

Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy Statement

_____ is an organisation made up of volunteers and paid staff. We exist to build community at the heart of the _____ and to assess and address the needs of children and young people in the areas in which we work. We value children and young people as equal citizens in society and therefore:

- We commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safekeeping of all, especially children and young people.
- It is the responsibility of each one of us to prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children and young people and to report any abuse discovered or suspected.
- We are committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who work with children and young people and to providing supervision.
- We are committed to following the Derbyshire SCB guidelines & procedures together with guidelines set out in Section 11 of the Children's Act 2004.

_____ Project has adopted the above principles; all volunteers and staff will be presented with a copy and expected to follow the procedures and guidelines as set out in this document.

_____ Project aims to provide a safe, friendly, fun youth space for all young people between the ages of 11 -19. We aim to ensure the safety and welfare of all young people, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality or disability attending our sessions. Any concerns expressed about the welfare of a young person, either by staff/volunteers or the young people themselves, will be taken seriously and prompt action taken.

Throughout the remaining policy the term 'staff' will refer to both paid and unpaid staff i.e. volunteers.

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it is meeting the aims laid out.

Duty of Care

All youth workers/volunteers have a *Duty of Care* under section 17 and 47, of the Children Act 1998, this includes reporting any concerns.

_____ Project takes our responsibilities seriously and have designated _____ as our Safeguarding Co-Coordinator.

The Safeguarding Co-Coordinator is responsible for:

- Ensuring this Policy is put into practice
- Identifying training opportunities for staff
- Acting as a reference point for child protection issues
- Keeping a record of any concerns expressed about child protection issues, and bring these to the notice of the Management Committee
- Take further steps, where necessary, to alert other agencies
- Ensuring staff are given support, the opportunity to debrief and access supervision
- Reviewing the safeguarding policy annually

Definitions of Abuse

Abuse and Neglect

Someone may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

Physical 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 feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as factitious illness by proxy or Munchausen's syndrome by proxy.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment 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 feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve serious bullying 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 ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the 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.

Organised Abuse

Organised or multiple abuse may be defined as abuse involving one or more abuser and a number of related or non-related abused children and young people. The abusers concerned may be acting in concert to abuse children, sometimes acting in isolation, or may be using an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit children for abuse.

Organised and multiple abuse occur both as part of a network of abuse across a family or community, and within institutions such as residential homes or schools.

(A child may suffer more than one category of abuse)

Signs of Abuse

There are signs that *may* indicate a child or young person may have suffered abuse. The following list, whilst not exhaustive, is intended to raise awareness of that possibility

Physical Have injuries— bites, burns, bruises, fractures—for which there are no explanations, or the explanations offered raise suspicion and concerns. Physical abuse has been linked to aggressive behaviour, emotional and behavioural problems and educational difficulties. Changes to the law have clarified the term 'reasonable chastisement'. Smacking and other forms of corporal punishment that leave marks or injuries should be considered physical abuse.

Emotional Emotional abuse has a significant impact on a developing child's mental health, behaviour and self-esteem. Symptoms may include — reverting to younger behaviour, nervousness, sudden under-achievement, attention-seeking, running away, stealing, lying.

Sexual Pre-occupation with sexual matters evident in words, play, drawings; being sexually provocative with adults; disturbed sleep, nightmares, bedwetting; secretive relationships with adults or children; tummy pains with no apparent cause. Disturbed behaviour including self-harm, sadness, depression and a loss of self-esteem have also all been linked to sexual abuse

Neglect Looking ill-cared for and unhappy, being withdrawn or aggressive, having lingering injuries or health problems. Experience low self-esteem, feelings of being unloved and isolated.

Remember:

*These are **SIGNS NOT EVIDENCE** of abuse and some may have innocent explanations. However, a child showing these signs is likely to need support and you should accept the possibility that he/she may have been significantly harmed.*

How to Respond

_____ Project and all its appointed youth workers and volunteers are committed to the safeguarding of children and young people from physical, sexual or emotional abuse. The following procedures will be followed where abuse is disclosed or discovered.

