



Edfords Care Farm

Health & Safety Policy: Children + Young People

Policy number:	HASP
Version:	4.0
Policy holder:	Chris Howes
Approval board:	Edfords Care Farm Board of Directors
Date of original approval:	May 2015
Date of latest approval:	01 September 2026
Review period:	Annual
Date of next review:	31 August 2027

Care Farm Health & Safety Policy for Children

Policy statement

Our care farm is committed to providing a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment for all children who attend, visit or participate in our activities. This policy outlines our procedures to protect children from harm, manage risks effectively, promote safe behaviour, and ensure staff understand their responsibilities in safeguarding and health and safety.

This policy links to the Risk Assessments we have for all areas of the farm and work skills activities and tasks. This policy works alongside our general health and safety policy and our staff health and safety policy.

1. Supervision and Access

1.1 Constant Supervision

- Children must be under **direct, continuous supervision** by a responsible adult at all times while on site.
- Supervisor-to-child ratios must be appropriate to age, needs, and activity risk level.

1.2 Designated and Restricted Areas

- The site will clearly display signs marking **permitted areas** for children.
- Staff must ensure children **do not enter off-limits** zones, including machinery sheds, chemical stores, or livestock pens unless part of a supervised activity.

1.3 Machinery, Vehicles, and Equipment

- Children are **not permitted** to operate or ride on farm machinery or vehicles.
- All machinery operators must be aware of children on site and must stop operations if a child approaches too closely.

1.4 Visibility

- Children will, if required wear **high-visibility tabards or vests** provided by the care farm to increase visibility around specific tasks.
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2. Risk Management

2.1 Animal Safety

- Children must **never be left unsupervised with animals**.
- Access to animals, including feeding or grooming, must be part of an organised and supervised activity.
- Children must not enter yards or pens containing animals that are stressed, protective, or potentially dangerous.
- Handwashing with soap and water is required **immediately after animal contact**.

2.2 Hazardous Substances

- All chemicals, medicines, veterinary treatments, fuels, and cleaning supplies must be stored in **locked, child-inaccessible cupboards** or areas.
- Staff must ensure no substances are left unattended.

2.3 Tools and Equipment

- All tools must be locked away or safely stored when not in use.
 - Children may only use age-appropriate tools as part of a structured, risk-assessed activity under adult supervision.
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3. Safeguarding and Reporting

3.1 Abuse Awareness

All staff and volunteers must be alert to signs of:

- physical harm
- emotional or psychological abuse
- neglect
- inappropriate behaviour
- bullying or peer-on-peer abuse

Training will be provided to help staff recognise these signs.

3.2 Reporting Concerns

- Staff must report *any* concern about a child's safety or conduct by another child or adult.
- Concerns must be reported to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** immediately.
- The DSL will decide whether escalation to the **local authority safeguarding team** or the **NSPCC** is required.
- All concerns must be **recorded accurately and promptly**.
- Refer to Safeguarding Policy for full details.

3.3 Whistleblowing Protection

- Staff who report concerns in good faith are protected under our whistleblowing policy.
 - Retaliation or victimisation of whistleblowers is strictly prohibited.
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4. General Safety Rules for Children

4.1 Hygiene

- Handwashing with soap and water is required:
 - after touching animals
 - after touching soil, feed, or farm equipment
 - before eating or drinking
 - after using the toilet
- Hand sanitiser may be used in addition, but **not instead of** proper handwashing after animal contact.

4.2 Behaviour Expectations

Children must be advised and reminded not to:

- run in car parks, yards, or near livestock
- climb on gates, fences, walls, or machinery
- wander beyond designated safe areas
- tease, chase, or shout around animals

4.3 Food and Drink

- Eating and drinking are only permitted in **designated clean areas**.
- No food is to be consumed in animal areas, barns, or fields.

4.4 Smoking and Vaping

- Smoking and vaping are strictly **prohibited** anywhere on the care farm premises.
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5. Roles and Responsibilities

Staff and Volunteers

- Ensure safe supervision at all times.
- Follow risk assessments and safety procedures.
- Model safe behaviour and good hygiene practice.
- Report hazards and safeguarding concerns immediately.

- Report to schools/commissioners in the event of a concern or accident

Visitors and Parents/Carers

- Must follow all safety instructions provided by staff.
 - Must supervise their children unless participating in a supervised activity led by care farm staff.
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6. Monitoring and Review

- Risk assessments will be reviewed **annually** or sooner if an incident occurs.
- This policy will be audited regularly to ensure compliance with safeguarding and health & safety legislation.
- Updates will be communicated to all staff, volunteers, and partners.