



<b>Policy Title</b>	<b>Date Implemented or Date of Last Review</b>	<b>June 2023</b>
<b>Child Protection - Abuse</b>	<b>Date of Next Review</b>	<b>June 2026</b>

### Policy

*Good News Nwk Ltd.* (the Home) will, through formal and informal procedures, monitor the care of children and young people on a regular basis so as to ensure that individual care plans are implemented, maintained and updated and that care is delivered to appropriate and laid down standards.

It is the duty of all employees to report to their manager or supervisor any witnessed or suspected incidents of abuse. Such incidents may include behaviour which has harmed a child, committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, or behaviour which indicates the person is unsuitable to work with children.

Employees may be assured that their jobs will not be threatened by reporting abusive behaviour by others. The home will not tolerate abuse in any form (either of children and young people, employees or anyone connected with the home) and where abuse is suspected, or witnessed, then immediate action will be taken, as outlined in the following procedure.

For the purposes of this policy abuse is defined as:

**“A single or repeated act or lack of appropriate action (neglect) occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which causes harm or distress.”**

**Any employee who is found to have abused a child or young person will face disciplinary action which may include dismissal and subsequent referral to the Police and/or the Disclosure and Barring Service.**

**The Manager of the home is the designated person responsible for managing allegations of abuse within the home and for liaising with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).**



## **Procedure**

### **Prevention of Abuse**

The home is committed to preventing the abuse of children and young people. It will strive to achieve this by:

- Liaison and co-operation with any local authority which is, or may be, making child protection enquiries in relation to any child accommodated in the home;
- ensuring that thorough, professional and systematic recruitment practices are followed which ensure that adequate references are taken up for all care workers, and use is made of all checking procedures, particularly the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosure process;
- Encouraging the role of the advocate for children and young people. Children and young people who have no relatives or friends to act as advocates should be encouraged to have an independent advocate who will act as spokesperson and participate in care reviews as necessary;
- recognising the fundamental rights of children and young people to privacy, dignity, maintenance of self-esteem and fulfilment, choice, recognition of diversity, individuality and independence, together with the maintenance of their rights as citizens;
- making relatives and advocates aware of the home's complaints procedure and encouraging them to comment upon the care received by children and young people and to participate in reviews of care;
- committing to quality assurance and regular quality reviews;
- ensuring that training is provided on the forms and prevention of abuse, together with skills to care for children who have been abused and that such training is available to all employees;
- taking action whenever there is suspicion that abuse has occurred in any of the forms described below;
- utilising management systems which support and supervise employees in their work and facilitate good communications;
- encouraging an atmosphere of openness and trust where employees and children feel able to discuss and therefore prevent the development of potentially abusive situations;
- ensuring that induction procedures for employees include the prevention of abuse of children and young people;
- giving children and young people a copy of the home's complaints procedure on admission and ensuring that they understand how to use the procedure.



## **Detection**

- Children and young people should be assessed for signs of abuse as part of the initial assessment process on admission to the home. Abuse may be occurring where the child or young person appears withdrawn, depressed, frightened, with irregular sleep patterns, low self-esteem etc. Where abuse is suspected, then it must be recorded and reported without delay;
- Employees are encouraged to look for signs of abuse such as bruises that are said to be self - inflicted or the result of repeated accidents; unconvincing explanations should arouse suspicions. Signs of sexual abuse include pain or injury in the genital area, bloodstains or discharge on underwear or discomfort when walking or sitting. Employees should also be alert to signs of abuse of children and young people by other children and young people, particularly bullying and intimidation;
- Employees should observe how children and young people react to different members of staff; abused children and young people are likely to be nervous or possibly fearful when the abuser comes near, or to strike out to prevent an anticipated attack;
- Children and young people's appearance and reactions should be noted following visits or outings. Employees should be alert to the potential of abuse by other people outside the home. A child or young person who is frightened of an abusing relative may ask a member of staff to stay with them when the relative visits;
- Employees should be alert for potential financial abuse, particularly when someone else is managing their finances.
- Employees should also be aware of the growing potential for direct or anonymous abuse via portable phones, the internet and social media such as chat forums, twitter, Facebook etc.

## **Action in event of abuse occurring or suspected**

If abuse of a child or young person is witnessed and the situation is urgent, the person witnessing the abuse should:

- Immediately challenge the person who is abusing the child or young person and try to persuade him/her to stop;
- If the immediate risk to the child has passed the person witnessing the abuse should report it immediately to the Manager of the home or person in charge. The person reporting the incident should be offered the support of another person if they wish;

- Any suspicions of abuse of a child or young person should be reported to the Manager of the home or person in charge immediately;
- In the event that the child, a visitor, friend or relative alleges the abuse, the matter should be dealt with by way of referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer, (herein referred to as “LADO”);
- All incidents must be reported to the Manager of the home. Requests to “keep it quiet” (even from the victim) will, ordinarily, have to be refused, although the circumstances surrounding the request must be discussed with the Manager of the home as part of the investigation process.

### **Handling the incident**

- The Manager of the home or person in charge must refer the incident to the LADO who will undertake an investigation and, if necessary, take immediate action to protect the child or young person. Confidentiality must be maintained;
- The child or young person should be interviewed, and where necessary the child’s or young person’s General Practitioner informed and a medical examination requested;
- If the child or young person is confused or unable to complain formally, an advocate may take up the complaint on behalf of the child or young person;
- Statements should be taken from witnesses. Accurate written records of the ongoing situation should be kept, (dated and signed) in the child’s or young person’s records.

