



Safeguarding Children/Young People Policy

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1. Introduction & Purpose

Introduction

Good News NWK (The Home) is dedicated to providing exceptional care for children with learning disabilities, recognising the unique challenges and vulnerabilities they face. Understanding that these children are more susceptible to abuse due to their higher levels

of need and dependency on staff for personal care, our childcare service policy is designed to ensure their safety, well-being, and holistic development. This policy outlines the measures we take to protect our children, promote their independence, and create a nurturing and secure environment where they can thrive.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- embed the legislative requirements and expectations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children/young people in our care
- ensure staff know how to identify and report concerns, suspicions and allegations of abuse

2. Policy statement

The legislative expectations of providers inform this policy in line with the requirements laid out in [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#). We recognise that the following two fundamental principles underpin safeguarding:

- safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part
- a child/young person-centred approach

For services to be effective, practice should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children/young people. It is also our policy to:

- develop a culture of listening to children/young people and taking account of their wishes and feelings, both in individual decisions and the development of services
- follow safe recruitment practices for individuals whom the organisation will permit to work with children/young people, including policies on when to obtain a criminal record check
- ensure staff complete safeguarding training that enables them to recognise signs of potential abuse and neglect
- provide appropriate supervision and support for staff
- have a designated professional to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children/young people who will liaise with local statutory children's services agencies as appropriate
- ensure staff are aware of the indicators and types of abuse and how to respond

3. Reporting concerns

It is the responsibility of every member of staff to report concerns, suspicions or allegations of abuse or harm. Staff must without delay report to the senior on shift and notify the designated safeguarding officer.

4. Definitions

4.1 Safeguarding and promoting welfare

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children/young people is defined as protecting children/young people from maltreatment; preventing impairment of health or development and ensuring that children/young people are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

4.2 Child protection

Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children/young people who are suffering or are likely to suffer significant harm. ([Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#))

4.3 Child

The Children's Act 1989 and 2004 respectfully define a child as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. If a child has reached 16 years of age and is living independently or in further education, it does not change his or her entitlement to services or protection under the Children Act 1989.

5. Definitions of abuse

5.1 General guidance

- While working in the home, you will be involved in the care and support of children/young people who may have suffered abuse or may be at risk of harm. You are required to know and understand the presenting risks for each child/young person and how to recognise signs of abuse. Many of the children/young people who we support may not be open about their past or present situation, or when working with children with learning disabilities, may not have the understanding or the means to communicate such experiences. It is up to staff to understand the risks, the presenting issues of the child/young person and to be acutely aware of the

requirements of risk assessments, placement plans, the signs of abuse and the mechanisms for reporting concerns.

- Often the signs of abuse will not be visible but based on your knowledge of the child/young person. Never hesitate to discuss the welfare of children/young people in your care with your senior, manager or responsible Individual. The earlier we can intervene to support a child, the better.
- The main categories of abuse are sexual, physical, emotional and neglect. Within those categories, there are often other emerging forms of abuse such as criminal exploitation, human trafficking and child sexual exploitation. Staff will need to be vigilant to these overarching areas when working with children and be aware of other individual policies to be read alongside this policy. Staff should also be aware that the home supports children with disabilities who are deemed to be at an increased risk of abuse.

5.2 Abuse and Children with Disabilities

Research on the protection of disabled children indicates that they are more at risk of being abused than non-disabled children. In fact, it is estimated that disabled children are over 3 times more likely to be abused or neglected than non-disabled children. This analysis of the risk to disabled children covered a wide range of types of disability, including physical and sensory impairments, mental illness, mental or intellectual impairments and long-term health problems.

According to the NSPCC publication, 'Protecting deaf and disabled children', some of the reasons that make disabled children more vulnerable to abuse include the below:

Dependency

Some disabled children are dependent on a wide network of carers and other adults to ensure that their medical and intimate care needs are met.

