



Serving and Protecting Selsey's Young People
Youth Dream (Selsey) Limited
Registered in England and Wales
Company Registration No. 8752886 Registered Charity No. 1155982

The Bridge Youth Support Centre

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY

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Youth Dream

October 2022

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Child Protection and Safeguarding Children

1.0 Introduction

The Children's Act 1989 states that a child's welfare is paramount and that every child has a right to be protected from abuse, neglect and exploitation. The Government's Every Child Matters agenda aims to ensure that every child attains their full potential. Safeguarding children from harm plays an important part in meeting this goal. Safeguarding is also relevant to meeting the duty of care that Youth Dream owes towards children with whom it has contact (under 18 years old) or by working with the parents or carers of those children.

Youth Dream is committed to promoting the welfare of children and young people when they come into contact with the services we provide, or when working with their parents or carers. Youth Dream's Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Policy and accompanying procedures is designed to promote the welfare of children, to protect children from potential abuse and to protect staff and volunteers from potential false allegations of abuse. It complements and is compatible with the Safeguarding Children Policies and Guidance produced by **West Sussex County Council and Pan Sussex Procedures**.

1.1 Scope

The Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures apply to all staff and volunteers, and those working on behalf of Youth Dream whose work involve contact with children and young people and their parents, hereafter are referred to as 'staff'. Contractors and/or those providing a service on behalf of Youth Dream and its trustees shall comply with the terms of this policy and procedure (in addition to following their own policy, which shall be no less onerous than Youth Dream's Policy) and contractors shall ensure that employees and sub-contractors do likewise throughout the duration of their contract with children and young people.

1.2 Roles and Responsibilities

Effective Safeguarding practice starts with having in place effective procedures. Lines of responsibility should be clear, with leadership from Trustee level. Safeguarding issues should be reported to the Trustee Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible. All staff from across Youth Dream should be involved in implementation and contributing to a culture where Safeguarding is openly discussed. Responsibility is delegated to the Safeguarding Team as listed in **Appendix 1 – 'Essential Contacts'** who, for operational purposes will have a nominated senior, she/he being the Chair of Trustees for Youth Dream Ltd. Final accountability for ensuring Youth Dream fulfils its Child Protection and Safeguarding responsibilities falls to the Chair of Trustees. Members of staff with particular responsibilities are required to attend all relevant Safeguarding training provided and will be responsible for:

- The actions set out in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Children policy
- Maintaining a record of all Child Protection related documents and reports

- Receiving and recording information regarding Child Protection concerns
- Assessing the information promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information as appropriate
- Consulting with the relevant statutory agencies regarding any Child Protection concerns raised
- Making formal referrals to relevant statutory agencies regarding any Child Protection concerns

1.2.1 Local Safeguarding Board

A Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is a multi-agency body set up in every local authority. Each LSCB has an independent Chair, that is, someone who doesn't work for social services. However the Chair will work closely with the Director of Children's Services.

The role of the LSCB is to:

- coordinate what is done by everyone on the LSCB to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the area
- make sure that each organisation acts effectively when they are doing this.

The LSCB publishes policies and procedures for child protection in their area.

What organisations are represented on the LSCB?

As well as the local authority, other organisations are represented on the LSCB. They include:

- the police
- health services
- probation services
- the local youth offending team
- in England, CAFCASS (Children and Family Courts Advisory and Support Service)
- in Wales, CAFCASS CYMRU (Children and Family Courts Advisory and Support Service).

The LSCB can also include representatives from other people or organisations in the community if their activities relate to children, for example, the NSPCC or Barnados.

LSCB policies about child protection

Each LSCB must draw up their own procedures for dealing with child abuse, in line with legislation and government guidance. Because of this, procedures for dealing with child abuse may be different in different local authority areas. Copies of the local procedures are available online from the local authority child protection team. See Appendix 2 or go to:

<http://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/>

Youth Dream falls under the remit of the **West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSSCP)**.

2.0 LEGAL FRAMEWORKS

The government defines child protection as;

‘a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm’.

2.1 The Children Act 1989

This Act defines the basis for compulsory intervention into family life. It also provides the legal framework for defining the situations in which local authorities have a duty to make enquiries about what, if any, action they should take to safeguard or promote the welfare of the child.

2.2 The Children Act 2004

Section 10 of this Act places a duty on local authorities and other key bodies to cooperate and share information with a view to improving the wellbeing of children. Section 11 of this Act places a duty on certain key bodies to make arrangements to ensure their functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It is important to ensure that intervention from Children’s Social Care does not place a child and their family at greater risk, any potential risk factors that could escalate due to referral and should be discussed with the social worker.

2.3 The Adoption and Children Act 2002

The definition of significant harm has been updated by this Act S.120 to include ill-treatment or the impairment of health or development suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another.

2.4 Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021

See Appendix 3

2.5 Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

See Appendix 4

2.6 Keeping Children Safe during Community Activities, After-School Clubs and Tuition 2020

See Appendix 13

3.0 Children Safeguarding Policy

3.1 Introduction

This policy is to be used by all staff and volunteers who carry out services under Youth Dream. Contract workers or those delivering services on behalf of Youth Dream shall adhere to the terms of this policy in addition to following their own. The policy describes what

constitutes the protection and safeguarding of children and young people and then sets out the process that staff and volunteers must follow to promote the best interests of the child and safeguarding their own position when engaging with young people.

3.2 What does safeguarding children mean?

Safeguarding children is:

“the action we take to promote the welfare of children and young people and protect them from harm – this is everyone’s responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play”.

