



Rainbow Trees Pathway Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Approved: June 2025

Next Review Date: June 2026

Version: 1.0

Rainbow Trees Pathway

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Approved: December 2025

Next Review Date: June 2026

Version: 2.3

1. Purpose of Policy

At Rainbow Trees Pathway, safeguarding is always paramount. This policy outlines how we will meet our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people, and adults with support needs who access our services.

We recognise that safeguarding is not solely about protecting individuals from harm but also about actively creating environments in which people accessing support feel safe, valued, and respected. This policy ensures that:

- Everyone working with Rainbow Trees Pathway understands their role in safeguarding.
- Concerns and disclosures are responded to promptly, appropriately, and compassionately.
- The rights, autonomy, and voice of the individual are central to all safeguarding responses.
- We meet our duties under English law, including the Children Act 1989 and 2004, the Care Act 2014, and relevant statutory guidance.
- Our safeguarding approach aligns with our neuro-affirming, person-centred ethos.

In addition, this policy has been updated to incorporate the Department for Education's Non-school Alternative Provision: Voluntary National Standards



2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All Rainbow Trees Pathway staff, practitioners, associates, and volunteers.
- Anyone delivering activities or services on behalf of Rainbow Trees Pathway.
- All individuals who engage with Rainbow Trees Pathway services, including children, young people, adults with care and support needs, their families, and carers.

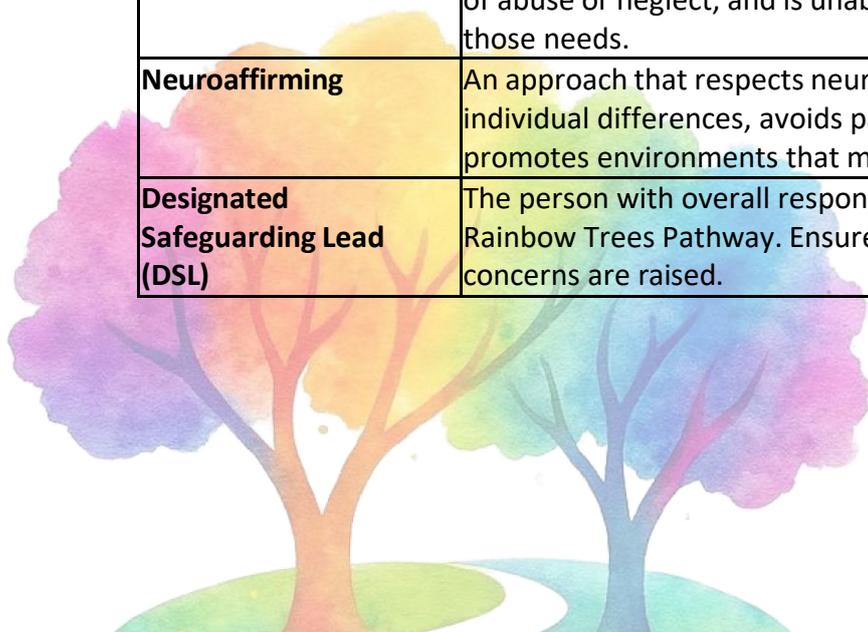
Where Rainbow Trees Pathway delivers provision commissioned by a school or local authority, our safeguarding arrangements operate alongside and in partnership with those of the commissioning body and do not replace their statutory safeguarding responsibilities.

3. Definitions

Safeguarding (Children) refers to protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of health or development, ensuring safe and effective care, and enabling children to thrive.

Safeguarding (Adults) refers to protecting adults with care and support needs from abuse or neglect while promoting wellbeing, dignity, and control over their own lives

Term	Definition
Safeguarding (Children)	Protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of health or development, ensuring safe and effective care, and enabling children to thrive.
Safeguarding (Adults)	Protecting adults with care and support needs from abuse or neglect, while promoting their wellbeing, dignity, and control over their own lives.
Abuse	A form of maltreatment. It may be physical, emotional, sexual, financial, or neglect. Abuse may be deliberate or result from a lack of understanding or training.
Adult at Risk	An adult who has care and support needs, is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, and is unable to protect themselves because of those needs.
Neuroaffirming	An approach that respects neurodivergent identities, celebrates individual differences, avoids pathologising language, and promotes environments that meet diverse needs.
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	The person with overall responsibility for safeguarding within Rainbow Trees Pathway. Ensures appropriate action is taken when concerns are raised.