Isolation

Disabled children may need support carers to take them out. They may not have the same network of relationships with their peers as other children.

Communication barriers

Some disabled children have difficulty reporting concerns or abuse. Many of the ways open to children, such as telephone helplines, are not accessible to all disabled children.

Problems identifying the signs of abuse

A lack of understanding and training about safeguarding disabled children can result in professionals not recognising signs of abuse or neglect. This is important because research indicates that identifying abuse of disabled children is most likely to come from observations of physical signs, behaviour or changes in mood. Research shows that disabled children are less likely to disclose abuse and more likely to delay disclosure.

Issues with understanding healthy relationships and how to be safe

Accessible programmes to explore sex and healthy relationships and understand what abuse is are not always available to all disabled children. As a result, a disabled child may not know how to recognise when they are being abused or who to tell. Research has found that children who have special educational needs have a poorer understanding of bullying and inappropriate touching. This means that disabled children are less able to keep themselves safe.

5.3 Contextual safeguarding

- Contextual safeguarding is an approach to understanding and responding to children/young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. Traditional approaches to protecting children/young people from harm have focussed on the risk of violence and abuse from inside the home, usually from a parent/carer or other trusted adult. They do not always address the time that children/young people spend outside the home and the influence of peers on children/young people's development and safety.
- Contextual safeguarding recognises the impact of the public/social context on children/young people's lives, and consequently their safety. Contextual safeguarding seeks to identify and respond to harm and abuse posed to children/young people outside their home, either from adults or other children/young people. It is an approach that looks at how interventions can change the processes and environments, to make them safer for children/young people, as opposed to focussing on an individual.

Contextual Safeguarding applies to a wide range of risks which can potentially cause significant harm to children/young people where the prime cause of harm is outside of the family. This list is not exhaustive, but includes:

- peer on peer and relationship abuse
- criminal/sexual exploitation/online abuse
- missing episodes
- risks associated with gangs
- risks associated with radicalisation
- safeguarding risks in public spaces
- trafficking and modern slavery

Staff must recognise that children/young people's experience is not only influenced by their family but also by their peer network, wider community, and society, and risk assessment in this context.

5.4 Abuse

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child/young person by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children/young people may be abused in a family or an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children/young people may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child/young person or other children/young people.

5.5 Physical abuse

Physical abuse is a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing harm to a child/young person. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child/young person.

5.6 Signs and symptoms of physical abuse

Signs and symptoms of physical abuse may include, but are not limited to:

- unexplained recurrent injuries, burns, bruises, bite marks
- broken bones, recurring fractures to the ribs
- withdrawn and withdrawal from activities

- obsessive behaviour
- improbable excuses or refusal to explain injuries
- wearing clothes to cover injuries, even in hot weather
- refusal to undress for gym
- bald patches
- chronic running away
- fear of medical help or examination
- self-destructive tendencies
- aggression towards others
- fear of physical contact
- fear of a suspected abuser being contacted
- self-harm and suicide attempts

5.7 Sexual abuse

- Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child/young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether the child/young person is aware of what is happening or not. The activities may include physical contact, including an assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children/young people in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children/young people to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child/young person in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.
- Adult males do not solely perpetrate sexual abuse. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children/young people. Men, women, teenagers and other children/young people commit sexual abuse and offenders come from all parts of society and all backgrounds.

5.8 Types of sexual abuse

There are two different types of child sexual abuse. These are contact abuse and non-contact abuse.

