

Cambridgeshire Outdoor Centres Safeguarding Review

Name of Centre: Grafham Water Centre

Name of Reviewer: Rachael Schofield

Date: 22/03/24

The aims of this safeguarding review are as follows:

- To review practice and procedures associated with the leadership and management of safeguarding within the centre.
- To identify strengths and areas for development or improvement.
- To offer support and advice as required.

The safeguarding issues and principles in this review have been taken from several key documents including:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education, Sept 2023
- Ofsted School Inspection handbook, Sept 2023

This review focuses on the following areas:

1. Policies and practice
2. Staff training and development
3. Normal safeguarding procedures and arrangements
4. Safer recruitment processes
5. Ongoing vigilance

Issue	RAG	Comments/Evidence
1. Policies and Practice:		
Has the provider put in place effective child protection and staff behaviour policies that are well understood by everyone in the setting?	Y	Grafham Water has up to date policies. These include the: • Safeguarding and child protection policy • First aid policy • Critical incident plan • Lone working policy • Grafham Water Centre site risk assessment (including hospitality and catering) • Health and Safety statement These policies are shared with staff at induction and subsequently on an annual basis. It is noted by the Association for Heads of Outdoor Education Centres (AHOEC) Gold Accreditation (points 5.7, 5.8) that the safeguarding policy and critical incident and emergency procedures are in place. The centre abides by the Cambridgeshire County Council Complaints policy, code of conduct, respect at work documentation and whistleblowing procedures. Staff verbalise that they would raise any concerns with the centre's designated safeguarding leads (DSLs). These policies are available to all staff online but are also accessible in folders in the staff lobby. Updated or new policies are circulated to staff through a team WhatsApp link. They consent that they have read, understood, and will adhere to key policies using Microsoft Forms. Examples were given that evidenced that staff are not complacent and that relevant actions are taken e.g. concern that pupils may attempt to access staff social media accounts resulted in reminders about ensuring settings were secure.
Is there evidence of a whole-institution approach to safeguarding?	Y	Safeguarding and child protection is at the forefront of, and underpins, the centre's processes. Policy and protocols have been agreed, communicated, and can be evidenced e.g. staff are aware that they must not use their personal phones around pupils. The high priority of safeguarding is evidenced through the AHOEC Gold Standard and the AALA inspection report.

Safeguarding is promoted to schools through the information that **are** sent before visits and through the sharing of expectations, rules, and practical arrangements once groups arrive at the centre. Information about children's needs (medical, dietary, behavioural, SEN) is requested in advance and meetings are held with the school group leader, on arrival, to ensure that the provision is up-to-date and can be met. Everything is documented and shared with the relevant centre staff. Where individual adjustments are required, these are met e.g. creation of personal evacuation plan for a pupil attending in a wheelchair.

The centre's sign-in system is secure. Grafham Water staff wear identifying lanyards and branded uniform. School staff wear identifying lanyards. External visitors are required to sign-in at reception and are provided with identifying lanyards. Any contractors that are required to visit site, that are not verified by Cambridgeshire County Council, are accompanied. Staff are vigilant and challenge anyone else who is seen on site (e.g. walkers / cyclists near the lake). All visitors to site are notified of the centre's Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL).

Health and safety information is posted around the site e.g. fire-evacuation procedures.

The team ensure that safeguarding remains high on the agenda. Each morning a briefing is held, that shares key information including operational concerns, necessary adaptations (for children with SEN etc.) and practical updates e.g. weather. A parallel afternoon debrief is also scheduled.

Staff explained that safeguarding training is delivered annually in January. They were familiar with the DSLs and the process for logging a concern. Staff spoke about a thorough induction process and felt well informed. Staff felt confident to report accidents, incidents or first aid provision using the QR code. Senior leaders are using technology efficiently to streamline systems and to ensure that data is held securely.

The centre is advised to promote their vigilant attitude to safeguarding on the website. Currently multiple clicks are required to access the safeguarding and child protection policy, so it is not easily located. For the parents of children attending the Discovery Club etc. it would be helpful for the contact details of the DSLs to have a higher profile and for some further information to be posted promoting the centre's good practice and safeguarding culture. It may also be beneficial for the centre to publish details of their safeguarding responsibilities e.g. notifying parents that it may be necessary for a referral to be made, if concerns are shared.

