



SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

Procedures and Advice for Community, Voluntary & Faith Groups (The 3rd Sector)

June

2011

1 Introduction

1.1

The aim of this document is to help any Community, Voluntary, or Faith Group in Leeds develop effective Safeguarding Policies which will be in line with the Policies and Procedures of the Leeds Safeguarding Children Board

It is hoped that the document will provide any of these Groups/Organisations with a basic framework which can be built on and tailored to meet their individual needs

The document also aims in Section 5 to give advice on some issues of child protection which it is hoped will help groups in their day to day practice.

1.2

Within the area of child protection it is vital that all staff and volunteers know what to do if they are concerned about a child. It is equally important that parents/carers and young people themselves are aware that the Organisation takes the safety and welfare of children/young people into consideration in every activity that is undertaken.

(see Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010, Section 11 Children Act 2004, Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education 2007)

1.3

Child abuse exists in all societies and cultures. It exists in family settings and in institutions. Often the abuser is known to the victim. It is their closeness and the position of trust that makes the criminal act much easier. It would be simplistic and naïve on the part of any Organisation to think that their families and institutions are immune. Acknowledgement of a disease makes it treatment possible; ignorance or denial makes treatment impossible, and can be fatal.

1.4

Community, Voluntary, Faith Groups are often in the front line in providing services for children and families and they need to ensure that they:

- adopt safeguarding policies and procedures
- follow procedures for safer recruitment
- ensure workers receive child protection training
- follow government guidelines in relation to safe working practice

1.5

Similarly Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) are expected to work with these communities and others to safeguard children. They have a responsibility for making sure safeguarding arrangements operate effectively within their geographical jurisdiction. LSCBs can help ensure that communities are supported in ensuring they have safeguarding arrangements in place, and that working relationships develop between them and the statutory agencies.

1.6

As well as government expectations and, in addition to the requirements of funding bodies, organisations need to have policies and procedures in place to meet the expectations of their insurers, the Charity Commission, and Commissioning Agencies.

1.7

If assistance is required in developing your Child Protection Policies or Procedures, please contact Leeds Safeguarding Children Board in the first instance on **0113 395 1334**

2. Developing your Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures

2.1

Your Group's Child Protection procedures should detail the steps which will be followed where there are concerns that a child or young person could be experiencing abuse and/or neglect. The procedures should help to ensure a speedy and effective response for dealing with such concerns. They should also detail procedures for responding to allegations against members of staff or volunteers. It is important that your procedures comply with the West Yorkshire Consortium Safeguarding Procedures which can be viewed on the Leeds LSCB website

2.2

Group's who provide education provision i.e supplementary schools, must ensure that their child protection policy has regards to and is compliant with the Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2007).

3 Suggested outline when writing your procedures

3.1 Introduction:

Your introduction should give a brief outline of the work that you do with children and young people. You should make it clear that you are committed to the welfare and protection of children and/or young people within all the activities you undertake

3.2 Recognising the Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

It is important in this section to provide definitions of abuse under the headings of Physical Abuse, Emotional Abuse, Sexual Abuse and Neglect, as detailed in “Working Together to Safeguard Children” 2010, Chapter 1, as follows:

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/carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE: Is 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 in so far 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 cyber-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 maltreatment of a child, though it may 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. The activities 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. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

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. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

3.3 Becoming Aware of a Child Protection issue

It is also important that your procedures provide some detail about how you become aware about a child or young person's safety.

For example

- *a third party or anonymous allegation is received;*
- *a child or young person's appearance, behavior, play, drawing or statements cause suspicion of abuse and/or neglect;*
- *a child or young person reports an incident(s) of alleged abuse which occurred some time ago;*
- *a written report is made regarding the serious misconduct of a worker towards a child or young person.*

3.4 A Named Person(s) for Child Protection

Any organisation that works with children or young people should have in place a named person who is responsible for dealing with child protection issues that may arise. A deputy should be made available in their absence. These individuals should be trained in child protection. This training is available through the Leeds Safeguarding Children Board *For example:*

:Named Person for Child Protection: _____
Work telephone number: _____
Mobile number: _____
Emergency contact no: _____

Deputy *Name of contact person:* _____
Work telephone number: _____
Mobile number: _____
Emergency contact no: _____

The roles and responsibilities of the named persons are:

- To ensure that all staff are aware of what they should do and who they should go to if they are concerned that a child/young person maybe subject to abuse or neglect.
- Ensure that any concerns about a child/young person are acted on, clearly recorded, referred on where necessary and, followed up to ensure the issues are addressed.
- To ensure they attend the relevant training course provided by the LSCB