Contact abuse involves touching activities where an abuser makes physical contact with a

child/young person, including penetration. It includes:

- sexual touching of any part of the body whether the child/young person is wearing clothes or not
- rape or penetration by putting an object or body part inside a child/young person's mouth, vagina or anus
- forcing or encouraging a child/young person to take part in sexual activity
- making a child/young person take their clothes off, touch someone else's genitals or masturbate

Non-contact abuse involves non-touching activities, such as grooming, exploitation, persuading children/young people to perform sexual acts over the internet and flashing. It includes:

- encouraging a child/young person to watch or hear sexual acts
- not taking proper measures to prevent a child/young person being exposed to sexual activities by others
- meeting a child/young person following sexual grooming with the intent of abusing them
- online abuse including making, viewing or distributing child/young person abuse images
- allowing someone else to create, view or distribute child/young person abuse images
- showing pornography to a child/young person
- sexually exploiting a child/young person for money, power or status (child exploitation)

5.9 Signs and symptoms of sexual abuse

Signs and symptoms of sexual abuse may include, but are not limited to:

- displaying sexualised behaviour or having sexual knowledge that is inappropriate for their stage of development
- being overly affectionate or knowledgeable in a sexual way inappropriate to the child/young person's age
- medical problems such as chronic itching, pain in the genitals, sexually transmitted diseases

- other extreme reactions, such as depression, self-mutilation, suicide attempts, running away, overdoses, anorexia
- personality changes such as becoming insecure or clinging
- regressing to younger behaviour patterns such as thumb sucking or bringing out discarded cuddly toys
- lack of trust or fear of someone they know well
- starting to wet again, day or night/nightmares
- using sexually explicit language
- misuse of drugs or alcohol

5.10 Emotional abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child/young person, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child/young person's emotional development. It may involve the following

- communicating to a child/young person that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.
- developmentally inappropriate expectations on children/young people. These may include interactions that are beyond a child/young person's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child/young person participating in normal healthy social interaction.
- seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.
- severe bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children/young people frequently to feel frightened or in danger.
- the exploitation or corruption of children/young people.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in maltreatment of a child/young person, though it may occur alone.

5.11 Signs and symptoms of emotional abuse

Signs and symptoms of emotional abuse may include, but are not limited to:

- use language, act in a way or know about things that you wouldn't expect them to know for their age

- struggle to control strong emotions or have extreme outbursts
- seem isolated from their parents
- lack social skills or have few, if any, friends
- physical, mental and emotional development lags
- sudden speech disorders
- continual self-depreciation
- overreaction to mistakes
- extreme fear of any new situation
- inappropriate response to pain
- neurotic behaviour
- extremes of passivity or aggression

5.12 Neglect

Neglect is the most common form of child/young person abuse. It constitutes the persistent failure to meet a child/young person's basic physical or psychological needs, likely to result in the severe impairment of the child/young person's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child/young person from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child/young person's basic emotional needs.

5.13 Signs and symptoms of neglect

Signs and symptoms of neglect may include, but are not limited to:

- constant hunger
- poor personal hygiene
- constant tiredness

- poor state of clothing
- emaciation
- untreated medical problems
- no social relationships
- compulsive scavenging
- destructive tendencies
- self-harm and suicide attempts

5.14 Child sexual exploitation and online exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of abuse, which may involve physical contact, including an assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children/young people in the production of sexual images, forcing children/young people to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children/young people to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child/young person in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). The definition of child sexual exploitation is as follows:

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited, even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#)

Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child/young person's immediate recognition, for example, the persuasion to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phones with no immediate payment or gain. Those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and economic or other resources. Online sexual exploitation includes:

- befriending through online chat rooms/messaging services
- online grooming techniques, e.g. stalking, identity pretence, false promises, e.g. meeting celebrities, tickets, gifts
- asking children/young people to take and share indecent images of themselves

- leverage for further demands, e.g. threat to show other people recorded sexual acts by child/young person
- arranging an offline meeting to abuse child/young person sexually
- contact from perpetrators in other countries
- messaging for extortion and the sale of drugs and other illegal activities

Staff must report any concerns, suspicions or allegations of abuse or harm to the designated safeguarding officer and follow the safeguarding procedures.

5.15 Child criminal exploitation

Child criminal exploitation occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child/young person under the age of 18. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. Criminal exploitation of children is broader than just county lines and includes, for instance, children/young people forced to work on cannabis farms or to commit theft.

