

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Guidance Handbook for Workers, Volunteers,
Management Committee Members and Trustees in
Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations
Working with Children and Young People

This handbook has been prepared by
Young Solutions Worcestershire

in partnership with



Worcestershire Safeguarding
Children Partnership



Worcestershire Safeguarding
Adults Board

This document is available for download from

www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding

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Disclaimer

This handbook has been produced primarily to provide guidance for groups/organisations in Worcestershire. The information is believed to be accurate and up to date at the point of publication.

If your group/organisation is based outside Worcestershire you should refer to the local Safeguarding Children Partnership and Children's Social Care in your area for their processes.

Young Solutions Worcestershire cannot be held responsible for how the material contained in this Guidance Handbook is used.

Edition 5.1 – April 2025

This revision of the 2023 Handbook incorporates the minor changes introduced in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.

In addition see page 8 for the National Code of Practice for keeping children safe in out of school settings.

The link to the West Midlands Regional Safeguarding Procedures (see page 16) has changed and they can now be accessed at

westmids-worcestershire.trixonline.co.uk/

The other hyperlinks were checked and where necessary updated.

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FOREWORD

Since the previous edition of the Young Solutions Safeguarding Guidance Handbook in 2018 we have continued to see an increased focus on the safeguarding of children, young people and adults. This has been driven at a national level by numerous reports and reviews, often resulting from tragic events which receive widespread publicity within the media. From these we see an ever increasing number of documents and recommendations, and we do recognise that at times the breadth and volume of these can feel overwhelming. It is therefore vital that those organisations who work with the most vulnerable members of our communities provide very clear policies and guidance for their members which bring together the information they need in their day to day role, and we are delighted to see that once again Young Solutions has done this with the fifth edition of their Guidance Handbook.

The role that the voluntary and community sector have in keeping children, young people and adults safe cannot be over emphasised. It is organisations such as these that often have the most regular contact with those who may be at risk or are suffering harm, abuse or neglect. It is important therefore that those working within the voluntary and community sectors have a strong understanding of those risks and potential harms, and this latest edition also includes guidance on safeguarding adults, so recognising that the need to safeguard continues beyond a young person's 18th birthday. This is encouraging to see, as this transition to adulthood is a point in a young person's life where there can be particular vulnerabilities, and challenges for those working to keep them safe.

As the chairs of the Children's and Adults Safeguarding Boards for Worcestershire we want to record our thanks to all those involved in the production of this guidance. It really is accessible and clear and reflects significant hard work from those involved. We are delighted therefore to have the opportunity to introduce the fifth edition of the Young Solutions Safeguarding Guidance Handbook and hope that it will prove helpful to you in your work.

Stephen Eccleston
Independent Chair
Worcestershire Safeguarding
Children Partnership

Professor Keith Brown
Independent Chair
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INTRODUCTION

This Guidance Handbook is designed to assist those working in the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) to fulfil their responsibility to safeguard children and young people.

This revised 2024 version brings the fifth edition published in 2023 up to date with changes during the last year. Since 2008 the handbook has been an invaluable resource to the VCS.

The Children Act 1989 is still the basis of the statutory safeguarding system. Since then a wide range of legislation and statutory guidance has been produced which impacts on those of us in the VCS who work with children and young people.

Safeguarding and child protection are rooted in the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**. This spells out the basic human rights of children and young people everywhere, without discrimination.

- The right to survival
- The right to develop to the fullest
- The right to protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation
- The right to participate fully in family, cultural and social life

Every child and young person, therefore, should be able to grow up free from the fear of abuse or neglect.

The abuse and death of children and young people continues to shame our society.

Key factors regularly identified in Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews are the need for greater cooperation between workers in both Voluntary and Community Groups and statutory agencies and for everyone to be more willing to act when concerns are raised.

In 2023 the Government produced an updated **Working Together to Safeguard Children**. Building on previous documents it once again seeks to promote a child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding by confirming that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. It is in line with the national focus and local protocols that this updated Guidance Handbook has been produced.

Working Together reports what children have said they need.

- **Vigilance:** to have adults notice when things are troubling them
- **Understanding and action:** to understand what is happening; to be heard and understood; and to have that understanding acted upon
- **Stability:** to be able to develop an on-going stable relationship of trust with those helping them
- **Respect:** to be treated with the expectation that they are competent rather than not
- **Information and engagement:** to be informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns and plans

- **Explanation:** to be informed of the outcome of assessments and decisions and reasons when their views have not met with a positive response
- **Support:** to be provided with support in their own right as well as a member of their family
- **Advocacy:** to be provided with advocacy to assist them in putting forward their views

We hope this updated Safeguarding Guidance Handbook will assist those of us who work in the VCS to play our part in safeguarding all children and young people and supporting those who are in particular need.

Sometimes it is difficult to know what to do. If you have a query or need to talk over something contact Young Solutions. If we cannot help we will signpost you to an appropriate specialist organisation or agency.

Using this Guidance Handbook

The purpose of this Guidance Handbook is to assist groups/organisations who are working with children and young people to operate as safely as possible. To this end groups and organisations need appropriate policies and procedures, to understand the reasons for them and to inform children, young people and their parents/carers about them.

The terms 'groups' and 'organisations' refer to any group, organisation, charity, community interest company, etc. who work with or provide services for children and/or young people.

This document primarily covers children and young people aged from 6 to 18 years. We recognise that some groups also work with those over the age of 18 who may have additional needs or may be vulnerable. We hope it will inform or refresh your understanding of the broad range of topics which encompass safeguarding children and young people.

In this document you will find

- background information about each topic
- where to find sample documents, policies and procedures
- links for further information

The Sample Documents should be adapted to suit your situation and structure. Contact Young Solutions if you want further advice.

The Sample Documents Supplement is downloadable as a PDF and in Microsoft Word format (which you can edit) from

www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding

SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYONE'S BUSINESS

In this section the responsibility of volunteers, paid workers, managers and trustees in safeguarding children and young people is identified.

The role of the Voluntary and Community Sector is clarified as is the importance of working with statutory agencies and the vehicles for doing this.

Everyone involved in the care of children and young people has a role to play in safeguarding their welfare.

Children and young people should be involved in decision making within the group/organisation.

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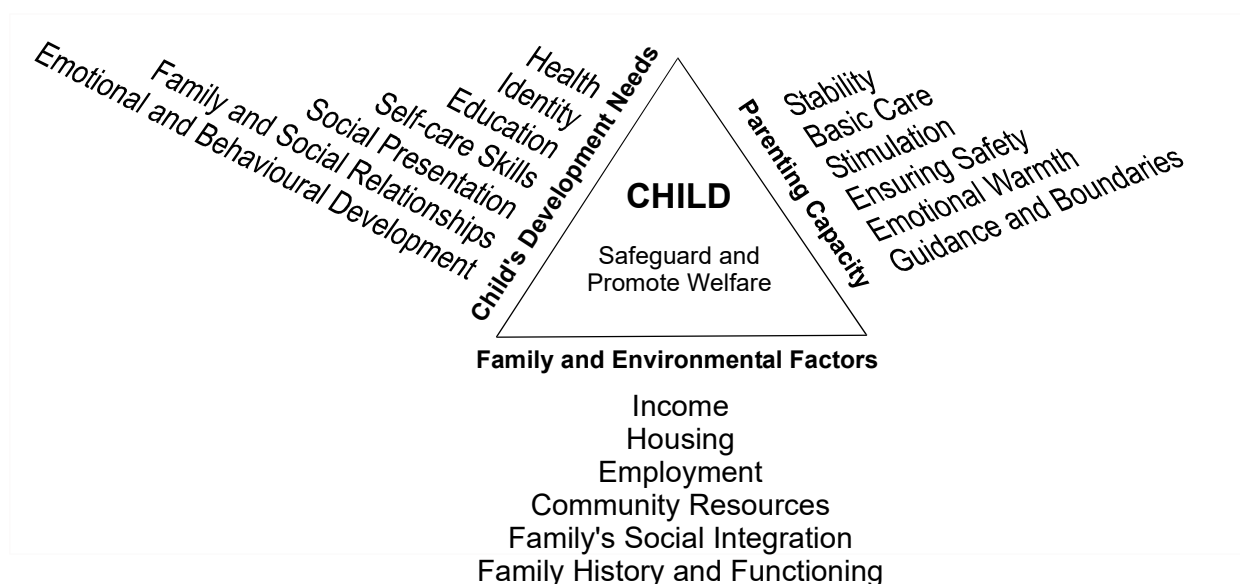
The World of the Child or Young Person

Those who work with children and young people are in unique positions to perceive how individual children and young people are dealing with life within their own environment. You are often in a position to notice changes in how the child or young person is developing and is responding to peers and adults.

Children and young people from all cultures are subject to neglect and abuse. It is important that workers are sensitive to differing family patterns and lifestyles and to child-rearing patterns that vary across different racial, ethnic and cultural groups. At the same time abuse cannot be condoned for religious or cultural reasons.

Children and young people may need to be protected even when it appears that they are not aware that the neglect they experience or the physical abuse or sexual activity that they are involved in, or witness, is harmful to them.

When you are concerned about a child or young person you may find it helpful to look at the **Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families**. This is government guidance to help agencies, including the VCS, to work together.



Assessment Framework Triangle

Importance of Family

The impact of adult family members' complex needs on the children and young people in the family should be considered and information shared with other agencies if appropriate.

Responsibilities for Safeguarding

Everyone involved in working with or supporting children and young people has responsibilities and duties to try to ensure that each individual is growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

As a **person (a volunteer or a paid worker) working with children and young people**, you are in a unique position to observe any changes in a child or young person's behaviour or appearance. You are also able to develop a relationship with a child or young person so they may identify you as a person to whom s/he may turn to for support. You must prepare yourself and be ready to share your concerns with the Safeguarding Lead, your manager or act in an emergency.

As a **leader/manager with responsibility for workers, paid and/or voluntary**, you have a responsibility to create a safe environment for all. This means creating an environment where

- staff are vigilant to concerns about the welfare and protection of children and young people and are confident and know what action to take
- there is no negligence or unnecessary exposure to avoidable risks
- the risks that you do need to take are assessed, carefully managed, and communicated to children, young people and their parents/carers
- children, young people or parents/carers can raise concerns
- there are safe recruitment and selection practices

As a **member of a management committee/board of trustees or directors** you have a responsibility to ensure

- policies and procedures are in place which create an environment and culture which safeguards children and young people
- these policies and procedures are adhered to
- a Safeguarding Lead is appointed
- a Safeguarding Champion is appointed from within your management committee
- workers and volunteers are informed about safeguarding issues and deal with them appropriately
- a culture of listening to and enjoying dialogue with children and young people exists
- there is a culture of reflection and evaluation involving children, young people, parents/carers as well as workers and volunteers
- you keep up-to-date with issues and information on child protection

Many people working with children or young people never experience child abuse or disclosures about child abuse at first hand. Nevertheless, everyone has a duty to be alert to signs of abuse.

Should abuse be suspected, disclosed or discovered, regardless of the setting in which the abuse has taken place, you have a moral and legal responsibility to act on your concerns.

Safeguarding is Everyone's Business

The **Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS)** plays an important role in delivering services and support to children, young people, their parents and carers. Every VCS group/organisation has a responsibility in contributing to the safeguarding of children and young people. This is often best achieved by working in partnership with other voluntary groups and statutory agencies. The sector also carries out a key role in providing information and resources to the wider public about the needs of children and young people.

Faith Organisations, churches and other places of worship provide a wide range of activities for children and young people and the wider community. They also have an important role in safeguarding and supporting all who are vulnerable. Each group/organisation needs to have appropriate policies and arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children and young people.

The **Business Sector** also plays an important role in providing services for children and young people whether as their core business or as an additional service or activity. Companies, such as sports clubs, pubs with play areas, etc., have to ensure that they are safeguarding all those with whom they work or provide services.

In 2023 the government published a code of practice for keeping children safe in out of school settings. **After-school clubs, community activities, and tuition - Safeguarding guidance for providers 2023** sets out the non statutory guidance for organisations providing community activities for children.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-out-of-school-settings-code-of-practice

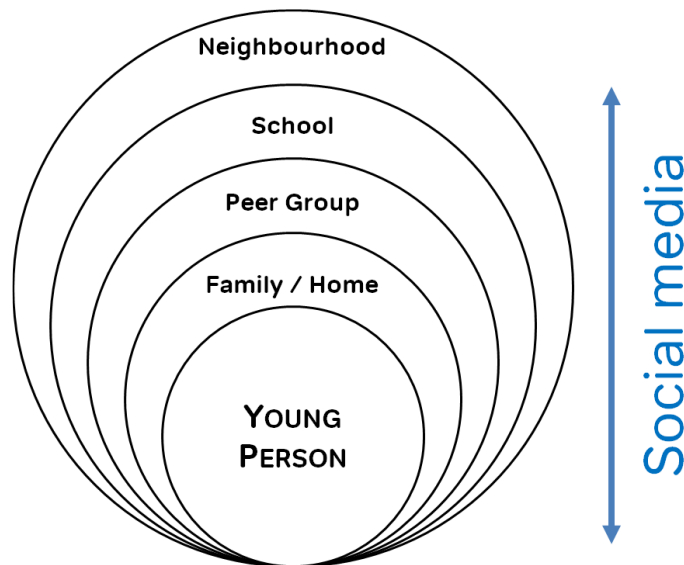
Shared Responsibility

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, in particular protecting them from significant harm, depends on effective joint working between agencies and groups.

The VCS and the statutory sector have different roles, operate in a variety of settings and together offer a wide range of expertise. Joint working is especially valuable for some of the most vulnerable children and young people and those at the greatest risk of suffering harm and social exclusion.

Contextual Safeguarding

Contextual Safeguarding considers children and young people and identifies the influences on their lives including those 'hidden' through social media and the internet.



Young Person

- Persistently going missing from school or home
- Unexplained acquisition of money, clothes, or mobile phones
- Health concerns
- Change in behaviour
- Radical thoughts
- Change in physical and/or emotional presentation that are not age appropriate / out of character

Family / Home

- Regularly leaving their home without explanation
- Recent negative change in quality of relationships at home
- Poor or negative communication with young person not responding to boundaries, routines or consequences
- Culture
- Expectations of family
- Neglect
- Domestic Abuse
- Parental Capacity
- Parents offending / prison

Peer Group

- Relationships with controlling individuals or groups.
- Peers who are using illegal substances
- Peers who are known by criminal justice agencies
- Spending more time with peers in the community / whereabouts unknown
- Peer group violence / sexual offending

School

- Significant decline in educational attainment and attendance
- Bullying
- NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training)
- Special Educational Needs
- Exclusions / Alternative Educational Provision
- Peer recruitment

Neighbourhood

- Public Transport – use of
- Anti-social Behaviour, Criminal Behaviour
- Gangs / Risky Adults / Locations
- Parks, shopping centres, areas of concern

Involving Children and Young People in Safeguarding

A Culture of Safeguarding

Safeguarding children and young people, promoting their wellbeing and ensuring their development is the key responsibility of everyone involved in a group/organisation working with these age groups. Safeguarding therefore needs to be at the heart of a group/organisation's purpose and culture.

Culture can be said to be "the way we do things here". It is the system of values, beliefs, and assumptions which govern how people behave in the group/organisation. These shared values are recognised by those inside and outside the group/organisation both directly and indirectly. The values are shared directly through the information shared with children, young people, parents/carers and potential workers and volunteers. They are shared indirectly by the way people act and how they relate to children, young people and their parents/carers.

The culture of your group/organisation should be focussed on the care and welfare of children and young people. It should include

- a positive programme of activities that encourage children and young people to make good choices about healthy, safe lifestyles and how to ask for help if they do not feel safe
- a safe environment where children and young people do not have to endure bullying, racism or sexual harassment
- a setting where talking is seen as a positive and children and young people know they will be listened to and heard
- inclusive practices so that all children and young people feel included and will be encouraged to fulfil their potential
- a commitment to an open and honest relationship and involvement of parents/carers
- safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures which are understood and used by all volunteers and workers and these documents are easily accessible.
- well trained workers and volunteers who have appropriate and updated levels of training and are clear and confident about what is expected of them in order to safeguard children and young people
- clarity about how volunteers and workers are expected to engage with children, young people and adults
- trustees (or members of the management committee) who are committed to the safeguarding culture and are supportive when interventions are necessary
- robust safe recruitment, selection and management practices that help to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children or young people or are otherwise unsuited to be involved with them.

Involving children and young people in safeguarding is at the heart of high quality work. The policies and procedures developed by your group/organisation to safeguard children and young people will be more effective if the members are involved in creating and making decisions about them.

Policies and procedures are not cast in stone and will continue to be useful and effective if, within the culture of your group/organisation, the ideas and priorities of the children and young people can be recognised. By working with the children and young people positive change can happen and the unique ethos and character of your group/organisation will be strengthened.

Some of these discussions will be group/organisation wide, talking about confidentiality and agreeing the confidentiality statement, for example. Other involvement, such as taking part in interviewing new workers or volunteers, will involve smaller numbers who will need to be prepared or trained before they take part.

Participation and **empowerment** are key elements in good youth work. If you need advice, support or suggestions about how to involve children and young people contact Young Solutions.

Your group/organisation may want to develop a policy or a statement about involving children and young people in decision-making.

The Sample Policies and Documents Supplement to this Guidance Handbook contains an editable version which you may want to use as an example. It can be downloaded from

www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding

Safeguarding Children in Worcestershire

Working Together 2023 sets out the requirements for local safeguarding arrangements previously provided by Safeguarding Children Boards. The responsibility for the **Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP)** arrangements rests with the three named Safeguarding Partners - Worcestershire County Council, West Mercia Police and NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Board. The Partnership is committed to safeguarding children. The three named Safeguarding Partners work together as an Executive Group with the wider partners (including the voluntary sector) where the longstanding ethos of scrutiny, challenge and continuous improvement drives improvements to the safeguarding arrangements for children and young people.

www.safeguardingworcestershire.org.uk/

WSCP recognises that multi-agency training (with participants from different organisations) can make a significant contribution to building mutually respectful and trusting relationships, which forms the foundation of effective partnership working.

Current training opportunities and events can be found at

www.safeguardingworcestershire.org.uk/learning-development/training-c/wscb-events/

The Family Front Door is Worcestershire County Council's first point of contact for Children's Social Care Services. Its purpose is to ensure that the most vulnerable children and young people get the help and support they need as speedily as possible.

Phone calls can be made as detailed below

The Family Front Door can be contacted

- by phone for all Child Protection referrals, levels of need debates and advice calls – 01905 822666 Monday – Friday 8.30am - 5.00pm (Friday 4.30pm)
- for emergencies outside these times contact 01905 768020

For other less urgent concerns, advice should be sought from the Early Help Support Teams which are district based. Contact details for each area are found here

www.worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/childrens-social-care/early-help-family-support

Information on how to contact the Family Front door and other County Council departments is available at

www.worcestershire.gov.uk/contact?children-social-care/family-front-door

Signs of Safety

The **Signs of Safety** approach, seeks to strengthen assessments and maximise family participation. Where possible the family actively contribute to solutions to keeping their child safe. Using the Signs of Safety approach professionals supporting families work together to

- Look at what's going well in the child's life - the strengths
- Understand who is worried and why - the worries and concerns
- Identify what needs to be done to build on the strengths, reduce the concerns and keep the child safe - the outcomes

Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPR) (formerly **Serious Case Reviews (SCR)**) are undertaken by the Safeguarding Children Partnership when abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected and the child has died or been seriously harmed.

The purpose of the CSPR is to establish what lessons can be learned about the way local workers, managers, groups/organisations or agencies work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

Each group/organisation involved with the child or young person, including those in the VCS, will be able to contribute to the review.

Lessons learned from a CSPR will be published. Key findings from local CSPRs and SCRs can be found on the WSCP website.

Referrals can also be made via this link

www.safeguardingworcestershireshire.org.uk/home/wscp/serious-case-reviews/

GET SAFE

GET SAFE is the Worcestershire multi agency response to the criminal exploitation of children and young people aged 10 - 25 years of age.

GET SAFE stands for

Gangs
Child Sexual **E**xploitation
Trafficking
Modern Day **S**lavery
Absent or Missing
Forced Marriage
Criminal **E**xploitation

The approach to GET SAFE includes County Lines, Honour-based Violence, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Radicalisation. Contextual safeguarding and signs of safety approaches are used to understand the young person's world and the risks and vulnerabilities alongside the protective factors and strengths.

Safeguarding Adults in Worcestershire

Many VCS groups work with adults over 18 years of age. Some of these will be adults with care and support needs. Such an adult is anyone over the age of 18, who

- requires care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect and
- is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect

Care leavers up to the age of 25 may be supported by the Care Leavers Team. See page 46.

Abuse may only happen once or may happen many times over a period of time.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 applies if a young person over 16 or an adult does not have the mental capacity to make a decision that needs to be made, for example, about healthcare or residential care. A health professional should carry out a Mental Capacity Assessment before any important decision can be made. In an emergency, however, a decision might be taken before the assessment is done. Any decisions made must follow the Best Interests Checklist in the Act.

Adults with additional needs have the right to live their lives free from violence and abuse. It is essential, therefore, that workers and volunteers play their part in protecting and supporting them so that they feel safe and are free to make their own choices.

The abuse and exploitation of vulnerable adults is a very real problem in our society. The increasing number of serious incidents of abuse emphasises the need for action to ensure that adults who are at risk receive protection and support. This is also a multi-agency responsibility and the VCS have an important role to play.

Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board is in place to promote wellbeing and reduce the risk of harm for people with care and support needs.

Policies, Procedures and Guidance for the protection of adults with care and support are available on the WSAB website.

www.safeguardingworcestershire.org.uk/wsab/

If you have concerns that you, or someone that you know, is being abused or neglected you should do the following

- If you believe a crime has been committed call the police on 999.
- If you need to make a referral call the Adult Safeguarding team on 01905 768053.
- If you would like safeguarding advice phone the Adult Safeguarding Team on 01905 843189. (Note this number does not accept referrals.)

CARM framework

Complex Adults Risk Management (CARM) framework seeks to provide front line practitioners with a framework to facilitate effective working with adults who are at risk of significant harm due to their complex needs, and where the risks cannot effectively be managed via other processes or interventions.

The CARM framework should be used when the adult's engagement with support is intermittent or where it has proved difficult to engage with the adult, and the risk is significant, and an individual agency procedures have not been able to resolve the problem(s).

For more information and details of how to make a referral please follow this link

www.safeguardingworcestershire.org.uk/wsab/policies-procedures-a/

Safeguarding Adults Review

A **Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR)** (like a CSPR) is a multi-agency review process which seeks to determine what relevant agencies and individuals involved could have done differently that could have prevented harm or a death from taking place. The purpose of a SAR is not to apportion blame. It is to promote effective learning and improvement to prevent future deaths or serious harm occurring again. An Executive Summary and Learning briefing from the SAR is published on the WSAB website.

West Midlands Regional Safeguarding Procedures

Within the West Midlands, there are 13 local areas that collaborate with regards to child safeguarding procedures. With the introduction of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, each local area's multi-agency safeguarding arrangements are led by the statutory safeguarding partners/organisations - local authorities, integrated care boards and the police.

As many partner organisations (including Police, Probation, Health and many others) span an area that crosses local authority boundaries the West Midlands Safeguarding Children Partnerships developed a regional approach to multi-agency working around safeguarding.

This useful resource is very comprehensive and is easy to navigate. It can be accessed at

westmids-worcestershire.trixonline.co.uk/

Safeguarding in West Mercia

Many statutory and other organisations in Worcestershire, including the police and NHS, work in neighbouring local authority areas. If you are supporting children or young people living outside Worcestershire then the links below will direct you to the appropriate local arrangements.

