

# Safeguarding children and older people in intergenerational settings.

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## 1. Introduction

A growing number of pre-schools and schools are reaching into their communities to share social and learning opportunities with older people. This happens in both community spaces and bespoke care settings. Such intergenerational experiences have benefits for everyone!

Ensuring children and older people are safe and able to enjoy such opportunities to the full is a fundamental priority for everyone involved in this work at every level.

*Safeguarding is everyone's business!*

This priority is underpinned by the most recent statutory requirements of:

- \* *Keeping Children Safe in Education*
- \* *Working Together to Safeguard Children*
- \* *Care Act 2014*
- \* *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006*
- \* *Public Interest disclosure Act 1998*

This document uses a human-rights approach to ensure effective safeguards are in place when engaging in intergenerational experiences.

To support this, the document offers a set of principles that can be used to consider the safety of children when planning and developing intergenerational work.

The principles emphasise the importance of ensuring safe environments, effective risk management and practices for children and older people. This includes consideration of how settings create a culture, adopt strategies and take action to promote safeguarding to prevent any harm to children/older people by:

- creating intergenerational environments where safety and wellbeing is kept at the centre of thought, planning and actions
- ensuring staff and volunteers are well trained, confident and know how to raise a safeguarding concern in a timely and appropriate manner
- monitoring conditions to reduce the likelihood of any harm to children or older people

- identifying and safely managing any potential risks
- responding immediately to concerns, disclosures, allegations or suspicions.

Consideration of safeguarding principles is a **significant** and **central** feature of **high quality** intergenerational work and interactions between different generations.



## 2. The Wheel of Intergenerational Safeguarding



### 3. Principles for Intergenerational Safeguarding

1	Safeguarding priorities are embedded in leadership and culture.
2	Children and older people are informed about their rights and encouraged to participate in decision making as appropriate. Their views are taken seriously at all times.
3	Families and the community are informed and involved in promoting effective safeguarding.
4	Equity and diversity.
5	The workforce is suitable and supported to understand the centrality of safeguarding to high quality practice.
6	Effective processes are in place to respond to complaints are child/older person focussed.
7	Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing, minimising the opportunity for children and older people to be harmed.
8	Safeguarding policies and procedures are regularly reviewed in line with statutory requirements.

## 4. Guidance

The following section of the document provides guidance on each of the ten principles. It is intended to support settings to be consistent and effective in how they address safeguarding as a fundamental prerequisite of high quality intergenerational practice.

### **Principle 1 Safeguarding priorities are embedded in leadership and culture.**

Adoption of this principle shows how the organisation has a commitment to safeguarding, safety and wellbeing at every level of the organisation. Governance arrangements are transparent and include effective safeguarding policies and procedures, practice guidance and risk management framework. Leadership is robust and provides an authorising environment for the appropriate sharing of information to support effective safeguarding for children and older people.

#### **Effectiveness Indicators**

- \* Publicly available and current documents are available and up to date e.g. safeguarding policy, information sharing protocols, volunteer policy and risk assessment framework.
- \* Leadership models and regularly reinforces attitudes and behaviours that value children and older people, demonstrating a clear commitment to safeguarding issues.
- \* Staff, volunteers, families and older people have a sound knowledge of the rights of children and older people, including their right to feel safe and heard and the accountabilities that accompany these rights
- \* Leaders promote the sharing of best practice and learnings about safeguarding in line with all statutory requirements.
- \* Safeguarding policies and procedures are robust and meet all statutory requirements for children and older people
- \* Safeguarding audits demonstrate confidence in safeguarding approaches amongst all stakeholders
- \* Safeguarding practices are consistently implemented including culturally safe working practices.

**Principle 2 Children and older people are informed about their rights and encouraged to participate in decision making as appropriate. Their views are taken seriously at all times.**

This principle outlines an operating culture that supports children and older people to understand about the importance of safeguarding. They are informed about their rights and responsibilities in a way that is appropriate and age and understanding.

Both children and older people are encouraged to actively contribute and take part in building a safe shared culture and way of communicating. They recognise safe environments and spaces and understand protective strategies. In shared spaces they feel comfortable and able to be themselves without concern or fear.

**Effectiveness indicators**

- \* Quality resources and books help to educate children and older people of their rights, including their right to safety and to be listened to
- \* Age and understanding appropriate platforms regularly seek children and older people's views and encourage participation in decision-making
- \* All staff and volunteers have a sound understanding of the needs of individual children and older people in order to contribute to their safety
- \* Intergenerational spaces and experiences are welcoming for all ages
- \* Children and older people engage in discussion around safety and risk management
- \* Children and older people can identify trusted adults and friends
- \* Children and older people are informed of their roles and responsibilities in helping to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of their community
- \* The importance of cross age friendships is recognised to help everyone feel safe and less isolated

**Principle 3 Families and the community are informed and involved in promoting effective safeguarding.**

This principle outlines the way families and the community are involved in safeguarding approaches and can easily access information about safeguarding children and older people. This will empower them to speak up and drive conversations around safeguarding and how they can raise issues and concerns.