Does the centre share information with others and actively seek expert advice when required? Are all safeguarding decisions accessible for appropriate scrutiny?	Y	DSLs are receptive to challenge and are reflective of their own practices to ensure that safeguarding policies, systems, and processes are kept under continuous review. The DSLs discuss cases with each other. They are proposing to train further DDSLs to support with effective provision. Key staff meet regularly and work closely daily e.g. Heads of Department weekly meetings enable critical updates to be discussed e.g. inspection reports, future bookings etc. Recently decisions have been made to tighten the centre's terms and conditions (shared with schools when booking) to clarify the responsibilities that remain with the school (e.g. duty of care outside of session time, room allocation decisions etc). A wide range of organisations use the centre and for a variety of purposes. For children this involves a holiday club (Discovery Club) / HAF and more recently the provision to pupils through the Adventures Away from Home scheme. Centre staff reflect on the needs of these individual groups e.g. the increased requirements when school staff are not attending to ensure loco parentis (and ensure child protection concerns are acted on by DSLs) or through the increased demand, on the centre, for specialist equipment and provision. During the visit, DSLs and other staff were seen to provide appropriate challenge to each other (for instance ensuring they alerted others where they were going, arranged assistance from adults as required, or checked radio contact) to ensure systems worked efficiently. There used to be a governance team that oversaw the provision. Currently there is liaison with Sara Rogers (Education Safeguarding Team) and oversight from Helen Gregg from within the Local Authority.
2. Staff Training and Development:		
Have appropriate training and updates been received by DSLs?	Y	The DSLs have attended the two-day training provided by the Education Safeguarding Team in Cambridgeshire. Updates from this, or other briefings received are disseminated to staff. Further training has been accessed through Our Development.
Does the centre ensure that all those who work with pupils are trained well so that they understand their responsibilities and the systems and processes that the centre operates? Are they empowered to 'speak out' where there may be concerns?	Y	All staff that are appointed and in post receive safeguarding training each January. Resources used for this are created by the DSLs, combining aspects of their DSL training and other material that is relevant to the context of the centre. The DSLs have reflected that the generic safeguarding training material (available from the Education Safeguarding Team) is not completely relevant for their staff, so a package of materials is, instead, created by the DSLs which covers most of Keeping Children Safe in Education and some unique contextual information.

		Staff who are appointed after January each year receive individualised training from DSL as part of their induction programme. Seasonal staff receive training in April; however their start dates can be staggered, resulting in training being delivered throughout the month. New staff who begin but have not yet had full training shadow others so are not left unattended. The induction process was reviewed within the AHOEC report section 3.2.
Can the centre evidence that the training, delivered to staff, is effective?	Y	Staff were familiar with the safeguarding procedures and were able to speak about how they would respond to concerns. DSLs confirm that most concerns are raised by instructors, due to their proximity to pupils, but all staff (including catering team, cleaning team etc. have received training). Communication is effective. A daily staff meeting is held at the beginning and end of every day sharing key information about the site, weather, equipment, and groups. Full centre staff meetings are held every other week to reflect on lessons learned and training updates are also provided. Head of Department meetings are held weekly to discuss the upcoming week. Information provided in advance of visits can therefore be reviewed or any practical (health and safety) matters be resolved. The teams work effectively together (e.g. maintenance, hospitality, facilities etc.) The Heads of Department ensure that any updates or specific requirements are shared with their wider teams. Key information is posted on staff noticeboards around the site e.g. whistleblowing, QR codes for logging incidents or accidents etc. These were known to staff. Supervisory meetings are held regularly. The DSLs promote an 'open door' culture and staff comment that they are accessible and approachable. This ensures that any emerging concerns can be raised, or staff can seek out advice. Staff are involved in decision making at the appropriate levels and understand the reasons behind the centre's policies and protocols. Expectations are high that guidance is followed rigorously and monitored effectively. Our Development online training can be accessed – and team leaders were able to give examples of how training has been adjusted, to be accessible to staff members with additional needs.