Herefordshire

In Herefordshire the Safeguarding Adults Board, Safeguarding Children Partnership, and Community Safety Partnership website provides all the local links about safeguarding adults, protecting children and community safety.

www.herefordshiresafeguardingboards.org.uk/

Shropshire

The Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership brings together child and adult safeguarding and community safety.

www.shropshiresafeguardingcommunitypartnership.co.uk

Telford & Wrekin

The Telford and Wrekin Safeguarding Partnership is responsible for making sure that children, young people and adults are kept safe.

www.telfordsafeguardingpartnership.org.uk/

ABUSE AND NEGLECT

This section outlines the definition of child abuse and neglect, the different types of abuse and the symptoms of abuse and neglect.

The particular groups of children and young people who are particularly vulnerable are highlighted.

The importance of early intervention is identified along with the recognised process so the child or young person and their parent/carer can receive early help.

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What are Abuse and Neglect?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child or young person. Many of these areas apply to adults with additional needs as well and should be read as such. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to prevent harm.

Children and young people may be abused

- in a family
- in an institutional, group or community setting
- within their community
- by those known to them
- by a stranger
- by an adult, or adults
- by another child, or young person
- by a group of children or young people

Types of Abuse

There are many different types of abuse.

Physical Abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately, induces illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse involves the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children.

These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying) causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may also occur alone.

Sexual Abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

It may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. It may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse.

Sexting is taking sexually explicit photographs, underwear shots, pictures or videos of oneself or other people naked and texting (sharing) them via a mobile phone, the internet or through online social networking sites. The originator quickly loses control over the images. It can also include rude messages or videos. Most social network sites have strict policies in place that prohibit nude photographs. They do not, however, proactively monitor all content that is posted; they are clear in saying that they are 'reactive'. An inappropriate image should be reported to the site as soon as possible so that it can be removed. See page 27 for more details.

Even if the sexual activity appears consensual it can still be abuse.

Grooming is the preparation and psychological manipulation of a child or young person with the intent of sexual exploitation. Within groups/organisations we also need to be aware of grooming.

Grooming can be the cause of longer term psychological harm due to the techniques used as it also creates a harmful model of child-adult relationships.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child or young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger and failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

Online Abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the internet. It may be through social networks, playing online games or using mobile phones. It may involve cyberbullying, harassment, grooming, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or emotional abuse. It may include the viewing or sharing inappropriate images.

Young people and children can be at risk of online abuse from people they know, as well as from strangers. Online abuse may be part of abuse that is taking place in the real world (for example bullying or grooming). It may be, however, that the abuse only happens online (for example persuading children to take part in sexual activity online).

Children and young people can feel like there is no escape from online abuse – abusers can contact them at any time of the day or night, the abuse can come into safe places like their bedrooms, and images and videos can be stored and shared with other people.

Online Gaming is enjoyed by many children and young people. Some games are sports related, others are mission based games and others are quests in which gamers complete challenges. Interactive games cover a wide range of interests and can enable gamers to link up and play together.

Games can be played online using consoles and/or mobile apps. A large number of games can be accessed via websites or software programs. While many of these are free of charge, additional content can often be purchased.

In augmented reality games a live view of the real-world environment is altered to include moveable graphics, allowing players to experience digital game play in the real world. It is usually achieved by using a camera on a mobile device.

Virtual reality is an immersive wearable technology which creates environments and allows one to explore them as if one is actually there.

The usual internet safety rules apply also to online gaming. According to Childnet there are risks of

- content – inappropriate material may be available
- contact – potential contact from someone online who may wish to bully or abuse them
- conduct – children and young people may be at risk because of their own and other people's online behaviour, such as the personal information they make public
- commercialism – children and young people's privacy can be invaded by aggressive advertising and marketing schemes

Online abuse involving adults is rarely restricted to a single victim and perpetrator because the internet is able to connect abusers with both multiple victims and abusers. Online abuse should always be reported. See page 27 for more details.

Domestic Abuse is 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. This can encompass, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse. It includes so called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage. The Serious Crime Act 2015 also introduced the offence of controlling and coercive behaviour in an intimate or family relationship.

In a setting where domestic abuse is occurring any children within the household are also experiencing abuse. They are likely to be aware of the abuse even if they themselves are not being subject to the abusive behaviour and so are almost certainly suffering emotional abuse.

Stress for children and families can be caused through social exclusion, domestic abuse, poverty, the mental illness of a parent or carer, or drug or alcohol misuse. All these areas may have a negative impact on a child or young person's health, including mental health, and changes or lack of development may be noticed by workers.

Spiritual Abuse occurs when someone uses their power within a framework of spiritual belief or practice to satisfy their own needs at the expense of others. It also includes attacking another's belief system.

A child or young person will experience spiritual abuse as a deeply emotional personal attack. This abuse may include manipulation and exploitation; enforced accountability; censorship of decision making; requirements for secrecy and silence; pressure to conform; misuse of power to control behaviour; requirement of obedience to the abuser; the suggestion that the abuser has a 'divine' position; isolation from others, especially those external to the abusive context.

It also includes creating an environment in which children and young people are discouraged from asking questions or holding alternative views as well as the belief in the demon possession of children resulting in the labelling of a child as 'evil' or 'witch'.

The most typical incidents involve those in leadership who have achieved a 'cult-like' or 'guru' status due to their charismatic personality and strong leadership style.

Modern Slavery encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

Child trafficking is the practice of transporting children and young people into, within and out of the UK or any other country for the purposes of exploitation. The exploitation can be varied and may include domestic servitude, labour exploitation, criminal activity (e.g. cannabis cultivation, petty street crime, illegal street trade, etc.), sexual exploitation (brothels, closed community for sharing child abuse images), benefit fraud, forced begging, illegal adoption and sham marriage.

Financial or Material Abuse includes theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to a child or young person's financial affairs or arrangements, including the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits, or in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions.

Discriminatory Abuse exists when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity to some groups or individuals. It can be a feature of any form of abuse of a child or young person and can be motivated because of age, gender, sexuality, disability, religion, class, culture, language, race or ethnic origin.

It can result from situations that exploit a person's vulnerability by treating the child or young person in a way that excludes them from opportunities they should have, for example, education, health, justice and access to services and protection.

Abuse and Neglect

Hate Crime is any behaviour that someone feels was caused by hostility, prejudice or hatred of

- disability (including physical impairments, mental health problems, learning disabilities, hearing and visual impairment)
- gender identity (includes people who are transgender, transsexual or transvestite)
- race, skin colour, nationality, ethnicity or heritage
- religion, faith or belief (including people without a religious belief)
- sexual orientation (people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or questioning their orientation)

Historic Abuse Allegations or expressions of concern about abusive behaviour towards children or young people in the past is still abuse and should be reported in the same way as any other form of abuse.

This is important as there may be other children living with, or in contact with, the alleged perpetrator of abuse and their welfare will need to be assessed.

Also, reports of past abuse can be investigated by the police and justice achieved for survivors of abuse.

Recognising Abuse and Neglect

Recognising abuse is not easy, and it is not your responsibility to decide whether or not abuse has taken place. You do, however, have a responsibility to act if you have a concern or if you believe or are told that a child or young person is at risk of neglect or any form of abuse.

For all sorts of reasons (see page 31) many children and young people do not tell someone that they are being abused. As workers, therefore, we have a responsibility to look out for signs of possible abuse or neglect.

The following information will help you to be alert to the signs of possible abuse. If you believe there is a possibility of abuse or neglect you have a responsibility to report it.

Recognising Physical Abuse

Most children will collect cuts and bruises in their daily life. These are likely to be in places where there are bony parts of their body, like elbows, knees and shins.

Some children and young people, however, will have bruising which can almost only have been caused non-accidentally. An important indicator of physical abuse is where bruises or injuries are unexplained or the explanation does not fit the injury, or when it appears on parts of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely e.g. on the cheeks or thighs. A delay in seeking medical treatment when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern.

Bruising may be more or less noticeable on children with different skin tones or from different racial groups and specialist advice may need to be taken.

Physical signs of abuse may include

- unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body
- bruises which reflect hand marks or fingertips (from slapping or pinching)
- cigarette burns
- bite marks
- broken bones
- scalds

Changes in behaviour which can indicate physical abuse

- fear of parents/carers being approached for an explanation
- aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- flinching when approached or touched
- reluctance to get changed, for example wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- depression
- withdrawn behaviour
- running away from home

Any concerns should be shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation. This may lead to a referral to the Family Front Door or District Early Help Team depending on the urgency of the concern.

Recognising Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse can be difficult to identify, and often children and young people who appear well cared for may be emotionally abused, for example by being taunted, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents/carers.

Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix or play with other children.

The physical signs of emotional abuse may include

- a failure to thrive or grow
- sudden speech disorders
- developmental delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate emotional abuse include

- neurotic behaviour e.g. hair twisting, rocking
- being unable to play
- fear of making mistakes
- self harm
- fear of parents/carers being approached regarding their behaviour

Any concerns should be shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation. This may lead to a referral to the Family Front Door or District Early Help Team depending on the urgency of the concern.

Recognising Sexual Abuse

Adults who use children and young people to meet their own sexual needs abuse both girls and boys of all ages, including infants and toddlers.

Usually, in cases of sexual abuse, it is the child or young person's behaviour which may cause you to become concerned, although physical signs can also be present. In all cases, children and young people who talk about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important, therefore, that they are listened to and taken seriously.

The physical signs of sexual abuse may include

- pain or itching in the genital/anal areas
- bruising or bleeding near genital/anal areas
- sexually transmitted disease
- vaginal discharge or infection
- stomach pains
- discomfort when walking or sitting down
- pregnancy

Changes in behaviour which can indicate sexual abuse may include

- sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- having nightmares
- running away from home

- sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or developmental level
- sexual drawings or language
- bedwetting
- eating problems such as overeating or anorexia
- self harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
- saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about
- substance or drug abuse
- suddenly having unexplained sources of money
- not being allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
- acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults

The indicators for child sexual exploitation can sometimes be mistaken for 'normal adolescent behaviours' and it can be difficult to identify children and young people who are being exploited. It requires knowledge, skills, professional curiosity and an assessment which analyses the risk factors and personal circumstances of individual children to ensure that the signs and symptoms are interpreted correctly and appropriate support is given.

See "Children and Young People at Risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)" on page 39 for more details.

There is evidence that those who abuse children and young people gravitate towards groups and organisations that work with children and young people. It may be that grooming may be taking place within your group/organisation and you need to keep a look out. Is an individual singling out a particular child or young person and giving them preferential treatment, gifts or too much attention? Is s/he taking someone home or meeting them outside your setting without it being known? Sometimes it is necessary to think the unthinkable.

Any concerns should be shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation. This may lead to a referral to the Family Front Door or District Early Help Team depending on the urgency of the concern. If the concern involves a volunteer or worker within your group/organisation the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) should be informed. (See page 74)

Recognising Grooming

Within groups/organisations we also need to be aware of grooming. This is the preparation and psychological manipulation of a child or young person with the intent of sexual exploitation.

The first step of grooming is to gain the trust of a child or young person and the groomer will usually present his/her actions as beneficial for the child or young person. It can take place either in person or online. The goal of the interactions is to arrange a meeting with the child or young person, or to manipulate him/her online so as to obtain pornographic images.

Grooming can be the cause of longer term psychological harm due to the techniques used as it also creates a harmful model of child-adult relationships.

Recognising Neglect

Neglect can be a difficult form of abuse to recognise, yet it has some of the most lasting and damaging effects on children and young people.

The physical signs of neglect may include

- constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children/young people
- constantly dirty or 'smelly'
- loss of weight, or being consistently underweight
- being overweight or having an unhealthy diet
- inappropriate dress for the conditions

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect may include

- complaining of being tired all the time
- not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments
- having few friends
- mentioning their being left alone or unsupervised

The above list is not meant to be definitive but a guide to assist you. It is important to remember that many children and young people will exhibit some of these indicators at some time, and the presence of one or more should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring. There may well be other reasons for changes in behaviour, such as the birth of a new baby or a death in their family, relationship problems between parents/carers, etc.

Any concerns should be shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation. This may lead to a referral to the Family Front Door or District Early Help Team depending on the urgency of the concern.

Recognising Online Abuse

Children and young people may experience cyberbullying, grooming, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or emotional abuse.

The indicators given below are as examples only. They do not mean that abuse is occurring as there may be other non-abusive explanations but they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

A child or young person may be experiencing abuse online if they

- spend much more or much less time online, texting, gaming or using social media than is usual for them
- are withdrawn upset or outraged after using the internet or texting
- are secretive about who they are talking to and what they are doing online or on their mobile phone
- say they have lots of new friends, phone numbers, texts or email addresses on their mobile phone, laptop or tablet

The Association of Chief Police Officers website gives useful advice on cyberbullying and online harassment

www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk/cyberbullying.html

The CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) website of the National Crime Agency can be used to report online abuse.

www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/

Workers within your group/organisation may be able to assist young people in the suggested actions.

Cyberbullying should be reported to internet service providers. Although content on social media can be offensive or upsetting, it is not necessarily a criminal offence. Cyberbullying often violates the terms of use conditions established by social media sites and internet service providers. You should report cyberbullying, therefore, to the social media site so that they can take action against users abusing the terms of the service. The Help sections on social media can show how to block users and change settings to control who can make contact.

If a child or young person believes that s/he has been the victim of an offence, encourage them always to keep a record of the content by, for example, taking a screenshot.

Any concerns should be shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation. This may lead to a referral to the Family Front Door or District Early Help Team depending on the urgency of the concern.

Reports can also be made to CEOP.

www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/

Recognising Domestic Abuse

Disagreements occur in all families and relationships from time to time. We all do things we regret and cause unhappiness to those we care about. According to Women's Aid if this becomes a consistent pattern then it is an indication of domestic abuse.

Children and young people who witness domestic abuse may

- have difficulty in communicating distress
- display signs of anxiety, fear and worry
- self blame for parents' behaviour
- deny their own needs and feelings
- have confused and torn loyalties
- experience unplanned separations causing distress and disruption to friendship networks

Older young people may be in abusive relationships with other young people or adults. Some indications might be

- a person is experiencing violence in their relationship
- an individual is kept from seeing friends or family
- a person is constantly being belittled or humiliated or regularly criticised
- changes of appearance or behaviour, reportedly at the wish of their partner
- a partner wanting to know about their whereabouts at all times

Abuse and Neglect

Any concerns should be shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation. This may lead to a referral to the Family Front Door or District Early Help Team depending on the urgency of the concern.

Recognising Spiritual Abuse

Spiritual abuse is a misuse of leadership authority. The indicators given below are as examples only. They do not mean that abuse is occurring but they may alert you to the need to be aware of the possibility of abuse, to be observant and to record any concerns.

Spiritual abuse may be taking place if there is/are

- a fear of not attending a place of worship regularly or ignoring or disobeying the pronouncements of a spiritual leader
- healing ministries that cause a significant emotional response
- children and young people are speaking in a way that suggests they are submissive to the will of a named leader to the extent that their sense of personal identity is reduced and confidence levels decline
- reports of services taking place away from formal places of worship and at unusual hours
- comments made by parents/carers and others referring to an individual child as being 'evil' or 'spirit possessed'

Any concerns should be shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation. This may lead to a referral to the Family Front Door or District Early Help Team depending on the urgency of the concern.

Recognising Modern Slavery

Some of the children and young people with whom you work may have been trafficked and may be trapped in some form of forced labour. They may be working in agriculture, in nail bars, car cleaning, in brothels or in private homes. It is known that some young people who go missing from care can be trafficked and exploited.

Some possible indicators of modern slavery are the child or young person

- does not have access to their identity documents
- is isolated
- is living in a multiple dwelling in poor, cramped, overcrowded conditions
- has an unkempt appearance or is malnourished
- has restricted movement
- has few or no personal effects

Any concerns should be shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation. This may lead to a referral to the Family Front Door or District Early Help Team depending on the urgency of the concern.

Further information about modern slavery can be found on the Clewer Initiative website.

theclewerinitiative.org

Recognising Financial Abuse

Although financial or material abuse is usually associated with adults it may occur in the lives of young people particularly if they have a serious disability.

Some indications might include

- an individual saying they do not have any money or cannot get any money especially just after they have been paid wages or benefits
- a person says they have 'lost' possessions they previously had e.g. mobile phone, watch, etc.
- wearing worn out clothes or being hungry

Any concerns should be shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation. This may lead to a referral to the Family Front Door or District Early Help Team depending on the urgency of the concern.

Recognising Discriminatory Abuse

The use of inappropriate names, speaking using derogatory language or terminology within a group/organisation should always be challenged. Concern should be noted if a parent/carer appears to have a lack of understanding of a child or young person's needs.

Discriminatory abuse may be taking place if

- a lack of respect is being shown
- a child or young person has poor self esteem
- if an individual becomes withdrawn or is socially isolated
- a worker/volunteer may seem to avoid working with certain groups

Any concerns should be shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation. This may lead to a referral to the Family Front Door or District Early Help Team depending on the urgency of the concern.

What may give Cause for Concern?

Abuse and neglect are among the worst things that can happen to a child or young person. If you have any concerns at all you should talk them over with the Safeguarding Lead in your group/organisation.

There is no clear dividing line between one type of abuse and another. The following list should alert you to possible causes for concern

- bruising on parts of the body which do not usually get bruised accidentally, e.g. around the eyes, behind the ears, back of the legs, stomach, chest, cheek and mouth (especially in a young baby), etc
- burns or scald marks
- bite marks
- any injuries or swellings, which do not have a plausible explanation
- bruising or soreness to the genital area
- faltering growth, weight loss and slow development
- unusual lethargy
- any sudden uncharacteristic change in behaviour, e.g. child becomes either very aggressive or withdrawn

Abuse and Neglect

- a child or young person whose play and language indicates a sexual knowledge beyond his/her years
- a child or young person who flinches away from sudden movement
- a child or young person who gives over rehearsed answers to explain how his/her injuries were caused
- an accumulation of a number of minor injuries and/or concerns
- a child or young person who discloses something which may indicate s/he is being abused
- concern about a parent or carer's behaviour or presentation, e.g. evidence of possible alcohol or drug misuse, mental health difficulties, or domestic abuse
- concern about arrangements for the collection of the child or young person

A cluster of these signs should increase concern.

Workers must take special care to help safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people who may be living in particularly stressful circumstances. These include families

- living in poverty
- where there is domestic abuse
- where a parent has a mental illness
- where a parent is misusing drugs or alcohol
- where a parent has a learning difficulty
- that face racism and other forms of social isolation
- living in areas with a lot of crime, poor housing, high unemployment or gang culture

Workers need to be particularly aware of the 'toxic mix' - the co-occurrence of mental health problems, substance misuse and domestic abuse within a family.

When working with children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm workers should exercise 'professional curiosity' and so

- be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect
- be alert to the risks of harm
- prioritise direct communication and positive and respectful relationships with children and young people ensuring their wishes and feelings underpin any safeguarding activities or assessments
- share and help to analyse information so that an effective assessment can be made
- contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child or young person
- work cooperatively with parents/carers unless this is inconsistent with ensuring the safety of the child or young person

The Voice of the Child or Young Person

Why do children and young people keep quiet about abuse?

Children and young people find it very hard to talk about abuse and neglect. They may not understand the impact it is having on them. Young people or children may not appreciate that what is happening to them is abuse or not have the language to describe it. This may be particularly true in relation to grooming.

- Children and young people may be afraid of the consequences of speaking out about abuse. They may fear it could disrupt their family or make their abuser angry.
- Children and young people may think they will not be believed if they tell someone about the abuse.

As children and young people find it so difficult to speak out there is an even greater onus on those of us who work with them to speak out on their behalf to stop the abuse.

Even if a child or young person does not speak about abuse an adult should consider the child or young person's lived experience. What is it like to be that particular child or young person living in that specific family situation?

If there is a concern about a particular a child or young person a worker should consider all the information available

- what the child or young person is actually saying
- whether the information given is consistent
- how the child or young person behaves
- what other people say about the child, young person and/or their situation
- what you observe about the child or young person's relationships or environments

Adults Children and Young People can Trust

Children and young people chose the adults with whom they talk. Four main characteristics have been identified (Children's Rights Alliance for England and the NSPCC 2003) by young people

- **being there:** children and young people have the general feeling that an adult is there for them
- **providing herself/himself:** taking the time to listen, acting appropriately and keeping promises
- **having the right attitude:** not losing their temper or trying to take over
- **knowing what they are talking about:** sharing relevant experience and not acting as if they know more than they do

It is a privilege if a child or young person chooses to talk with you but with it come responsibilities.

Supporting Children and Young People who have been abused

It takes a lot of courage for a child or young person to disclose abuse or recognise they have been abused. It is important, therefore, that s/he is able to access appropriate support at the right time.

See "Responding to a Concern, Disclosure or Incident of Abuse" on page 69 for information on what to do if you receive a disclosure.

Your group/organisation may be able to provide some of the support needed but more specialist help may also be needed. A list of organisations which provide information, advice or support can be found on our website.

www.youngsolutions.org.uk/useful-links

Advocacy An advocate supports, enables and empowers a child or young person to be heard. S/he can assist the child or young person to be listened to by Social Care and/or the police. Children within the Care System may be particularly in need of such support.

Befriending A worker builds a relationship of trust with a young person with a specific purpose and agreed outcomes.

Counselling A trained counsellor encourages a young person to talk about their feelings and concerns in a confidential and dependable environment. There are a number of different types of counselling.

Specialist Support The Local Authority, the Health Services, the Youth Offending Service and a number of charities offer specialist support services for children and young people who have particular needs.

CAMHS (Children and Adolescents Mental Health Services) is the name for NHS-provided services for children, generally until school-leaving age, who are having difficulties with their emotional or behavioural well-being.

Choosing Support A child or young person has the right to expect support and the right to choose the support they want. Your group/organisation may be able to assist her/him in identifying and choosing this support.

Some children and young people prefer the support of an empathetic adult with whom they already have a professional relationship. If this is a worker or volunteer within your group/organisation s/he must have the approval of their manager and external professional support should be provided.

For some children and young people an independent professional would be their preferred option. There are a number of independent charities who offer specialised support or can signpost you to experienced and trained workers.

Safeguarding Children and Young People who are Particularly Vulnerable

Groups/organisations have a responsibility to be aware of the possibility that the children and young people who take part in their activities may have difficulties within their lives at home or outside the group and be at risk of harm. If a worker or volunteer becomes aware that a child or young person is at risk s/he has a responsibility to do something about it.

It is very important, therefore, that any concerns are shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation. This may lead to a referral to the Police, Family Front Door or District Early Help Team depending on the urgency of the concern.

The following groups can be seen as particularly vulnerable.

Adolescents

The risks of serious abuse and neglect faced by adolescents aged 11 years and over have been better recognised in recent years. Abuse of adolescents is often complicated by a range of issues such as alcohol or substance abuse, homelessness or conflict with parents/carers.

There can be the belief that adolescents are more resilient and so more able to remove themselves from abusive situations or more likely to disclose abuse than younger children. This may not be the case; so if making a referral for a young person you may have to be very clear about why you are making the referral and follow it up if necessary.

It is important that the safeguarding of adolescents is recognised and taken seriously. When a young person's lifestyle is chaotic or unpredictable a coordinated multi-agency approach is required. Any concerns must be shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation.

Children and Young People with a Disability

Children and young people with a disability may attend your group/organisation. Disability can take a number of forms including – physical disability, sensory impairment or learning disability. Research suggests that children and young people with a disability are more likely to be abused than non-disabled children and they may find it more difficult to recognise abuse. Disclosing abuse is difficult for any child; for a child with disabilities it may be especially difficult.