3.3 The government defines child protection as;

‘a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer significant harm’.

- Working Together to Safeguard Children DfE 2015

4.0 Categories of Abuse

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect

5.0 Recognising physical abuse, including:

- ***FGM (Female Genital Mutilation)***
- ***Breast Ironing***
- ***Peer on Peer Abuse***
- ***Dosing***
- ***Honour Based Violence***
- ***Forced Marriage***

- Soft tissue bruising, particularly around the head and neck
- Bruising of different ages
- Bruising or any injuries to an immobile baby
- Injuries to a baby's mouth
- Bruising or marks that reflect the use of an object (e.g. handprints)
- Scalds and burns inconsistent with the explanation given
- Bite marks
- Unexplained fractures
- Any unexplained injuries

The presence of the following factors should be a cause for concern:

- Discrepancy between the injury and explanation
- Conflicting or changing explanations or no explanation for the injury
- Delay in seeking treatment
- Parents taking a child to different hospitals when injured
- Injuries of different ages
- History of previous injuries or concerns
- Previous abuse
- Evidence of substance misuse
- History of aggression and past violence
- An allegation of abuse from the child
- Reluctance to talk about injury

5.1 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female genital mutilation (FGM), is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It's also known as female circumcision cutting or sunna.

Religious, social or cultural reasons are sometimes given for FGM. However, FGM is child abuse. It's dangerous and a criminal offence.

There are no medical reasons to carry out FGM. It doesn't enhance fertility and it doesn't make childbirth safer. It is used to control female sexuality and can cause severe and long-lasting damage to physical and emotional health.

UK communities that are most at risk of FGM include Kenyan, Somali, Sudanese, Sierra Leonean, Egyptian, Nigerian and Eritrean. Non-African communities that practise FGM include Yemeni, Afghani, Kurdish, Indonesian and Pakistani.

- <http://www.brightonandhove|scb.org.uk/fgm-resource-pack/>

A Woman Or Girl Who Has Had FGM performed on her may:

- Have difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- Spend longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet
- Have unusual behaviour after an absence from school or college
- Be particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations
- Ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear

Staff must recognise this practice as a criminal offence and have a duty to pass any information on to the police or relevant agencies in relation to a young person under the age of 18.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/female-genital-mutilation-fgm/>

(Further information, support, advice and contacts can be found in the Youth Dream Tool Kit)

5.2 Breast Ironing

5.2.1 Introduction

Breast Ironing also known as “Breast Flattening” is the process whereby young pubescent girls breasts are ironed, massaged and/or pounded down through the use of hard or heated objects in order for the breasts to disappear or delay the development of the breasts entirely. It is believed that by carrying out this act, young girls will be protected from harassment, rape, abduction and early forced marriage and therefore be kept in education.

Much like Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Breast Ironing is a harmful cultural practice and is child abuse. Professionals working with children and young people must be able to identify the signs and symptoms of girls who are at risk of or have undergone breast ironing. Similarly to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), breast ironing is classified as physical abuse therefore professionals must follow their Local Safeguarding Children’s Board Procedures.

5.2.2 Definition

The United Nations (UN) states that Breast Ironing affects 3.8 million women around the world and has been identified as one of the five under-reported crimes relating to gender-based violence (<http://www.unwomenuk.org/breast-ironing-must-be-stopped/>). The custom uses large stones, a hammer or spatulas that have been heated over scorching coals to compress the breast tissue of girls as young as 9 years old. Those who derive from richer families may opt to use an elastic belt to press the breasts so as to prevent them from growing.

The mutilation is a traditional practice from Cameroon designed to make teenage girls look less “womanly” and to deter unwanted male attention, pregnancy and rape. The practice is commonly performed by family members, 58% of the time by the mother (<http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/CEDAW/HarmfulPractices/GenderEmpowermentandDevelopment.pdf>). In many cases the abuser thinks they are doing something good for their daughter, by delaying the effects of puberty so that she can continue her education, rather than getting married.

5.2.3 Law

There is no specific law within the UK around Breast Ironing, however it is a form of physical abuse and if professionals are concerned a child may be at risk of or suffering significant harm they must refer to their Local Safeguarding Children’s Board Procedures.

5.2.4 Risks

The girl generally believes that the practice is being carried out for her own good and she will often remain silent. Young pubescent girls usually aged between 9 – 15 years old and from practising communities are most at risk of breast ironing.

5.2.5 Indicators

Breast ironing is a well-kept secret between the young girl and her mother. Often the father remains completely unaware. Some indicators that a girl has undergone breast ironing are as follows:

- Unusual behaviour after an absence from school or college including depression, anxiety, aggression, withdrawn etc;
- Reluctance in undergoing normal medical examinations;
- Some girls may ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear;
- Fear of changing for physical activities due to scars showing or bandages being visible.

5.2.6 Where is it practiced?

Breast ironing is practiced in all ten regions of Cameroon and has been reported in Benin, Ivory Coast, Chad, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Togo, Zimbabwe and Guinea-Conakry. The charity CAWODIGO – CAME Women and Girls (<http://www.cawogido.co.uk/index.php>) is concerned that African immigrants have brought breast ironing practice with them to the UK. In their efforts to reduce the number of affected girls and women, CAME provides training for Cameroonian organisations working to protect girls from being abused through breast ironing and supporting families and communities.

5.2.7 Health consequences

Due to the instruments which are used during the process of breast ironing, for example, spoon/broom, stones, pestle, breast band, leaves etc. combined with insufficient aftercare, young girls are exposed to significant health risks. Breast ironing is painful and violates a young girl's physical integrity. It exposes girls to numerous health problems such as cancer, abscesses, itching, and discharge of milk, infection, dissymmetry of the breasts, cysts, breast infections, severe fever, tissue damage and even the complete disappearance of one or both breasts.