- Criminal exploitation involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where children/young people (or a third person or persons) receive something (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them completing a task on behalf of another individual or group of individuals; this is often of a criminal nature.
- Child criminal exploitation usually occurs without the child/young person's immediate recognition, with the child/young person believing that they are in control of the situation. Those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child/young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/ economic and emotional vulnerability.
- Criminal exploitation interlinks with a number of multiple vulnerabilities and offences, including the child/young person being exposed to, and being a victim of, physical and emotional violence, neglect, sexual abuse and exploitation, modern-day slavery and human trafficking, domestic abuse and missing episodes.
- The risk to a child/young person, and their family and friends as a result of experiencing criminal exploitation, can include, but is not limited to:

- physical injuries, including the risk of severe violence and death
- emotional and psychological trauma
- sexual violence, including sexual assault, rape, internally inserting drugs, indecent images being taken and shared as part of initiation, revenge, or punishment
- debt bondage, where a child/young person and their families are 'in debt' to the exploiters, which is then used to control the child/young person
- neglect, and the child/young person's basic needs not being met
- living in unclean, dangerous and unhygienic environments
- tiredness and sleep deprivation, where the child/young person is expected to carry out criminal activities over long periods and through the night
- poor attendance and attainment at school/college/university

Please also see safeguarding children/young people from criminal exploitation and gang violence policy.

All Staff must

- Consistently assess whether each child is at risk of harm (taking account of information in the Child's relevant plans).
- Understand that their primary obligation is to protect children. This is paramount.
- Be familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies.
- Ensure that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm.

Raising Concerns and Speaking Up

If you have concerns about:

- Any child's welfare and/or wellbeing who is living in the home.
- Any colleague or the practice of any colleague.
- Any other persons' working at or visiting the home.

- Any other person who has contact with a child in the home.
- Any other concerns.

You must SPEAK UP. Failure to speak up regarding concerns identified or witnessed will necessitate disciplinary action as appropriate to the circumstances.

5.16 Abuse by children/young people who display sexually harmful behaviour

Harmful sexual behaviour by children/young people ranges from experimentation that unintentionally goes too far through to serious sexual assault. It sometimes involves children as young as four or five, although most of those who sexually harm others are adolescents. Usually, but not always, the child/young person causing the harm is older than the victim. Often victims are uncomfortable about what is happening and may feel they are willingly involved, but not understand that the behaviour is harmful.

It is essential to recognise that children/young people are likely to engage in some forms of sexual exploration with similar age children/young people. However, any child/young person who participates in sex play with a much younger or more vulnerable child/young person, or who uses force, tricks or bribery to involve someone in sexual activity, is a cause for concern and we should intervene. Harmful sexual behaviour includes:

- using sexually explicit words and phrases
- inappropriate touching
- using sexual violence or threats
- full penetrative sex with other children/young people or adults

Children/young people who develop harmful sexual behaviour can cause harm to themselves and others. In the same way that a power imbalance is created in other forms of child sexual exploitation, the same characteristics can be found in the behaviour of those displaying harmful sexual behaviour. Harmful sexual behaviour can include coercion, threats or aggression and secrecy. Often the power imbalance means the victim cannot or does not give informed consent. Power imbalance may be due to age, intellectual ability, status, physical size, gender or race. Harmful sexual behaviour can lead to criminal convictions or prosecution.

- Staff must be aware that a significant number of sexual offences against children/young people are committed by their peers. Staff must be mindful of the presenting risks of each child/young person in the service and should not automatically dismiss harmful sexual behaviour, if it occurs, as normal behaviour between children/young people.
- Staff must be aware that we will be dealing with children/young people who may have already experienced trauma and may themselves be exposed to harmful sexual behaviours. They may have unmet needs and have not yet come into contact with sources of help and support. We must be mindful that while identifying and responding to their needs that other children/young people must be protected.