Their disability may mean that

- they have had limited life experiences resulting in difficulty in recognising inappropriate behaviour
- they are afraid of challenging people, concerned that they will anger an authority figure or get into trouble
- communication difficulties make it hard for them to report the abuse
- they may not be physically able to leave an abusive situation
- they may receive intimate physical care and, therefore, the abuse may seem 'normal'

- their self-esteem and self-image are poor
- they might not be aware to whom they can report abuse
- authority figures are unwilling to believe that anyone would abuse a disabled child or young person

Parents/carers are often closely involved in the groups and organisations which support children and young people with disabilities. In these circumstances there is a danger that workers may over-identify with the parents/carers and have a reluctance to accept that abuse or neglect is taking place. Behaviour may be seen as attributable to the stress and difficulties of caring for a child with a disability. There is also a danger that siblings of children and young people with a disability may be vulnerable.

Therefore any concerns must be shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation. This may lead to a referral to the Family Front Door or District Early Help Team depending on the urgency of the concern.

Young People with Mental Health Problems

Mental health is a state of wellbeing in which the individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to his or her own community. (World Health Organisation)

Everybody has mental health and it is recognised that there is a continuum. It goes from being completely mentally healthy and flourishing i.e. coping well to not coping. People can move along the continuum at different times. S/he can flourish or languish, depending on individual functioning, social well-being and mental health issues. Mental health, therefore, is not simply the absence of mental illness and it is possible to have mental health while living with mental illness.

Mental illness can include depression, eating disorders, ADHD, conduct disorders, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia, self-harm and suicide. A report from NHS Digital in 2022 found that 18% of children aged 7 to 16 years and 22% of young people aged 17 to 24 years had a probable mental disorder. In children aged 7 to 16 years, rates rose from 1 in 9 (12.1%) in 2017 to 1 in 6 (16.7%) in 2020.

People working in informal situations with children and young people can have an important role to play in helping them to build resilience, the capacity to bounce back from adversity. This can be done both through the culture of the group/organisation and through activities in the programme. Things that can help to build resilience include

- positive relationships with caring adults
- valuing individual young people, accepting who they are
- developing problem solving and other skills
- recognising what s/he is good at and what has been achieved
- developing self-regulation skills
- ability to make decisions about the group/organisation activities
- a sense of belonging

Abuse and Neglect

It is very important that concerns about a specific child or young person is shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation. This may lead to a referral to the Police, the Family Front Door or District Early Help Team depending on the urgency of the concern.

Children and Young People who Self-Harm

Self-harm is any behaviour where the intent is to deliberately cause self-injury. This could include

- cutting
- swallowing hazardous material or substances
- burning
- over/under-using medication, e.g. insulin
- hitting/punching
- skin picking/scratching/hair pulling
- taking an overdose of tablets
- alcohol/drug misuse
- over/under-eating

There are number of reasons why a girl or a boy or a young man or a young woman may self-harm. These could include a desire to escape an unbearable situation or emotional pain, to reduce tension and stress, to express hostility, to take control, or to punish self or others.

A child or young person who is self-harming will not usually have an intention to end their life, but it may sometimes be a precursor to suicide. Those who deliberately self-harm may kill themselves by accident.

Self-harm is secretive behaviour that can go on for a long time before being uncovered. Children and young people may struggle to express their feelings in another way and will need a supportive response to help them to explore their feelings and behaviour and change the self-harming behaviour.

If there is concern that a child or young person is self-harming it is important that you should provide a supportive response that demonstrates respect and understanding of the child or young person, and is non-judgemental.

If a concern is identified the Safeguarding Lead should be involved. It may be that a decision is made that a worker will talk to the young person and explore such things as

- How long has s/he felt like this?
- Is there a risk of harm from others?
- Is s/he worried about something?
- Are there any health and/or other problems such as relationship difficulties, abuse or sexual orientation issues?
- Has s/he been involved in any other risk-taking behaviour?
- What has s/he been doing that helps?
- What is s/he doing that stops the self-harming behaviour from getting worse?

- What could be done in school or at home to help them with this? Is there, for example, a family member or a friend to whom they could talk?
- How is s/he feeling generally at the moment?
- What needs to happen for her/him to feel better?

It is important that the worker does not panic or try and solve the issue quickly, or to dismiss what the child or young person is saying or feeling.

If there is continuing concern the Safeguarding Lead should make a referral to the Family Front Door or District Early Help Team depending on the urgency of the concern.

Children and Young People who are Sexually Active including those under-age but sexually active

Many young people will develop a healthy and developmentally appropriate interest in sexual relationships whilst they are still children and some will do this before they reach the age of consent.

The legal age for young people to consent to have sex is 16 years, whether they are straight, gay or bisexual. The aim of the law is to protect the rights and interests of young people and make it easier to prosecute people who pressurise or force others into having sex they don't want. A child under 13 years of age does not, under any circumstances, have the legal capacity to consent to any form of sexual activity.

Workers and volunteers may become aware that the young people with whom they are working are involved in sexual relationships. They should consider the nature of the relationship and consider whether there are power imbalances between the couple. These can occur through differences in size, age, ability and development. Levels of sexual knowledge may also be an issue. Consideration should also be given as to whether the use of sex for favours is occurring, e.g. exchanging sex for clothes, CDs, trainers, alcohol, drugs, cigarettes.

If a young person's sexual partner is in a 'position of trust' in relation to them, e.g. teacher, youth worker, carer etc. this may be an offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 irrespective of the age of the victim and must be reported. See page 74.

Young People aged between 13 and 15 years

If a worker is aware that a young person in this age group is engaging in sexual activity the worker should discuss this with their line manager and the Safeguarding Lead. It must be ensured that the young person has information about staying safe and being healthy. This can be done individually or in a group setting.

It is good practice for workers to follow the Fraser Guidelines (see Glossary on page 136) when discussing personal or sexual matters with a young person under 16. The Fraser Guidelines give guidance on providing advice and information to young people aged under 16 years of age.

Young People aged between 16 and 18 years

Although sexual activity in itself is no longer an offence over the age of 16, young people under the age of 18 are still offered protection under the Children Act 1989/2004. Consideration still needs to be given to issues of sexual exploitation and the abuse of power.

If there are concerns about the relative ages of those involved or there are any indications about coercion or competence then these should be shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation.

Peer on Peer Child Sexual Abuse

Developmental sexual activity includes actions that are not unusual for children as they move from infancy through to adulthood. They are developing an understanding of their physical, emotional and behavioural relationships with each other. Such sexual activity is essentially information gathering and experimentation characterised by mutuality and consent.

This is only abuse if the behaviour is characterised by a lack of true consent or the presence of a power imbalance and exploitation.

Sexual Behaviours Traffic Lights Tool

If a worker has concerns about an individual child or young person it is helpful to refer to the Brook Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool

www.brook.org.uk/our-work/category/sexual-behaviours-traffic-light-tool

This tool categorises the sexual behaviours of young people and is designed to help workers differentiate between healthy sexual development and harmful behaviours.

Young People who identify as being LGBTQ+

The acronym LGBTQ+ is formed from the terms Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning (or Queer) with the addition of + standing for love, acceptance and embracing of all. Other acronyms are added by some individuals to express their status.

As part of growing up young people will explore their identity and develop a sense of who they are. This will usually include their sexual orientation and gender identity.

Sexual orientation is a person's emotional, romantic and/or sexual attraction to another person. The term 'trans' is a word that describes people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth.

A young person may think or realise they are lesbian, gay or bisexual at different stages in their life. They may not tell anyone for a while and may choose to 'come out' at different times and in a variety of ways. The decision about when to 'come out' is up to the young person. They may choose a friend or a youth worker to speak to first.

Being lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans is not a problem or a risk in itself but the negativity often experienced by a young person can be damaging. It is the responsibility of the youth work staff to enable all young people to be valued for who they are, to ensure they are fully included in the group/organisation and to provide support if required.

It is important that any safeguarding concern about a specific child or young person is shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation.

Children and Young People at Risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Evidence suggests that children and young people at risk of, or engaged in, sexual exploitation may not see themselves as victims. Workers may need to be keenly aware of young people who may be at risk.

Parents/carers may be concerned about their children and may require targeted support to engage with relevant agencies.

The sexual exploitation of children and young people is described in the government guidance document as

"involving exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of their performing, and/or others performing on them, sexual activities. It can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition e.g. being persuaded to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability."

There are strong links between children who go missing and the internal trafficking, between towns, of young people for the purposes of sexual exploitation. Children and young people from loving and supportive families can be equally at risk of exploitation and workers must be careful not to stereotype specific groups of children as potential victims.

It is very important, therefore, that any concerns are shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation. The Get Safe Risk Assessment Tool (see below) should be used to inform your judgement. Consider if the current indicators show that

- there is evidence that the child or young person is at immediate risk or suffering CSE and so is in need of protection
- or
- there is evidence that the child is at possible risk or is vulnerable to CSE and so is in need of prevention

westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/local-content/4cjN/child-sexual-exploitation-risk-assessment

If the risk is immediate the Police should be contacted.

Abuse and Neglect

Then, in all cases, refer the child or young person to the Family Front Door.

If it is not a child-specific concern e.g. there are concerns about an adult or a location the District Early Help Team should be contacted for advice.

Within Worcestershire it has been agreed that the threshold for making a referral can be applied flexibly where there is a concern about possible sexual exploitation.

Children and Young People who have Parents/Carers with a Mental Illness

Some children and young people grow up with a parent who suffers a mental illness. Most of these illnesses will be mild or short-lived and the family copes. Some children, however, live with a parent who has an enduring illness.

In a household where a parent has enduring and/or severe mental ill-health, children are possibly more likely to be at risk of, or experiencing, significant harm. A child or young person at risk of harm, or whose well-being is affected, could be one who

- becomes a target for parental aggression or rejection
- has caring responsibilities inappropriate to his/her age
- may witness disturbing behaviour arising from the mental illness (e.g. self harm, suicide, uninhibited behaviour, violence)
- is neglected physically and/or emotionally by an unwell parent

Parental mental illness does not necessarily have an adverse impact on a child or young person's care and developmental needs. However a study of 100 child deaths through abuse or neglect showed clear evidence of parental mental illness in one-third of cases.

It is very important, therefore, that any concerns are shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation. This may lead to a referral to the Family Front Door or District Early Help Team depending on the urgency of the concern.

Children and Young People who have Parents/Carers with Learning Disabilities

Parental learning difficulties do not necessarily have an adverse impact on a child's developmental needs. But, where it is known parents/carers do have learning disabilities, workers should be particularly aware of the developmental, social and emotional needs of the children and young people in the family. If a parent with learning difficulties appears to have difficulty meeting their child/ren's needs, a referral must be made to Children's Social Care, who have a responsibility to assess the child's needs and offer supportive and protective services as appropriate.

A child or young person at risk of harm, or whose well-being is affected, could be

- a child having caring responsibilities inappropriate to their age placed upon them, including looking after siblings
- a child who experiences neglect leading to impaired growth and development, physical ill-health or problems in terms of being out of parental control

- a child with a parent with learning disabilities who may be a target for men who wish to gain access to children for the purpose of sexually abusing them

Groups/organisations must also recognise that parents/carers with learning difficulties may need to have information about the programme and activities explained to them verbally and may need support when forms need to be completed.

It is important that any concerns are shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation.

Children and Young People who have Parents/Carers who Misuse Substances

Although there are some parents/carers who are able to care for and safeguard their children despite their dependence on drugs or alcohol, parental substance misuse can cause significant harm to children at all stages of their development.

Where a parent has enduring and/or severe substance misuse problems, the children and young people in the household are likely to be at risk of, or experiencing, significant harm primarily through emotional abuse or neglect.

Groups/organisations need to be aware and question whether the child or young person's daily life revolves around the parent's/carer's substance misuse and to what extent the child is assuming inappropriate responsibilities.

Any concerns must be shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation. This may lead to a referral to the Family Front Door or District Early Help Team depending on the urgency of the concern.

Children and Young People who are experiencing Domestic Abuse

In a home where domestic abuse is taking place the children and young people are also being abused. Children and young people may be aware of the abuse of a parent through hearing or seeing incidents of physical violence or verbal abuse. Even if they are moved from the home they may also continue to witness and/or hear abuse during post-separation contact visits.

Domestic abuse is usually a process not a one-off incident. Awareness of domestic abuse in the home can cause emotional abuse in the children or young people. The impact may be revealed through aggressive or anti-social behaviour or anxiety or depression.

The risks of children and young people being directly physically or sexually abused are markedly increased in homes where domestic violence occurs.

Within groups/organisations there may be opportunities for children and young people to talk about what is happening to them or their family. It may also be possible to introduce activities into the programme which discuss or demonstrate acceptable behaviours within family relationships.

Abuse and Neglect

It is very important, therefore, that any concerns are shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation. This may lead to a referral to the Police, the Family Front Door or District Early Help Team depending on the urgency of the concern.

Children and Young People who are Young Carers

According to the Office for National Statistics in the 2021 Census there were approximately 120,000 young unpaid carers (aged between 5 and 17 years) in England (1.4% of all 5 to 17 year olds) and 8,200 in Wales (1.8% of all 5 to 17 year olds).

A young carer is a child or young person under 18 whose life is restricted by the need to take responsibility for another person. The person might be a parent, a brother or sister, grandparent or other relative who is disabled, has some chronic illness, mental health problem or other condition connected with a need for care, support or supervision.

Young carers can become isolated, with no relief from the pressures at home, and no chance to enjoy a normal childhood. They are often afraid to let it be known that they are carers and do not ask for help as they fear letting the family down or being taken into care. A young carer should be encouraged to make their school/college aware of their caring responsibilities and, if appropriate, supported in doing this.

Groups/organisations should be aware of the needs of a young carer and be able to offer emotional support and/or signpost him/her to a support organisation specifically for young carers. Contact YSS for support for young carers.

www.yss.org.uk/worcestershire-young-carers

If their needs are more serious or urgent these concerns must be shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation.

Children and Young People affected by Gang Activity

Being part of a friendship group is a normal part of growing up and it can be common for groups of young people to gather together in public places to socialise. These groups should be distinguished from 'street gangs' for whom crime and violence are a core part of their identity. Although, occasionally, some group gatherings can lead to increased antisocial behaviour and youth offending, these activities should not be confused with the serious violence and abuse of a gang culture.

Young people who become involved in gangs are at risk of violent crime and are, therefore, deemed vulnerable and in need of safeguarding.

The nature and characteristics of gangs vary but generally

- members are predominantly young males
- members begin offending early and have extensive criminal histories
- they are often territorially based or linked to a particular religion or culture
- they deal in drugs as a way to make money

Children and young people do not always join gangs out of choice; for some it is seen as inevitable based on where they live as the status of being in the gang is important for their wellbeing.

Girls tend to be less willing than boys to identify themselves as gang members but can be drawn into male gangs as girlfriends or sisters of existing members. They are at particular risk of being sexually exploited or abused. This risk may also affect male gang members.

Young people involved in gangs should be held responsible for their actions and harmful behaviour but workers also have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of these young people and to prevent further harm both to themselves and to other potential victims. As many young people are likely to have a dual victim and perpetrator status, it is vital that workers assess their needs and provide support. This may need to be alongside a criminal justice response.

County Lines Activity

County Lines Activity involves a gang from a large urban area travelling to smaller locations on a regular basis to sell class A drugs and collect cash. Gangs may exploit children and young people in the smaller location to get involved e.g. as runners, using intimidation, violence, debt bondage and/or grooming. They may also have a degree of affiliation and loyalty to the gang. Sometimes a local property, often the home of a vulnerable individual, may be taken over and used as a base for the gang's activities.

Young people involved in 'county lines' may go missing or talk about visiting other towns. They may also have more money, clothes or accessories than usual and for which they are not able to account.

Information sharing is key to identifying 'county lines' so it is very important, therefore, that any concerns are shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation. This may lead to a referral to the Police or the Family Front Door.

Young People who are Homeless

Homeless young people are not just those who are sleeping on the streets. Young people may be 'sofa surfing' (staying on the floors and sofas of friends or family), in temporary hostel or bed and breakfast accommodation or in unsuitable or unsafe accommodation.

For some young people this may be a temporary response to a stressful situation at home and, perhaps following discussion, the young person may decide to return. For other young people the circumstances are such that they never want to return to the parental/carers' home.

There are many reasons why young people are homeless but, whatever the reason, insecure housing is likely to have a debilitating impact on their lives. The age of the young person may affect what needs to be done.

It is very important, therefore, that any concerns are shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation.

Children and Young People Missing Education (CME)

The law requires that the education of all children and young people between the ages of 5 and 16 is 'efficient' taking into account the child's age, ability and any special educational needs. Children and young people who are not attending school or not being home-educated may be at risk.

As somebody working with children and young people you may become aware that a child or young person is missing out on their education. They (aged 16 and under) may not be attending school or their home schooling may not be happening in practice.

Children go missing from education for a number of reasons including

- they don't start school at the appropriate time and so they do not enter the educational system
- they are removed by their parents
- behaviour and/or attendance difficulties
- they cease to attend, due to exclusion, illness or bullying
- the family has cultural reasons
- they fail to find a suitable school place after moving to a new area
- the family move home regularly
- problems at home

If there are any safeguarding concerns about a specific child or young person contact the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation. If in Worcestershire s/he should then phone the Family Front Door 01905 844666.

All information will be held confidentially and securely.

Young People under 18 who are not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

Young people under 18 should be in education, training or work. If they are not, and you are aware of this, you should share this information so that it can be ascertained that s/he is safe. S/he can be supported into an appropriate education or training placement.

Worcestershire Children First offers a free support service providing impartial careers information, advice and guidance to young people in years 12 and 13 who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) via this link

www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schools-education-and-learning/16-18-years-not-training-education-or-employment-neet

Children and Young People who Go Missing

There is always concern when a child or young person goes missing. As a worker or volunteer within a community you may be alerted at an early stage that a child or young person is missing unexpectedly and her/his parents/carers and friends do not know where s/he might be.

It is very important, therefore, that any concern about a specific child or young person is shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation. This may lead to a referral to the Family Front Door.

Where children go missing from one county the national missing children database will be contacted to inform other parts of the country that there may be children and young people new to their area in need of support.

Children and Young People who are Fostered Privately

Not all children and young people are able to live within their natural families. Many satisfactory arrangements are made within the wider family or with friends. Other families may choose to make a private arrangement, generally through an agency, with individuals or families to care for their children.

A privately fostered child is a child under 16 years of age (or 18 years of age if with a disability) who is being cared for, for 28 days or more, by an adult who is NOT their close relative. Close relatives are defined as step-parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles or aunts (whether of full blood, half blood or by marriage).

The natural parents remain legally responsible for their child.

By law, parents and carers must notify the local authority of any private fostering arrangement, but in practice, this often does not happen. Children Services, however, has a legal duty to ensure children and young people in these situations are safe and well and their needs are being met. Children's Services may also be able to offer help and support.

Examples of private foster care arrangements are

- children and young people who are sent to this country for education or health care by their birth parents from overseas.
- children or young people whose parents work or study long and/or antisocial hours and other people care for their children
- children or young people who are living with a friend's family as a result of parental separation, divorce or difficulties at home
- a teenager living with the family of a boyfriend or girlfriend
- host families who look after children studying with language schools

Children and Young People who are in Care (LAC)

A Looked After Child (LAC) is a child/young person for whom the Local Authority (LA), through Children's Services, has taken responsibility for placing him/her in some form of accommodation. The LA has a duty to monitor the child or young person and support them in this accommodation. Sometimes the parent maintains a shared responsibility with the LA.

Approximately 60,000 children and young people are looked after by LAs at any one time, with up to 90,000 young people passing through the care system in any year.

The particular challenges faced by children and young people in care can be significant. They tend to be more likely to miss or be excluded from school and achieve less well in GCSEs. Many also say they have been subject to bullying.

Abuse and Neglect

Children and young people in care may live in children's homes, live with foster carers or may be living with a family member. Some of the children and young people who attend your group/organisation may be in care. While they may be well integrated and relate well to their peers it is good practice to be vigilant and offer support if necessary. There are also a number of specialist agencies who provide advocacy and support and, after discussion with the child or young person, this may be a more appropriate route for support.

If there are any concerns these should be discussed with the Safeguarding Lead who may contact the Family Front Door.

Children and Young People who are Leaving Care or who have Left Care

Each year around 8,000 young people aged 16 or over leave care. Young people leaving care are particularly vulnerable. The provision for these young people is like a maze, it depends on a number of factors.

A useful guide showing the different rights can be found at

coramvoice.org.uk/for-professionals/specialist-advocacy-service/leaving-care/

For example, slightly different services are provided for young people who are under 18 and over 18 years of age.

If the young person is 16 or 17, was in care on their 16th birthday and has been in care for at least 13 weeks since they were 14 then Children's Services must, if s/he is an eligible child

- listen to their wishes and feelings
- appoint a personal adviser
- make an assessment of their needs
- prepare a Pathway Plan
- review the Pathway Plan
- provide somewhere suitable to live

If the circumstances are slightly different then additionally, as a relevant child, the LA should

- pay for the accommodation
- provide money for subsistence
- provide support for him/her to continue their education

If the young person is over 18 then the role of the Care Leavers Team is to stay in touch and make sure s/he has somewhere to live and enough money. This help and advice should continue until s/he is 25, or longer if they are in education or training. For more details see the link above.

If there is a concern about a particular young person these should be discussed with the Safeguarding Lead who may contact the Family Front Door.

Children and Young People who Abuse Others

A very few children and young people abuse their peers. However when it happens it needs to be recognised, not only that they may pose a significant risk of harm to other children or adults but that such children and young people are also likely to have considerable needs themselves.

They are likely to have suffered considerable disruption in their lives, been exposed to abuse within the family or may have witnessed or been subject to physical or sexual abuse. The children and young people are likely to have problems in their educational development and may have committed other offences. Such children and young people are likely to be a Child in Need, and some will in addition be suffering or at risk of significant harm and may themselves be in need of safeguarding.

The needs of these children and young people should be considered separately from the needs of their victims.

If there are any concerns that any child or young person may be abusing others this should be discussed immediately with the Safeguarding Lead who should contact the Family Front Door.

Young Women Coerced (or about to be Coerced) into Forced Marriage

Forced Marriage is the term used when a person is made to marry against their will. The person does not consent freely, but instead enters the marriage under duress; this includes both physical and emotional pressure. A forced marriage cannot be justified on any cultural or religious basis.

This is not to be confused with an **Arranged Marriage** in which both parties consent to the union. Arranged marriages have taken place successfully within some communities for a very long time.

The Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007 allows courts to order civil measures to be taken to prevent forced marriages. It is an offence to breach a Forced Marriage Protection Order.

The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 make it a criminal offence to force someone to marry. This includes

- taking someone overseas to force them to marry (whether or not the forced marriage takes place)
- marrying someone who lacks the mental capacity to consent to the marriage (whether they are pressured to or not)

Any information or concerns are shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation.

Children and Young Women subjected (or about to be subjected) to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female genital cutting is illegal in the UK. It refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

Abuse and Neglect

It is an abuse of a child or young person and it contravenes a girl's right to a whole body. It happens to girls without their permission and often against their will. A girl may be taken to her family's country of origin so FGM may be carried out during the summer holidays.

It is very important, therefore, that any concerns are shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation. This may lead to a referral to the Family Front Door.

Children in whom Illness is Fabricated or Induced

Fabricated or Induced Illness, previously known as Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy, is a condition whereby a child suffers harm through the deliberate action of her/his parent/carer and which is attributed by the adult to another cause.

It is a relatively rare but potentially lethal form of abuse and can only be diagnosed by a health professional. Other workers who see the child or young person regularly may have concerns. They may notice discrepancies between reported and observed medical conditions, such as the incidence of fits or they may be given information by parents/carers about the child or observe the child directly and note discrepancies between what they are told about the child's health and development and what they see themselves.

Any concerns should be shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation.

