



| <u>Policy</u>          | <u>Author &amp; Board member</u> | <u>Date to Review</u> | <u>Responsible staff</u>     |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Safeguarding Statement | Samantha Johnson: CEO            | Jan 2027              | SJ/AE Young People's Service |

## **SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT**

**Keeping children and young people safe is everyone's responsibility.**

**ECHO - Evelina Children's Heart Organisation - is committed to delivering a service for children and young adults with congenital & acquired heart disease (and their families) that complies with safeguarding and safe working practice guidelines.**

**We have a duty of care to make sure all our staff and volunteers are trained and equipped to provide a safe and supportive environment for every child under the age of 18 who accesses our services.**

At ECHO we understand our statutory responsibility to keep children and young people safe, and to promote their well-being. All of our working practices will adhere to policies and procedures relating to both child and adult safeguarding practice.

At ECHO, we recognise that the child's welfare is paramount. All children and young people have a right to be protected from abuse and we have policies in place which inform the organisation, and individuals within it, how to respond in situations where abuse is suspected.

ECHO will work in partnership with other agencies to ensure that any risk to those we work with is acknowledged and responded to quickly and effectively.

ECHO is committed to the provision of Safeguarding training for all our team members, with additional supervision and support, to ensure effective safeguarding. Our child protection policy is reviewed on an annual basis, informed by the National guidance, *Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2015*, in accordance with the *Children Act, 2004* and the *Children Act, 1989* and *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act, 2006*. The policy is shared with all new ECHO employees, volunteers and trustees.

ECHO will continue to work to national and local safeguarding policy including Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures and protocols, and will keep up to date with future changes in safeguarding and safe working practice policy.

ECHO staff, trustees, sessional workers and volunteers are trained on our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy as part of their induction, and on an ongoing basis through refreshers. All the above named people must know how to communicate and record concerns and know to act upon concerns in line with our policies to Safeguard Children.

In addition, the ECHO staff team hold policy review meetings every two years as part of their regular staff meetings, ensuring all staff are fully briefed on all ECHO policies on a regular basis across the year.



## Connecting the Children's Heart Community

### **All children and young people in contact with ECHO Children's Charity will:**

- Be treated with respect
- Be listened to and taken seriously, whatever their level of development or communication
- Be given time to do things for themselves, to understand and be understood
- Be involved in decisions that affect them
- Have their privacy respected at all times and in all places
- Have a right to confidentiality – all information about them will be treated carefully, be kept safe and only shared with those people who need to know.

### **Returned DBS Traces**

- All employees and volunteers are covered by a specific clause in their contract/role description to notify ECHO of any charges or convictions brought against them. Clearly where a role is subject to a satisfactory DBS check this clause becomes critical in determining what action should take place.
- Depending on the nature of the offence we will determine whether: the charge or conviction is such as to affect, or be likely to affect, the suitability of the employee/volunteer for the position in which he/she is employed, or the business or reputation of the Employer, or where the existence of the charge or conviction could, in the opinion of the Employer, otherwise seriously undermine the trust and confidence that the Employer has in the employee.
- Where a trace is returned during recruitment the volunteer coordinator (or delegated representative) will make a decision on these factors for recruitment and may decide not to appoint. Having a conviction will not necessarily bar individuals from working for ECHO and each disclosure is assessed individually. Each individual case will be considered with reference to the sentence, severity and nature of the offence and the potential risk to children or vulnerable adults.
- Where a current employee undergoes repeat DBS and returns traces, our safeguarding lead will also be involved to determine if disciplinary action should be taken. Where a trace is returned for any other type of worker/volunteer, reference should be made to the terms under which that worker is engaged.

Visit our website for our Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy or if you need to report a safeguarding concern: <https://echo-uk.org/about-us/policies/>  
ECHO commits to reviewing policies regularly with our board of trustees. We have a named policy contact on the board, and we ensure all ECHO policies are reviewed throughout the year as part of policy review sessions every two years.

**The wellbeing of a child or young person is the paramount consideration in all circumstances.**

**ECHO's CEO is available for any questions or comment regarding safeguarding: [samantha@echo-uk.org.uk](mailto:samantha@echo-uk.org.uk) 0207 998 4710 [www.echo-uk.org](http://www.echo-uk.org)**