This form of mutilation not only has negative health consequences for the girls, but often proves futile when it comes to deterring teenage sexual activity according to CAME Women and Girls. The practice not only seriously damages a child's physical integrity, but also their social and psychological well-being.

5.2.8 Justifications

The practice is carried out under the misguided intention to “protect” women and girls from men's sexual harassment. These violent acts are not only perpetrated by men on women, but by older generations of women on young girls. In practicing communities, it is believed many boys and men believe girls whose breasts have grown are ready to have sex, therefore elders (mothers, grandmothers, aunties etc.) believe that by suppressing a girl's development of her breast she will be protected from rape, kidnapping, sexual harassment and early forced marriage.

5.3 Peer On Peer Abuse

Children can abuse other children, both in school and other settings such as public places like parks, online etc.

- Bullying including Cyber-Bullying
- Physical Abuse – hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair-pulling
- Sexual Violence – rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault
- Sexual Harrassment – sexual comments, remarks, jokes, online harassment
- Sexting – Youth Produced Sexual Imagery
- Initiation type violence and rituals

Peer on Peer Sexual abuse and harassment

- Can occur between two children of any age
- Can involve a group of children towards and individual or another group
- Can occur online and in person, both physical and verbal
- Some groups are more at risk eg. girls, children with SEND and those identifying as LGBT.

Children do not always feel able to speak out about their experiences of peer-on-peer sexual abuse.

They may be afraid of:

- being considered a 'snitch'
- getting in trouble themselves
- how they will be perceived by others
- teachers or other adults not being discrete
- their parents being informed

(Contextual Safeguarding Network, 2020).

If a child is unsure about whether or not they have been sexually abused, they might be worried about causing a fuss or getting someone else in trouble for 'no reason'.

Children may not always understand that they have experienced or carried out peer-on-peer sexual abuse. This might be because:

- they don't understand what constitutes appropriate, inappropriate, problematic or abusive sexualised behaviour
- they have experienced sexual abuse themselves and don't realise that what happened to them was wrong
- they don't know whether consent was given
- the abuse happened between friends or partners
- the abuse took place online
- they blame themselves for the abuse they received
- younger children lack knowledge of sex and sexuality as they are less likely to have received any relationships and sex education

You should balance the duty to safeguard the child who has experienced abuse with the need to support the child who has displayed harmful sexual behaviour. Children who witnessed the abuse or are friends of those involved may also be affected and need support. Each incident of or concern about peer-on-peer abuse will be different. You must report all concerns.

5.4 Dosing/Dousing

While still not common, reports of attacks by corrosive substances have risen. They can easily be carried and disguised in a drinks bottle or can. Dosing or dousing the deliberate act of throwing a corrosive substance at a person with the intention to cause pain and suffering.

Immediate and appropriate first aid treatment has been shown to make a dramatic difference to the amount of pain, suffering and long term scarring experienced by the casualty.

It is important to Report the crime and call 999 immediately – but put the phone on speaker or ask someone else to call so you don't delay giving immediate First Aid.

Contaminated clothing should be swiftly and very carefully removed, ensuring you don't pull any clothing that has stuck to the skin and that you protect yourself from being injured by the corrosive substance.

Then the affected skin should be rinsed under copious amounts of running water until medical attention arrives, flushing the eyes and face (and the airway if affected) first. A bottle of water is insufficient, you will need a lot of water, ideally from a tap, hosepipe or shower.

They should then be transported to hospital by the paramedics as soon as possible.

In summary:

- **Report** the attack: dial 999.
- **Remove** contaminated clothing carefully.
- **Rinse** skin immediately in running water.

5.5 Honour Based Violence

Honour-based violence is a “collection of practices that are used to control the behaviour within families in order to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour.”

Violence can take place when perpetrators perceive that a relative has brought shame to their family and/or to their community by breaking their 'honour code' which is closely related to their religion.

Women are most often the victims of honour-based violence but this is not always the case. However, what marks honour-based violence is that it is usually committed with some kind of approval or collusion from family and/or community members.

Males can be caught up in honour-based violence if they are believed to be supporting the victim and sometimes because of their involvement in what are perceived to be inappropriate relationships such as being in a homosexual relationship.

What is honour-based violence?

The kinds of offences that make up honour-based violence are listed below and will be explained at greater lengths throughout this blog.

Types of honour-based violence –

- Common assault.
- Domestic abuse.
- Forced marriage.
- Neglect and abandonment.
- Failure to secure regular attendance at school.
- Theft (for example of a passport or other form of identity).
- Child abduction.
- Abduction of an unmarried girls under the age of 16 from a parent or guardian.
- Abduction of a woman by force or for the sake of her property.
- Forced repatriation.
- Rape.
- Aiding and abetting a criminal offence.
- Kidnapping.
- False imprisonment.
- Murder.

A child or adult who is at risk of honour based violence is not only at risk of the threat of physical harm but also of emotional harm as well as they may witness violence directed towards a brother, sister or other family member.

5.6 Forced Marriage

Some families force their children to marry because they:

- think it's an important part of religion or culture
- are worried about the family's reputation and honour (in some cultures also known as 'izzat')
- want all of the family's money to stay together
- want to marry their children off in exchange for money
- don't approve of their child being [gay, lesbian, bisexual](#) or [transgender](#)
- don't want their children to have relationships or sex
- feel pressured by the community or other family members to follow traditions
- want to keep family values and honour.