Do all adults know and understand the indicators that may suggest a child, learner or vulnerable adult is suffering or at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or harm?	Y	Adults from a variety of teams were able to identify the indicators that may suggest a child is suffering or at risk of suffering abuse, neglect, or harm. Team leaders commented that their staff were vigilant and raised concerns with them and to the DSLs. Concerns were about pupils, the conduct of visiting staff or indeed other centre employees. The DSLs reflect that the training which is delivered to staff is adjusted (to be relevant to their context) and therefore elements of Keeping Children Safe in Education receive a reduced focus. Others, which appear more relevant, are revisited more frequently. Staff have just received additional Prevent training, as it was possible that pupils (or visiting staff) may demonstrate extremist ideologies.
Are all staff and other adults working within the setting clear about procedures where they are concerned about the safety of a child or learner?	Y	Staff report all concerns, in person, to the DSLs. All matters are recorded – either as an accident / incident, or as a child protection log of concern. The DSLs take relevant actions; usually having taken advice from Sara Rogers (Education Safeguarding Team). Active concerns would be shared with the DSL from the child's school to be logged or acted upon. If a concern was raised about a visiting staff member, it may be determined necessary to notify their Headteacher and make a co-referral to LADO. Where the centre operates in loco-parentis e.g. Discovery Club / HAF – it may be necessary for the centre, itself, to make a direct referral to social care. The DSLs comment that they value the close relationship that they have with the Educational Safeguarding Team and act on their advice.
Have staff received other safeguarding training?	Y	Staff have received health and safety training and regular reminders to log any concerns. The site team can then take appropriate actions. Staff receive training with regards to critical incident procedures e.g. fire alarms, manual handling, whistleblowing procedures. Senior leaders have received safer recruitment training. Further training has been delivered to staff to address specific needs. Although staff have completed the Prevent Awareness module on MyConcern, refresher training was provided in March '24 to ensure staff were familiar with the latest guidance. Staff have recently received further training in risk management, as the centre were notified that there was the possibility that a parent (subject to a no-contact order) may use the opportunity of the residential to approach a child. Staff discussed preventative measures and the response they would take (i.e. immediate contact back to Duty Manager). Agreed responses to potential incidents are communicated e.g. how to ensure a child who stops cycling half-way round the lake can get back to the centre; how to enable a frightened child to come down from the climbing wall etc.

		Instructors are first aid trained. Other staff have completed relevant Our Development modules e.g. fire-safety or first-aid.
3. Everyday safeguarding procedures and arrangements:		
Are records for safeguarding / child protection made in an appropriate and timely way and are held securely where adults working with children or learners are concerned about their safety or welfare?	Y	Logs of concern are completed by anyone raising a concern. These are then transferred by DSLs to One Note – and held securely. Concerns, for school groups, are always shared with the school's own DSLs – and the centre records this transfer of information. Necessary actions are then taken by the school. If a log of concern is raised about a child where there is no school group (e.g. HAF), then the centre themselves will respond, as required, having taken advice from Sara Rogers. If required, direct referrals would be made to social care. Concerns about Grafham Water staff members would be reported, through the whistleblowing procedures, to the centre's DSLs. They would take appropriate action e.g. LADO referral or disciplinary proceedings (as necessary). Low-level concerns are logged and would be retained on the one-note system. Concerns about visiting school staff would be recorded on One Note, but the school's own Headteacher would be notified. Advice from the Education Safeguarding Team would be taken to inform all decisions.
Are these records shared appropriately with other agencies e.g. school and professionals where this is necessary to safeguard the child/learner, while complying with data protection legislation? Are there occasions when the organisation would contact social care directly?	Y	Records are shared with the appropriate professionals from visiting schools. Records are discussed with Sara Rogers from the Education Safeguarding Team and, as applicable, the Designated Safeguarding Officer. The organisation would contact social care directly if they were attending, outside of an organised school group, and there was a relevant concern.
Does the centre record (and share) records of first aid, incidents, accidents?	Y	The centre has sufficient and suitable arrangements for providing first aid and calling medical and rescue services and dealing with emergencies. Staff are aware how to report accidents / incidents as well as emergency protocols. Accident / incidents records are collated, and reports are produced to identify any trends and improvements that need to be made. Staff are appropriately trained in first aid (dependent on their role).