The following is a summary only, for reference. It is no substitute for training and should be used in conjunction with the Safeguarding Flowchart. (p.10)

Respond to the child in the following manner:

- Allow the young person to speak in their own words.
- Accept what the young person says and affirm them in having done the right thing.
- Listen attentively but do not push for information or ask leading questions.
- Do not display shock or disbelief.
- Do not ask to see physical evidence of abuse.
- Be aware that the child may have been threatened.
- Tell the child they are not to blame.
- Do not promise secrecy.
- Explain to the young that you take what they say seriously and as a result may need to speak to someone else such as Social Care
- Let them know what you are going to do next, who you are going to tell and why, and roughly what will happen.
- Reassure the young person of your ongoing support.

Under no circumstances attempt to approach or question the alleged perpetrator.

**Make notes as soon as possible (preferably within an hour of being told), writing down:
(using appropriate incident form)**

- Exactly what the child said
- What you said in reply to the child
- When he/she said it and what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g. description of activity).
- Record dates and times of these events and when you made the record.
- Keep all hand written notes securely, even if these have been typed subsequently.

Report your discussion as soon as possible to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

If the latter is implicated or unavailable report to worker-in-charge. If both are implicated or unavailable, report to Social Care:

Children's Social Care: 0845 058058

If it is felt the young person is in danger the police should be contacted immediately:

Derbyshire Police: 0845 123 33 33

You should not discuss your suspicions or allegations with anyone other than those nominated in the above point.

Once a child has talked about abuse the worker and Co-ordinator should consider whether or not it is safe for a child to return home to a potentially abusive situation. On rare occasions it might be necessary to take immediate action to contact Social Care and/or police to discuss putting into effect safety measures for the child so that they do not return home.

A Guide to Good Practice & Codes of Behaviour

Project will ensure that:

As far as possible a worker is not alone with a child where their activity cannot be seen. On premises, this may mean leaving doors open, or two groups working in the same room.

In a mentoring or counseling situation with a young person, where privacy and confidentiality are important, try to make sure that another adult knows the interview is taking place and with whom. If possible, another adult should be in the building, and the young person should know they are there. Wherever possible the counseling should be conducted by a worker of the same sex.

Ensure that access to the building is safe and well lit.

You, the worker, should ensure that you:

- Treat all children and young people with respect and dignity
- Provide an example of good conduct you wish others to follow.
- Watch your language, tone of voice, and where you put your body.
- Remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned.
- Recognize that special caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people.
- Operate within the organisation's policies & procedures.
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspicions of abuse.

You should not:

- Invade the privacy of children when they are showering or toileting.
- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games
- Make sexually suggestive comments about or to a young person, even in 'fun'
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts.

- Either exaggerate or trivialize child abuse issues.
- Show favouritism to any individual.
- Use scapegoat, ridicule, or reject a child or young person
- Let a young person involve you in excessive attention-seeking that is overtly sexual or physical in nature.
- Invite a child or young person to your home alone: invite a group, or ensure that someone else is in the house. Make sure the parents know where the child is.
- Give lifts to children or young people on their own, other than for short journeys. If they are alone, ask them to sit in the rear of the car and wherever possible arrange for the driver to be of the same sex as the child(ren).
- Share sleeping accommodation with children or young people if you take a group away.
- Believe 'it could never happen to me'.
- Take a chance when common sense, policy or practice suggests another more prudent approach.

Intimate Care

A situation may arise when _____ Project staff are required to do things of a personal nature for young people in our care, particularly if they are disabled. Such tasks should only be carried out with the full consent of parents/carers. In an emergency situation that requires this type of help, parents/carers should be informed as soon as is reasonably possible.

In such situations staff will ensure that they are sensitive to the young person and undertake personal care tasks with the utmost discretion.

Trips & Activities

_____ Project is committed to being 'positively safe' in our provision of youth work activities.

- Young people will be adequately supervised at all times.
- An adequate staffing ratio of adult to young person will be available in all sessions.
- All activities will be adequately risk assessed and any activity using potentially dangerous equipment needs adequately trained staff, constant adult supervision & protective clothing where necessary.
- Parental consent will be necessary for all off-site activities
- Information should be collected about a young person's allergies, medical problems or any special needs.
- All methods of transport will be risk assessed.
- Buildings & equipment being used will be safe and meet required standards such as fire and health & safety.
- There will be sufficient heating & ventilation.
- Fire precautions will be in place, exits marked and action plans displayed.
- First Aid facilities will be readily available, clearly marked and adequately stocked.
- There will be access to a telephone.
- Insurance cover will cover all necessary activities, transport & public liability.