5.17 Domestic abuse

- The Home Office (March 2013) defines domestic abuse as any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over, who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. Domestic abuse includes controlling and coercive behaviour and can encompass, but is not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and emotional abuse.
- The staff team must be aware that children/young people placed in our care may have experience of domestic abuse in the home. Where it is deemed relevant and appropriate, staff may be enrolled on specialist training in relation to this.

Types of domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can be emotional, physical, sexual, financial or psychological, such as:

- kicking, hitting, punching or cutting
- rape (including in a relationship)
- controlling someone's finances by withholding money or stopping someone earning
- controlling behaviour, like telling someone where they can go and what they can wear
- not letting someone leave the house
- reading emails, text messages or letters
- threatening to kill someone or harm them
- threatening to another family member or pet

Signs that a child has witnessed domestic abuse can include:

- aggression or bullying
- anti-social behaviour, like vandalism
- anxiety, depression or suicidal thoughts
- attention seeking
- bed-wetting, nightmares or insomnia
- constant or regular sickness, like colds, headaches and mouth ulcers
- drug or alcohol use
- eating disorders
- problems in school or trouble learning
- tantrums
- withdrawal

Living in a home where domestic abuse happens can have a severe impact on a child/young person's mental and physical well-being, as well as their behaviour. And this can last into adulthood.

NSPCC - <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/domestic-abuse/>

5.18 Discriminatory abuse

Discriminatory abuse includes racist or sexual remarks, comments based on a person's impairment, disability, age or illness and other forms of harassment, slurs, or similar treatment. This type of abuse may also include isolation or withdrawal from religious or cultural activity, services or supportive networks, culture, religion, politics and sexual orientation, discrimination that is based on person's disability or age and Hate crime.

Discrimination can be in two forms:

- Direct - when a person with a protected characteristic is treated less favourably than others.
- Indirect - when a person with a protected characteristic is placed at an unfair disadvantage by putting rules or arrangements in place that apply to everyone. Consideration should be given to harassment and victimisation.

5.19 Radicalisation

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism' (Prevent HM Govt. 2011). We understand that many people become radicalised in the course of their contact with others. The UK government Prevention strategy (2011), which is a crucial aspect of safeguarding, outlines the commitment to be made by the healthcare sector in ensuring that threats of this kind are understood and responded to. Channel is a supportive multi-agency process, designed to safeguard those individuals who may be vulnerable to being drawn into any form of terrorism, and staff will receive Prevent training.

Please also see extremism and radicalisation policy.

5.20 Modern slavery or human trafficking

Child trafficking is child abuse defined as recruiting, moving, receiving and harbouring children for exploitation. Child trafficking is a form of modern slavery (HM Government, 2014). Children/young people can be trafficked from one part of the UK to another or from overseas. Traffickers may use grooming techniques to gain the trust of a child/young person, family or community. They may trick, force or persuade children/young people to leave their homes. Child trafficking can involve a network of organised criminals who recruit, transport and exploit children/young people within or across borders. Some people in the network might not be directly involved in trafficking a child/young person but play a part in other ways – such as falsifying documents, bribery, owning or renting premises, or money laundering (Europol, 2011). Individuals and children/young people's own families can also organise child trafficking. Being trafficked is abuse in itself. But trafficked children/young people may experience other forms of abuse and neglect that impact on their physical and mental health and social and emotional development. These include:

- sexual abuse and exploitation
- physical abuse
- emotional abuse
- neglect

Children/young people may be trafficked for

- sexual exploitation
- criminal activity, including:
 - cannabis cultivation
 - street crime - such as pick-pocketing, begging and bag theft



- moving drugs
- benefit fraud
- immigration fraud
- selling pirated goods, such as DVDs
- forced marriage
- domestic servitude, including:
 - cleaning
 - childcare
 - cooking
- forced labour, including working in:
 - restaurants
 - nail bars
 - factories
 - agriculture
- illegal adoption
- unreported private fostering arrangements (for any exploitative purpose).