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities or reduced capacity, cannot) consent to the marriage as they are pressurised, or abuse is used, to force them to do so. It is recognised in the UK as a form of domestic or child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights.

The pressure put on people to marry against their will may be:

- physical: for example, threats, physical violence or sexual violence
- emotional and psychological: for example, making someone feel like they are bringing 'shame' on their family

Financial abuse, for example taking someone's wages, may also be a factor.

The FMU operates a public helpline to provide advice and support to:

- victims and potential victims of forced marriage
- professionals dealing with cases

The FMU public helpline can help with:

- safety advice
- providing assistance when an unwanted spouse is due to move to the UK ('reluctant sponsor' cases)
- where possible, assistance in repatriation of victims held against their will overseas

Contact

- Telephone: +44 (0) 20 7008 0151
- email, including for outreach work: fmunit@fcdo.gov.uk
- Facebook: [Forced Marriage page](#)
- Twitter: [@FMUnit](#)

6.0 Recognising emotional abuse, including:

- **Radicalisation**
- **FGM (see 5.1 above)**
- **Online Emotional Abuse and E-Safety**
- **Sexual exploitation (see 7.1 below)**
- **Bullying and cyber bullying**
- **(witnessing) Domestic abuse**
- **County Lines**
- **Peer on Peer Abuse (see 5.3 above)**

6.1 Radicalisation and Prevent Duty

From 1 July 2015 all children service providers have a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the **Prevent duty**. Youth Dream has regard to the PREVENT DUTY 2015 and this duty works alongside other safeguarding policy and practice as required by Working Together To Safeguard Children – DfE 2015. All Youth Dream key staff have an oversight of the PREVENT DUTY.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty>

For The Prevent Duty June 2015 see Appendix 5.

<http://www.brightonandhovelscb.org.uk/working-together-to-prevent-extremism-and-terrorism/>

(Further information, support, advice and contacts can be found in the Youth Dream Tool Kit)

Safeguarding children and young people from radicalisation is no different from safeguarding them from other forms of harm. Indicators for vulnerability to radicalisation are the same as those you are already familiar with:

- Family tensions
- A sense of isolation
- Migration
- Distance from cultural heritage
- Experience of racism or discrimination
- Feeling of failure or worthlessness
- Those in the process of being radicalised may become involved with a new group of friends, search for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging, possess extremist literature or advocate violent actions, change their behaviour and language, or may seek to recruit others to an extremist ideology. (Merton Safeguarding Board, 2016)

Emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise, as the signs are usually behavioural rather than physical. The manifestations of emotional abuse might also indicate the presence of other kinds of abuse. An emotionally abused child may show some or all of the following characteristics:

- Sudden withdrawal from technology or change in computer or phone usage might indicate signs of cyber bullying
- Delays in physical, social or emotional development such as poor growth, speech delay, under-achievement in school, difficulty in forming peer relationships, difficulty becoming independent, concentration difficulties or limited ability to explore
- Abnormal attachments between a child and parent/carer e.g. anxious attachment
- Indiscriminate attachment or failure to attach
- Extreme behaviours such as over-compliant or disobedient, over-passive or aggressive
- Inability to accept boundaries
- Scapegoating within the family
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence
- Problems with habits such as rocking, thumb-sucking, over-eating, disturbed sleeping and excessive masturbation
- Problems with behaviour such as withdrawal, stealing, destructiveness, smearing and bedwetting, attention seeking behaviour and running away
- Problem with emotion such as anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, lack of confidence, inappropriate seeking or avoiding of affection, frozen watchfulness
- Self-harm behaviours such as head banging, scratching or cutting skin, pulling out hair, attempted suicide

It must be understood that these signs may be caused by issues other than abuse in the child's living arrangements, including poverty, bereavement, stressful change, discrimination, concerns at school. They are not in themselves indicative of emotionally abusive acts by parents or carers. It is important to remember that for emotional abuse to be said to be present there must be evidence of a causal link between the sign in the child and specific chronic abusive acts by carers. However, there are certain parental behaviours which unless changed will impact detrimentally on the child and which should meet the threshold for the likelihood of harm.

Such behaviour has been categorised as follows:

- Persistent negative attitude towards the child
- Repeated and persistent denigration, hostility, belittling or blaming of the child
- Holding the child responsible for misfortunes and threats or actually severe punishment
- Conditional parenting, in which the child's secured place within the family is made contingent on his/her good behaviour
- Emotional unavailability, unresponsiveness and neglect
- Maternal depression, parental alcohol abuse and childhood experiences may leave parents unable to recognise or respond to their children's attachment and emotional needs
- Failure to recognise or respect the child's individuality and psychological boundary. This is where a child is expected to fulfil the psychological needs of the parent(s) and is expressed by parental behaviours and attitudes, or deployment or deprivation of the child
- Inappropriate or inconsistent developmental expectations and considerations
- Premature impositions of physical and psychological responsibility on the child

- Inappropriate or inconsistent expectations of a young child
- Failure to protect from inappropriate experiences
- Confusing communications and distortion of objective truth
- Overprotection and failure to provide age appropriate opportunities for cognitive and emotional learning experiences
- Persistent inappropriate socialisation
- Actively overprotecting a child and denying developmental need, preventing participation in normal social interaction

PREVENT DUTY 2015 (See Appendix 5)

6.2 Online Emotional Abuse and E-Safety

Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens through the internet, whether that is through social networks, playing online games or using mobile phones. Children and young people may experience cyberbullying, grooming, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or emotional abuse. 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) or it may be that the abuse only happens online (for example persuading children to take part in sexual activity online such as sexting). Children 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.