Abuse is a form of maltreatment and may be physical, emotional, sexual, financial, discriminatory, or involve neglect. Abuse may be deliberate or result from a lack of understanding or training.

An adult at risk is an adult who has care and support needs, is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, and is unable to protect themselves because of those needs.

A neuro-affirming approach respects neurodivergent identities, celebrates individual differences, avoids pathologising language, and promotes environments that meet diverse needs.

Child-on-child abuse refers to abuse that occurs between children and young people and may include physical abuse, sexual violence or harassment, bullying, coercive behaviour, and online abuse.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

All staff, volunteers, and associates must:

- Be familiar with this policy.
- Attend safeguarding training appropriate to their role.
- Remain vigilant and raise concerns if they suspect abuse or neglect.
- Promote environments where autistic and neurodivergent people feel safe, listened to, and empowered.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible for managing safeguarding concerns, disclosures, and referrals; providing advice and guidance to staff; maintaining accurate and secure safeguarding records; liaising with statutory agencies and commissioning bodies; and ensuring this policy is reviewed annually.

This role is supported by a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL), who is appropriately trained and assumes safeguarding responsibilities in the absence of the DSL.

5. Safer Recruitment

Rainbow Trees Pathway follows safer recruitment practices to prevent unsuitable adults from working with children. All staff, volunteers, and associates working with children are required to undergo enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, including barred



list checks where appropriate. Identity, right-to-work, qualification, and suitability checks are completed before individuals begin work with children.

A record of recruitment and vetting checks is maintained within a Single Central Record in line with statutory guidance.

6. Recognising Abuse and Neglect

Abuse can take many forms, including physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, financial abuse, and discriminatory abuse. Safeguarding concerns may sometimes be misunderstood or missed for neurodivergent individuals due to communication differences, sensory needs, or learned compliance. Staff are trained to consider these factors and approach safeguarding sensitively and appropriately.

Online abuse and exploitation are recognised as safeguarding risks and are responded to in line with this policy.

7. Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

If someone is in immediate danger or requires urgent medical attention, emergency services must be contacted by calling 999.

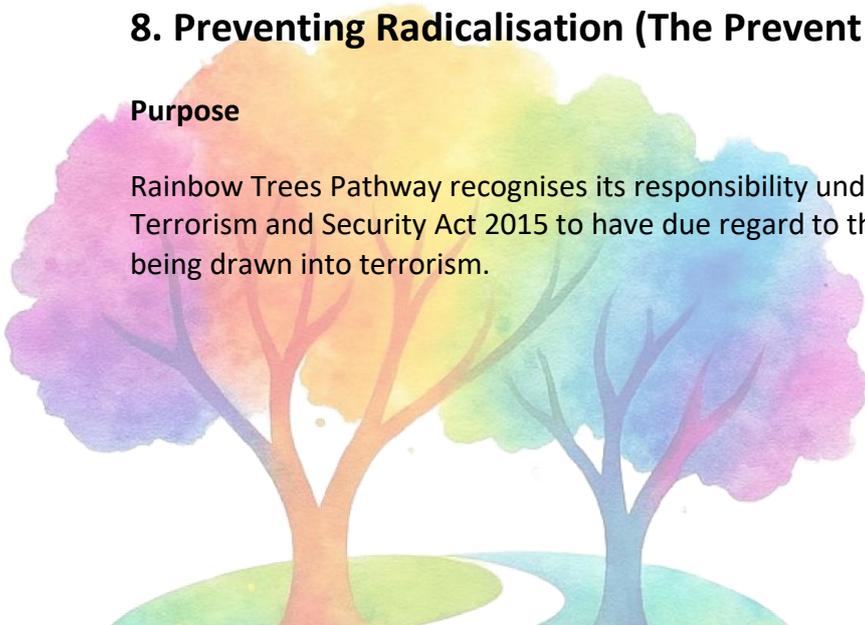
If a child or adult discloses abuse, staff must listen carefully, avoid promising confidentiality, reassure the individual that they have done the right thing, record the concern using the individual's own words where possible, and report the concern immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Concerns are handled in accordance with the principles of confidentiality, with information shared on a need-to-know basis to protect the person at risk. Rainbow Trees Pathway works in partnership with statutory agencies, commissioning schools, and other professionals as appropriate.