This list is not exhaustive and trafficked children/young people may experience exploitation in more than one way. Impacts of child trafficking and exploitation include but are not limited to:

- poor health and illness, which may be left untreated
- limited or no access to education
- physical and mental exhaustion

Children/young people may also experience emotional challenges, such as missing family, friends, communities and cultures leading to

- feeling isolated and lonely
- disturbed sleep patterns
- depression and anxiety
- headaches

- panic attacks
- eating difficulties
- self-harm and suicidal thoughts
- drug and alcohol use as a means to escape from problems
- post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

(Jamieson, 2018; Pearce, Hynes and Bovarnick, 2009)

Please also see the anti-slavery and anti-trafficking policy.

5.21 Female genital mutilation

- According to the NSPCC, female genital mutilation, FGM, is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons, and it can be known as female circumcision, cutting or 'Sunna'. Sometimes, religious, social or cultural reasons are put forward for this happening, but it is abuse and a criminal offence, to a woman or child/young person. The term covers harmful procedures to the female genitalia for non-medical purposes. There are four types of FGM and are illegal and have serious health risks.
- FGM ranges from pricking or cauterising the genital area, through partial or total removal of the clitoris, cutting the lips (the labia) and narrowing the vaginal opening. Someone with no medical training usually performs FGM, without anaesthetic or antiseptic treatment. Victims are often forcibly restrained and cut using instruments such as a knife, pair of scissors, scalpel, glass or razor blade, and serious health problems are common.
- FGM has been a criminal offence in the UK since 1985, and in 2003 it also became a criminal offence for UK nationals or permanent UK residents to take their child/young person abroad to have female genital mutilation. Anyone found guilty of the offence faces a maximum penalty of 14 years in prison. FGM is a hidden crime, and it is, therefore, difficult to assess the scope of this. More information can be found by contacting help@nspcc.org.uk or calling 0808 800 5000.

5.22 Hate crime

The term 'hate crime' describes a range of criminal behaviour where the perpetrator is motivated by hostility or demonstrates hostility towards the victim's disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or transgender identity. These aspects of a person's identity are known as 'protected characteristics'. A hate crime can include verbal abuse, intimidation, threats, harassment, assault and bullying, as well as damage to property. The perpetrator can also

be a friend, carer or acquaintance who exploits their relationship with the victim for financial gain or some other criminal purpose.

5.23 Mate crime

- Mate crime is when someone befriends a child/young person or vulnerable person intending to exploit or take advantage of them. It may not be an illegal act but still harms the individual. Mate crime is often difficult for police to investigate, due to its sometimes-ambiguous nature, reporting to the police will enable them to decide whether a criminal offence has been committed.
- Mate crime is carried out by someone the person knows and often happens in private. In recent years there have been several serious case reviews relating to people with a learning disability who were murdered or seriously harmed by people who purported to be their friend.
- Mate crime can happen in children's homes. Children/young people may befriend each other and share each other's belongings, which may not be a problem. When this behaviour moves to mate, crime can be difficult to distinguish due to the nature of the environment. It could include using another's phone and using their credit, enticing someone to spend their pocket money or allowance for their friend.
- Staff need to be vigilant to children/young people's risks and ensure they are being treated fairly. Children/young people moving to independent living can be vulnerable to mate crime. When preparing children/young people for independence, work should be undertaken to make children/young people aware of mate crime and the steps to take to protect themselves when they move on.

5.24 Restraint

In extreme circumstances, unlawful or inappropriate use of restraint may constitute a criminal offence. Someone is using restraint if they use force, or threaten to use force, to make someone do something they are resisting, or where freedom of movement is restricted, whether they are resisting or not. Restraint covers a wide range of actions. It includes the use of active or passive means to ensure the person concerned does something or does not do something they want to do, for example, the use of keypads to prevent people from going where they want from a closed environment. Physical restraint or physical intervention will only ever be used as a last resort and following the child/young person's agreed placement plan.