It is important for Youth Dream staff and volunteers to familiarise themselves with the stand alone ICT Policy. Staff are expected to discuss concerns with Safeguarding Staff which highlights any inappropriate online behaviour which might consider the following:

- Inappropriate use of mobile phones, digital cameras and other communication technologies in the work place
- Misuse or lack of privacy settings on social networking sites
- Media content which both children and staff are and aren't allowed to access online

Reporting upsetting or inappropriate content must be done with Safeguarding Staff who will carry out an appropriate referral to CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre) and/ or MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub).

For links to further information and advice as to what to do to protect children from online dangers see www.nspcc.org.uk.

(Further information, support, advice and contacts can be found in the Youth Dream Tool Kit)

ALL STAFF SHOULD REFER TO THE SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Influencers

“Influencers” in social media are not a new thing. However, in 2022 particular Influencers are coming to note due to their strong views. Andrew Tate is one such influencer.

When Youth Dream staff are made aware of an Influencer they are asked to make other staff aware so that where necessary and appropriate conversations can take place with young people allowing for and encouraging critical thinking.

6.3 Bullying and cyber bullying

Cyberbullying is one of the most common online dangers, and kids and teens are particularly susceptible because they tend to take their tormentor's words to heart and resist confiding in their own parents.

With these statistics in mind, it's an especially important part of parenting to recognize the signs of cyberbullying. These ten signs could signal that a child has fallen victim to a cyberbully.

- Appears nervous when receiving a text, instant message, or email
- Seems uneasy about going to school or pretends to be ill
- Unwillingness to share information about online activity
- Unexplained anger or depression, especially after going online
- Abruptly shutting off or walking away from the computer mid-use
- Withdrawing from friends and family in real life
- Unexplained stomach aches or headaches
- Trouble sleeping at night
- Unexplained weight loss or gain
- Suicidal thoughts or suicide attempts

6.4 Domestic Abuse

The March 2013 Government definition of domestic violence and abuse now states: "Any 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, the following types of abuse:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual

- Financial
- Emotional

It is advised that:

Controlling behaviour is: “a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour”.

Coercive behaviour is: “an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim”.

The above definition which is not a legal definition includes so called ‘honour’ based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group.

Gaslighting is: Gaslighting is a colloquialism that is defined as making someone question their reality.

The term is also used informally to describe someone (a "gaslighter") who persistently puts forth a false narrative which leads another person (or a group of people) to doubt their own perceptions to the extent that they become disorientated and distressed. This dynamic is generally only possible when the audience is vulnerable such as in unequal power relationships or when the audience is fearful of the losses associated with challenging the false narrative. Gaslighting is not necessarily malicious or intentional, although in some cases it is.

Where it is intentional, Gaslighting is an insidious form of manipulation and psychological control. Victims of gaslighting are deliberately and systematically fed false information that leads them to question what they know to be true, often about themselves. They may end up doubting their memory, their perception, and even their sanity. Over time, a gaslighter’s manipulations can grow more complex and potent, making it increasingly difficult for the victim to see the truth.

Women’s Aid Definition: “Domestic violence is physical, sexual, psychological or financial violence that takes place within an intimate or family-type relationship and that forms a pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour.

This can also include forced marriage and so-called ‘honour crimes’. Domestic violence may include a range of abusive behaviours, not all of which are in themselves inherently ‘violent’”.

Prolonged and/or regular exposure to domestic abuse can have a serious impact on a child’s development and emotional wellbeing as well as his/her physical safety. Domestic abuse is one of the potential causes of significant harm to children which may warrant the use of Child Protection procedures.

Procedures relating to Domestic Abuse

All staff and volunteers who receive information or have concerns about domestic abuse must establish if there are any children living in the household. A discussion of the case must take place with Safeguarding staff in the first instance, who will consider whether it is necessary to make a referral as a child in need (defined in Section 17 CA1989) or a child in need of protection (defined in Section 47 CA1989).

A referral must always be made to MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) in the following situations:

- A child was injured

- A child or children present have a child protection plan (in which case the social worker or their manager should be informed immediately)
- A child was involved in the assault, for example used as a physical barrier or tried to intervene
- The woman who was assaulted is pregnant
- A child's behaviour may be affected as a result of seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another

A referral to MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) should be considered in the following situation:

- A child was left unattended as a result of domestic abuse
- A child has seen or heard the ill treatment of another
- There is previous information relating to domestic abuse or child welfare concerns

6.5 County Lines

County Lines' is a term used when drug gangs from big cities expand their operations to smaller towns, often using violence to drive out local dealers and exploiting children and vulnerable people to sell drugs. These dealers will use dedicated mobile phone lines, known as 'deal lines', to take orders from drug users. Heroin, cocaine and crack cocaine are the most common drugs being supplied and ordered. In most instances, the users or customers will live in a different area to where the dealers and networks are based, so drug runners are needed to transport the drugs and collect payment.

A common feature in County Lines drug supply is the exploitation of young and vulnerable people. The dealers will frequently target children and adults - often with mental health or addiction problems - to act as drug runners or move cash so they can stay under the radar of law enforcement. Criminals are deliberately targeting vulnerable children – those who are [homeless](#), experiencing learning difficulties, going through family breakdowns, struggling at school, living in care homes or [trapped in poverty](#).

In some cases the dealers will take over a local property, normally belonging to a vulnerable person, and use it to operate their criminal activity from. This is known as cuckooing.