3.5 Stages to Follow if you are Worried about a Child

Stage 1

- Initially talk to a child/young person about what you are observing. It is okay to ask questions, *for example: "I've noticed that you don't appear yourself today, is everything okay?"* But never use leading questions
- Listen carefully to what the young person has to say and take it seriously;
- Never investigate or take sole responsibility for a situation where child/young person talks about matters that may be indicative of abuse;
- Always explain to children and young people that any information they have given will have to be shared with others, if this indicates they and or other children are at risk of harm;
- Notify the organisation's Named Person for Child Protection
- Record what was said as soon as possible after any disclosure; The person who receives the allegation or has the concern should complete a pro-forma and ensure it is signed and dated.
- Respect confidentiality and file documents securely;

Stage 2

- The Named person(s) should take immediate action if there is a suspicion that a child has been abused or likely to be abused. In this situation the Named Person should contact the police and/or Leeds Children and Young People's Social Care. (see Section 6). If a referral is made direct to the Leeds Children and Young People's Social Care this should be followed up in writing within 24 hrs.

NB Parents / carers will need to be informed about any referral to Children & Young people's Social Care unless to do so would place the child at an increased risk of harm.

3.6 Managing Allegations made against a member of staff or volunteer

All Groups should have procedures in place to ensure that any allegation made against a member of staff is dealt with appropriately.

Any allegations made against a member of staff should be discussed with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) who is based within the Child Protection Unit (0113 247 8653)

If the allegation is about a lead person in your organisation then the matter should again be discussed with the LADO

The worker must ensure that that the child is safe and away from the person against whom the allegation is made.

Regardless of whether a police and/or Children and Young People's Social Care investigation follows, an internal investigation should take place and consideration is given to the operation of disciplinary procedures. This may involve an immediate suspension and/or ultimate dismissal dependant on the nature of the incident.

3.7 Management and supervision of staff / volunteers

It is important that all staff have an opportunity to discuss with their line manager any child protection matter giving them concern and this is best done by providing regular supervision. Your procedures should indicate the supervision arrangements in place for your staff

3.8 Recording and managing confidential information.

This section should include:

- A form for recording concerns/allegations of abuse, harm and neglect should be attached to the guidelines. This can be a very simple form outlining name of child, date of birth, date and details of incident. The person who receives the allegation or has the concern should complete and sign this form.
- A summary of the organisation's commitment to manage confidential information safely, how information is stored and, the circumstances under which information needs to be shared
- A statement about the rights of children and young people to confidentiality unless the organisation considers they could be at risk of abuse and/or harm.

3.8 Distributing/Reviewing Policies and Procedures

All Groups should have in place a system for distributing, displaying and reviewing their overall policies and procedures.

They should be reviewed annually, signed by the Management Committee (Best practice guidelines advise the involvement of parents/carers and young people in developing policies that affect them)

Your Policies and Procedures should be displayed on a prominent notice board and on your web site and a copy should be given or be made easily available to all staff and parents.

3.10 Responsibilities of Management Committees

All groups need to make sure that their policies and procedures are approved by their Management Committees. These Committees need to understand that they are ultimately accountable for all that happens within their establishment and that includes the implementation of effective Child Protection Procedures

Some of the ways which this can be achieved

- Provide written guidance to all staff and committee members
- Ensure everyone understands their legal duties and responsibilities

Management committees should also

- Develop a clear framework for behaviour management towards any children or young people
- Provide information about procedures to follow if an allegation is made
- Ensure all workers have training to recognize the signs and symptoms of abuse
- Ensure that all staff have enhanced CRB checks.
- Ensure all workers understand that physical punishment or threat of physical punishment must never be used
- Ensure that workers understand that verbal humiliation of children is unacceptable

4. Safer Recruitment

Finding and recruiting the right people to work with children can be difficult. So this is a checklist to help in the task

- Write a clear job description (what tasks the applicant will do) and a role profile (what skills the person will be expected to have).
- Use application forms to assess the candidate's suitability for the role. This makes it easier to compare the experience of candidates and helps you to get all of the important information you need to ask.
- Make it clear that you have a commitment to safeguarding and protecting children. You could include this in a job application pack.
- Have a face-to-face interview with pre-planned and clear questions.
- Include a question about whether they have any criminal convictions, cautions, other legal restrictions or pending cases that might affect their suitability to work with children.
- Check the candidate's identity by asking them to bring photographic ID.
- Check the candidate actually holds any relevant qualifications they say they have.