It also recognises that families and carers are best placed to advise about children and older people's needs and can inform practitioners about practices and environments that are safe for them. In such an environment children and older people should feel their culture and identity are respected and protected.

### **Effectiveness indicators**

- \* Cultural safety issues are considered and staff are responsive to the needs of individuals
- \* Families and the community have opportunities to be involved in how experiences are planned and organised and invited to provide feedback to support improvement
- \* Safeguarding information is clearly presented and easily accessible for families and the community, including how to raise a concern
- \* Cultural safety e.g. anti-racism, bias, intergenerational trauma is built with sensitivity through respectful relationships.

### **Principle 4 Equity and diversity.**

This principle examines how recognition of children and older people's diverse circumstances enable staff to work in more child/person centred ways enabling everyone to participate more effectively. This includes embracing individuals regardless of their abilities, gender, age, cognitive capacity, social, economic or cultural background.

A welcoming environment will feel safe and comfortable for children and older people, with experiences planned and shared in culturally safe and inclusive ways. This will lessen the risk of discrimination, exclusion, bias, bullying and abuse.

### **Effectiveness indicators**

- \* Policies and systems are in place that promote equity and respect diversity for children, employees and older people
- \* Materials are produced that are child and dementia friendly and in accessible formats that promote inclusion
- \* Employees and volunteers champion attitudes and behaviours that respect the human rights of children and older people and are inclusive, well-informed and responsive to diverse needs
- \* Leaders and employees reflect on how discrimination and exclusion, whether intentional or unintentional, may work against a safe and inclusive culture and strategies are developed to address this
- \* Employees and volunteers are trained to recognise and respond effectively to children and older people with diverse needs.

**Principle 5 The workforce is suitable and supported to understand the centrality of safeguarding to high quality practice.**

This principle describes recruitment and staff development policies, including appropriate screening that are the foundation of robust safeguarding practices. This includes induction training and appropriate supervision of employees and volunteers. Reporting obligations, training in record keeping and information sharing provide employees and volunteers with the appropriate practice tools to better safeguard children and older people.

**Effectiveness indicators**

- \* A commitment to the highest quality of safeguarding is given emphasis when advertising for, or recruiting and screening employees and volunteers
- \* All background check requirements are completed and recorded
- \* Selection criteria, interview questions and job descriptions demonstrate that children and older people are valued and respected
- \* Ongoing employee support, supervision and performance management include safeguarding considerations
- \* There are a range of tools and processes in place to effectively monitor and mitigate risk
- \* All staff and volunteers complete appropriate safeguarding training as a part of induction training.

**Principle 6 Effective processes are in place to respond to complaints are child/older person focussed.**

This principle highlights the importance of effective complaints management processes which are accessible, responsive and well understood by children, families and older people. Complaint management processes meet all statutory and legal requirements. Training helps employees and volunteers to recognise safeguarding concerns and includes training around complaints, privacy considerations, listening skills, disclosures and reporting obligations.

**Effectiveness indicators**

- \* Staff and volunteers are confident and well-informed about their safeguarding roles and responsibilities
- \* Complaints policies prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and older people and recognises the need for families and the community to understand how to make a complaint
- \* Policies and procedures demonstrate regard for fairness to all parties to a complaint or investigation including support and information as appropriate

- \* Employees and volunteers have a good knowledge of the different ways children and older people (particularly those living with dementia) express concerns or distress and disclose harm
- \* Children and older people know who to talk to if they are feeling unsafe
- \* Timely feedback is provided to those who raise a concern or complaint. This includes reporting back on incidents, concerns and complaints
- \* Complaints are always taken seriously and responded to promptly and thoroughly.

**Principle 7 Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing, minimising the opportunity for children and older people to be harmed.**

This principle highlights that reducing the risk of harm in physical and online environments is an important preventative consideration. Risk management strategies clarify potential risks where intergenerational interactions occur or where the physical environment is unsafe.

Risks associated with online experiences are well managed. Associated risks are minimised through all necessary means including expectations around online activity, the application of safety filters and communication protocols.

**Effectiveness indicators**

- \* Risk management strategies address physical and online risks
- \* Planning around the physical environment promotes cultural safety
- \* Employees and volunteers are proactive in identifying and mitigating physical and online risks
- \* Third party contractors for the provision of spaces and services have appropriate measures in place to ensure effective safeguarding

**Principle 8 Safeguarding policies and procedures are regularly reviewed in line with statutory requirements.**

This principle places emphasis on continuous improvement including effective monitoring and evaluating of safeguarding practices. This includes the importance of reporting on the findings of reviews and sharing effective practice and learnings on a regular basis.

**Effectiveness indicators**

- \* Children and older people participate in regular reviews of safeguarding policies, procedures and practices

- \* Review outcomes are considered and implemented to improve safeguarding practices
- \* Timely analysis of any complaints demonstrates improvement in safeguarding practices.