		First aid kits were observed around the site. The centre also has an automated external defibrillator. The visiting group staff were aware of first aid arrangements.
Is there a clear understanding of who is responsible for the safety of pupils at every point during the day?	Y	Leader responsibilities are stated in the booking terms and conditions and visiting staff handbook. These confirm how responsibilities are organised. Visiting staff are aware that they have a duty of care between 17.30pm and 08.30am – although out of hours cover is provided through an on-call system. On arrival the lead teacher meets with the Course Director to clarify expectations. Behavioural rules are agreed (e.g. dining room). Dietary information is shared in advance, but discussed once more to ensure there are no changes. Pupils with dietary needs are given wrist band and their information is shared with kitchen staff; those children always eat first. The centre does not provide tuck shop services any longer, so can regulate access to food. School staff are responsible outside agreed hours. A duty staff member is on call when children on site. The centre would record any actions taken by their staff; however, if a school staff member administers first aid overnight (and centre staff are not involved), this is not logged by the centre. School staff have access to resources out of hours e.g. spare bedding / first aid etc. and if they use this, it is not necessarily recorded by the centre. The school are currently revising the booking terms and conditions to make them more overt. Many decisions remain the responsibility of the school (e.g. which pupils are allocated to which rooms), whether pupils are permitted to bring snacks / sweets; whether staff are permitted to consume alcohol out-of-hours and, correctly, the centre wishes to ensure that the school are fully aware of the risks and responsibilities that their staff must oversee.
Are appropriate consideration / measures taken to safeguard groups from each other?	Y	External doors to buildings are locked and require keypad access. Visiting group leaders are informed of these for their accommodation. The centre teams ensure that different groups have little contact with each other e.g. separate lounges and dining room areas. External providers use the site e.g. Royal Yachting Association (RYA) and British Canoeing (BC). Individuals can also potentially book the facilities (including accommodation) and consideration is given to ensure there is no cross-over between these external groups and school visits. Groups are kept separate and, if there are concerns that agreed rules are being ignored, the Duty Manager would raise concerns directly with school leader. Groups are not informed, in

		advance. If concerns arose about interactions between pupils or between pupils and adults (on site) - the Duty Manager would implement further measures, if required, to ensure the separation of groups e.g. ongoing monitoring. Careful planning ensures that external adult groups do not cross over with pupil groups. They cannot access residential facilities and pupils are supervised. Adults entering the pupil areas of the site e.g. group lounges would be challenged. Staff working at the site are directed to only use a single, lockable disabled toilet – to ensure they have no contact with pupil groups. Cleaning staff visit student rooms between school visits or will ensure that mid-week cleans are undertaken when pupils are involved with activities and therefore there is no contact. Pupil lounges etc. are cleaned at times when pupils are not using them. Bell tents are used on site (May-September) and there is a slightly increased vulnerability here as the door to pupil facilities cannot be locked. Centre and teaching staff monitor boundaries and staff are present alongside pupils. External perimeter gates are locked at night-time.
Can school staff and group leaders be identified? Are staff trained to respond to an unofficial visitor on site?	Y	External contractors are approved by Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC). Letters of assurance can therefore be provided to verify that appropriate checks have been undertaken. All contractors sign in at reception. They are required to read 5C Control of Contractors. They are supervised on site by the Facilities and Site Supervisor. All site visitors are required to sign-in at reception. School staff are required to wear identifiable ID. Centre staff wear Grafham Water ID and branded clothing items. Staff are trained to challenge any visitors on site who are not wearing either item and are vigilant to the potential risks of an open site. Staff and pupils are told about these ways of identifying the adults with whom they may interact.
Is reasonable force, including restraint, only used in strict accordance with the legislative framework to protect the child or learner and those around them?	Y	Staff comment that they would only intervene, physically, with pupils if required for safety reasons. An example was given where it was necessary to restrain a child who was attempting to use the climbing wall without safety equipment. All incidents would be reported to the Duty Manager, who would ensure that they were reviewed, recorded, and discussed alongside other health and safety incidents / accidents in the regular meetings for the H&S committee.