- Apply for a Criminal Records Bureau check. This should be for all your staff who have contact with children or have access to your records, including volunteers, trustees, and committee members. *NB Access to the Bureau's services is available to all groups working with children, either directly as registered bodies or through umbrella groups. It is likely that if small your group will have to go through an umbrella body to access checks – you can seek information directly from CRB (www.crb.gov.uk or 0870 909 0811)*
- Take up references. Ask specifically about an individual's suitability to work with children.
- Provide a copy of your safeguarding/child protection procedures

There may be occasions where you wish to appoint a worker from abroad. This will mean that CRB disclosures may not be able to be undertaken. Nevertheless a "fit person" check may be available from the country the person is moving from. You should ensure that additional references are undertaken on any worker from abroad

5 Other Important Issues, Forms of Abuse and Good Practice Advice

5.1 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM has been illegal in the UK since the introduction of The Prohibition of Female Circumcision Act 1985. Although this Act made it illegal to practice Female Circumcision in the UK no prosecutions have been recorded due to many girls being taken abroad for this procedure. The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 was therefore introduced to extend its jurisdictions abroad as well as increase the sentence from 5 to a maximum of 14 years imprisonment for those found to conduct the procedure and aiding and abetting.

5.2 Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007

A forced marriage is one that is carried out without the full consent and approval of both parties and duress is involved, including physical and Psychological. It is different from an arranged marriage where the spouses' families take a leading role in introducing suitable partners or making marriage arrangements, but the final choice of whether to accept the suitor or not remains with the young people.

Forced marriage is a violation of a person's human rights and cannot be justified on religious or cultural grounds.

There are a number of legal issues related to forced marriage

- The minimum age at which a person is able to give consent to marriage is 16
- A person aged 16-18 may not marry without consent from those with parental responsibility
- a marriage is voidable if either party to the marriage did not consent to it
- sexual intercourse without consent is rape, whether or not it takes place within a marriage
- perpetrators can be prosecuted for a range of offences
- civil courts can now make a Forced Marriage Protection Order to safeguard someone at risk of or already subject to a forced marriage
- As the main authority and the officiator of the marriage ceremony, any priest, minister or imam ought to request consent from both young people wishing to participate in the marriage union

See Section 6 for details of the **Forced Marriage Unit**

5.3 Spirit possession

The belief in “possession”, “jinn”, and “witchcraft” is common. It is not confined to particular countries, religions or cultures, nor is it confined to new immigrant communities in this country. Child abuse generally occurs when a parent or carer views a child as being “different” attributing this difference to the child being possessed and then attempting to exorcise him or her. This ritual can involve severe beating, burning, starvation and/or isolation and usually in the same household where the child lives. Any other children in the household may well be cared for with all their needs met by their carers

Children may exhibit a variety of behaviours that they may need support with; for example; they may become withdrawn or anxious, aggressive or mimic behaviours as a consequence of distress or abuse. However, if families feel

Working Together (2010) Sections 6.49 to 6.53 addresses “Child abuse linked to belief in “possession” or “witchcraft”, or in other ways related to spiritual or religious belief’. Earlier In 2007 the Government issued “*Safeguarding Children from Abuse linked to a belief in Spirit Possession*”. There is also a Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) publication entitled *Good Practice for Working with Faith Communities- Spirit Possession and Abuse*” Issues such as mental health issues may become misinterpreted or blurred with spirit possession and therefore vulnerable children may not get the support they need.

It is good practice for “lead persons” to access training on mental health issues: this will increase their awareness and knowledge on the mental health issues and will enable them to make the appropriate referrals to support the individual.

5.4 Children and Fasting

Some children are required to fast from the age of puberty, and this is not harmful.

Fasting prior to this age is tolerated differently depending on the children's general health, nutrition and attitude. Fasting prior to the age of seven or eight years old is not advisable, although it is a good idea to make the children aware of the practice of fasting in the community around them, and to give them a 'taste' of fasting, e.g. a few hours at a time.