People exploited in this way will quite often be exposed to physical, mental and sexual abuse, and in some instances will be trafficked to areas a long way from home as part of the network's drug dealing business.

These criminals groom children into trafficking their drugs for them with promises of money, friendship and status. Once they've been drawn in, these children are controlled using threats, violence and sexual abuse, leaving them traumatised and living in fear.

However they become trapped in criminal exploitation, the young people involved feel as if they have no choice but to continue doing what the criminals want.

They use the children to cross county lines, to sell the drugs in their home towns and villages and fund their train and bus journeys to do so.

Recognising County Lines

- Returning home late, staying out all night or going missing

- Being found in areas away from home
- Increasing drug use, or being found to have large amounts of drugs on them
- Being secretive about who they are talking to and where they are going
- Increasingly disruptive or aggressive behaviour
- Using sexual, drug-related or violent language you wouldn't expect them to know
- Coming home with injuries or looking particularly disheveled
- Having hotel cards or keys to unknown places.
 - An increase in visitors and cars to a house or flat
 - New faces appearing at the house or flat
 - New and regularly changing residents (e.g different accents compared to local accent)
 - Change in resident's mood and/or demeanour (e.g. secretive/ withdrawn/ aggressive/ emotional)
 - Substance misuse and/or drug paraphernalia
 - Changes in the way young people you might know dress
 - Unexplained, sometimes unaffordable new things (e.g clothes, jewellery, cars etc)
 - Residents or young people you know going missing, maybe for long periods of time
 - Young people seen in different cars/taxis driven by unknown adults
 - Young people seeming unfamiliar with your community or where they are
 - Truancy, exclusion, disengagement from school or college
 - An increase in anti-social behaviour in the community

Coded Communication

Gang related / Drill music / Trap houses

- **Elder** – Respected Leader or Member of gang with high status
- **Man** – Gang/group/network/friend
- **Fam** - Group of friends considered 'Family'
- **Opp** - Enemy
- **Ching Ching** - Money
- **Splash / Dipped** - stabbed
- **44** - .44 magnum firearm
- **Shottys & Spinners** - Guns
- **Head Chest or Belly** – typical stab sites for more serious retribution
- **KK or Green** - Cannabis
- **Beef**- Violence or Trouble
- **Clowning** – To disrespect or make fun of someone
- **Bin** – Jail
- **Go County** – bringing drugs into area

Sexual / Drug Exploitation

- **Clean Skins / Tiny's** – young people not previously known to services
- **Dosing** – Filling drink bottles with Acid/Ammonia ...threat "I'll dose you"
- **Plugging / Banking** – Inserting drugs into anus and/or vagina
- **Dinking / Chiefing / Chefing** – Pinned to ground and drugs forcibly removed and weapon inserted into vagina/anus.
- **P** - Money
- **Food** - Drugs
- **Taxing** – inflicting violence to take control – acts as a warning to others
- **Cuckooing** – taking over the home of a vulnerable adult (pretending to be in a relationship with so they can move in / drug addicts / elderly – holiday lets / caravan parks)

7.0 Recognising sexual abuse including:

- **CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation)**
- **FGM (see 5.1 above)**
- **Grooming**
- **Trafficking**
- **Sexual Harassment**
- **Voyeurism – Upskirting**
- **Sexting / TA-HSB**

7.1 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse in which children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can affect both young men and young women. Some children are particularly vulnerable. These include:

- those having a history of running away or of going missing from home
- those with special needs
- those in and leaving residential and foster care
- migrant children
- unaccompanied asylum seeking children
- children who have disengaged from education
- children who are abusing drugs and alcohol
- those involved in gangs

Children or young people may be tricked into believing they're in a loving, consensual relationship. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol. They may also be groomed online. Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the UK for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Sexual exploitation can also happen to young people in gangs. Child sexual exploitation is a hidden crime. Young people often trust their abuser and don't understand that they're being abused. They may depend on their abuser or be too scared to tell anyone what's happening. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults, including oral and anal rape. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status.

Recognition can be difficult, as there may be no physical signs and indications are likely to be emotional/behavioural for example:

- Going missing for periods of time or regularly returning home late
- Frequently staying out late or overnight with no explanation

- Going places that you know they cannot afford
- Skipping school or being disruptive in class or getting into trouble with the police

Diagnosis and management in these situations is a complex multi-disciplinary process. A child or young person may have disturbed behaviour or changes in behaviour. Most behaviours associated with child sexual abuse are not specific to sexual abuse, only indicating that a child or young person is distressed. The cause of this distress may have other causes such as parental disharmony or bullying at school.

Those behaviours with a higher but not invariable association with sexual abuse include:

- Sexualised behaviour (particularly in young children)
- Sexual knowledge or awareness beyond that expected for their age
- Prostitution or sexually risky behaviour
- Self-mutilation
- Running away

Some physical indicators which may be associated with this form of abuse are:

- Inappropriate sexualised conduct
- Pain or itching of genital area
- Sexually explicit behaviour, play or conversation, inappropriate to the child's age
- Continuous and inappropriate or excessive masturbation
- Blood on underclothes
- Pregnancy in a younger person where the identity of the father is not disclosed

(Further information, support, advice and contacts can be found in the Youth Dream Tool Kit)

7.2 Grooming

Introduction

Grooming is when someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them.

Children and young people who are groomed can be [sexually abused](#), [exploited](#) or [trafficked](#).

Anybody can be a groomer, no matter their age, gender or race. Grooming can take place over a short or long period of time – from weeks to years. Groomers may also build a relationship with the young person's family or friends to make them seem trustworthy or authoritative.