8. Preventing Radicalisation (The Prevent Duty)

Purpose

Rainbow Trees Pathway recognises its responsibility under Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.



We understand the Prevent duty as part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities. Our approach is proportionate, trauma-informed, neuro-affirming, and person-centred, and focuses on early support rather than criminalisation.

Our Approach

At Rainbow Trees Pathway, Prevent is embedded within our safeguarding culture. We are committed to:

- Creating safe, inclusive environments where children, young people, and adults feel respected, listened to, and able to express views safely
- Supporting wellbeing, identity development, critical thinking, and a sense of belonging
- Recognising that neurodivergent individuals may be at increased risk of exploitation or grooming, including online, due to factors such as social isolation, communication differences, trauma, or learned compliance
- Ensuring Prevent is applied without stereotyping, discrimination, or assumptions

Recognising Vulnerability to Radicalisation

There is no single profile of someone at risk of radicalisation. Vulnerability may be influenced by a combination of factors, including:

- Social isolation or exclusion
- Identity exploration or distress
- Experiences of discrimination, bullying, or injustice
- Trauma, abuse, or neglect
- Mental health needs
- Neurodivergence or communication differences
- Online influences, including social media, forums, or gaming platforms

Staff are trained to consider these factors alongside other safeguarding concerns and to respond sensitively and proportionately.

Responding to Prevent Concerns

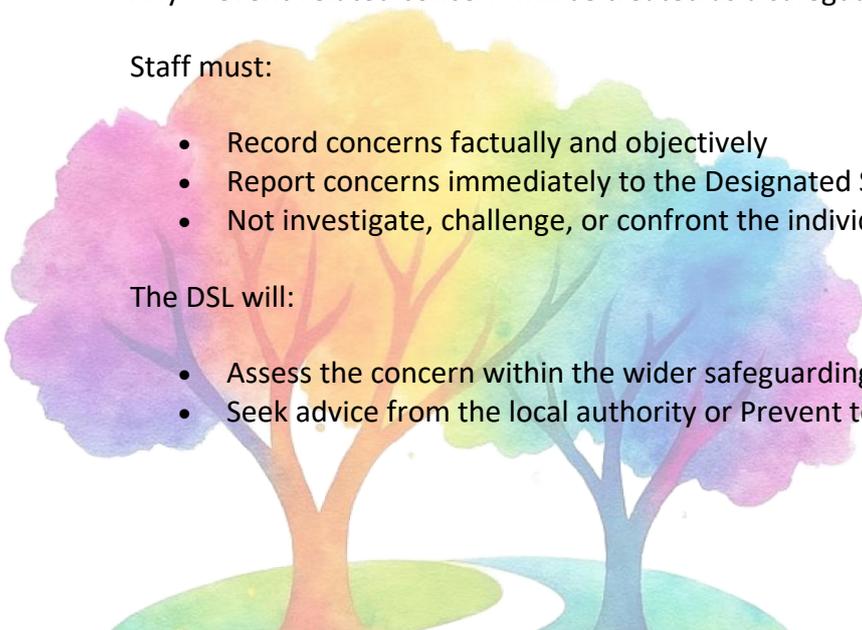
Any Prevent-related concern will be treated as a safeguarding matter.

Staff must:

- Record concerns factually and objectively
- Report concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Not investigate, challenge, or confront the individual

The DSL will:

- Assess the concern within the wider safeguarding context
- Seek advice from the local authority or Prevent team where appropriate



- Make a referral to the Channel process if necessary

Where appropriate and safe to do so, individuals and families will be involved in discussions, unless this would increase risk or compromise safeguarding.

If there is an immediate risk of harm, emergency services will be contacted by calling 999.