The Manager of the home has a duty to refer, promptly, to the local authority (Local Authority Designated Officer, LADO) in whose area the home is situated, any allegation of abuse or neglect affecting any child accommodated in the home.

In addition, this duty extends to notifying the child’s placing authority and Ofsted of the instigation and outcome of any child protection enquiries involving a child accommodated in the home.

If there are identified injuries or if fraud is suspected, the police will have to be informed.

### **Finally,**

- Any communications with outside agencies should be logged, with the date and time, and noted in the child or young person’s records;
- If the alleged abuser is a member of staff, they will be dealt with according to the home’s disciplinary procedure;

**Head Office Address: 107 Alexandra Road  
Wellingborough NN8 1EG**



- The abused child or young person should be offered counselling and support;
- Consideration and support should be offered to other children and young people who may have witnessed the abuse.

### **Review**

These procedures have been submitted for consideration and comment to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) and to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for Child Protection (or other senior officers responsible for child protection matters in that department) and are consistent with the local policies and procedures agreed by the LSCB relevant to the geographical area of the home. These procedures will be reviewed regularly.

### **General Duty on everyone employed at the home**

Everyone employed at the home (including junior staff, ancillary, volunteer and agency, paid, unpaid) has a duty to report any concerns about the welfare or safety of any child accommodated in the home to one of the following:

- (i) The registered person;
- (ii) A police officer;
- (iii) An official of Ofsted;
- (iv) An officer of the local authority in whose area the home is situated (LADO);
- (v) An officer of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

Contact details (Name of contact, if appropriate, job title, telephone number and postal address) for both Ofsted and the LADO are posted on to the notice board in the main hall. Where allegations or suspicions of abuse concern the Manager of the home then staff should contact someone from (ii) to (v) above. In addition any member of staff should report to the police any evidence of children becoming involved in prostitution, or of unauthorised persons picking children up, contacting children in the home, or observed trying to make contact with children outside the home.

### **Referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**

There may be occasions when an employee may have to be referred, in exceptional circumstances to the DBS. There are two conditions which must be met to trigger a referral.

#### **A referral must be made to the DBS when the home:**

1. Withdraws permission for an individual to engage in a regulated or controlled activity, or would have done so had that individual not resigned, retired, been made redundant or been transferred to a position which is not a regulated or controlled activity because they think that the individual has engaged in relevant conduct; satisfied the harm test; or received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence.

2. The referral should be made to the DBS when the home has gathered sufficient evidence as part of their investigations to support their reasons for withdrawing permission to engage in regulated or controlled activity and in following good practice, consulted with their Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Such referrals will normally only follow after comprehensive thorough investigation and full and proper implementation of the home's disciplinary procedures which include the right of appeal.

**Examples of Abuse (Reference may also be made to the DBS Guidance to the Referral Process)**

<b>Physical Abuse</b>	This may range from hitting or slapping to rough handling or unnecessary physical force either deliberate or unintentional when caring for a child or young person. The injuries caused by physical abuse may not always be visible although there may be bruises, broken skin, cuts, burns or broken bones. Restraining children and young people so that they cannot move (Unless such restraint is justified) is also abusive, as is using furniture to stop them moving.
<b>Verbal Abuse</b>	Shouting and/or swearing at a person should be regarded as abusive behaviour. Equally, speaking to a child or young person in a quiet but threatening way so as to make the child or young person fearful or feel ridiculed is abusive.
<b>Emotional/Psychological Abuse</b>	Involves any behaviour, verbal or non-verbal, that negatively impacts another person's psychological or emotional well-being. Typical examples may include ignoring feelings, ignoring people, ridiculing beliefs, withholding approval, appreciation or affection, refusal to socialise, shouting, frightening, swearing etc.
<b>Abuse through the misapplication of drugs</b>	The overuse and misuse of sedatives and other medication, to control or restrain a child or young person is unacceptable unless medically required.
<b>Financial Abuse</b>	The illegal or improper use or control of, property, bank account or other valuables, or the withholding of a person's money, and stealing, are all forms of abuse.
<b>Racial or Ethnic Abuse</b>	Victimising people, verbally insulting them and physically attacking them because of their racial or ethnic origin is abusive.
<b>Sexual Abuse</b>	Forcing someone to take part in sexual activity against his/her will is abuse and a criminal offence. The force may not always be physical. An individual may participate in behaviour he/she finds unacceptable following undue emotional or psychological pressure.
<b>Neglect</b>	Isolated from social interaction, left unattended for periods of time, withholding care and treatment when it is required, rejecting various types of appropriate support and depriving children and young people of the essentials of everyday life, e.g. food, clothes and personal cleanliness, are all forms of abuse.



**Institutional abuse**

Institutional abuse may manifest itself in the following ways:

- Lack of personal possessions, furniture etc.
- Employees giving children and young people orders.
- Children and young people put to bed too early in the afternoon/evening, or awakened too early in the morning.
- Lack of choice about meals, and the timing of meals
- Lack of opportunity for obtaining drinks and snacks.
- Lack of attention to laundering, naming and mending a child's or young person's personal clothing.
- Poor standards of cleanliness.
- Lack of toilet facilities.
- Lack of privacy.
- Poor management of medical conditions.
- Inappropriate administration of medication.

<b>References to Legislation and Quality Standards</b>	
<b>Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015</b>	<b>Regulation 12</b>
<b>Quality Standard</b>	<b>Protection of Children</b>