5.5 Children with Special Needs

Special care and attention should be given to all children with disabilities and special need for two reasons: They are often at increased risk of abuse and neglect because

- They have fewer outside contacts than other children
- They receive intimate personal care possibly from a number of carers
- They have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse
- They have communication problems making it difficult to tell others what is happening
- They may be inhibited about complaining because of a fear of losing services
- They may be especially vulnerable to bullying and intimidation

5.6 Bullying

Bullying may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those who are bullied to defend themselves. The three main types of bullying are:

- Physical (eg. hitting, kicking, theft)
- Verbal (eg racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling)
- Emotional (eg. Isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group)

Bullying can cause considerable distress to children, to the extent that it affects their health and development or, at the extreme, causes them significant harm (including self harm)

5.7 Cyberbullying

This is when a person or a group of people threaten, tease or embarrass someone else by using a mobile phone, the internet or other technologies.

Those who take part in this often target their victims by putting a comment to a photo on a blog, or asking their friends to send it to other people. It can also include

- Email- sending messages that can be threatening or upsetting
- Instant messenger and chatrooms – sending messages directly to the victim or to friends. Other people are then invited to join the bullying conversation
- Social networking sites – setting up profiles on sites such as Facebook or Bebo to make fun of the victim
- Mobile phone- sending humiliating and abusive text messages, including photo and video messages
- Interactive gaming games consoles allow players to chat online in a multi player game. Cyber bullies can abuse other players by using threats or locking victims out of games

5.8 Punishment: Discipline or Abuse?

One of the risk factors identified for abuse is the belief in and use of physical punishment as a form of discipline. Physical punishment includes

- Spanking, slapping, smacking with the hand
- Striking with an object (eg belt, shoe, ruler, stock)
- Forcing a child to hold an uncomfortable position eg. Standing motionless or kneeling on the floor

In law parents in the UK can use “reasonable chastisement” when punishing their children(Section 58 Children Act 2004). However hitting a child hard enough to leave visible bruising, grazes, scratches, minor swellings or cuts can result in a criminal offence.

Anyone other than a parent using **any** form of physical force to discipline a child may be accused of physical abuse and is committing a criminal offence.

In any case research has found that physical punishment can lead to child aggression, delinquency and poor mental health. Physical punishment does not effectively deter the repetition of undesirable behaviour; rather it teaches children that violence pays, and may lead to aggressive, anti-social behaviour.

Explore more constructive alternative approaches to discipline- It works better to reward good behaviour and thus encourage its repetition than to punish wrong behaviour. Explain fully to children what you want them to do. Tell them what they have to do rather than what they don't have to do. Recognise, praise and reward good behaviour- the best way to achieve good behaviour is to praise children who are doing well

6. Useful Contacts/ Documents

Leeds Safeguarding Children Board	www.leedslscb.org.uk	0113 395 1334
Children Leeds	www.leedsinitiative.org/children	0113 395 0247
Child Protection Team		0113 247 8653
Supplementary Education Co-ordinator (Wesley Wu)		07891270385
Children and Young People's Social Care Call Centre (normal working hours)		0113 222 4403
Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team		0113 240 9536
West Yorkshire Police		0845 60 60 60 6
NSPCC Leeds Office		0113 217 2200

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline

The NSPCC Child Protection Helpline is a free 24-hour service available in all languages that provides counselling, information and advice to anyone concerned about a child at risk of abuse. Telephone: 0808 800 5000 – Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Domestic Violence Helpline: 0808 2000 247

Muslim Youth Helpline: 0808 808 2008

The Forced Marriage Unit

(+44) (0)20 7008 0151 between 9 am and 5pm Monday to Friday
Emergency Duty Officer (out of office hours)
(+44) (0)20 7008 1500
Or e-mail: fmf@fco.gov.uk
Forced Marriage Unit at: www.fco.gov.uk/forcedmarriage

Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS)

is an independent Christian child care charity working across the faith sector
www.ccpas.co.uk

Children Leeds website

www.leedsinitiative.org/children

“Safe Network”

www.safenetwork.org.uk. This web site is also very helpful for a wide range of help and advice on child protection issues for smaller community groups including an online guide to developing your Safeguarding standards.

“AFRUCA” - Africans Unite Against Child Abuse

promoting the rights and welfare of African children in the UK, particularly concentrating on safeguarding issues.
0844 660 8607 www.afruca.org

Child Protection in Faith-Based Environments

A Guideline Report – Dr. G. Siddiqui
The Muslim Parliament of Great Britain
109 Fulham Palace Road, London, W6 8JA

A Guide to Healthy Fasting

Communities in Action supported by the NHS have produced a helpful booklet: “Ramadan Health Guide”

Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education .

Department for Education and Skills Guidance published in 2007.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010

HM Government- a guide to inter agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children