		Information would be shared, as relevant, with the supervising school staff, and potentially with the DSL or Headteacher of the child's own school.
Is the physical environment for children and learners safe and secure?	Y	The AALA inspection evidenced that operating procedures and emergency procedures were secure. The AHOEC review evidenced that appropriate arrangements were in place for the health, safety and welfare of all staff and participants. The activity risk-benefit analysis documents and the activity health and safety policy are known to staff. Risk assessments for the dining room, kitchen, housekeeping, admin, site risk assessment and fire risk assessments are reviewed annually. The H&S committee meet every six weeks, review reports and take relevant action. The accommodation and facilities are fit for purpose and ongoing facility maintenance is undertaken as required.
Are adjustments made for children with SEN / behavioural needs?	Y	Visiting groups are asked to provide information regarding any additional needs. This information is shared with the Course Director and the Hospitality Supervisor. The Course Director will advise instructional staff of any additional needs during the morning meeting. Course Directors meet with the group leader upon arrival and will discuss and confirm any additional needs, part of which will be confirming dietary information with the Hospitality Supervisor and distributing the colour coded wrist bands for identifying dietary needs. If a pupil has specialist care at home / school then free leader spaces are offered to accommodate this at Grafham. The centre has a range of specialist equipment e.g. hoist for climbing, adapted bikes, sailing seats and trains staff in how to adapt their sessions. All activities have been designed to be fully inclusive as practicable and staff are constantly reviewing their offer to ensure inclusivity. The centre report that, even with all this careful planning, they are still sometimes notified of information at the last minute e.g. non-cyclists. Adjustments can be made wherever possible; for instance, a separate session was run to enable these pupils to learn some initial cycling skills.

		Whilst staff can adapt their teaching style and make reasonable adjustments for pupil behaviour, the responsibility for behaviour management remains, ultimately, with school staff. It is determined that it is not possible for a student to undertake an activity due to their behaviour – the Course Director will discuss this with the group leader. When delivering to pupils through HAF / Discovery Club – behavioural rules are agreed with pupils and a place can be withdrawn if it is determined that a pupil cannot adhere to these, for reasons of safety. The centre is advised to ensure that a behavioural policy is created and shared online, to establish clear boundaries with pupils who do not come as part of a school group.
4. Safer Recruitment Processes:		
Has CCC recruitment and selection training been undertaken?	Y	The CCC recruitment policy is adhered to. Relevant staff (Centre Manager / Assistant Managers) complete on-line safer recruitment training and records are maintained. The CCC on-line recruitment system used for all recruitment. Each shortlisting and interview panel contains a trained individual. All staff involved in recruitment have also completed the Equality and Diversity e-learning module. The Hospitality Manager ensures appropriate checks are undertaken for agency workers.
Describe the pre-appointment process:		Each job advertisement contains a safeguarding statement, as determined by CCC, to promote safeguarding. Candidates are shortlisted against the criteria in the person specification to avoid excluding candidates based on factors that are not relevant to the roll. The scoring criteria is consistent. Shortlisting is undertaken by more than one person to ensure that any potential bias is challenged. Shortlisting scores are recorded and retained on site for six months. Two centre staff always involved in interviews. Behavioural interview questions are asked. Interview answers are compared to model answers; enabling a fair comparison to be made. Candidates are asked about their understanding of the safeguarding responsibilities of the role and how they will comply with these requirements. Application forms are reviewed before the interview to identify any gaps in a person's employment history. If identified, these would be investigated further. When staff begin work they are required to complete a six-month probationary period (and reviews at regular intervals) ensuring that their practice can be assessed and monitored carefully. Candidates are requested to provide identification documents, physically. These