Unaccompanied Migrant Children and Young People

Unaccompanied migrant children and young people are some of the most vulnerable people in the country. They are on their own, in an unfamiliar country and likely to be surrounded by people unable to speak their first language.

The children or young people are likely to have been trafficked so will be uncertain or unaware of their rights, and not know whom they should trust. After being placed by the local authority they are at increased risk of going missing, often leaving the care of those who would protect them, to return to traffickers who will continue their exploitation. They will probably have experienced emotional trauma in their country of birth, during their journey to the UK or through their treatment by adults in the UK.

Any concerns about a child or young person should be shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation.

Children and Young People who have been Trafficked

Trafficking involves moving children and young people across or within international or national borders for the purpose of exploitation. It includes the trafficking of children within domestic borders. It is often achieved through coercion and deception. A child or young person might believe, for example, s/he is coming to the UK to go to school but instead is exploited. Many children who are victims of trafficking come from extremely poor families or have been orphaned through parental illness or conflict.

It can be difficult to recognise potentially trafficked children. Some of the indicators are

- no identifying papers
- may not be clear about where they are or where they live
- tells the same or similar story to other children about their journey
- has a mobile phone but no money
- is being cared for by adults who are not parents/family and the quality of the relationship is poor
- s/he goes missing

Children and young people who have been trafficked are often reluctant to disclose. They may have been groomed to believe that the consequence of revealing the true situation could be fatal for themselves or their family back in their country of origin.

The Government has set up a system, known as the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) to identify and support victims of trafficking in the UK. It is intended to ensure that victims of modern slavery, human trafficking, or forced labour receive appropriate protection and support. This might include specialist care including accommodation to prevent re-trafficking or counselling to cope with the traumas they have experienced. Further information is available here

www.modernslavery.gov.uk/

Children and young people who have been trafficked are extremely vulnerable and many go missing. It is important, therefore, that any concerns are shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation. This may lead to a referral to the Police or the Family Front Door.

Young People involved in Honour-based Violence

Honour-based violence is the term used to describe violence, including murders, in the name of so-called honour. Murders are sometimes called 'honour killings'. These are murders in which, predominantly, women are killed for perceived immoral behaviour, which is deemed to have breached the honour code of a family or community, causing shame.

The police definition of so-called honour-based violence is 'a crime or incident, which has, or may have, been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community'.

A child or young person who is at risk of honour-based violence is at significant risk of physical harm (including being murdered) and/or neglect, and may also suffer significant emotional harm through the threat of violence or witnessing violence directed towards a sibling or other family member.

The perceived immoral behaviour which could precipitate violence includes

- inappropriate make-up or dress
- the existence of a boyfriend
- kissing or intimacy in a public place
- rejecting a forced marriage
- pregnancy outside of marriage

Abuse and Neglect

- being a victim of rape
- inter-faith relationships
- leaving a spouse or seeking divorce

For a child or young person to report that they have fears of honour-based violence in respect of himself/herself or another person requires a lot of courage and trust that the group/organisation to which they disclose will respond appropriately. Under no circumstances should the group/organisation allow the child or young person's family or peer group to find out about the disclosure. To do so might put the child or young person at further risk of harm.

Any concern about a specific child or young person must be shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation. This may lead to a referral to the Police or the Family Front Door.

Children and Young People at Risk of Extremism

Groups/organisations have a responsibility to prevent children and young people being drawn into terrorism. Unlike schools and childcare providers, for VCS groups/organisations providing activities this is not a legal duty but a moral duty.

Protecting children and young people from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of wider safeguarding responsibilities, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other harms (e.g. drugs, gangs, neglect, sexual exploitation), whether these come from within their family or are the product of outside influences.

The Government has developed a **PREVENT** strategy which includes the aim of safeguarding people and communities from the threat of terrorism. It includes the following definitions

- **Radicalisation** - the process by which people come to support terrorism and extremism and, in some cases, to then participate in terrorist groups.
- **Extremism** - vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. It also includes calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas
- **Terrorism** - an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people, causes serious damage to property, or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat is designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

The Government has identified factors that may suggest a young person or their family may be vulnerable or involved with extremism.

- **Identity crisis:** Distance from cultural/religious heritage and uncomfortable with their place in the society around them; significant changes to appearance/behaviour.

- **Personal crisis:** Family tensions; sense of isolation; experience of peer, social, family or faith group rejection; low self-esteem; disassociating from existing friendship group and becoming involved with a new and different group of friends; searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging.
- **Personal circumstances:** Migration; local community tensions; events affecting country or region of origin; first-hand experience of racial or religious hate crime; alienation from UK values; having a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy.
- **Unmet aspirations:** Perceptions of injustice; feeling of failure; experience of disadvantage, discrimination or social exclusion; rejection of civic life.
- **Criminality:** Experiences of imprisonment; poor resettlement/reintegration, previous involvement with criminal groups.
- **Access to extremist influences:** Reason to believe that the young person associates with those known to be involved in extremism such as
 - possession or distribution of extremist literature/other media material likely to incite racial/religious hatred or acts of violence
 - accessing extremist websites or use of closed network groups via electronic media for the purpose of extremist activity
 - being in contact with extremist recruiters; articulating support for extremist causes or leaders; joining extremist organisations
 - verbal or written support of terrorist attacks; justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues
 - international events in areas of conflict and civil unrest have a personal impact on the young person resulting in a noticeable change in behaviour
 - extended periods of international travel to places known to be linked to extremism

It is essential that both workers and volunteers are able to identify children and young people who may be vulnerable to radicalisation, and know what to do when they are identified. This is known as the **Prevent Duty**.

Although the most serious threat is from international terrorism influenced by Al-Qaeda or ISIL, terrorism can be motivated by a range of ideologies or other factors. Extreme right wing groups and single issue groups such as animal rights campaigners can also pose a significant threat.

It is very important, therefore, that any concerns are shared with the Safeguarding Lead within your own group/organisation. This may lead to specific group or one-to-one work with the young person or the group as a whole. This may be undertaken within the group/organisation or a specialist agency could be brought in.

If this is not appropriate there should be a referral to the Family Front Door or District Early Help Team depending on the urgency of the concern. It may also lead to a referral to the Police.

Early Help

It is recognised that some children, young people and their families require additional assistance if they are to achieve. Early help, effective prevention and appropriate services can make a difference when provided at the right time.

What is Early Help?

Early Help refers to the support which is needed for children, young people and their families at the first sign of additional unmet need, at any point in the child's life from pre-birth through to the later teenage years. Providing the right help at the earliest opportunity can help to solve problems before they become more pressing and complex and avert the need for statutory intervention later on.

Early Help is used to describe services that are available to children, young people and their families at Level 2 (Additional Support) and Level 3 (Targeted Support). (See page 55 for the Levels of Need diagram.) Effective early help relies upon local groups/organisations and agencies working together to

- identify children, young people and their families who would benefit from early help
- undertake an assessment of the need for early help
- provide services to address the assessed needs of a child, young person or family to improve outcomes

All of us working with children and young people should be alert to the potential need for early help for a child or young person who

- has a disability and has specific needs
- has special educational needs
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of engaging in anti-social or criminal behaviour
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child or young person, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse
- has returned home to their family from care
- is showing signs of abuse or neglect
- appears to need more support/care than s/he is currently receiving

If there are concerns about a particular child or young person a worker or volunteer is encouraged to use the Early Help Assessment to identify whether s/he is in need of additional or targeted support. An assessment can only be undertaken with the approval of the parents/carers.

(Note that parental consent is not required if the young person is not living with them. However if a young person, living with their parents, is requesting support but the parents do not consent then, assuming the young person is competent under the Fraser Guidelines (see the Glossary on page 136), s/he should not be denied support.)

Following discussion with the child or young person and their parents/carers a Lead Professional may be identified. This might be someone from a VCS group/organisation already known to the family or a social worker.

The role of the Lead Professional is to

- co-ordinate the Early Help Assessment
- act as an advocate on the family's behalf
- co-ordinate the delivery of support services as part of the Family Plan

An **Early Help Assessment** consists of an assessment of the needs of a child or young person looking at all areas – health, behaviour, learning, parents/carers and environmental factors – from the point of view of the child or young person and their family. The form also provides opportunities to identify the strengths of the child or young person and their family.

www.worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/childrens-social-care/early-help-guidance-families-and-professionals/early-help-assessment-guidance-and-process

What are the Benefits of an Assessment?

The child or young person will benefit by

- identification of what is working well in the life of a child or young person
- identification of need across all areas of the child or young person's life
- getting the services they need more quickly
- needing to go through fewer assessments as the information on the assessment will stay with the child or young person across agencies
- not having to repeat information to workers

Working through the form can enable the child or young person and their parents/carers to say positive things about their relationships and the things they like or enjoy. It is an assessment based on strength and need.

What does this mean for a VCS worker?

- You can make a referral to access support for a child or young person by completing the online Early Help Notification form. Remember you need consent from parents/carers. Completion of the notification will/may provide evidence of need.
- You can use the Early Help Assessment when or if you think a child or young person has additional needs or requires more support than s/he is getting.
- Use of the Assessment is understood by other agencies making dialogue easier.

If the parents, child or young person do not consent to an Early Help Assessment then the Lead Professional will need to make a judgement as to whether, without help, the needs of the child or young person will escalate and whether a referral to Children's Social Care may be necessary.

If you need advice and guidance, support is available from the District Early Help Team who will also be able to identify other resources within the community.

www.worcestershire.gov.uk/early-help-family-support/early-help-family-support-district-teams

Levels of Need in Worcestershire

The Levels of Need have been developed in order to promote early identification of concerns by groups/organisations and agencies working with children and young people. Based on a four-tier model it provides a framework to support both the identification of need and the delivery of appropriate support for children, young people and their families.

Children and young people may have unmet needs at any age or stage of development. In addition, their circumstances and needs may change over time which means that they may need to access services from different levels at different times.

Level 1 - children and young people with no identified additional needs. Their needs are met through statutory agencies and some will receive services through community and voluntary services such as leisure, holiday and play. The majority of children and young people will successfully develop and thrive at this level of need.

Level 2 – children and young people with extra needs that can be met by a universal service providing additional support or straightforward working with one or more partners, e.g. Parenting Support, Physiotherapy, or Speech and Language Therapy. Some of this support is provided by the VCS.

Level 3 - children and young people with complex or escalating needs that can only be met by a co-ordinated multi-agency plan which sets out the outcomes to be achieved and the role of each partner agency and the family in meeting these objectives. Professionals working with the child and family will identify whether there is a need to engage specialist services. Some of this specialist provision is provided by the VCS

Level 4 - children and young people who need statutory and/or specialist interventions including

- children and young people in need including those in need of protection
- children and young people looked after and privately fostered
- young people who have committed an offence
- children and young people with acute mental health needs

Full details of the Levels of Need can be found in this document

www.safeguardingworcestershire.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Levels_of_need_guidance_September_2021.pdf

Child (or young person) in need is defined by the Children Act 1989, which provides that a child is to be taken as 'in need' if

- a) he is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for him of services by a local authority, or*
- b) his health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision for him of such services, or*
- c) he is disabled.*

You are disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.

A child in need of protection is described in Section 47 of the Children Act 1989

Where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found, in their area is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, the authority shall make, or cause to be made, such enquiries as they consider necessary to enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare.



Levels of Need Diagram

Information, advice and guidance are available to children, young people and families at all levels of need. A child or young person's needs may move forwards and backwards across the levels. This highlights the importance of coordinated service delivery across both the voluntary and statutory sectors.

Professional Judgements

Remember

While written guidance can support decision-making about the appropriate level of intervention professional judgements should always be exercised especially when decisions need to be made about children and young people at risk of harm.

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION

In this section the need for policies and procedures which seek to protect children and young people is explained.

The difference between safeguarding and child protection is clarified.

How to deal with Disclosures, Concerns, Allegations and Complaints is considered.

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What is the Difference between Safeguarding and Child Protection?

Safeguarding means proactively involving everyone in keeping all children and young people safe and promoting their welfare. It is about ensuring that children and young people are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

Having the appropriate policies and procedures also safeguards volunteers, workers, trustees and management committee members. It also means you can inform parents/carers about the safeguards that are in place to protect their children and young people.

Child Protection is a central part of safeguarding. It is about protecting an individual child or young person who is identified as either suffering harm, or at risk of suffering harm, as a result of abuse or neglect.

Children and young people and their parents and carers have a right to expect that every group/organisation creates a safe environment so that it can fulfil its 'duty to care' and respond appropriately in emergency situations.

Roles in Safeguarding

Within your group/organisation roles should be created to ensure that safeguarding and child protection is at the heart of your activities.

The **Safeguarding Lead** is the person to whom everyone in your group or organisation goes if there is any suggestion of a safeguarding issue or a child protection concern. The Safeguarding Lead is sometimes called the Designated Person or Safeguarding Officer or Welfare Officer. Within larger organisations it may be appropriate for a Safeguarding Lead to be appointed within each unit/club. This may be in addition to the individual's main role and responsibilities.

The responsibilities of the Safeguarding Lead include

- being familiar with WSCP procedures for safeguarding and investigating child abuse
- receiving information from workers, volunteers, children and young people, parents and carers about child protection issues including any allegations against workers or volunteers
- assessing that information promptly and taking appropriate action
- ensuring that the child/young person and their parents/carers are offered appropriate support

It is good practice for groups/organisations to appoint a Deputy Safeguarding Lead in case the Safeguarding Lead is not available or an allegation is made about the Safeguarding Lead.

If you are working with young people who are over 18 years of age you will also need to appoint a Safeguarding Lead for Adults. This may be the same person or a different individual.

Remember to appoint a new Safeguarding Lead or Deputy if the previous person leaves or changes role. You will need to inform everybody in your organisation, including the children/young people and their parents/carers.

The **Champion for Safeguarding** is the person who has ultimate responsibility for safeguarding and child protection in your group or organisation and ensures safeguarding procedures are followed. The Champion should be a trustee or a member of the management committee.

The responsibilities of the Safeguarding Champion include

- ensuring that Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies are in place
- ensuring that procedures for safe recruitment and handling allegations against paid workers and volunteers are in place
- ensuring that any concern or disclosure is dealt with appropriately
- providing an annual report to the committee about any safeguarding and child protection issues, including allegations

The Sample Policies and Documents Supplement to this Guidance contains editable Role Descriptions for these roles and an Annual Report Form.

www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding

Policies and Procedures

Children and young people and their parents/carers have a right to expect that every group/organisation creates a safe environment so that it can fulfil its duty of care. Your group/organisation's responsibility for keeping children and young people safe and secure is broader than just child protection.

A **Policy** is a stated mode of action for the future, providing a framework for decision making within the group/organisation. It provides the boundaries within which workers and volunteers, including trustees, can operate.

A **Procedure** is the process by which a policy is put into practice.

The Sample Policies and Documents Supplement to this Guidance Handbook contains editable versions of the Sample Policies and can be downloaded from

www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding

If you want support in developing policies and procedures appropriate for your group/organisation contact Young Solutions.

The Importance of Policies

A policy is a public statement about how your group/organisation operates in important areas of its work. It provides a common understanding about how things should be done. A policy should be compliant with the appropriate laws, guidance and good practice.

Developing a Policy

Every policy should be developed in consultation with all, or representatives, of each part of the group/organisation including children and young people. It is often helpful to prepare a draft policy to take to these groups for discussion.

When creating a policy reference should be made to this Safeguarding Guidance Handbook and/or other respected authorities to ensure that the policy is up-to-date and in line with best practice.

A policy should be written in language that is easily understood.

Adopting a Policy

It is the Management Committee or the Trustees who are legally responsible for the way the group/organisation operates. It is, therefore, they who need to adopt the developed policy. It is also their responsibility to ensure that the group/organisation operates within the boundaries of the policy.

Once adopted the policy (and any accompanying procedures) should be made known to all volunteers, workers, children and young people involved in the group/organisation.

It should be formally recorded that each worker and volunteer has read and understood the policies and procedures both on their induction and following each review.

To Whom does a Policy Apply?

Any policy which is adopted applies to everyone involved in your group/organisation unless the policy states specifically those to whom it applies.

Availability of Policies

All policies should be available for children, young people, parents/carers to see. Many groups/organisations keep a file of all policies to hand in case a request is made. Other groups/organisations put all their policies on their website.

Reviewing a Policy

When a policy is adopted a realistic date when it is to be reviewed should be agreed. This may be on an annual or bi-annual basis. Laws and regulations change and policies need to be kept up-to-date.

Which Policies does my group/organisation need?

All groups/organisations that work with children and young people and want to safeguard them should develop and work within their policies on the following topics

- Safeguarding Children
- Child Protection
- Confidentiality
- Equal Opportunities and Diversity
- Recruitment and Selection
- Anti-Bullying
- Management of Allegations
- Confidential Reporting
- Discipline
- Grievance
- Positive Behaviour Management
- Physical Intervention
- Complaints
- E-Safety
- Data Protection
- Employment of Ex-Offenders
- PREVENT
- Volunteering
- Health and Safety

Depending on the age group with whom you are working or the activities you arrange you may need to consider developing the following policies

- Safeguarding Adults
- Environmental

If you are employing or intending to employ workers you will need to develop policies on such topics as holiday entitlement, sick pay, maternity and paternity leave, etc.

Sample Policies for Adaption

Young Solutions has prepared sample policy templates to assist in preparing policies. These can be found in the supplement to this guidance handbook which can be downloaded from

www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding

The samples should be adapted to suit your group or organisation. If you need further advice or support contact Young Solutions.

Developing Procedures

While policies are clear, simple statements of how your group/organisation intends to conduct its activities, procedures describe how a policy will be put into action. Each procedure should outline

- who will do what
- what steps they need to take
- which forms or documents to use

Procedures might just be a few bullet points or instructions. Sometimes they work well as forms, checklists, instructions or flowcharts.

Remember

Policies and procedures are only any good if they are followed...a policy alone does not protect a child or young person.

Safeguarding and Child Protection are so important that it is expected that all workers and volunteers will undertake training appropriate to their role and regular refresher training.

Confidentiality

Within your group/organisation the principle of confidentiality should be fundamental. Information should not be confined to individuals - the bounds of confidentiality are within the staff team on a need-to-know basis.

Everyone must treat personal information about children and young people with confidence, whether obtained directly or indirectly, or by inference. Such information includes name, address, date of birth, and other descriptions of the child or young person's life and circumstances, which might result in their identification. Information concerning a child or young person may not be passed on to another young person except with their agreement.

Workers and volunteers must take particular care not to gossip either about children, young people and their families, or with them.

Information about individual children or young people should not be uploaded onto any website or electronic communication without the consent of the child, young person or their parent/carer (depending on their age).

When workers wish to communicate information about a child or young person outside the team permission should be sought from the child or young person, if appropriate, or their parent or carer.

In exceptional circumstances where there is danger that a child or young person may cause physical harm to themselves, or to a third party, and there are good grounds to indicate that s/he is no longer able to take responsibility for her/his own actions, the worker should take action to protect the child or young person.

In situations where a child or young person may be disclosing sexual, physical, emotional or internet abuse or neglect, confidentiality should never be promised.

The nature of working with children and young people makes the practice of prescriptive guidelines difficult in some areas. Therefore workers, including volunteers, need to be aware of different factors around confidentiality, which affect them in different working contexts, and make appropriate decisions. If a worker or volunteer has any doubts whatsoever they should seek advice. Workers, volunteers, trustees and committee members need to be aware of good practice in relation to Information Sharing. See page 64 for further details.

A couple of sample confidentiality policies which may be adapted to suit your group/organisation can be found at

www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding

It is good practice for your group/organisation to display a statement about confidentiality where it can be seen by all including children and young people. It can be discussed with the children and young people and adapted to suit your group/organisation.

Information Sharing

All groups/organisations collect information about the children and young people with whom they work. Generally this information will not need to be shared outside the group/organisation. When, however, there are concerns about a child or young person your group/organisation may need, or be asked, to share information with a statutory agency. It is good practice to seek consent to share information if this does not put anyone at risk. But, if consent cannot be obtained in a timely manner, then it should be shared anyway.

The information shared should be relevant and proportionate. It may not be appropriate to share all you know about an individual if only part of it relates to the risk of significant harm.

Key factors identified in many Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews have been failures in

- recording information
- sharing information
- understanding the significance of the information
- taking appropriate action

All volunteers and workers, therefore, need to be alive to the responsibility for sharing information. Your group/organisation may be the only agency holding a vital piece of information that impacts on the safety of the child or young person.

Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (2024) gives guidance on information sharing and recording, to improve practice amongst workers across all children's services including those provided by the VCS.

assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1062969/Information_sharing_advice_practitioners_safeguarding_services.pdf

It identifies seven golden rules to sharing information.

1. **The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)** and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing. They provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
2. **Be open and honest:** Children, young people, and parents/carers should be told, openly and honestly, from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and that their agreement will be asked. The exception to this is where to do so would put that child, young person or others at risk of significant harm, or an adult at risk of serious harm, or if it would undermine the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime including where seeking consent might lead to interference with any potential investigation.
3. **Seek Advice:** Advice should be sought from the Safeguarding Lead or the line manager where there is any doubt, especially where doubts relate to a concern about possible significant harm to a child or serious harm to others. Advice can also be sought from other workers if you are in any doubt about

sharing the information concerned. The identity of the individual concerned does not need to be disclosed.

4. **Informed consent:** Share with informed consent where appropriate and where possible. The wishes of children, young people or families who do not consent to share confidential information must, where possible, be respected. Information may still be shared if, in your judgement, there is good reason to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. The judgement will need to be based on the facts of the case. When sharing or requesting personal information you must be certain of the basis upon which you are doing so. Consent should be obtained in writing and a copy given to the young person and the parent/carer.
5. **Consider safety and wellbeing:** Decisions about information sharing must be based on considerations of the safety and wellbeing of the individual and others who may be affected by the actions.
6. **Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure:** Ensure that the information shared is necessary for the purpose for which it is being shared and is shared only with those individuals who need to know it. It should be information that is accurate, up-to-date; is shared in a timely manner and is shared securely.
7. **Record:** A record must be kept of your decision and the reasons for it, whether it is to share information or not. If you do decide to share, then record what has been shared, with whom, when and for what purpose. Any such record must be stored with other details about the child or young person and held securely.

In some circumstances, it is not appropriate to seek consent before sharing information with others and/or information can be shared where consent has been refused. This may be the case if making a referral to Children's Social Care.

Information cannot be shared without the consent of the parent/carer, young person of 16 or over, or a child unless one or more of the following circumstances apply

- where failure to share information may result in harm to the child or young person
- where failure to share information may result in serious harm to an adult
- where failure to share information may result in a crime being committed
- where failure to share information may result in a crime not being detected, including where seeking consent might lead to interference with any potential investigation
- where the young person is deemed to have insufficient understanding to withhold consent and therefore cannot override parental consent
- where the young person is deemed to have sufficient understanding to override the parental refusal to give consent
- where there is a statutory duty or Court Order requiring information to be shared

Remember

Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people at risk of abuse or neglect.

Nobody should assume that someone else will pass on information which they think may be critical to keeping a child or young person safe. If a person has concerns about a child's welfare and believes s/he is suffering, or likely to suffer harm, the information must be shared.

Data Protection

Personal information about children, young people, their parents/carers and workers and volunteers, including members of the management committee/trustees, has to be collected by your group/organisation in order to comply with safeguarding requirements. Since 1998 the Data Protection Act has controlled how this personal information is kept and used.

Strict rules, called 'data protection principles', require that the information is used fairly and lawfully and used only for limited, specifically stated purposes.

Since May 2018 the responsibilities your group/organisation has in relation to data protection changed. The EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) applies in the UK. Although the UK is no longer a member of the EU the GDPR is still in force.