Types of grooming

Children and young people can be groomed online, in person or both – by a stranger or someone they know. This could be a family member, a friend or someone who has targeted them – like a teacher, faith group leader or sports coach. When a child is groomed [online](#), groomers may hide who they are by sending photos or videos of other people. Sometimes this'll be of someone younger than them to gain the trust of a "peer". They might target one child online or contact lots of children very quickly and wait for them to respond.

The relationship a groomer builds can take different forms. This could be:

- a romantic relationship
- as a mentor
- an authority figure
- a dominant and persistent figure.

A groomer can use the same sites, games and apps as young people, spending time learning about a young person's interests and use this to build a relationship with them. Children can be groomed online through:

- social media networks
- text messages and messaging apps, like Whatsapp
- email
- text, voice and video chats in forums, games and apps.

Whether online or in person, groomers can use tactics like:

- pretending to be younger
- giving advice or showing understanding
- buying gifts
- giving attention
- taking them on trips, outings or holidays.

Groomers might also try and isolate children from their friends and family, making them feel dependent on them and giving the groomer power and control over them. They might use blackmail to make a child feel guilt and shame or introduce the idea of 'secrets' to control, frighten and intimidate.

It's important to remember that children and young people may not understand they've been groomed. They may have complicated feelings, like loyalty, admiration, love, as well as fear, distress and confusion.

Signs of grooming

It can be difficult to tell if a child is being groomed – the signs aren't always obvious and may be hidden. Older children might behave in a way that seems to be "normal" teenage behaviour, masking underlying problems.

Some of the signs you might see include:

- being very secretive about how they're spending their time, including when online
- having an older boyfriend or girlfriend
- having money or new things like clothes and mobile phones that they can't or won't explain
- underage drinking or drug taking
- spending more or less time online or on their devices
- being upset, withdrawn or distressed
- [sexualised behaviour](#), language or an understanding of sex that's not appropriate for their age
- spending more time away from home or going missing for periods of time.

A child is unlikely to know they've been groomed. They might be worried or confused and less likely to speak to an adult they trust.

7.3 Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment is defined as “Unwanted conduct of a sexual nature” and includes

Sexual comments – telling stories, commenting on clothes / appearance or calling someone names

Sexual jokes or taunting

Physical behaviour – brushing against someone / touching, displaying pictures of a sexual nature

Online sexual harassment – sharing images, sexualised bullying, unwanted comments including on social media

Sexual Exploitation

Upskirting

Staff should

- Make it clear that sexual violence and harassment is not acceptable, will not be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up
- Not tolerate or dismiss it as ‘banter’, ‘part of growing up’, just having a laugh’ or ‘boys being boys’
- Challenge behaviours such as grabbing bottoms, lifting up skirts, etc,

Not responding risks normalising these behaviours.

7.4 Upskirting

This involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification or cause the victim distress or humiliation.

It is a Criminal Offence as of 12 April 2019 and can result in up to 2 years in jail and being placed on the Sex Offenders register.

7.5 Sexting / TA-HSB

- Sharing sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others
- Sending sexually explicit messages
- Can be through mobiles, tablets, smartphones, laptops
- Can also be called 'trading nudes', 'dirties', 'pic for pic'

TA-HSB Technology - Assisted Harmful Sexual Behaviour is when children and young people use the internet or technology such as mobile phones to engage in sexual activity that may be harmful to themselves or others.

Sexting can be seen as harmless but creating or sharing explicit images of a child is illegal, even if the person doing it is a child. A young person is breaking the law if they:

- take an explicit photo or video of themselves or a friend
- share an explicit image or video of a child, even if it's shared between children of the same age
- possess, download or store an explicit image or video of a child, even if the child gave their permission for it to be created.

However, as of January 2016 in England and Wales, if a young person is found creating or sharing images, the police can choose to record that a crime has been committed but that taking formal action isn't in the public interest.

Crimes recorded this way are unlikely to appear on future records or checks, unless the young person has been involved in other similar activities which may indicate that they're a risk.

There are many reasons why a young person may want to send a naked or semi-naked picture, video or message to someone else.

- joining in because they think that 'everyone is doing it'
- boosting their self-esteem
- flirting with others and testing their sexual identity
- exploring their sexual feelings
- to get attention and connect with new people on social media
- they may find it difficult to say no if somebody asks them for an explicit image, especially if the person asking is persistent

Young people may think 'sexting' is harmless but it can leave them vulnerable to:

- **Blackmail**
An offender may threaten to share the pictures with the child's family and friends unless the child sends money or more images.
- **Bullying**
If images are shared with their peers or in school, the child may be bullied

- **Unwanted attention**
Images posted online can attract the attention of sex offenders, who know how to search for, collect and modify images.
- **Emotional distress**
Children can feel embarrassed and humiliated. If they're very distressed this could lead to suicide or self-harm

It's easy to send a photo or message but the sender has no control about how it's passed on.

When images are stored or shared online they become public. Some people may think that images and videos only last a few seconds on social media and then they're deleted, but they can still be saved or copied by others. This means that photos or videos which a young person may have shared privately could still be end up being shared between adults they don't know.