Anti-Bullying

_____ Project recognises the seriousness of bullying and the affects it can have on a young person.

We have defined bullying as the use of physical or verbal aggression with the intention of hurting someone physically, emotionally or mentally.

_____ Project is aware that bullying can occur in many forms; emotional, physical, racist, sexual, homophobic, verbal and cyberbullying through the use of ICT, particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else.

Where bullying is suspected or witnessed:

- The Safeguarding Co-ordinator will be consulted
- Parents will be informed of the circumstances and any action taken
- Appropriate agencies informed if necessary, including the police
- Action taken in accordance with the youth project guidelines, this may include suspension or expulsion (refer to the appropriate policy)

Internet Safety

_____ Project is aware of both the opportunities and risks associated with the use of the internet, particularly in relation to young people and social networking sites. We will therefore implement the following measures to promote a safe environment and safe internet usage by young people.

- We will place computers where they are easily visible by all and where the viewing content can be easily monitored by staff.
- We will clearly display our internet usage policy which advises young people on the safe use of chat rooms and social networking sites.
- We will clearly display the anti cyber bullying code.
- We will encourage young people to report anything they come across that they feel is abusive, offensive or makes them feel uncomfortable.

Allegations Against Staff (Whistleblowing)

Where there has been an allegation or suspicion that a member of staff has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a young person
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child
- Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they are unsuitability to work with young people

Employees must acknowledge their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior management and/or relevant agencies. Although this can be difficult this is particularly important where the welfare of young people may be at risk.

You may be the first to recognise that something is wrong but may not feel able to express your concerns out of a feeling that this would be disloyal to colleagues or you may fear harassment or victimisation. These feelings, however natural, must never result in a child or young person continuing to be unnecessarily at risk. Remember it is often the most vulnerable children or young people who are targeted. These children need someone like you to safeguard their welfare:

Don't think what if I'm wrong - think what if I'm right

Reasons for whistle blowing

- Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour
- To prevent the problem worsening or widening
- To protect or reduce risks to others
- To prevent becoming implicated yourself

What stops people from whistle blowing

- Starting a chain of events which spirals
- Disrupting the work or project
- Fear of getting it wrong
- Fear of repercussions or damaging careers
- Fear of not being believed

The recipient must inform the person in charge or the Safeguarding Coordinator, who will consult/make a referral to the Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Board

If one of the above is implicated in the allegation or suspicion the member of staff should go direct to the Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Board.

Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Board: 01629 532169

Further information is available from Section 11 – Allegations against Staff, Carers and Volunteers of the Derbyshire Safeguarding Boards Handbook, www.derbyshirescb.org.uk

Following any allegation the Trustees will review the circumstances, to access if any amendments are required to policies/procedures and practices of the organisation.

What happens next?

- You should be given information on the nature and progress of any enquiries
- Your line manager has a responsibility to protect you from harassment or victimisation
- No action will be taken against you if the concern proves to be unfounded and was raised in good faith
- Malicious allegations may be considered a disciplinary offence

Recruitment

All staff and volunteers will be subject to a careful selection process.

- All posts will require the completion of an application form and the person's identity will be checked against a suitable document, such as their passport.
- Two references will be taken up before any new employee can begin work.
- Interview Panels will have at least two members.
- Advice will be sought if recruiting someone with a Criminal Record.
- All staff and volunteers will undergo a Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure check before any unsupervised contact with children or young people.
- All staff will complete a three month probationary period.
- All staff will receive regular supervision/appraisal.

Induction & Training

All staff and volunteers will undergo safeguarding training appropriate to their role and responsibilities.

New staff and volunteers will have safeguarding awareness training as part of their induction before they have contact with young people. Induction will ensure that all staff and volunteers have read through and understood this manual.

Copies of the Safeguarding Manual will be distributed to all staff with updates distributed when necessary.

Annual training will be organised by the Head of Youth Work Development. Training will be internal or external as appropriate.