Groups/organisations which hold personal data about individuals will need to ensure that

- the rights of the individual are observed. S/he must be aware of the information you are holding and must be given access to it if they make such a request
- children have the same rights as adults over their personal data. These include the rights to access their personal data, request rectification, object to processing and have their personal data erased.
- an individual's right to erasure is particularly relevant if they gave their consent to processing when they were a child.
- data is collected only for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes, that it is kept accurate and up to date and for no longer than is necessary
- the criteria for making data-processing legitimate are observed, for example, when you give your consent, sign a contract, or legal obligations, etc. are met
- there is confidentiality about the processing
- the processing of data is secure

Personal data relates to any personal information which can be used to identify a person, directly or indirectly, such as their name, address, telephone/mobile number, email address, their place and date of birth, etc.

There is also a need to identify how information will be removed when it is no longer required.

An individual has the right to find out what information your group/organisation is holding about them. If a person asks to see such information this is known as a Subject Access Request. You are legally required to provide it except in certain specific situations. Under GDPR these requests can be made by email and must be responded to within a month.

Your group/organisation should appoint a **Data controller**. This may be a worker, volunteer or member of the management committee. The obligations of the data controller are to ensure that the above requirements are met. If an individual's rights are not respected s/he has a right to make a complaint and there may be legal and financial consequences for the group/organisation. A data controller can, however, withhold personal data if disclosing it would 'adversely affect the rights and freedoms of others'.

A sample Data Protection Policy can be found in the Sample Policies and Documents Supplement at

www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding.

It should be adapted to suit your group/organisation.

Some good practice in relation to data protection is

- change passwords on computers etc. at least every three months
- ensure everyone who deals with personal information is aware of the legal requirements
- save sensitive information in a password protected file on the computer or in a locked cabinet
- check that a time stipulation when the form will be destroyed is on forms containing personal information (e.g. application forms or consent forms)
- when disposing of computers ensure that the hard disks are destroyed, for example, with a hammer; the disks should not be recycled
- conduct an annual internal audit. This should include
 - what information is held
 - what is done with it
 - how and when it will be disposed of

Consent

The GDPR tightens the rules around consent

- consent must be specific, informed, unambiguous and given freely
- there must be a positive opt-in – consent cannot be inferred from silence, inactivity or pre-ticked boxes
- all requests for consent must be separate from other terms and conditions
- it must be easy for individuals to withdraw consent

If you need help or support with regard to Data Protection get in touch with Young Solutions.

Disclosures, Concerns, Allegations and Complaints

In order to keep children and young people safe groups/organisations need to be clear about the differences between disclosures, concerns, allegations and complaints because there are different procedures to be followed.

Child Protection Procedures (see page 69) should be followed when

- A child or young person makes a **disclosure**.
 - A **disclosure** is when a child or young person tells someone else about the behaviour of another person or persons towards him or her that makes the hearer think that the child or young person is experiencing some form of abuse or may be at risk of abuse.
- There is a **concern** about a child or young person.
 - A **concern** is when another child or young person, another parent or carer or a worker raises a question about whether a particular child or young person is experiencing some form of abuse or may be at risk of abuse.

Management of Allegations Procedures (see page 76) should be followed when

- An **allegation** is made about a paid worker, a volunteer or a committee member/trustee.
 - An **allegation** is when somebody informs someone in the group/organisation or there is reasonable cause to believe that a person who works with children or young people may have
 - behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child or young person
 - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or young person
 - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm

These include actions taken outside of the work situation.

Complaints Procedures (see page 78) should be followed when

- A **complaint** is made about the group/organisation.
 - A **safeguarding complaint** is a complaint about practices in the group/organisation which mean that children and young people are put at risk.

Everyone needs to know these differences and which procedure to follow. They should contact the Safeguarding Lead in any of these instances. In some cases two sets of procedures may need to be used.

Remember

In all cases the wellbeing of the children and young people is paramount.

Responding to a Concern, Disclosure or Incident of Abuse

Your group/organisation should produce guidelines for how volunteers, workers or management committee members/trustees should behave if a child or young person discloses to you or tells you something that leads you to believe that they are, or may be, at serious risk of harm from someone else or themselves.

Reporting a Concern

There are different processes to follow whether

1. there is an immediate danger or risk of immediate significant harm
2. there is not an immediate danger or risk of immediate significant harm

1. Reporting a Concern where there is an immediate danger or risk of immediate significant harm

Once a decision has been made that a child or young person is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm and needs immediate protection you or the Safeguarding Lead, must act either

- phone the Police on 999 if there is an immediate risk of danger saying that you have serious concerns about a child or young person, or
- contact the Children's Services Family Front Door
 - on 01905 822666 from Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm. (4.30pm on a Friday)
 - if out of office hours contact the Emergency Duty Team on 01905 768020

When making a referral you will be asked for the following

- the name, address, date of birth, ethnic origin and gender of the child or young person
- the name and contact details of the parent/carer or other close family members, if known
- the reason(s) for your referral

Do not delay if you do not have all this information.

Following your call you may be asked to complete the referral form

lcsportal.worcschildrenfirst.org.uk/web/portal/pages/cpassess#assess

2. Reporting a Concern where there is not an immediate danger or risk of immediate significant harm

If you believe that a child or young person is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm but is not in immediate danger or at risk of immediate significant harm you should speak to the Safeguarding Lead in your group/organisation.

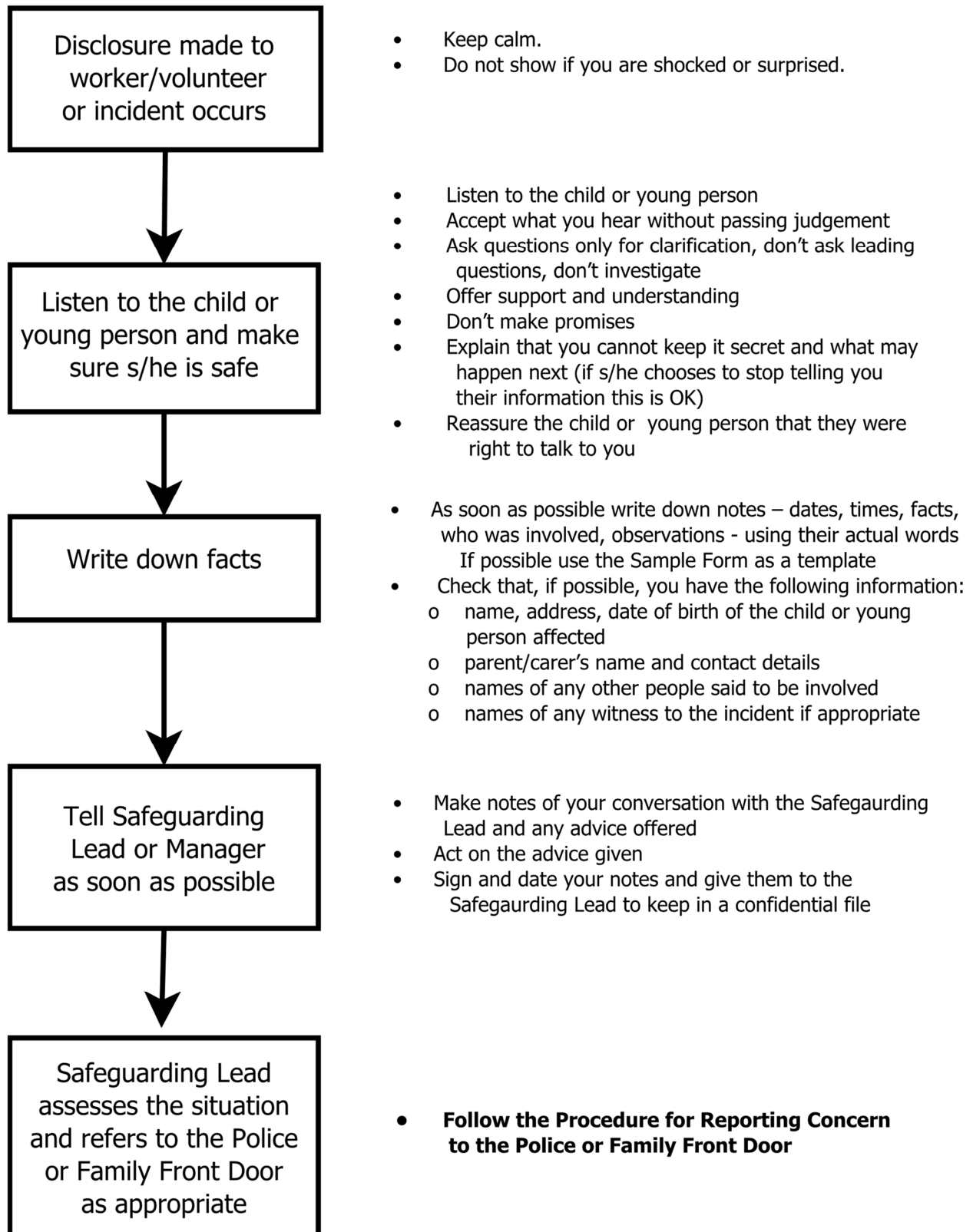
Then

- Check your own group/organisation's records for any notes or previous concerns
- If your group/organisation has access to the Professionals' Portal, check the Single View of the Child Record
- Talk with any other workers or agencies you know are involved with the family, e.g. their school
- Be prepared to work with other agencies as part of a team to support the family

If you have undertaken these actions and you still have concerns about the child or young person complete the Children's Social Care Referral Form as above.

If you are unsure about whether or not to make a referral or would like guidance about completing the referral form contact a District Early Help Team member. These are qualified support workers who offer advice to both workers, including volunteers, and parents/carers to ensure that children and young people receive the right support and intervention. S/he may be able to tell you if a social worker is already involved with the family. You can book a telephone conversation with your local District Early Help Team member by phoning the Family Front Door on 01905 822666.

Procedure following a Concern, Disclosure or Incident of Abuse



This procedure should be followed if you have a concern about abuse, or a disclosure or incident of abuse occurs. A sample form for recording the details is included in the Sample Documents Supplement at

www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding

ALWAYS REMEMBER – IF IN DOUBT – CONSULT

Respect the confidentiality of everyone involved in the incident keeping the matter restricted only to those who need to know.

Support should be provided for the child or young person making the disclosure.

Don't

- press for explanations
- put it off because you don't have all the information
- leave it to someone else to help
- be afraid to express your concerns

What happens at the Family Front Door/Children's Social Care?

Under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989, Local Authorities have a statutory duty to make enquiries where they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child or young person is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Children's Social Care, carries this responsibility on behalf of the Local Authority.

Your referral (made either by telephone or through submitting a Children's Social Care referral) will be sent to the Family Front Door. All referrals are taken seriously. The needs of the child or young person and the family will be assessed so that information can be collected and support put in place where appropriate.

Enquiries will be made with other professionals and the child or young person's family. Your group/organisation may be part of these enquiries and you may be invited to take part in meetings. Your group/organisation may also continue to be part of any ongoing support for the child or young person.

Children's Social Care will not be able to guarantee to keep the identity of the referring group/organisation or individual worker confidential as s/he may be needed to provide evidence should an investigation become necessary.

What happens next?

Children's Social Care will make one of three decisions.

1. Identify her/him as a **child in need of protection** i.e. a child or young person who is likely to suffer significant harm without the provision of services. (Section 47 of the Children Act 1989)
'Significant harm' justifies compulsory intervention and gives Children's Social Care a duty to make enquiries to decide whether further action should be taken.
2. Identify her/him as a **child in need** i.e. a child or young person considered to be at risk of not achieving or maintaining a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision of services. (Section 17 of the Children Act 1989)
It also includes those children and young people who have a disability.
See Early Help on page 52.
3. To do nothing if they believe the level of need has not been met.

If your group/organisation makes a referral then Children's Social Care has an obligation to inform you about the outcome of the referral.

Not happy with the decision?

The disagreements might be about

- a decision about a referral to Children's Services
- the outcome of an assessment
- a child or young person's plan or its implementation
- an intervention to bring about change
- the sharing of information in a particular case

If you are unhappy about the decision there are steps you should take depending on whether

1. It is a disagreement about a safeguarding concern
2. It is a disagreement about a child in need concern.

1. Process when there is a Disagreement about a Safeguarding Concern

Stage 1

- Contact the Family Front Door, within one working day if possible
- Check that there is a shared understanding of the disclosure or concern
- Record discussion and outcome
- Check back to ensure agreed actions have been fully implemented within agreed time scale

If the issue is not resolved

Stage 2

- Worker/volunteer or Safeguarding Lead discusses disagreement with the line manager in Children's Services
- Managers liaise without delay, in accordance with the level of risk, but no later than two working days to review information and resolve if possible
- Feedback to worker/volunteer involved
- Confirm actions in writing and a date to review them
- Check back to ensure agreed actions have been fully implemented within agreed time scale

If the issue is not resolved

Stage 3

- The professional concern or disagreement is referred without delay through the line management structures of the respective agencies. Senior managers seek to resolve the matter

If the issue is not resolved

Stage 4

- WSCP members for the respective group/organisation or agency are informed. This might be the VCS representative. The WSCP manager will convene a meeting with an independent chair (Contact Young Solutions to find out the name of the VCS representative)
- The outcome of the meeting including agreed actions and must be recorded in writing

- Feedback to worker/volunteer involved.
- Senior managers consider the need to review policies or procedures or to address any compliance or professional competency issue.
- Check back to ensure agreed actions have been fully implemented within agreed time scale.

2. Process when there is a Disagreement about a Child in Need Concern

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Stage 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Talk to your group/organisation's Safeguarding Lead and the manager (if different)• Check your group/organisation's records• Check the Single View of the Child Record accessed via the Professional Portal (if your group/organisation has been granted access to this tool)• Talk with others in your group/organisation who know the family |
| Stage 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Talk with any other professionals you know are involved with the child, young person or the family |
| Stage 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be prepared to work with other agencies as part of a team to support the child, young person or family |
| Stage 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you have completed all of the above and you still have concerns about the child or young person complete the Cause for Concern Notification |

lcsportal.worcschildrenfirst.org.uk/web/portal/pages/cpassess#assess

Remember

Keep a record of all conversations especially the decisions made and the reasons given for the decisions.

Management of Allegations against Workers or Volunteers

Your group/organisation must have an agreed policy and procedure in place to deal with a situation when you know, or have reasonable cause to believe, that a person, whether a paid worker or a volunteer, who works with children or young people, may have

- behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child or young person
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or young person
- behaved towards a child or young person in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children or young people

A sample policy can be found at

www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding

Children's Services has a team of Duty Officers who will advise you in the event of an allegation being made. Their responsibilities include the management and oversight of individual cases from VCS groups/organisations, as well as statutory agencies, if an allegation meets the thresholds. These officers are known as a **LADOs, (Local Authority Designated Officers)**. In Worcestershire referrals should be made online via this form

lcsportal.worcschildrenfirst.org.uk/web/portal/pages/ladorefferral#h1

Further enquiries can then be made on 01905 846221.

If an allegation comes to the attention of the group/organisation the LADO must be informed within one working day. (If the LADO cannot be contacted advice should be sought from the Family Front Door.)

In cases where the nature of the allegation does not require immediate referral to Children's Services or the police, the Safeguarding Lead and the LADO will make a decision jointly as to whether such a referral is necessary and who will make it.

Dealing with an allegation may bring your group/organisation into contact with a number of agencies as there can be up to three strands in the consideration of an allegation.

- Enquiries and assessment by Children's Social Care about whether a child or young person is in need of protection or in need of services
- A police investigation of a possible criminal offence
- Consideration by an employer of disciplinary action (if you are not the employer)

A sample policy on the Management of Allegations can be found on

www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding

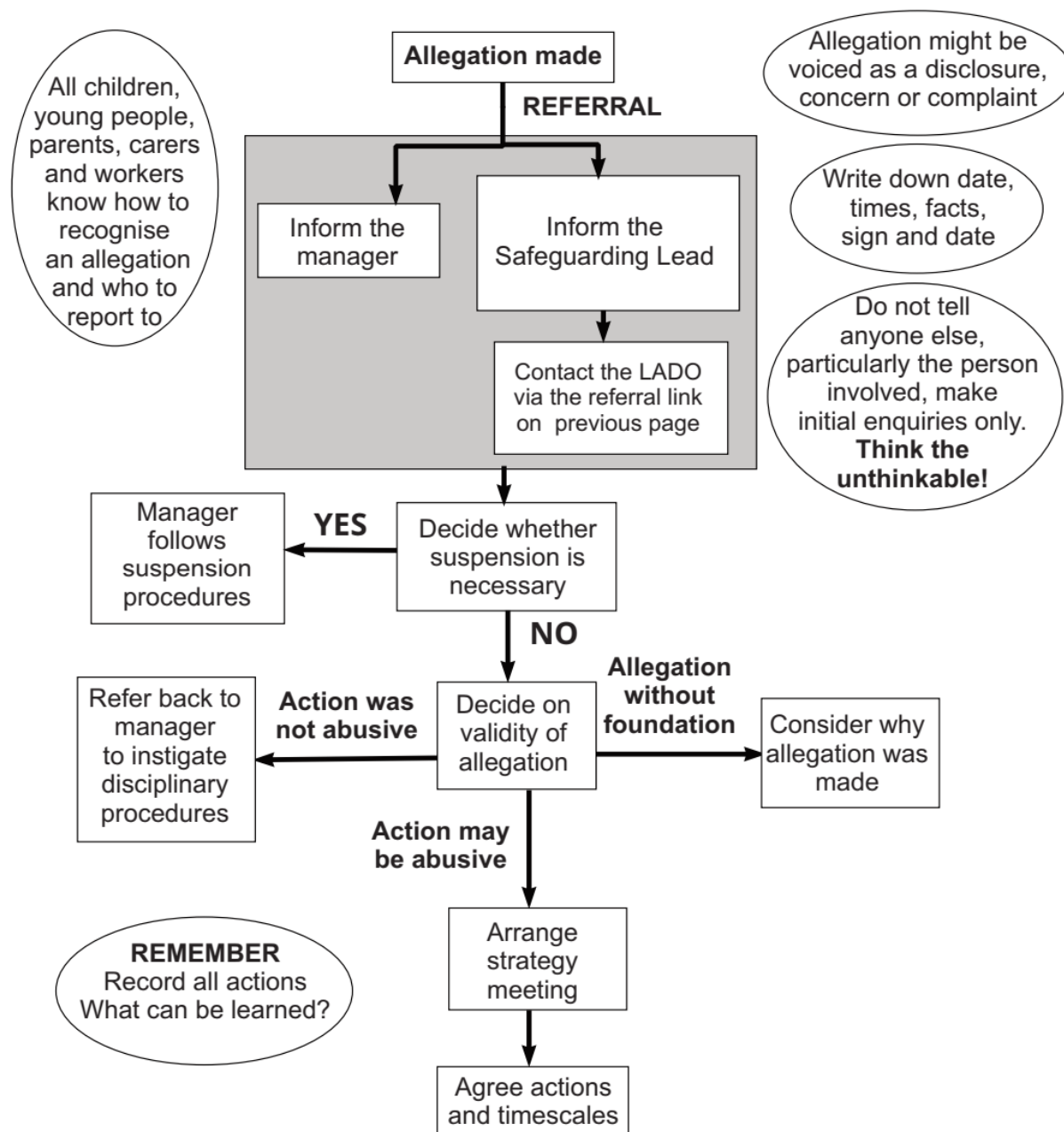
If your group/organisation is dealing with an allegation it would be useful to refer to

westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/ykpzy/statutory-child-protection-procedures/allegations-against-staff-or-volunteers/

Responding to a Safeguarding Allegation

In all cases when an allegation is made against a worker or a volunteer, including a member of the management committee/board of trustees, the Management of Allegations Procedures should be followed. If a child or young person is at risk then the Child Protection Procedures should also be followed.

Every allegation, whether made by a child, young person, parent, carer or another member of the group/organisation must be taken seriously and treated in accordance with your procedures. This is regardless of whether the person receiving the allegation believes it or not.



Management of Allegations Flowchart

Additional Points

- Support should be provided for the individual making the allegation if s/he is within the group/organisation.
- Suspension should be seen as a neutral act without prejudice.
- As soon as possible, and after discussion with the LADO, the person against whom the allegation has been made should be informed and advice given on how to access support.
- Following discussion with the LADO, parents/carers of the child or young person should be informed and support offered.
- Confidentiality should be maintained.
- Even if the paid worker resigns, or the volunteer leaves the group/organisation, the allegation must still be followed up and if necessary a referral made to the Disclosure and Barring Service. See page 111 for details on the Duty to Refer.
- A record must be kept of any allegations made and how it was followed up and resolved. This must be kept for 75 years in a locked cabinet. A copy should be given to the individual.
- If a reference is provided for an individual against whom an allegation has been made, then it must clearly state this even if the allegation was found to be false or unproven.
- Disclosures or allegations of abuse have an impact on the group/organisation. It is important for the benefit of the children and young people and the group/organisation that the impact causes as little disruption as possible. Having a clear Confidentiality Policy and Confidential Reporting Policy can be supportive.
- Sample policies can be found at www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding and also a sample procedure which can be used in the event of an allegation.

Abuse of a Position of Trust

A position of trust involves a person (worker or volunteer) in a position of authority over another person. There is an offence 'Abuse of Trust' which means it is illegal for someone in a position of trust involved with children or young people to have a sexual relationship with them. The law defines specific roles and settings. Currently working in most VCS groups/organisations is not considered under this law.

As the safeguarding of the children and young people with whom we work is paramount VCS groups/organisations should require standards of behaviour that reflect the principles of this legislation. The principles should be incorporated into your codes of behaviour and, if broken, should be dealt with through the disciplinary process and discussed with the LADO.

If you need support in this area contact Youth Solutions.

Dealing with Complaints

Children, young people, and/or their parents/carers, should know how, and be able, to, complain if they are not happy with any aspect of your group/organisation. An open culture provides people with a safe way to voice complaints or concerns. Any complaint should be addressed without delay.

If the complaint has child protection or safeguarding implications in relation to the behaviour of an individual or a group of individuals involved in the work of the group/organisation then the Management of Allegations Procedure should be followed.

Your group/organisation should have a written policy and procedure in place for dealing with complaints. A sample policy can be found at

www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding.

It should be adapted to suit your group/organisation.

You may also want to prepare an age-appropriate or ability-appropriate statement for the children and young people with whom you work, about how they can make a complaint.

If dealing with complaints is part of their job or role, a worker or volunteer may need to receive training.

How a complaint can be made

- verbally, in writing or by email, or in a box where complaints can be placed anonymously
- there are no restrictions on issues which may be complained about including any complaints made against workers or volunteers
- the senior worker/manager and the chair of the Trustees/Management Committee should be informed if there are any complaints
- the chair of the Trustees/Management Committee should be notified directly if the complaint is about the senior worker/manager.

The process of a complaint

Stage 1 Once a complaint has been made, it is good practice to meet the complainant face-to-face as soon as possible. If a complaint is dealt with thoroughly, speedily and with understanding it usually stops it going any further. A record still needs to be kept.

If the complainant is not satisfied s/he can ask for it to be moved to the next stage.

Stage 2 A senior worker or a Trustee/Member of the Management Committee is appointed to look into the complaint by speaking with those involved and looking at any appropriate paperwork including the policies etc. of the group/organisation. A letter explaining the process and the findings of the investigation, including any recommendations, should be sent within the set number of working days specified in your policy.

If the complainant is still not satisfied s/he can ask for it to be moved to the next stage.

Stage 3 This involves a review of the previous investigation and the recommendations. It is not a new investigation. A Review Panel should be set up. It usually consists of three people. This may include members of the management committee who have not previously been involved in the complaint and/or people independent of the group/organisation. The Panel will recommend whether the complaint should or should not be upheld and will comment on how the complaint was handled. They may also make recommendations to the management committee/board of trustees. The findings of the Panel should be conveyed to the complainant by letter from a senior representative of the group/organisation together with a statement that the findings are accepted or not. If the findings are not accepted reasons should be given. The letter should also identify if any changes will be made as a result of the complaint.

