's access to its facilities.

Where required, The Haven Centre will consider referral obligations to Disclosure Scotland, regulatory notifications and reporting a notifiable event to OSCR.

Any internal investigation or disciplinary process will be managed so that it does not compromise statutory investigations.

17. Training and Awareness

All Haven Centre staff, volunteers, and trustees will receive appropriate safeguarding training at induction and refresher sessions every two years.
Specialist training will be provided for staff working directly with children or vulnerable adults, and all trustees will receive safeguarding briefings annually.

18. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

All safeguarding records will be:
- Kept secure and confidential.
- Shared only with those who need to know to protect the individual.
- Factual, accurate, and stored in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.

Safeguarding concerns must be recorded promptly, accurately and objectively using the Centre's safeguarding concern reporting procedure.

Records should include the date and time of the concern, individuals involved, observations or disclosures, immediate actions taken, referrals made and relevant decisions.

Records will be stored securely, with access restricted to appropriately authorised individuals, and retained in accordance with the Centre's data protection and records retention arrangements.

Relevant information may be shared with statutory authorities without consent where necessary, proportionate and lawful for safeguarding purposes. The reason for sharing information, or deciding not to share it, must be recorded.

19. Monitoring and Review

The Haven Centre is committed to continuous improvement in safeguarding practice.
This policy will be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees or sooner if legislation, guidance, or organisational needs change.

Date of approval: 24th September 2026
Next review due: September 2027
Approved by: The Haven Centre Board of Trustees

20. Key Contacts

- Designated Safeguarding Lead: Rona Matheson, The Haven Centre CEO, 07511 808085, rona.matheson@havencentre.org
- Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Rosie Jardine, The Haven Centre Trustee, 07979691224, rosie.jardine@havencentre.org
- Highland Council Child Protection: 01463 703 481
- Adult Protection Team: 0800 902 0042
- Police Scotland: 101 / 999 (emergency)

Signed:



ELSIE NORMINGTON (CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES)

Date: 24th September 2026