6. Roles and responsibilities

- Staff have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children/young people.

- Staff have the responsibility to be alert to possible abuse and to record and report concerns to the Registered manager or senior staff.
- It is unacceptable for any member of staff to keep such concerns to themselves, including concerns about the conduct of another member of staff.
- The designated safeguarding officer (The Registered Manager) takes the lead responsibility for child safeguarding and child protection.
- The designated safeguarding officer (The Registered Manager) provides advice and support and information to staff as appropriate, liaising with the local authority and other agencies, maintaining child protection records for individual children/young people, and arranging necessary training for staff.
- Any suspicion of abuse by a member of staff or other persons must be reported to the designated safeguarding officer (The Registered Manager).
- The designated safeguarding officer will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child/young person in question and any other child/young person who may be at risk.

Staff exercising their responsibilities under this procedure and in good faith will not be penalised for doing so. Any attempt to victimise staff for raising genuine concerns or trying to prevent such concerns being reported will be regarded as a disciplinary matter.

6.1 Designated safeguarding officer

The responsibilities of the designated safeguarding officer (Registered Manager) include:

- ensuring staff who have direct contact with children/young people are provided with safeguarding and child protection training
- notifying the LADO of reported concerns
- informing staff of their roles and responsibilities in recognising and acting upon indicators that a child/young person's welfare or safety may be at risk and implementing agreed procedures
- advising and supporting staff when they encounter a child protection issue and acting as the first point of contact for child protection matters
- informing the accused person about the allegation as soon as possible after consulting the LADO
- attending and contributing to any strategy discussion and any further investigations and suspending a member of staff from duty in cases where the LADO, children's social care and the police consider this to be necessary

- ensuring that placing authorities and Ofsted are informed of child protection incidents and advising and informing the responsible individual of child protection events
- monitoring the child protection case until a conclusion is agreed by parties and ensuring accurate written records are kept

If the complaint or allegation is about a member of staff and is such that it is clear that investigation by the police or children's social care is not necessary, the designated safeguarding officer will discuss next steps with the LADO. Options may include:

- taking no further action
- instigating disciplinary proceedings following an investigation
- deciding not to use a person's services in future

Where a case has been concluded, and an allegation against a member of staff has been substantiated, the designated safeguarding officer will discuss with the LADO as to whether a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service is required. At the conclusion of a case, the designated safeguarding officer will review the circumstances of the case to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to help prevent similar events in the future. The designated safeguarding officer will monitor the services safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures on an annual basis.

7. Allegations against staff

- An allegation may relate to a colleague who has:
 - behaved in a way that has harmed a child/young person, or may have harmed a child/young person
 - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child/young person
 - behaved towards a child/young person in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children/young people
- Any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse or harm must be reported to the most senior member of staff on duty as soon as is practicable or in their absence the designated safeguarding officer.
- The designated safeguarding officer will inform the LADO within one working day of allegations that come to our attention or that are made directly to the police.

- If we remove an individual from work because the person poses a risk of harm to children/young people, we will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service within one month of the allegation being substantiated.
- If the child/young person is suffering from a serious injury, medical attention must be sought from accident and emergency services.
- Staff must respond in line with the organisation's allegations of abuse of neglect policy.