Your group/organisation may also need to consider

- if a child, young person or an adult with additional needs is making the complaint how will s/he be supported
- whether a time limit should be identified in your policy if the complaint is not about safeguarding or child protection issues; there should be no time limit on safeguarding or child protection issues
- how the complaints will be reviewed to check that the procedure is working satisfactorily
- ways of identifying any emerging patterns of complaints and action taken on individual complaints

Confidential Reporting

Confidential Reporting (previously known as Whistleblowing) is described as the disclosure of wrongdoing, abuse or unethical behaviour by a worker or volunteer (including trustees or members of the management committee) within a group/organisation and reporting them to those in positions of authority.

Workers/volunteers must acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring to the attention of their line manager or a member of the management committee, any concern, suspicion, or allegation so that the matter can be investigated. The concern, suspicion or allegation may be about the behaviour of a worker/volunteer, a member of the management committee or a representative of a partner organisation. A person voicing a concern is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation but will need to demonstrate sufficient grounds for the concern.

It is good practice for a group/organisation to have an agreed policy on confidential reporting. A sample policy, which may be adapted to suit your requirements, can be found at

www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding

Acting on a concern, suspicion or allegation can be difficult but it is particularly important to act when the safety of children and young people might be at risk.

Reasons for reporting

Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour in order to

- safeguard children and young people both in the group/organisation and in other settings
- prevent the problem worsening or widening
- protect or reduce risks to others
- prevent oneself becoming implicated

What stops people from reporting

- starting a chain of events which spirals
- disrupting the group/organisation
- fear of getting it wrong
- fear of repercussions or hurting colleagues
- fear of not being believed

If you want to raise a concern

- don't delay
- try to be specific about what is concerning you and why
- put your concern in writing outlining the background and history, giving names, dates etc.
- talk to the line manager or a member of the management committee/trustees
- make sure you get a satisfactory response

If you are not satisfied with the response you should escalate your concern to the chair of the management committee/board of trustees.

What happens next?

Any worker or volunteer raising such a concern must be listened to and treated respectfully and their concerns must be taken seriously.

When a person has reported concerns the group/organisation has a responsibility to protect that person from any harassment or unfair treatment.

The person who reported the concern should be kept informed about its progress.

Self reporting

There may be occasions when an individual worker or volunteer has a personal difficulty, perhaps a physical or mental health problem, which they recognise to be impinging on their competence. That individual has a responsibility to discuss the situation with their line manager so that appropriate support can be offered. It may be that the individual is required to remove themselves from their work setting for a period.

While such reporting will remain confidential in most instances, this cannot be guaranteed where personal difficulties raise concerns about the welfare and safety of children and young people.

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SAFE PRACTICE

Children and young people need to feel safe and secure when they attend your activities. Their parents/carers have the right to know how you intend to ensure this.

Your group will need to record information about each child or young person and to get permission from their parent or carer.

This section includes the need for policies on bullying, positive behaviour management and equal opportunities and diversity.

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Providing Information about your Group/Organisation

For Parents/Carers

Parents/carers rightly ask questions about how a group/organisation makes sure their children and young people are taking part in activities within safe environments.

It is good practice for your group/organisation to provide an information leaflet or card containing the following

- background to your group/organisation – name, charity number, contact details, etc
- details of the activity programme – date, age group, etc
- Safeguarding Statement including the name and contact details of the Safeguarding Lead
- Equal Opportunities and Diversity Statement
- names and contact details of two people who can be contacted if there is a child protection issue or concern in relation to the group/organisation
- privacy notice / GDPR statement
- a statement that a full file of the group/organisation's policies is available on request

For Children and Young People

Children and young people also have the right to have information about your group/organisation. This could be provided in the format of a Members' Pack or a leaflet. It should be in age-appropriate or ability-appropriate language. As well as similar information to that provided for parents/carers it should include details about how children and young people are involved in decision-making within the group/organisation.

There should be information displayed on a notice board, as well as within the Members' Pack. It should include

- the person (or persons) that can be spoken with or contacted if the child or young person has an issue, concern or complaint
- a statement about the limits of confidentiality if a child or young person has been harmed or may be in danger

The notice/information should be prominently displayed and in clear language, perhaps accompanied by a photograph of the person who can be contacted.

Children and young people, however, usually talk to a person with whom they have a good relationship about issues they find difficult, whatever that person's role in the group/organisation may be.

Child and Young People's Records and Parental Consents

It is important that details of the children and young people who attend your group/organisation or use your service are collected in case of an accident. These records should include

- the child's or young person's personal details - name, address, date of birth
- whether the child or young person has any special needs - dietary, medical, physical or religious needs
- details of parents/carers, i.e. name, address and telephone and mobile numbers (particularly if the local authority shares, or has sole parental responsibility, for the child or young person)
- details of an alternate contact person
- whether there are any particular instructions concerning the child or young person, for example, if only one parent is authorised to collect the child or young person
- permission to undertake the regular activities of the group/organisation.

It is good practice to update this information every year as situations and home circumstances can change.

In order to be consistent with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), information about how long the consent form will be retained must be included. This might be until the end of the group/organisation's year.

If the child or young person is under 18 the form must be signed by a parent/carer. The form should be signed by the young person themselves if s/he is over 18.

Many groups/organisations also include a sentence that the parent/carer gives their consent to photographs being taken and possibly published. The word photograph means both still and moving images.

As well as a general consent for their child or young person to take part in the activities run by your group/organisation you will also need specific consent if you are arranging off-site visits or residentials.

Positive Behaviour Management

In order for your group/organisation to operate in a way that benefits the children and young people there should be clarity about what is expected from the children and young people and what happens if their behaviour falls below acceptable levels.

A sample policy can be found at www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding and should be adapted to suit your group/organisation.

A Positive Environment

Your group/organisation should try to create a positive atmosphere – where children and young people want to behave well. This can be encouraged through

- a consistent approach to promoting positive behaviour, offering praise and recognition when behaviour is appropriate
- using age and ability appropriate language
- a consistent approach when managing unacceptable behaviour
- enabling a child/young person to speak without interruption and listen and respond to what they are saying
- the active participation of children and young people in general discussions about behaviour and sanctions
- the involvement of children and young people in decisions about the programme of activities and the recruitment of workers and volunteers
- providing support for children and young people who may be experiencing difficulties
- supporting children and young people as they learn to resolve conflicts independently and positively

Positive Behaviour Practices

Workers and volunteers are expected to both model and promote positive behaviour by

- behaving in a positive and respectful way when interacting with other adults or children or young people
- giving positive reinforcement when children and young people are behaving appropriately
- telling children and young people when their behaviour is inappropriate
- trying to defuse situations before they escalate
- establish regular routines and systems e.g. when the coffee bar is open or ending sessions the same way
- applying a sanction in a way that is calm, effective and non-confrontational

Responding to Inappropriate Behaviour

- remain or appear calm
- speak firmly but quietly, and give the child/young person their personal space
- focus on de-escalating the situation and maintaining a safe environment

- don't take the behaviour personally and don't be quick to make assumptions
- remember, challenging or inappropriate behaviour always has a cause; consider what a child/young person may be communicating through their behaviour
- support young people to manage their own behaviour and make positive choices
- don't try to fix everything at once; prioritise and focus on one issue at a time

Following an incident is the time to reflect and review. Discuss with the manager or staff team calmly what happened, the actions taken and any lessons to be learnt for the future.

It is always the behaviour that is discussed not the child or young person. For example; it is never acceptable to say, *"You are a bad/naughty/wicked child"*. It was the behaviour that was not acceptable and this should be made clear.

In some instances it may be necessary for one-to-one support to be provided for the child or young person.

Children and young people need to know the behaviour that is expected of them. Some groups have a set of 'Club Rules'. Others get the children or young people together at regular intervals to draw up an agreed list of 'How we do things here'. These lists are more powerful as they have been discussed and agreed and use the language of children/young people.

By whichever method the 'rules' are drawn up they should consist of positive statements and not just be a list of 'Do not's'; for example, 'Be kind to other people' or 'Respect each other' instead of 'No bullying'. If left to themselves children and young sometimes come up with a list of 'don'ts'. Discussing what these actually mean can bring out the positives.

Sanctions

Workers and volunteers need to know the sanctions that are approved for use in your group/organisation. These will vary depending on the age and ability of the children and young people as well as environmental factors. They should be agreed in advance by the Trustees/Management Committee.

Sanctions may include

- warning about the consequences of the behaviour, *"If your behaviour continues then"*
- providing choices related to the behaviour sought, *"You can play the game properly or leave the table"*
- quietly requesting they sit out for a given period
- calmly requesting that a child or young person leaves the situation or activity where the behaviour has occurred and then engaging them in discussion

- if a mess has been made, for example, if something has been thrown and a cup smashed, asking the person to clean up the mess and replace the cup
- if two children or young people are involved, discussing with them how the situation should be resolved
- speaking to parents/carers about the behaviour
- informing the child or young person (and parent/carer if appropriate) that they may not attend the next session

It is not realistic to record all sanctions given. If, however, there is a major incident or workers/volunteers not present need to be informed of the sanction then any sanction should be recorded. You might also want to record whether or not the sanction was observed. This record should be reviewed on a regular basis to identify whether particular sanctions worked in relation to individual children and young people or more generally.

As part of the induction of a new worker or volunteer clear guidelines should be given about what sanctions may be used and whose decision it is to impose the sanction. There needs to be consistency about when and what sanctions are imposed. It can be helpful if sanctions are only imposed by the senior worker or volunteer at that particular session.

Physical Intervention

The use of physical intervention must be avoided as far as possible. It should only be used in exceptional circumstances if it is necessary to prevent personal injury to the child or young person, other children or young people or an adult. Physical intervention should always seek to restrain a child or young person and not be seen as aggressive.

If a physical intervention is needed, what was done and the reason for it must be recorded. Both the parent/carer and the Trustees/Management Committee must be informed.

Your group/organisation should have a policy on Physical Intervention. A sample policy can be found at www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding and should be adapted to suit your group/organisation.

Bullying

Bullying can be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, by an individual or a group, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. Bullying doesn't have to be a series of incidents – it can be any occasion when someone deliberately intimidates or harasses another.

Bullying is unacceptable. It must be dealt with swiftly and effectively. It is important not to underestimate the damage that can be caused by bullying and the effect on a child or young person's physical and emotional wellbeing and impact on their mental health.

Those children and young people who bully may themselves be vulnerable. They often have very low self-esteem and low self-worth. By bullying others they may be trying to compensate for their own negative feelings. This does not excuse bullying behaviour but, as workers/volunteers, we may need to work with and support the bullies as well as those who are being bullied.

If bullying is known or thought to be happening within your group/organisation and nothing is being done about it this can damage your reputation and credibility. Your group/organisation should have an Anti-Bullying Policy, a sample can be found at

www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding

If you are concerned that bullying is happening in your group/organisation and you would like some advice and support about how to deal with it then contact Young Solutions.

Types of Bullying

Bullying can take many forms - physical, verbal, emotional or cyber. It can often be a mix of these types and may involve other children and young people as witnesses or active participants.

A bully seems to focus on a presumed characteristic of a child or young person and bullying is often racist, sexual or homophobic. Children with physical or learning disabilities or young people who are carers may be particular targets for abuse.

Bullying can include

- being called names
- being teased
- being hit, pushed, pulled, pinched or kicked
- having their bag, mobile or other possessions taken
- being forced to hand over money
- being forced to do things they don't want to do
- being ignored or left out
- being attacked because of religion, gender, sexuality, disability, appearance, ethnic or racial origin

But it is not necessarily bullying when two children or young people of approximately the same age and strength have the occasional fight or quarrel.

Cyberbullying is an increasing concern. In a recent survey 56% of young people said that they have seen others being bullied online and 42% have felt unsafe online (Bullying UK). Cyberbullying is bullying which takes place online or through smartphones and tablets.

There are different types of cyberbullying

- **Harassment** - the act of sending offensive, rude, and insulting messages and being abusive; nasty or humiliating comments on posts, photos and in chat rooms; being explicitly offensive on gaming sites.
- **Denigration** – when someone sends information about another person that is fake, damaging and untrue; sharing photos of someone for the purpose to ridicule, spreading fake rumours and gossip, altering photos of others and posting in online.
- **Flaming** – when someone is using extreme and offensive language and getting into online arguments and fights.
- **Impersonation** – when someone hacks into someone else's email or social networking account and uses that identity to send or post vicious or embarrassing material to/about others.
- **Outing and Trickery** – when someone shares personal information about another or tricks someone into revealing secrets and forward it to others. They may do this with private images and videos too.
- **Cyber Stalking** – the act of repeatedly sending messages that include threats of harm, harassment, intimidating messages, or engaging in other online activities that make a person afraid for his or her safety.
- **Exclusion** – when others intentionally leave someone out of a group such as group messages, online apps, gaming sites and other online engagement.

This list is adapted from Bullying UK information

www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk/

All workers and volunteers, therefore, have a responsibility to ensure that there is a caring, safe and supportive environment within their group/organisation so that everyone knows that bullying is not tolerated. This should be specified in the Anti-Bullying Policy. In addition it may be appropriate to work with the children and young people within your group/organisation to develop a child/young person friendly anti-bullying statement.

The Sample Policies and Documents Supplement to this Guidance Handbook contains editable examples which can be downloaded from

www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding

Physical Contact with Children and Young People

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate for an adult to have physical contact when working with a child or young person. It is important, however, that adults should only touch children and young people in ways which are appropriate to their role and responsibilities.

Not all children and young people feel comfortable about physical contact and we should never assume that it is acceptable to use touch as a means of communication. One should ask permission of the child or young person particularly if the individual is showing signs of distress.

When physical contact is made with a child or young person this should always be in response to their needs at the time. It should be of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. It should not be in a one-to-one situation. Cuddles and tickling are not appropriate. Your professional judgement is required.

Some groups/organisations have developed a culture of hugging. It should be recognised that this is not appropriate for some children, young people and adults. Permission should always be sought rather than assuming the practice is acceptable to the individual.

It is sometimes necessary to touch a child or young person, for example, if first aid needs to be administered, if s/he is upset, or teaching a new skill.

Good practice in relation to physical conduct includes

- Use verbal directions rather than touch
- If it is thought a hug is needed, side hugs are more acceptable
- Non intrusive touch including 'high fives' or pat on the back when congratulating a child or young person
- If a child or young person with a disability needs regular help a care plan should be agreed with the young person or parents/carers (as appropriate) and written down
- Use words to accompany physical contact explaining what you are doing and why

Equal Opportunities and Diversity

Children and young people have the right to be protected from discrimination. This right should run through all the activities and decisions made within your group/organisation.

In the same way, volunteers, workers, management committee members and parents/carers involved in your group/organisation should not be discriminated against in any way. Your group/organisation must ensure it complies with all Equal Opportunities legislation.

For this reason, your group/organisation will need to have an Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy which fits in with its purpose and values. This policy will be of little value if it is not applied to all the safeguarding policies and procedures of your group/organisation. A sample on which you can base your own policy can be found in the Sample Documents Supplement at

www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding

The policy should make clear how your group/organisation aims to safeguard those who may face inequality or harassment due to one or more of the nine 'protected characteristics' as identified in the Equality Act (2010).

The Nine Protected Characteristics are

- Age
- Disability
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity

Diversity While Equal Opportunities are about preventing discrimination, Diversity is about recognising and valuing difference. It is about taking proactive steps to ensure that your group/organisation respects and values differences for the benefit of all the children and young people with whom you work. It is recognised as good practice for the make-up of your workforce (volunteers and workers) to reflect the diversity of the community in which it operates. Care should also be taken if using photographs that the diversity of the children and young people with whom you are working is appropriately represented.

It is expected that all volunteers and workers will undertake training on equal opportunities and diversity so as to work as effectively as possible with children and young people and not bring the group/organisation into disrepute.

If you need advice or support on equality or diversity issues or concerns please contact Young Solutions.

SAFE PEOPLE

To safeguard children and young people it is crucial to ensure that all the people involved in your group/organisation – volunteers, paid workers and trustees – are ‘safe people’. This means all recruitment processes need to be robust and volunteers and workers should be properly managed and supported.

This section covers recruitment and selection including DBS Disclosures, regulated activity and the need for discipline and grievance policies and procedures. There is also information about codes of conduct and support for volunteers and workers.

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Safe Recruitment and Selection

Rigorous recruitment, selection and retention procedures are central to safeguarding children and young people. These procedures must be in place to prevent and deter unsuitable individuals from gaining and maintaining access to children and young people through your group/organisation. You, therefore, have a responsibility to be cautious and identify and adopt a set of procedures to which you adhere to keep children, young people and your group/organisation safe.

West Midlands Regional Child protection Procedures website has information and advice about staffing issues in section 2.17 on

westmids-worcestershire.trixonline.co.uk/

Your group/organisation should have a Recruitment and Selection Policy. A sample policy can be found at

www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding

It should be adapted to suit your group/organisation.

There are some similarities and some differences between the recruitment processes for volunteers and paid workers so recruiting a volunteer is considered first; recruiting a paid worker starts on page 102. Whether recruiting a volunteer or a paid worker your group/organisation should identify the people responsible for undertaking this important role and ensure they are appropriately trained.

Particular care must be taken if applications are received from people who live overseas or if individuals have lived abroad for a period of years.

When a person expresses an interest in being involved in your group/organisation, whether as a volunteer or a paid worker you may want to send (or give) her/him a letter so that s/he may be clear about the group/organisation and the way it operates.

The Sample Policies and Documents Supplement to this Guidance Handbook contains an editable sample letter. It can be downloaded from

www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding

Young Volunteers / Young Leaders

Many groups/organisations have a tradition of encouraging young members to develop and take on leadership roles. This is important work for the personal development of the children and young people involved. They can learn skills, like teamwork and problem solving, and prepare them for their future lives. It can also provide insights about how the group/organisation works and expand its leadership team.

Some examples include

- older children can be encouraged to initiate and coordinate participation games so children can have fun playing together
- young people can develop projects that interest them within their community
- young people can take on leadership roles within their group/organisation, including on management committees

Good Practice in developing young leaders

- Each young person will need a role description so s/he knows exactly what s/he is expected to do.
- Even if you know the young person well it can emphasise the importance of the role if, at some point, a meeting is arranged to formalise the young leader's position. It does not have to be too formal but a form should be completed and references taken up.
- Young people will need training over time, for example, in leadership, safeguarding and the policies and procedures of the group/organisation.
- Young people should have their contributions and skills development recognised.
- It is important that young people are supported, particularly in their transition from member to young leader.
- It can be easier for a young person to take on a leadership role within a different group from that in which s/he is a member.
- Sometimes a young person will only want to be a leader on certain occasions and a member on others.
- Other club members should be able to recognise when a young person is in a young leader role.

If you would like advice and support on developing young leaders contact Young Solutions.

Recruiting a Volunteer

When someone enquires about working with children and young people or you identify a possible volunteer you should go through a formal recruitment process even if they are already known to or related to someone in your organisation. This applies to occasional volunteers as well as to members of the management committee or trustees, and ensures that people have been recruited fairly and that safeguarding has been taken into account. Volunteers have important roles to play in all VCS groups and organisations.

The procedure is as follows

- Give the potential volunteer information about your organisation and the role
 - information about your group/organisation
 - your Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the possible requirement for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check
 - a role description
 - a person specification
 - an application form/information sheet
- Potential volunteer completes an application form/information sheet
- Potential volunteer has an interview/informal 'chat'
- References and DBS (if required) are carried out
- Potential volunteer joins group/organisation and receives induction and training

Role Description

A role description is used to inform the volunteer about the expectations of the role. Occasionally a volunteer is found who can take on a role not previously identified. You should then draw up a role description for the new role.

The nature of the role should be clearly identified. Just 'Volunteer' is not accepted by DBS as a role. The role should have a title such as 'Support Worker for Young People'. Including children or young people in the title makes it easier to get a DBS check.

The Sample Policies and Documents Supplement to this Guidance Handbook contains sample role descriptions, person specifications and forms which can be used during the recruitment process. They should be adapted to suit your group/organisation. Such descriptions provide clarity on both sides of what is expected. Role descriptions should be approved by the management committee/board of trustees.

The samples can be downloaded from

www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding

Person Specification

A person specification is a profile of the ideal person for the role. It lists the criteria necessary to carry out the work. It helps both the volunteer and their line manager to judge whether the individual meets the requirements and to compare one person with another.

Application Form/Information Sheet

The application form/information sheet for a volunteer can be simple but should include

- name, address, phone and mobile number and email address
- details of their full work and education history
- contact details for two referees
- details of the volunteer's interests and experience including those in non-work settings

An application form/information sheet is important in relation to safeguarding practices. It is not good practice to accept a curriculum vitae (CV) in place of a application form/information sheet because this will only contain the information the volunteer wishes to present and may omit relevant details.

In many groups/organisations young people may move from being a member of the club to taking on volunteer roles. Even if you know the young person very well you should go through this process as it is both good practice and is a rehearsal for when the young person has an interview for a paid job.

Some volunteers may be put off at the thought of filling in an application form/information sheet. To overcome this it can be a good idea for someone from the group/organisation to talk it through with the applicant when s/he is completing the form.

References

Two written references are an essential part of safeguarding practice to ensure you are recruiting volunteers who are who they say they are and to obtain objective and factual information. They should be from reliable character witnesses who have known the volunteer for at least two years. References should not be accepted from relatives or friends. If possible one should be from a recent employer or line-manager and one should have knowledge of any previous work/support of young people.

A form should be used so that the referee can be asked to address specific questions. A stamped addressed envelope should be included. A sample form can be found in the Sample Documents Supplement to this Handbook.

Referees should be telephoned to confirm their identity and check the content of the reference.

Proof of Identity

You should ask for confirmation of identity by seeing either a current passport or a driving licence with a photograph as well as their National Insurance Number on an official letter or document. They should also bring a document such as a utility bill or financial statement which shows their current name and address. (These must be less than three months old.)

Interview

There should be a meeting with every potential volunteer in line with the Recruitment and Selection Policy, and Safeguarding Principles. The meeting should provide clarity on both sides about the proposed role and whether or not it suits the volunteer and meets the needs of the group/organisation. The meeting can be either a formal interview or an informal discussion.

A minimum of two people at least one of whom should be from the Management Committee/Trustees should be involved. Interviews should not be conducted by a single individual.

It is good practice to involve young people. They must be clear about their role in the process and how their views will be taken into account. They might, for example, meet the potential volunteer separately to ask and talk over a couple of agreed topics. If they are not present for the whole interview, they should be told how feedback will be given to them.

The Role Description and Person Specification will help you to decide on appropriate questions. See below for suggested questions.

Decide which member of the interview panel will ask the interviewee a particular question.

It is good practice to ask all candidates the same set of questions if you are interviewing more than one person for the same role. You may ask supplementary questions.

Issues can be explored with each person based on the information provided in their application form and in the references. This would include any gaps in their work history.

Possible Interview Questions

It is important to get the potential volunteer talking about himself or herself and their attitudes and values.

For the most part questions should be based on what the individual has done rather than hypothetical questions. For example *"Can you tell us about a time when....."*, rather than *"What would you do if.....?"*

- *"Tell us about yourself and what made you who you are today."*
- *"What experiences have led you to want to work with children and/or young people?"*

- *“Young people and children often challenge authority. Tell us about a time when your authority was challenged. How did you respond? With hindsight, would you have done anything differently?”*
- *“Have you ever had a safeguarding concern about a child or young person, either in your working or personal life? Tell us about it.”*
- *“What skills, interests do you have that would help you engage with children or young people?”*

During the interview be attuned to answers that are vague or unrealistic. Look out for answers that show no or little understanding or appreciation of children or young people's needs or expectations. Be aware of inappropriate language about children; unclear boundaries with children and young people and answers that imply adults and children are equal. Be conscious of any responses that indicate discriminatory views.