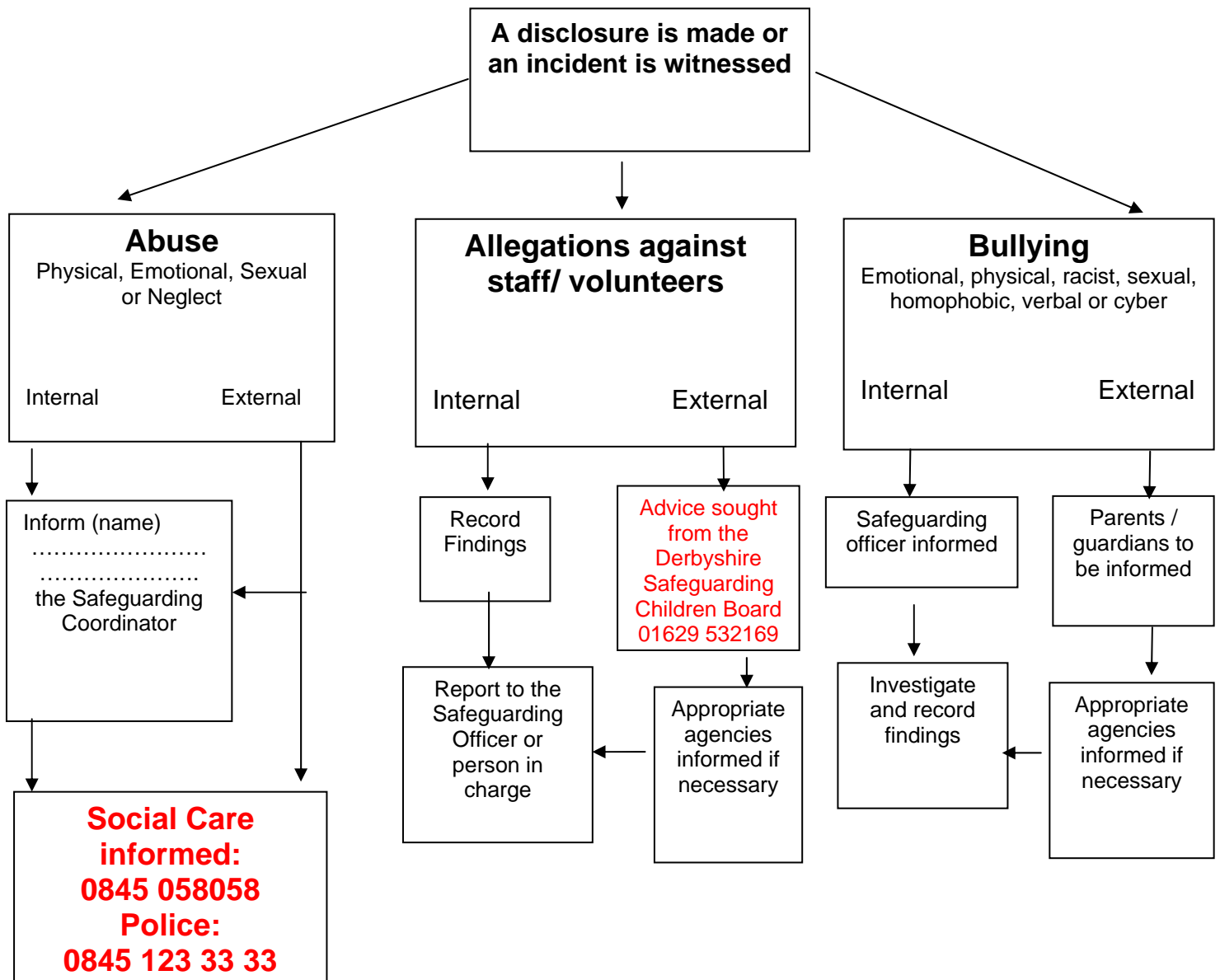
Information Sharing Arrangements

_____ Project recognises the importance of effective inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people. This also necessitates a commitment to effective information sharing arrangements. In such situations when it may be necessary to share information in the interests of effective safeguarding, _____ Project will seek clarity and reference from the current DCSF guidance on Information Sharing and the Derbyshire Children and Young People's Trust Information Sharing Agreement & Guidance for Practitioners.

Useful Contacts

Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Board www.derbyshirescb.org.uk	01629 532169
Derbyshire Police	0845 123 33 33
Derbyshire PCT www.derbyshirecountypct.nhs.uk	01246 231 255
Derbyshire Social Care www.derbyshire.gov.uk	0845 058058
NSPCC www.nspcc.org.uk	0808 800 5000
Child Line	0800 1111
Derbyshire Runaways www.youthreach.co.uk/runaways	01773 583037 (National)0808 800 70 70

Safeguarding Flow Chart



To be used in conjunction with the organisations Safeguarding Policy.

If in doubt contact Social Care

0845 058058