		are usually seen and verified at the interview stage; or are seen by a verifying officer (on site) before an offer of employment is confirmed. Pre-employment medical clearance is obtained for all external candidates. The centre does not, currently, have any employees who require sponsorship to work in the UK. Two verified references are sought for all employees. Staff members do not begin work until these are secured. Qualification checks are undertaken for instructors.
Which roles require a DBS check – and what level?		All staff are enhanced DBS checked with a children's barred list check. Although centre staff do work with vulnerable adults, they have been informed that they do not meet the criteria for requiring staff to be checked against the adult barred list check. No DBS checks have resulted in a positive trace.
Do you have agency workers – if so in what capacity? What checks are undertaken?		Agency workers are occasionally used within the catering team. Where this is required, letters of assurance are obtained from the agency, detailing that all relevant and appropriate checks have been undertaken. Agency workers always work under the direct supervision of other staff so are not required to be barred list checked.
What does induction include?		New staff tour the site. They meet with a DSL and are directed to complete relevant Our Development modules. They receive face-to-face health and safety and safeguarding training. They receive relevant documents including the code of conduct (Respect at Work), the safeguarding and child protection policy, health and safety information and whistleblowing guidance.
5. Ongoing Vigilance:		
Are staff vigilant, maintaining an attitude of 'it could happen here'?	Y	A culture of safety is evident across the organisation. Staff understand policies, systems, induction and monitoring. Staff receive regular training and development. The leaders appear responsive. Accident / incident data and reports are reviewed to identify trends or patterns. Staff report that they are regularly reminded to be vigilant. They are encouraged to raise any concerns about processes, or procedures which may not be working as well as they might. They are expected to flag any concerns about pupils, or adults that arise. The DSLs discussed how a repeat booking was not taken from a group as there were some concerns that the group's ethos and values may not align with those promoted by the centre.
Once appointed, how do leaders monitor staff/volunteers' ongoing suitability to		Observations of instructors / pupil engagement evidenced professional conduct.

prevent the risk of harm to children and learners?		To ensure ongoing suitability, sessions are regularly observed. Any concerns are logged. Staff undertake 'Our Conversations' and one-to-ones happen regularly. All training is recorded. If there are any concerns, these are immediately addressed, and staff are reminded of expectations e.g. code of conduct. Course Leaders were evidenced providing appropriate additional supervision and training for staff members with additional needs, to ensure their ongoing suitability.
Do all staff have access to and understand the written procedures for managing safeguarding allegations/concerns about members of centre staff or other adults from the schools? What would the procedures be?	Y	All staff have access to key safeguarding policies and protocols. Staff know to report concerns directly to the Centre Manager (DSLs). All concerns are recorded and logged on One Note. Staff were confident about logging first aid incidents/ accidents etc. by using QR codes and Microsoft Forms. These are collated by the administrative team and reviewed every six weeks. Staff noticeboards (in the staff lobby) contain programme information, wellbeing information, health and safety information and safeguarding information. A safeguarding folder is available to staff which includes whistleblowing protocols. The kitchen noticeboard details pupils requiring special diets. Other noticeboards around the site detail fire safety information, information for teaching staff (accessibly through QR codes) and provide the contact numbers for on-call staff.
Do they know how to make a complaint and understand policies on whistleblowing and how to manage other concerns about the practice of adults in respect of the safety and protection of children and learners.	Y	Staff were familiar with the centre's whistleblowing procedures. Visitors are informed, whilst on site, about the complaint process and the customer care policies that are available to them.
Are staff encouraged to report low-level concerns?	Y	Staff were able to speak confidently about the procedures for logging low-level concerns. Concerns received included observations about staff conduct, or equally pastoral concerns about colleagues who may be struggling with mental health concerns and may require wellbeing support.

Recommendations

Please note that actions in the table below have been given a recommended priority as A (urgent), B (important) and C (other).

Section	Priority Level	Recommended issues for action
1	B	The centre is advised to promote their vigilant attitude to safeguarding on the website. Currently multiple clicks are required to access the safeguarding and child protection policy, so it is not easily located. For the parents of children attending the Discovery Club etc. it would be helpful for the contact details of the DSLs to have a higher profile and for some further information to be posted promoting the centre's good practice and safeguarding culture. It may also be beneficial for the centre to publish details of their safeguarding responsibilities e.g. notifying parents that it may be necessary for a referral to be made, if concerns are shared.
3	B	When delivering to pupils through HAF / Discovery Club – behavioural rules are agreed with pupils and a place can be withdrawn if it is determined that a pupil cannot adhere to these, for reasons of safety. The centre is advised to ensure that a behavioural policy is created and shared online, to establish clear boundaries with pupils who do not come as part of a school group.

Signed:



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