Clarify with the potential volunteer what commitment (day, times, frequency) they want to make.

If you wish to be less formal than an interview you could invite the volunteer to a two-way question and answer session combined with a visit to the group. If you choose this more informal route you still need to find out about their motivation to work with children and young people perhaps using some of the questions suggested above. Make sure that more than one person is involved in the decision to accept the volunteer.

Whether the interview is formal or informal you need to keep a record. This should include the date, those present, the decision made and the reasons for the decision. The record should be kept for six months if the volunteer is not accepted or decided not to take up the role. It should be kept on the volunteer's personal file if s/he agrees to work with your group/organisation. This record is confidential so should be kept in a safe place.

Before the Volunteer starts work

For safeguarding reasons certain checks need to be satisfactory before an individual starts work with your group/organisation

- receipt of at least two satisfactory written references, confirmed by telephone
- verification of the individual's identity
- a satisfactory appropriate DBS Disclosure which includes a check of the Children and/or Adult Barred Lists, depending on the role (See page 108)
- verification of qualifications, where this is appropriate

If any of these are not satisfactory the individual should not be allowed to be involved in your group/organisation.

If these are satisfactory a volunteer agreement should be discussed and signed.

Criminal Record

If a volunteer informs you that s/he has a criminal record, those interviewing must make a judgement about their suitability taking into account only those offences which may be relevant to the post or role.

You should consider

- the nature of the work
- the nature of the offence and the age at which the offence took place
- the frequency of the offence

If in doubt seek advice from Young Solutions.

Probationary Period

Your group/organisation may choose to request a new volunteer to undertake a probationary period. It can give you some time to make sure the individual is right for your organisation. It can also provide an opportunity for the individual to receive additional support.

Induction

A volunteer has the right to receive an induction into their role, the ethos and values of your group/organisations and the policies under which you operate. A proper induction also helps a new volunteer to settle in quickly.

A sample checklist is included in the Sample Policies and Documents Supplement to this Guidance Handbook which can be downloaded from

www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding

Appointment

The decision about whether to appoint an individual lies with the interviewers. It is very important to have the best possible people volunteering with the children and young people in your group/organisation. The appointment of an inappropriate volunteer can cause all sorts of problems.

Remember – no appointment should be made unless it is believed that s/he will work well with the children and young people and will be an asset to your group/organisation.

Record Keeping

If an individual becomes involved with your group/organisation a confidential file should be opened for her/him. This can either be computer or paper-based. It should include

- application form/information sheet
- record of the interview/meeting and the decision made
- references and any additional information provided by the referees
- record of the DBS check – see page 111

Into this file, in the future, should go

- records of attendance
- details of training undertaken
- dates of supervision or support meetings attended
- any expenses paid to the volunteer
(Volunteers make a vital contribution to groups/organisations and should not be out of pocket so any travel expenses and other expenses should be offered.)
- any references for the individual if requested
- any safeguarding concerns
- any discipline issues

Details should be kept up-to-date and checked for accuracy on a regular basis, at least once a year. The records must be kept in a secure place (in a locked cabinet) and retained for six years after the individual has left and then safely shredded.

If there had been a safeguarding concern, disclosure or allegation the records should be retained at least until they reach normal pension age or for 10 years – whichever is longer.

If the decision is taken not to offer the individual an opportunity to work within your group/organisation the information about that person should be retained for six months and then shredded. This is in case the individual makes a complaint about how s/he was treated e.g. a claim of discrimination is made.

Recruiting a Paid Worker

When recruiting a paid worker it is important to follow a formal recruitment process to ensure that people have been recruited fairly and that safeguarding has been taken into account. The key steps are set out below.

Recruitment

When recruiting a new worker it is good practice to give them (or send out)

- information pack which includes information about your group/organisation
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies and the requirement for an appropriate Disclosing and Barring Service check (DBS)
- job description
- person specification
- application form
- diversity monitoring form
- details about the recruitment process, if possible, including the interview date

Identifying the Role

Whether it is a new post or a replacement for an existing worker you need to be clear what you want the new person to do. You need to identify the tasks and responsibilities of the role and the qualities, experience and/or qualifications required to carry out this role.

To avoid doubt when requesting a DBS check it is advisable to include children or young people in the job title e.g. Children's Arts Worker rather than just Arts Worker.

Job Description

A job description identifies the main purpose and main tasks of the job. It assists the applicant in deciding if the job is for them and is the tool used in shortlisting when deciding which applicants should be called for interview.

The Sample Policies and Documents Supplement to this Guidance Handbook contains sample job descriptions and other useful forms and documents to assist you during the appointment process. They should be adapted to suit your particular situation. The Supplement can be downloaded from

www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding

Person Specification

A person specification is a concise profile of the ideal person for the role. It lists the criteria necessary to carry out the work. It helps both the potential worker and their manager to judge whether the individual meets the requirements and to compare one person with another.

Application Form

An application form should be used to obtain a common core of data.

The application form for a paid worker can be simple but should include

(To comply with The Equality Act 2010 the date of birth should not be included on the main application form but added to a diversity monitoring form which is not seen by those shortlisting.)

- names, address, phone and mobile number and email address
- academic and/or vocational qualifications with name of awarding body and date
- full history in chronological order of post-secondary education including any further or higher education; full and/or part-time work, including any voluntary work undertaken, with start and finish dates and reason for leaving. There should also be an explanation of any periods not in work, education or training.
- details of the applicant's interests and experience
- personal statement about why the applicant feels they are suitable for the role and meets the person specification
- contact details for two referees
- statement that the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and a specific question about whether the applicant has any convictions (including relevant spent convictions), cautions, reprimands, warnings or bind-overs
(Your group/organisation may choose to allow the details of this information to be put into a sealed envelope which will only be opened following the interview if the individual is being considered for the post.)
- a statement that there is a requirement to complete an application for an appropriate Disclosure from Disclosure and Barring Service

The application form is important in relation to safeguarding practices. It is not good practice to accept a curriculum vitae (CV) in place of an application form because this will only contain the information the applicant wishes to present and may omit relevant details.

Shortlisting

Ideally the same panel should both shortlist and interview the potential workers.

Application forms should be scrutinised to ensure

- they are fully and properly completed
- the information is consistent and does not contain any discrepancies
- gaps in employment/education/training or a history of repeated changes of employment are identified

Incomplete application forms should not be accepted.

Notes should be made of any gaps in employment or discrepancies so that these can be raised at interview if the individual is shortlisted.

All applicants should be assessed equally against the person specification.

References

Two written references are essential as part of safeguarding practices to ensure you are recruiting workers who are who they say they are and to obtain objective and factual information. It is good practice to use a form when requesting a reference. This helps the referee to be more specific and should give you the information you need. A sample form can be found in the Sample Documents Supplement.

References should be from reliable character witnesses who have known the applicant for at least two years. References should not be accepted from relatives or friends. If possible one should be from a recent employer or line manager. Where an applicant is not currently working with children or young people but has done so in the past it is important that a reference is also obtained from this employer.

‘To whom it may concern’ testimonials are not acceptable.

Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations should be considered in the circumstances of the individual case. Cases in which an issue was satisfactorily resolved some time ago or an allegation either determined to be unfounded or did not require formal disciplinary sanctions, and in which no further issues have been raised, are less likely to cause concern than more serious or recent concerns or issues that were not resolved satisfactorily. A history of repeated concerns or allegations over time should give cause for concern.

Referees should be telephoned to confirm their identity, the content of the reference and that information provided by the candidate is accurate.

Proof of Identity

You have a legal requirement to check the identity of and the right to work in the UK of the potential worker. You should therefore should ask potential workers to bring to the interview evidence of their right to work in the UK and confirmation of identity including a passport or a current photographic driving licence. They should also bring evidence of their National Insurance Number and a document such as a utility bill or financial statement which shows their current name and address. (These must be less than three months old.)

Interview

As part of an Equal Opportunities Policy and a Safeguarding Policy you will need to follow a process of interviewing each applicant.

- The interview panel should consist of a minimum of two people, including a member of the management committee or an independent adviser.
- It is good practice to involve young people. They must be clear about their role in the process, how their views will be taken into account and, if they are not present for the whole interview, how they will receive feedback.
- The job description and person specification will help you to decide on appropriate questions.
- Decide which member of the interview panel will ask the interviewee particular questions.

- It is good practice to ask all applicants the same set of questions if you are interviewing more than one person for the same role. You may ask supplementary questions.
- A scoring system based on the questions asked and the person specification may be used. You are not required to appoint the individual with the highest score if you have good reason to think that employing this person would not be advantageous to the group/organisation. You must record the reason for this decision.
- Issues can be explored with each person based on the information provided in their application form and in the references. This should include any gaps in their work history.

Possible Interview Questions

It is important to get the applicant talking about himself or herself, their experiences, attitudes and values.

For the most part questions should be based on what the individual has done rather than hypothetical questions. For example *“Can you tell us about a time when.....”*, rather than *“What would you do if.....?”*

- *“Tell us about yourself and what made you who you are today.”*
- *“What experiences have led you to want to work with children and/or young people?”*
- *“Talk us through a project or a piece of work with children or young people, what your role was and the outcomes.”*
- *“Young people and children often challenge authority. Tell us about a time when your authority was challenged. How did you respond? With hindsight, would you have done anything differently?”*
- *“Have you ever had a safeguarding concern about a child or young person, either in your working or personal life? Tell us about it.”*
- *“Can you tell us about a situation when you were aware of discrimination taking place? How did it make you feel? How did you respond?”*
- *“What skills, interests do you have that would help you engage with children or young people?”*

During the interview be attuned to answers that are vague or unrealistic. Look out for answers that show no or little understanding or appreciation of children or young people’s needs or expectations. Be aware of inappropriate language about children; unclear boundaries with children and young people and answers that imply adults and children are equal.

You will need to keep a record of the interview, including the written notes of the interviewers. This should include the date, those present, the decision made and the reasons for the decision. This record is confidential so should be kept in a safe place with the application form and references. For unsuccessful candidates these should be retained for six months in case the applicant makes a complaint, for example, about discrimination. After this period the papers should be shredded.

Criminal Record

If a potential worker informs you that s/he has a criminal record those interviewing must make a judgement about suitability, taking into account only those offences which may be relevant to the post or role.

You should consider

- the nature of the work
- the nature of the offence and the age at which the offence took place
- the frequency of the offence

If in doubt seek advice from Young Solutions.

If the applicant fails to declare a criminal record you must consider whether you would be able to trust this individual.

Appointment

The decision about whether to appoint an individual lies with the interviewers. It is very important to have the best possible people working with the children and young people in your group/organisation. An inappropriate appointment can cause all sorts of problems.

Remember – no appointment should be made unless it is believed that s/he will work well with the children and young people and will be an asset to your group/organisation.

Conditional Offer of Appointment

An offer of appointment should be conditional upon

- receipt of at least two satisfactory written references, where possible confirmed by telephone
- verification of the individual's identity and address
- an appropriate DBS Disclosure including a check of the Barred Lists, if required (See page 108)
- permission to work
- verification of qualifications

If any of these are not satisfactory the individual should not be employed.

Contract

Once a worker is appointed s/he is entitled to a written contract giving specific details.

Probationary Period

Your group/organisation may choose to require a new worker to undertake a probationary period. This is often for a period of 6 months. There is no such thing in law as a 'probationary period', full contractual rights start from the first day of work, unless the contract specifies otherwise.

Starting a new job can be difficult and induction is essential for all new workers. It is also helpful for a new worker to be told how they are getting on so meetings

should be arranged to enable him/her to express their views, for the line manager to give feedback and agree training or additional support.

Record Keeping

When a worker is appointed, a confidential file should be opened for them. This can either be computer or paper-based. It should include

- application form
- record of the interview/meeting and the decision made
- references and any additional information provided by the referees
- record of the DBS check – see page 111
- induction checklist

Into this file, in the future, should go

- hours worked and holiday record
- information about pay
- record of supervision meetings
- record of training undertaken
- record of any safeguarding concerns or allegations and how they were dealt with
- any discipline issues
- any references for the individual if requested

Details should be kept up-to-date and checked for accuracy on a regular basis, at least once a year. The records must be kept in a secure place (in a locked cabinet) and retained for six years after the individual has left and then shredded.

If there had been a safeguarding concern, allegation or disclosure the records should be retained at least until they reach normal pension age or for 10 years – whichever is longer.

Disclosure and Barring Service

Disclosure Checks for Volunteers and Workers

A Disclosure Check is an important element in ensuring your group/organisation is fulfilling its safeguarding obligations. The checks, carried out by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), are designed to assist groups/organisations to make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children and young people.

If your group/organisation requires volunteers/workers to have DBS checks then you need to have a policy on the Employment of Ex-Offenders.

See www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding

Types of DBS Checks

- **Basic:** This check shows the details of convictions and conditional cautions that are considered to be 'unspent' under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) 1974.
An individual can apply for it for themselves directly online. A basic check can be used for any position or purpose (though may not be detailed enough for work with young people).
- **Standard:** This shows spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings, subject to filtering.
- **Enhanced:** This check shows the same as a standard check plus any information held by local police that is considered relevant to the role and the workforce applied for.
- **Enhanced with barred list check:** This is the highest level and shows the same as an enhanced check plus whether the applicant is on the list of people barred from working with either children and young people or vulnerable adults.

Barred Lists

The DBS holds the two 'Barred Lists' of individuals who are unsuitable for working with

- children and young people
- adults

It is against the law for a group/organisation to employ someone or allow them to volunteer for this kind of work if they know they are on the Barred List.

Regulated Activity

A Regulated Activity is any activity which you must not do if you are barred from working with children or adults.

The scope of regulated activity includes

- unsupervised activities: teaching, training, instructing
- caring for or supervising children or young people
- providing advice/guidance on well-being
- driving a vehicle only for children or young people

Work is Regulated Activity only if done regularly. In this context, 'regular' means carried out by the same person frequently (once a week or more often), or on 4 or more days in a 30-day period (or in some cases, overnight).

A person who manages or supervises someone who undertakes a Regulated Activity is also counted as undertaking a Regulated Activity. A person who manages someone who is not in Regulated Activity (but would be except for the fact that they are supervised) is also in Regulated Activity.

Regulated Activity Work with Children and Young People

In most VCS settings this is

- unsupervised activities such as teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children or young people, or providing advice/guidance on well-being, or driving a vehicle only for children. The activity must happen more than once a week or 4 times a month
- or
- work in a limited range of establishments ('specified places' that are government regulated) with opportunity for contact; e.g. schools, children's homes, childcare premises
- or
- intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once

'Supervised' means that another individual who is deemed to be carrying out Regulated Activity (and who has been DBS and Barred List checked themselves) can see and hear the interactions between the individual and the children or young people at all times. Supervision must be continuous at all sessions. Two equal status (not DBS and Barred List checked) people cannot supervise each other.

Regulated Activity Work with Adults

The main type of regulated care for VCS groups/organisations is likely to be personal care. There is no time limit for this activity. The 'adult workforce' should only be included for those involved in this activity.

It is the main type of workforce with whom an individual is working that should be specified on the DBS form.

Depending on the role a manager or trustee can sometimes be checked in the same way as the worker they manage.

How to Determine which Roles are 'Regulated Activity' with Children and Young People

1

Does the role involve carrying out any of the following activities:

- A. Teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children?
- B. Providing guidance and advice on well-being for children?
- C. Driving a vehicle only for children?

AND

2

Does it happen:

'frequently' (once a week or more)?

OR

'intensively' (on four or more days in a 30 day period or overnight)?

AND

3

Is the individual carrying out any of the activities UNSUPERVISED?

1 + 2 + 3 = YES

This is Regulated Activity.

This role is eligible for a DBS Check.

A Barred List check is required for this role.

1 + 2 = NO

This is NOT Regulated Activity.

This role is eligible for a DBS Check.

This role is NOT eligible for a Barred List check.

"What Level of Check do I Need to Do?"

For more information go to the DBS website

www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check

You can also phone the DBS helpline on 03000 200190.

Getting a Standard or Enhanced DBS Disclosure

The steps are

1. Individual completes a DBS application form and shows their documents for identity checking (usually through an umbrella body such as Young Solutions)
2. DBS application form is sent to the DBS centre
3. DBS request any relevant information about the individual from the police
4. DBS print the certificate and post it to the individual
5. Individual must then show the certificate to the appropriate person in your group/organisation

If the applicant has subscribed to the DBS Update Service you can obtain the individual's signed consent to check information on the status of their certificate online.

Checking a DBS Disclosure

You must thoroughly check the Disclosure to ensure the contents are accurate and understand any information provided by the police. Use this to make a decision about the role the individual can do in your organisation. (You should speak to the individual first if there is any information of concern.)

Remember someone cannot do 'Regulated Activity' (i.e. work unsupervised regularly with child/young person) if they are on the barred list, so you may need to put additional measures in place or delay their start date until you receive their DBS check.

Recording Information about a DBS Check

In line with data protection principles you should not take a copy of the DBS certificate unless you can prove why you need it. You should use the DBS certificate to make your recruitment decision and record this decision. The only other information you will probably need to record are

- name of person
- date of birth
- DBS certificate number
- date it was carried out
- role checked for
- level of check (e.g. Enhanced with Children's Barred List check)

A checklist to ensure the DBS is satisfactory is in the Sample Documents available from

www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding

If you need advice on how to respond to information on a particular DBS contact Young Solutions.

Duty to Refer

If an individual is found to be on the Barred List or the DBS Disclosure shows s/he has been disqualified from working with children by a court then s/he should be reported to the police and referred to DBS.

Anyone who is barred from working with children is committing an offence if they apply for, or offer to do, any work which involves children or young people.

It is also an offence for an employer knowingly to offer either paid or voluntary work with children or young people to an individual who is disqualified from working with children or to fail to remove an individual from such work.

Safe People

In addition a group/organisation has a legal responsibility to refer an individual, whether a paid worker or a volunteer, to the DBS if they

- sack them because they harmed a child or adult
- sack them or removed them from working in regulated activity because they might have harmed a child or adult

or

- were planning to sack them for either of these reasons, but the person resigned first or no longer had any contact with the group/organisation

Referrals should be made to the DBS via their online form

www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-referrals-form-and-guidance

Codes of Conduct

All adults who work with children and young people have a crucial role to play in shaping their lives. They have a unique opportunity to interact with children and young people in ways that are both affirming and inspiring. Your group/organisation has a responsibility to establish a safe and responsive environment which safeguards children and young people and reduces the risk of adults being unjustly accused of improper or unprofessional conduct.

All workers and volunteers who work with children and young people have a duty of care towards them and are accountable for the way in which they operate.

As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all adults working with children and young people are in 'Positions of Trust' in relation to the children and young people in their care. A relationship between an adult and a child or young person cannot be a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people. Adults, therefore, have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

Where an adult is in a 'Position of Trust' with a child or young person under 18, it is an offence for that person to engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of that child or young person, or to cause or incite that child or young person to engage in or watch sexual activity.

A Code of Conduct for workers and volunteers, including members of the management committee/trustees, is a good way for them to know how they are expected to behave when they are operating on behalf of your group/organisation.

Codes of Conduct are always more useful when they are negotiated and agreed by the people involved. Some ideas about the content are

Adults, workers and management committee members/trustees should always

- work within the policies and procedures of the group/organisation
- treat everyone with respect
- act as good role models
- provide opportunities and show understanding so that children and young people can talk about issues that are important to them
- recognise a child/young person's right to privacy
- respect an individual's faith and cultural traditions
- demonstrate and encourage young people to respect and value difference and challenge discriminatory actions and attitudes
- promote the rights of young people, within reason, to make their own decisions and choices
- challenge young people to broaden their perceptions and experiences
- promote the participation of young people
- risk assess situations to ensure potential dangers have been identified and the risk minimised
- report or follow up on any concern, disclosure or allegation

Safe People

- create an environment in which children and young people feel safe and deal with situations which might make the setting unsafe
- ensure, whenever possible, that there is more than one adult present during an activity with children or young people or it takes place at least within the sight or hearing of others
- avoid physical contact where possible; if it is needed, for example, in demonstrating a skill or to assist a young person with a disability or, wanted by a child who is upset, use common sense, keep it impersonal and short

Adults, workers and management committee members/trustees should never

- engage in inappropriate behaviour, conduct or use inappropriate language
- smack or hit any child or young person
- permit or accept abuse or discriminatory behaviour, for example, bullying, taunting
- show favouritism for anyone
- meet a child or young person away from the usual meeting place unless the parent/carer and/or the group/organisation is aware of the arrangement
- use alcohol or drugs when working or immediately prior to working
- smoke when working
- give personal money to anyone
- use their mobile phone for personal messages when working
- transport a child or young person on their own without the permission of the parent/carer and with the knowledge of the group/organisation
- communicate with children or young people using their personal phone, email or any social media

The Code of Conduct should be written down. Every adult in the group/organisation should sign that they agree with it and be given a copy.

The Code should be reviewed or re-negotiated at regular intervals, perhaps at the first staff meeting of a new year or term.

Resolving Problems and Difficulties

Many groups/organisations experience difficulties and problems at some time. Any difficulty should be dealt with as early as possible. In case informal discussions do not resolve the difficulties every group/organisation should have both a disciplinary policy and a grievance policy in place for both paid workers and volunteers. Used properly these procedures can be an aid to good management not just a means of imposing sanctions nor necessarily leading to dismissal.

Disciplinary processes are used when the group/organisation has issues or concerns with a worker or volunteer.

Grievance processes are used when the worker or volunteer has issues or concerns about how they have been treated within the group/organisation.

One or the other should be used when an individual has acted inappropriately. If the action(s) forms the basis of an allegation of abuse or a concern about suitability the appropriate procedures (e.g. Child Protection or Management of Allegations) should first be followed. See page 69 or page 76.

Sample policies can be accessed at

www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding

SAFE ACTIVITIES

All the settings and activities you provide for children and young people must be risk assessed so that accidents are less likely to happen. First aiders and equipment must be at hand to deal with incidents if/when they do happen.

Within this section is good practice both for general activities but also for the more specialist areas of internet safety, transport, residentials and working within another organisation.

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A Safe Activity Programme

The activities provided by your group/organisation should be in line with your aims and purposes. Children and young people can be engaged in challenging, stimulating and 'fun' activities. A club/organisation that offers the same things week in week out quickly becomes stale and uninviting to children and young people.

An interesting and varied programme of activities can help staff and volunteers to work with children and young people to explore matters that interest or concern them, raise issues, look at prejudice and attitudes and help change attitudes.

Programmes can also enable children and young people to participate and learn about their environment, develop skills, develop self-awareness, confidence and give them responsibility, enabling them to make choices about their lives.

Whatever the activity and in order to keep everyone safe, you should always try to follow this good practice list

- be prepared, plan ahead and risk assess the activity
- risk assess also in terms of safeguarding
- trained first aiders should be available
- involve children and/or young people in designing the activity programme so that you can be sure that the activity programme will have something that they actually want
- introduce one or two new experiences into the programme to widen the experiences of the children/young people
- include opportunities for all children and young people who attend your club/group, acknowledging the diverse nature of every child or young person's needs
- always aim to have a minimum of two adults present
(Workers and volunteers should watch out for each other and should avoid spending time with children or young people unobserved or in one to one contact.)
- abide by the code of conduct
- make sure workers, volunteers and children and young people are aware of the planned programme
- manage the time; start and finish on time
- evaluate the session, what worked well, what might make it better next time

Using the Internet, Phones and Social Media Safely

New technologies have become integral to the lives of children and young people. It might feel that children and young people know more about technology but adults know more about life and we want to keep them safe.

The internet and other digital media have become powerful tools which open up new opportunities for everyone. As with any environment, however, there are also risks. Your group/organisation should have an E-Safety Policy to ensure that volunteers and workers are aware of the risks and take steps to keep children and young people and staff safe. A sample E-Safety Policy can be found on in the Sample Documents Supplement and should be adapted to your situation.