Disclosures

If a child says something that indicates that abuse has taken place:

- Listen and take seriously what a child says and never express disbelief.
- Ensure that there is no imminent danger
- Do not make any suggestions about what has taken place, or how it came about, or question the child except to clarify what they are saying.
- Allow the child time to express themselves', but do not press for detail beyond what is minimally necessary to be clear that some form of abuse has taken place.
- Do not ask a child to repeat what has been said to anyone else before referring.
- Be calm and reassuring and do not make assumptions.
- Avoid making judgements about what is being said though reassure the child that they are not responsible for what may have happened.
- Do not promise to keep information secret. Make it clear that you will have to refer the matter on and to whom.
- Tell the child that there are people who can help.
- Do not contact parents/cares directly, take advice from the child's social worker.
- Write down what has been said, using the child's exact words and what you said in response. Be factual and state opinion, sign, date report. Send to the Registered manager

8. Confidentiality

- We recognise that matters relating to safeguarding and child protection are confidential, and the designated safeguarding officer will share information on a 'need to know, what and when' basis.
- Concerns should never be discussed elsewhere, inside or outside the service unless in confidential statutory meetings organised for that purpose.
- People who use services may sometimes make disclosures of abuse 'in confidence' to a trusted staff member. Staff cannot, however, agree to be bound by such a request. Their duty to report an allegation of abuse overrides their duty to keep confidence (secret). The person's concerns and fears should be passed on to the manager. This process also applies if a family member makes the disclosure. In these situations, staff will need to be sensitive and careful in ensuring that this policy is carefully explained.

9. Information sharing

- Information will be shared in line with the key principles outlined in [Working Together to safeguard children 2023](#). This legislation makes clear the obligation and actions to be taken if a child/young person is being abused or abuse is suspected.
- General principles outlined in [Information Sharing: Guidance for practitioners and managers](#) are also taken into account for information sharing. Flowchart of key questions for information sharing, as shown on Page 13 of the Guidance will be followed.
- In cases involving possible child abuse, the service must share information. The designated safeguarding officer will ensure this happens in line with the requirements set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 and the local authority procedures.

10. Complaints

Concerns raised beyond the scope of this policy which would generally be regarded as a complaint by either child/young person or a third party should be addressed using the formal complaints procedure. A copy of this is made available to children/young people at the time of placement, and any other party can obtain a copy via the registered manager.

11. Recruitment

- The service complies with safer recruitment, vetting and DBS checking procedures.

- The service ensures DBS checks on staff and appropriate volunteers are carried out as required, and a central file is maintained.
- The service has arrangements for secure storage, handling, use, retention, and disposal of DBS disclosures and disclosure information.

12. Recording and monitoring

- Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Staff are made clear about the need to record and report concerns about a child/young person or children/young people within the service. The designated safeguarding officer is responsible for such records and for deciding at what point these records should be shared with or transferred to other agencies.
- Safeguarding/child protection files are stored in a secure location. Only authorised staff have access to these files.
- The information in these files may be accessed and used as evidence by other agencies. Only factual information is recorded as such. If unsubstantiated information is recorded, it is indicated as such.
- The designated safeguarding officer decides what information needs to be shared with whom and when on a case-by-case basis. Confidentiality is essential, but staff working with children/young people can only provide effective support and monitor concerns if they are made aware of concerns.
- Safeguarding/child protection records are reviewed to check whether any action, advice or updating is needed.

13. Location risk assessment

To safeguard children/young people, we ensure the location risk assessment is comprehensive and identifies known or potential risks, alongside risk-reduction strategies. We also review the location risk assessment at least once a year or sooner when there is a safeguarding incident in the locality, which necessitates the locality risk assessment to be updated. In reviewing the location risk assessment, we include a good level of details and evidence of consultation with key safeguarding partners to gain an accurate picture of the local risks.

14. Additional policies

Please ensure additional safeguarding policies are viewed alongside this policy, including:

- Allegations Policy
- Child Protection- Abuse policy



- Child Protection – Radicalisation Policy
- Child Protection -Bullying Policy
- Child Protection – Cyber Bullying and Internet Grooming Policy
- Child protection- Money Shopping Policy
- Child Protection- Safe Positive Touch Policy
- Child Protection- Self-harm Policy
- Child Protection- Unauthorised Absence (Missing) Policy
- Child Protection- Whistleblowing policy
- Closed Cultures Guidance
- Mobile Phones Policy and guidance
- Protection of Children Policy
- What's App Policy