Training and Awareness

Rainbow Trees Pathway ensures that all staff, volunteers, and associates:

- Receive Prevent awareness training appropriate to their role
- Understand how Prevent links with safeguarding, equality, and human rights
- Are supported through supervision and safeguarding updates

Commitment to Rights and Inclusion

Rainbow Trees Pathway is committed to ensuring that Prevent is implemented in a way that:

- Upholds **human rights, dignity, and equality**
- Is consistent with our **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy**
- Reflects our **neuro-affirming and trauma-informed practice**
- Avoids stigmatisation or marginalisation of individuals or communities

9. Online Safety

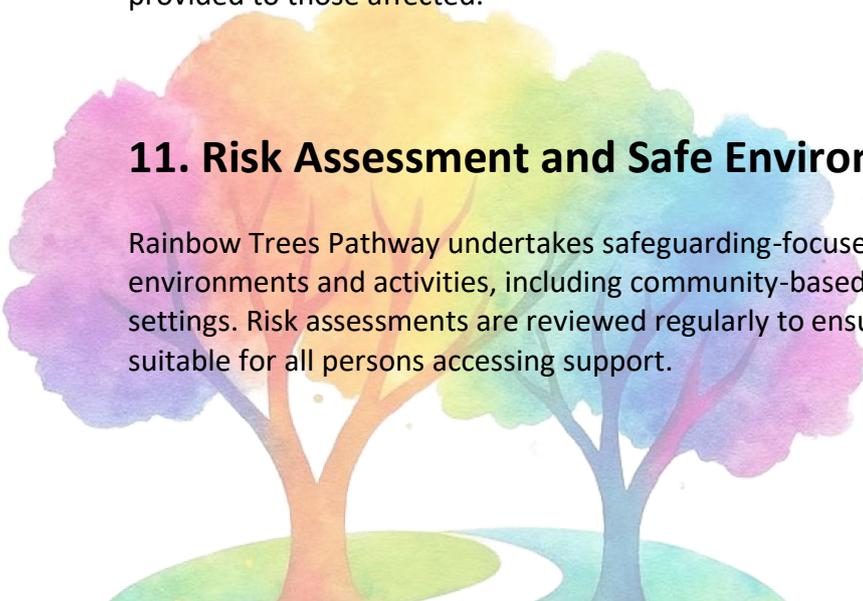
Rainbow Trees Pathway recognises that safeguarding includes online and digital environments. Any concerns relating to online abuse, grooming, or inappropriate digital contact are treated as safeguarding concerns and reported to the DSL in line with safeguarding procedures. This is outlined in our Online Safety Policy.

10. Child-on-Child Abuse

Child-on-child abuse is recognised as a serious safeguarding concern. All incidents are taken seriously and responded to through safeguarding procedures, with appropriate support provided to those affected.

11. Risk Assessment and Safe Environments

Rainbow Trees Pathway undertakes safeguarding-focused risk assessments for all delivery environments and activities, including community-based, home-based, and non-traditional settings. Risk assessments are reviewed regularly to ensure environments remain safe and suitable for all persons accessing support.



12. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Information about safeguarding concerns is shared only with those who need to know in order to keep someone safe. Rainbow Trees Pathway respects privacy and data protection rights in line with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. Safeguarding considerations override confidentiality where a child or adult is at risk of significant harm.

13. Training

All staff, volunteers, and associates complete safeguarding training on induction and participate in refresher training at least every two years. Staff receive guidance and supervision appropriate to their role, particularly when involved in safeguarding cases, and are provided with a copy of this policy.

14. Recording and Record Keeping

All safeguarding concerns are recorded accurately, factually, and securely. Records are clear, dated, and retained in accordance with data protection legislation and organisational policy.

15. Allegations Against Staff

Any allegation against a member of staff must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. The DSL will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) before any action is taken. Allegations involving senior leaders are managed by the Deputy DSL in consultation with LADO. If the concern involves both of the DSL & DDSL an external professional from the advisory board will deal with the concern.

16. Whistleblowing

Rainbow Trees Pathway recognises that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff have a professional duty to raise concerns about unsafe practice or safeguarding failures and may do so internally or via the NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline.



17. Review of Policy

This policy is reviewed annually or sooner if changes in legislation, guidance, or safeguarding practice require revision.

18. Contact Details

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Jemma Quarterman
Email: hello@rainbowtreespathway.co.uk

Police (non-emergency): 101
Emergency: 999