The purpose of such a policy is to

- give clear guidelines on how children, young people, volunteers and workers can use the group/organisation's equipment
- give clear guidelines on what volunteers and workers can say/write about the group/organisation
- comply with relevant legislation and protect all involved within the group/organisation
- be clear about sensitive issues such as monitoring and explain how problems with inappropriate use will be addressed
- help volunteers and workers to draw a line between their private lives and their work with the group/organisation
- protect the group/organisation against liability for the actions of volunteers and workers

Recognising the Risks

It is important that volunteers and workers recognise the risks and discuss them with children and young people as appropriate.

The risks include

- sharing personal information
- cyber-bullying
- communicating with or 'friending' people they don't know
- exposure to inappropriate content e.g. excessive violence or pornography

Using the Internet and Mobile Phones Safely

Advice for children and young people

- Never tell anyone you meet on the internet your home address, your telephone or mobile number or your school's name, unless your parent/carer specifically gives you permission.
- Never send anyone your picture, bank or card details, or anything else, without first checking with your parent/carer.
- Never give your password to anyone, even a best friend.
- Never arrange to meet anyone in person without first agreeing it with your parent/carer, and get them to come along to the first meeting, which should always be in a public place.

Safe Activities

- Never hang around in a chat room or in a conference if someone says or writes something which makes you feel uncomfortable or worried, and always report it to your parent/carer or a worker.
- Never respond to nasty, suggestive or rude e-mails or posts.
- Only use webcams with people you and your parent/carer know in real life. Never do anything in front of a webcam that you would not want your parent/carer to see.
- If you see something you don't like (for example, bad language or distasteful pictures) then move on or click **BACK**. If you are still concerned, talk to your parent/carer or worker.

Always remember if someone makes you an offer which seems too good to be true, it probably is.

CEOP's www.thinkuknow.co.uk website has useful material for young people about safe use of the internet and social media. The site also has useful information for workers and parents/carers.

Using Computers in a Youth Club or Community Building

The Internet is a valuable resource for workers and volunteers to develop programme ideas and get up-to-date information. It can also be used for children or young people to access information online as part of an activity. Care must always be taken about the sites used.

- Place the computer where everyone can use it and where everyone can see it, rather than out of sight in another room.
- Supervise use of the internet.
- Suggest sites that could be visited by children and young people.
- Talk to children and young people about what sorts of sites they can and cannot visit.
- Inform children and young people that chat sites are open to misuse and they should be as cautious of people they meet on the internet as strangers they may meet in real life.
- Advise children and young people not to give out personal details over the internet, e.g. surname, address, phone number or email address.
- Discuss with children and young people when the taking and sending of photographs is appropriate and when it is not.
- Advise children and young people never to arrange a face to face meeting with anyone they come into contact with on the internet without first agreeing it with their parent/carer, and get them to come along to the first meeting, which should always be in a public place.
- Encourage children to report to a worker or volunteer anything they come across which they feel is abusive or offensive.
- Limit the amount of time children or young people spend online.

Acceptable Internet Use Agreement

To encourage children and young people to be responsible for their own safety an Acceptable Internet User Agreement can be incorporated into your computers. They have to agree to it before accessing the computer further. The Sample Policies and Documents Supplement to this Guidance Handbook contains an editable example which can be downloaded from

www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding

Communicating with Children and Young People by Mobile Phone, Email and Social Networking

Your group/organisation may wish to communicate with children and young people through social networking, e-mail and mobile phones. These technologies can be fantastic tools with which to keep in touch and communicate directly with children and young people. Mobile phone contact is great when on trips, for example, but phones can also be fraught with danger.

Your group/organisation may choose to set up a profile on a social network site for use with the children and young people.

A volunteer or worker has a professional relationship with the children, young people and their parents/carers so they should not make their personal email address or mobile number available to them.

Your group/organisation may buy one or more mobile phones for workers and volunteers to use when communicating with children and young people. This is a good idea so that workers and volunteers do not use their personal devices.

When using the internet or mobile phones workers and volunteers should exercise care. Your group/organisation should require workers or volunteers when contacting children or young people to

- always copy another adult in on emails and text messages
- be extra careful not to respond to messages or to send messages which could be misconstrued in any way ('lol' in a text message could be 'laughs out loud' or 'lots of love' – avoid it!)
- be careful and consider before responding to text messages or e-mails immediately or on the spur of the moment; think about the time of day when you are communicating with the child or young person and leave time to decide whether it is really appropriate to respond
- never become 'friends' on social media with children or young people known through the club/organisation

This advice could form part of your **Code of Conduct**.

Use of Photographs or Recorded Images of Children and Young People

Your group/organisation may want to take photographs or record the activities undertaken by the children and young people. Implicit within safeguarding principles is the commitment to ensure that all publications and media represent participants appropriately and with due respect.

- A photograph or video of a child or young person should not be published without written consent. Personal information about the individual should not accompany the image. When a name is requested the first name of the individual may be all that needs to be provided.
- Care must be taken to ensure that images of children or young people who are under a court order are not recorded or published without permission.
- Simultaneous streaming of images onto a website should be avoided. Delayed streaming will provide an opportunity for editing inappropriate images. It is also recommended that an independent server is used to ensure that images cannot be accessed, copied or downloaded.
- Websites should be carefully monitored to eliminate the use of inappropriate images or improper text.
- Any instance of the use of inappropriate images should be reported to the line manager or management committee/trustees who may then inform the appropriate authorities.
- Parental consent forms should contain a specific section on photographs and moving images, how they may be used and how to request their removal in line with the group/organisation's data protection policy. Otherwise a separate photo consent form could be used. The Sample Policies and Documents Supplement to this Guidance Handbook contains an editable example which can be downloaded from

www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding

Advertising on the Internet

Care must be taken when advertising events for children and young people. It is a good idea to encourage enquirers to obtain full details for an event by speaking to a responsible contact person, such as a worker.

For example, a notice for an event might give the type of event, the date, the age group, the town but not the specific venue. A holiday club for children might not give specific times, but might talk about 'two hours every morning'. In each case a telephone contact of an organiser/leader should be included.

Transporting Children and Young People

When your group/organisation organises an activity or trip away from the usual meeting place you will need to consider how the children and young people are transported. Often the tone of the trip is established on the way there.

If your group/organisation is providing transport ensure that

- any transport provided is suitable for the trip
- a risk assessment is undertaken to ensure that all potential hazards have been identified and precautions taken
- workers and volunteers have appropriate insurance cover and valid driving licences
- if using extra voluntary helpers, all recruitment and selection processes are completed
- there are two adults in each vehicle so the driver is not distracted by the children or young people
- the route is planned to build in adequate rest breaks on long journeys
- the workers have a mobile phone
- there is a contact number of an external person 'home contact' who is not on the trip in case there are any issues.

Using Your Own Vehicle

It is possible, as part of your role within the group/organisation, to use your own vehicle to transport children and young people, however, this is not encouraged.

If you do use your own vehicle then you should

- only do it if it is agreed with your manager or committee
- ensure parents/carers are aware of the means of transport
- have an adult escort when possible
- ensure the car is in good condition with current MOT (if appropriate) and tax
- ensure the insurance is adequate (business use if the driver is a paid employee)
- not overload the car
- make sure seat belts are used

Using a People Carrier

It is becoming increasingly common for groups/organisations to use people carriers to transport children and young people. You need to be aware of the law around this.

If the vehicle has a maximum seating capacity of no more than 8 passengers plus the driver in any combination of seats and temporary or permanent wheelchair spaces, it will be classed as a car whatever its shape or size.

Using a Minibus

The legal issues around the use of minibuses are complex.

If your group/organisation is using a minibus you should consider the following

- Has a risk assessment on the minibus and the journey been undertaken, recorded and approved?
The journey should include planned stops. It is often the riskiest part of the trip.
- Is the minibus taxed, with a valid MOT certificate (from the first anniversary of its registration) and is it well-maintained?
- Is the insurance cover adequate and appropriate?
It should cover the services for which it is used, the number of passengers and all who are authorised to drive the vehicle.
- Is the driver suitably qualified to drive the minibus? See below.
- Is a permit needed? See below.
- Are there seat belts and who is responsible for ensuring that seat belts are being worn?
- Is there a first aid box on board and is it adequately supplied?

A Minibus Driver must

- be 21 years of age or older
- have had their driving licence for at least 2 years (This should be checked.)
- have a clean driving licence – this is best practice but it is at the discretion of the manager/committee
- meet the 'Group 2' medical standards (check with that s/he meets the standards)
- have received training in the driving of a minibus
- be driving on a voluntary basis

The minibus must

- be used for social purposes by a non-commercial body

Entitlement to Drive a Minibus

- A driver who obtained their full licence before 1 January 1997 has a D1 on their licence and so is entitled to drive a minibus.
- A driver who obtained their full licence after 1 January 1997 is only entitled to drive a vehicle with up to eight seats (in addition to the driver).

Volunteer Drivers, however, are exempt from this requirement and are allowed to drive a minibus with up to 16 seats (in addition to the driver). The term 'volunteer driver' has not been defined or tested in law.

Government Policy, updated in 2014, allows a member of school staff to drive a minibus and be considered as a 'volunteer driver' if driving the minibus is not stated in their contract. If it is stated in the contract, or an additional sum is paid for driving the minibus, then s/he would not be considered a 'volunteer driver' and would need to gain a full D1 licence. A group/organisation should discuss this with their insurer.

For more information please go to www.gov.uk/driving-a-minibus and www.rospace.com
Minibus Safety: A Code of Practice

Minibus Section 19 Permit

If you own a minibus you must apply for a permit if you need to charge passengers in order to cover costs. If you are using more than one minibus at a time you need to get a separate permit for each vehicle.

This applies as long as

- the vehicle can carry between 9 and 16 passengers
- you're driving it for a voluntary group/organisation that benefits the community - for example an educational, religious or sports organisation
- the minibus service is only available for members of that group/organisation - not to the general public
- the driver knows the names of the individuals on the vehicle
- any charges are to cover running costs and are not for profit

If your group/organisation is hiring or borrowing a minibus from either a commercial organisation or from another group you need to apply for a Section 19 Permit.

A Section 19 Permit is not specific to one vehicle so the group/organisation that holds the permit can transfer it between different vehicles. But a permit can only be used in one vehicle at a time. The permit must be displayed on the windscreen of the vehicle. You can find out more about Section 19 Permits by searching Section 19 on www.gov.uk/.

Where can I get a Section 19 Permit from?

In Worcestershire a permit can be obtained from the ShareLink team on behalf of the Department of Transport. Email sharelink@worcestershire.gov.uk or phone 01905 768 432 or .

Child Car Seats

Any group/organisation or individual who carries other people's children has a legal duty to ensure they carry them safely. If children are either under 12 years of age or under 135cms in height they must travel in child seats or booster seats that are suitable for their size and weight, suitable for the car and are securely fitted.

More information about this from the RoSPA site

www.childcarseats.org.uk

Visits and Trips

Offsite visits and trips may be the highlight of the programme. While the safety of the children and young people is paramount, elements of adventure and risk can add to the enjoyment and enable children and young people to learn and develop.

All such visits, whether to a local theatre or somewhere more adventurous, need to be carefully planned and risk assessed. It is good practice to involve young people in planning the trip including the risk assessment process.

Actions

- establish the purpose of the visit
- a preparatory visit should always be made
- conduct a risk assessment
- decide dates and times of leaving and returning
- identify who will be going
- establish the ratio of workers and volunteers to participants
- establish how much it will cost
- identify first aider(s) and first aid equipment
- ensure adequate insurance cover
- if taking part in adventurous activities establish
 - AALA licence (See Glossary on page 136)
 - instructors and qualifications
 - centre risk assessment
 - specific risk assessment

Home Contact

Identify a responsible person as the home contact. S/he should have the details of all participants and workers and their contact details. If an accident happens, or the return home is delayed, it is the home contact person who will inform parents/carers.

Parents/carers should have contact details of the home contact person.

Communicating with Parents/Carers

Before any visit or trip information must be provided for parents/carers. They must be made aware and given written information about

- purpose and location of the trip
- date and times of leaving and returning
- name and contact number of the lead worker
- name and contact number of the person acting as 'home contact'
- details of transport to and from the visit
- cost
- information about insurance
- what the young people need to take with them

Information required from parents/carers

- signed consent form detailing any specific medical information and special dietary requirements
- consent for emergency medical treatment

RoSPA have guidance for schools on offsite visits on their website which you may find helpful. Search for 'school visits guide' at

www.rospace.com

Specific advice on outdoor activities and leaders for such activities can be found on the website of the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel at

www.oeapng.info/

Residentials with Children and Young People

Residentials are valuable for creating important learning opportunities for children and young people. , However, workers must be aware of the safeguarding issues associated with such events.

A residential can offer opportunities which are difficult, if not impossible, to provide at a youth club or out on the streets. It often takes place in settings away from the participant's own environment and provides a space where children and young people, distanced from the pressures of their everyday life, can experiment with new ways of behaving. It can also enable them to get to know themselves and others better.

Planning and risk assessment are key to a successful residential. A preparatory visit should be made to the location. Children and young people must not be placed in situations which expose them to an unacceptable level of risk so a risk assessment should be undertaken. The details of a residential will vary depending on the purpose, age of the children and young people etc. but there are some key points to remember.

Actions

The following need to be clear so they can be communicated to children, young people and their parents/carers. Young people should be involved in planning the trip.

- establish the purpose of the residential
- the location
- a preparatory visit should always be made
- conduct a risk assessment
- the programme
- dates and times of leaving and returning
- identify who will be going
- establish the ratio of workers and volunteers to participants
- establish how much it will cost
- establish how much spending money is required
- ensure adequate insurance cover
- catering for all food requirements

Home Contact

Identify a responsible person as the **Home Contact**. S/he should have the details of all participants and workers and their contact details. If an accident happens, or the return home is delayed, it is the home contact person who will inform parents/carers.

Parents/carers should have the contact details of the home contact person.

The home contact should keep in daily touch with the workers on residential in case parents/carers ring to ask questions.

Accommodation

- All accommodation must be clean and with access to adequate and sufficient toilet and bathing facilities.
- It is not acceptable
 - for participants to share a bed
 - for male and female children or young people to share a room
 - for workers to share a room with participants

Checks must be made to ensure that the needs of participants with disabilities are met. For wheelchair users, for example, it is important to check access to the building, room and bathroom facilities.

If rooms are equipped with satellite TV, inappropriate programmes may be available. It may be possible to arrange for these programmes to be disconnected.

All participants must know which rooms the workers are in and how to contact them if required during the residential on a work mobile.

Communicating with Parents/Carers

Before taking any children or young people away a meeting with the parents/carers and participants must be held to provide details of the trip. They must be made aware and given written information about

- purpose of the trip
- name and contact details of the lead worker
- name and contact number of the person acting as 'home contact'
- details of transport to and from the venue and during the trip
- details of the accommodation with address and contact number
- an outline programme
- clothing and equipment list
- emergency procedures and telephone contacts
- codes of conduct for both workers and participants
- rules about mobile phones
- cost
- spending money
- details of insurance cover

Information required from Parents/Carers

- signed consent form accepting the code of conduct and detailing any specific medical information and special dietary requirements and an additional signed photo consent form (if necessary)
- consent for emergency medical treatment

Preparing Participants

Meet with the children or young people prior to the residential to negotiate and agree the Code of Conduct/Behaviour and to inform them about

- emergency procedures
- expectations of the participants
- rules about mobile phones
- workers' roles and responsibilities
- support if they become homesick or if they are unhappy, or need to speak to someone in confidence

Evaluation

After the residential it is good practice to involve all participants and workers in identifying what went well and what could have been improved. This should include safeguarding and child protection issues.

For more information, particularly about outdoor education visits go to the Outdoor Education Advisors Panel website

www.oeapng.info/

Detached and Outreach Youth Work

Detached and outreach are sometimes bundled together as if they are one and the same thing. This is not helpful as they are actually two different but complementary approaches to work with young people.

Detached Youth Work

In detached youth work contact between young people and workers takes place on the streets, in cafes, in shopping centres or wherever young people choose to be. There are therefore different issues around safeguarding and robust risk assessments should be undertaken.

Detached youth work is not about 'getting young people off the streets'. Detached youth workers are, like other youth workers, informal educators. They use their skills to gain the confidence, trust and respect of young people so that relationships can develop with mutual trust. The youth worker has to operate on young people's terms.

It is also necessary for the workers to gain the understanding and respect of the local communities and other agencies.

Traditionally, detached work was seen as long term and area based but it can also apply to short-term work with high risk groups or on particular issues.

The key to good quality detached work is for workers to develop a flexible approach based on the voluntary involvement of young people and responsiveness to the needs of individual young people. A detached work programme, therefore, takes its lead from the young people and helps them to work out what their needs and goals are and supports them in taking action to meet those needs.

Outreach Youth Work

Outreach youth work is aimed at providing information for and to young people about the youth work provision that is available to them. It often works from premises which provide youth activities.

As in detached youth work face-to-face contact takes place in their own space, on the streets, in parks etc. But it can also happen in other settings such as schools or sports centres.

Youth workers develop relationships with young people, provide relevant information and encourage young people to be involved in a youth club, a specific project or an activity.

Outreach work may also be used to consult young people.

The Safeguarding Issues for both detached and outreach youth work are the same.

Safeguarding Children and Young People

- workers have the same responsibilities in relation to 'duty of care' and child protection as workers in other settings
- workers must explain to young people the boundaries of confidentiality

Safeguarding Volunteers, Workers and the Group/Organisation

- workers must know their patch and undertake risk assessments on a regular basis
- workers should not work in poorly-lit areas, derelict buildings or places where known criminal activity is taking place
- workers must work at least in pairs or larger teams and always be in sight of their colleagues
- workers must never undertake lone working but should meet elsewhere and go to the work location together
- pairs and teams should ideally be of mixed gender
- identification tags should be worn when working
- workers should have a work mobile
- workers should check in and out with a manager at the beginning and end of each session
- workers should only carry a minimum of personal possessions
- when planning a session, workers should agree an exit strategy and a code word to use to signal withdrawal
- workers should not intervene in any threatening or potentially harmful situations (for example where drug use is taking place); they should withdraw and return when the time is right
- workers should never give out personal information

Working within Another Setting

There are occasions when a worker or volunteer is operating within another setting, for example, running a drama session in a school or a discussion about health issues in a youth club. If the worker identifies a child protection concern they must act on their concern as the welfare of the child is paramount. But which set of procedures should the worker follow: their own group/organisation's procedures or the other setting's procedures?

The worker must follow both sets of procedures. S/he should notify the Safeguarding Lead in their own group/organisation as well as the Safeguarding Lead in the host organisation. S/he must keep written records of all the actions taken.

It is important, therefore, that the worker is familiar with both sets of procedures.

It is also good practice for there to be a written agreement between the two groups/organisations about safeguarding and child protection.

Using Workers from Another Agency or Organisation

Sometimes you may decide to bring in someone from another agency or organisation to work with the children and young people in your group/organisation. This may be to introduce a different activity or for someone to speak to them on their specialist topic.

It would not be usual for a worker from another organisation or agency to work alone with the children and young people in your group on their first visit. This is both so that you can judge the effectiveness of the worker and the session and it gives confidence to the children and young people.

There are some good practice points that should be considered

- Is the organisation or agency reputable? Check it out.
- Just because someone calls and says they would like to talk to your young people or bring in a new activity don't automatically say yes.
 - Is the topic appropriate?
 - Is the activity suitable?
 - Is this a decision for the youth worker or the committee?
- Contact the agency or organisation and ask them to confirm in writing that the worker has an appropriate DBS if necessary.
- A worker will need an induction into your group/organisation and the place where you operate. This would include child protection and health and safety policies.
- Does the new activity need a specific risk assessment?
- There needs to be clarity about what process should be followed should any issue arise. If there is a safeguarding issue, for example, the procedures of both your group/organisation and the agency or organisation should be followed.
- Before the activity arrange when an evaluation meeting will be held to discuss how the sessions have gone.

If you are thinking of introducing a worker from another agency or organisation and would like to talk through the issues contact Young Solutions.

SAMPLE DOCUMENTS

Young Solutions has prepared sample policies and documents which you can download and adapt to suit your particular club or organisation.

The Sample Documents Supplement to this Guidance Handbook is available for download from the Young Solutions website.

www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding/

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The Legislative Framework and Government Guidance underpinning safeguarding and child protection is available on the Young Solutions website.

Take a look at these pages as they are both interesting and useful.

www.youngsolutions.org.uk/safeguarding/

GLOSSARY

Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA) This Health and Safety Executive Agency licences centres which provide adventure activities to young people under 18. It ensures that the provider follows good safety management practices. Activities include caving, climbing, trekking and water sports.

In law a **Child** is anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday. This includes young people who are living independently, in the armed forces or in prison. S/he remains entitled to services and/or protection.

Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs) are undertaken by the WSCP in cases where abuse or neglect is known, or suspected, and

- Either a child dies, or a child is seriously harmed, and
- there are concerns about how organisations or professionals worked together to protect the child

The reviews seek to establish what lessons can be learned about the way local workers, managers, groups/organisations or agencies work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. See page 13 for more information.

A child with a **Disability** is a **Child in Need** if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Duty of Care is the duty an individual or a group/organisation has to ensure all reasonable steps are taken to ensure the safety of a child or young person in any of the activities of the group/organisation. Any person in charge of or working with children or young people, in any capacity, is considered, legally and morally, to owe them a duty of care.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It is illegal in the UK.

Forced Marriage is the term used when a person is made to marry against their will. The person does not consent freely, but instead enters the marriage under duress, this includes both physical and emotional pressure.

The Government runs the Forced Marriage Unit (FMU). It operates both in the UK, where support is provided to any individual, and overseas where consular assistance is provided to British nationals including dual nationals.

The FMU operates a public helpline to provide advice and support to victims of forced marriage as well as to professionals dealing with cases. Telephone: 020 7008 0151 or email: fmu@fco.gov.uk

Gillick Competence/Fraser Ruling Legally Gillick Competence is concerned with a child or young person's capacity to consent. Fraser Guidelines (from a ruling by Lord Fraser in 1985) is used specifically to decide if a child or young person can consent to contraceptive or sexual health treatment. In practice Gillick Competence and Fraser Guidelines are used much more widely in making decisions about whether a child or young person has the ability to make crucial decisions about their life.

www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-protection-system/legal-definition-child-rights-law/gillick-competency-fraser-guidelines/

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) Worcestershire Children's Services has a team of Duty Officers whose responsibility is to advise you in the event of an allegation being made against a worker or volunteer. See page 74 for contact information.

Signposting is a method of helping people find the services that they want without necessarily making a referral for them. It offers a better opportunity for users of services to make decisions about the range of services that they can access and which one is right for them.

Toxic Mix refers to the parental risk factors of substance misuse, mental ill health and domestic abuse. Children and young people in families where all three are present are at increased risk of harm.

Young Carers are children and young people who assume important caring responsibilities for parents or siblings who are disabled, have physical or mental ill health problems or misuse drugs or alcohol.

ABBREVIATIONS

ACAS	The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service
CAMHS	Children and Young People's Mental Health Services
CEOP	Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command
CME	Children Missing Education
CSE	Children and young people at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation
CV	Curriculum Vitae
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
DPA	Data Protection Act
FMU	Forced Marriage Unit
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
LA	Local Authority
LAC	Looked After Child
LSAB	Local Safeguarding Adult Board
LSCP	Local Safeguarding Children Partnership
NEET	(young person) Not in Education, Employment or Training
NRM	National Referral Mechanism (modern slavery)
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
OEAP	Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel
RoSPA	Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents
SAR	Safeguarding Adult Review
SCR	Serious Case Review
VCS	Voluntary and Community Sector
WSAB	Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board
WSCB	Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board
WSCP	Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership

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- Young Solutions support staff

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