Websites and apps of known concern:

Admire

Omegle

Only Fans

Shagle

8.0 Recognising neglect

Neglect in child protection terms must be viewed as the 'sustained neglect of children in certain dimensions of their lives'. It may be over a long period or it may occur in episodes or 'bad patches' in parents' lives causing harm to childrens' development. Evidence of neglect is built up over a period of time and can cover different aspects of parenting. Typical features include:

- Failure by parents or carers to meet the basic essential needs i.e. adequate food, clothes, warmth, hygiene and medical care
- A child seen to be listless, apathetic and unresponsive with no apparent medical cause
- Failure of child to grow within normal expected pattern, with accompanying weight loss
- Observed thriving of child away from the home environment
- Child frequently absent from school
- Child left with adults who are intoxicated or violent
- Child abandoned or left alone
- Developmental delay without other clear cause
- Lack of social responsiveness
- Repeated failure by parent/carer to prevent injury
- Non-organic failure to thrive

Signs of Neglect

Poor appearance and hygiene

- being smelly or dirty
- being hungry or not given money for food
- having unwashed clothes
- having the wrong clothing, such as no warm clothes in winter
- having frequent and untreated nappy rash in infants

Health and development problems

- anemia
- body issues, such as poor muscle tone or prominent joints
- medical or dental issues
- missed medical appointments, such as for vaccinations
- not given the correct medicines
- poor language or social skills
- regular illness or infections

- repeated accidental injuries, often caused by lack of supervision
- skin issues, such as sores, rashes, flea bites, scabies or ringworm
- thin or swollen tummy
- tiredness
- untreated injuries
- weight or growth issues.

Housing and family issues

- living in an unsuitable home environment, such as having no heating
- being left alone for a long time
- taking on the role of carer for other family members.

Change in behaviour

- becoming clingy
- becoming aggressive
- being withdrawn, depressed or anxious
- changes in eating habits
- displaying obsessive behaviour
- finding it hard to concentrate or take part in activities
- missing school
- showing signs of self-harm
- using drugs or alcohol.

9.0 Children with disabilities

Children with disabilities are more vulnerable to abuse and/or neglect than children without disabilities. There are a number of reasons for children with disabilities being more vulnerable to abuse including:

- They are likely to be in contact with larger number of service providers than children without disabilities and are likely to receive intimate care from a larger number of people
- They are more likely to spend time away from their families in short break services, residential schools and so on
- Children with disabilities and their families may experience inadequate and poorly co-ordinated support services. This can lead to isolation which is widely recognised as a risk factor for abuse
- They may have greater difficulty in communicating, so cannot tell others what is happening to them

- They may have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse

10.0 Adopted Children

In December 2010, the law changed so that only counsellors and psychotherapists registered as an adoption support agency (ASA) with Ofsted are able to offer specialist adoption services. These amendments to the Adoption and Children's Act of 2002 were designed to ensure that the one in four UK individuals affected by adoption in some way, are provided with support and services from practitioners who hold the proper qualifications and experience. The introduction of this legislation now means that any counsellor working with a client for whom any aspect of adoption is the main focus, must be registered with Ofsted and subject to regular inspections.

All counsellors need to be aware that in order to work with clients on adoption issues, as a main subject, it is necessary to be registered as an Adoption Support Agency (ASA) or to work in a contracted capacity alongside an agency or organisation already registered as an ASA. Adoption Support Agencies have to be registered with Ofsted. This is the current situation in relation to the Adoption and Children Act 2002 and the Adoption Support Agencies (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010.

The Youth Dream referral form has been amended to ask specifically if the young person being referred is adopted and if the referral is mainly about adoption issues.

Where this is the case, young people regardless of where they were adopted, should be sign posted to:

West Sussex County Council Adoption and Fostering Services

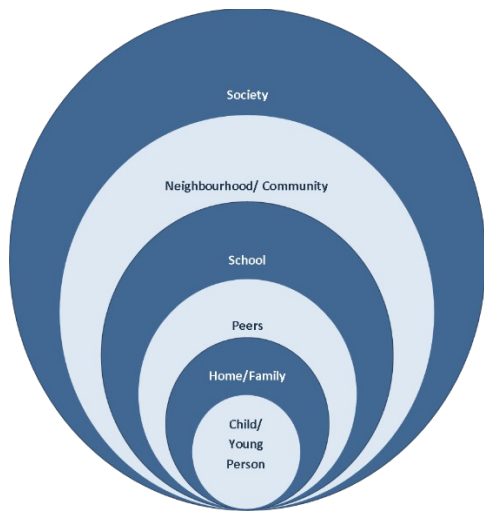
Telephone Number: 0330 222 7777

11.0 Contextual Safeguarding

Contextual safeguarding, which has been developed by Dr. Carlene Firmin at the University of Bedfordshire's [Contextual Safeguarding Network](#), recognises that as young people grow and develop they are influenced by a whole range of environments and people outside of their family. For example in school or college, in the local community, in their peer groups or online. Children and young people may encounter risk in any of these environments. Sometimes the different contexts are inter-related and can mean that children and young people may encounter multiple risks. Contextual safeguarding looks at how we can best understand these risks, engage with children and young people and help to keep them safe.

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships.

Therefore, children's social care practitioners, child protection systems and wider safeguarding partnerships need to engage with individuals and sectors who do have influence over/within extra-familial contexts, and recognise that assessment of, and intervention with, these spaces are a critical part of safeguarding practices. Contextual Safeguarding, therefore, expands the objectives of child protection systems in recognition that young people are vulnerable to abuse beyond their front doors.



Please see Appendix 6 Contextual Safeguarding 2020 for more detail.

Common affects of contextual safeguarding maybe gang culture, disputes over areas of land (including parks) due to race, religion or affiliation. Young people often know areas to avoid such as parks, streets and houses.

12.00 Food and Fuel Poverty

There is no one definition of poverty, however one commonly used measure by government is:

“Households where the household income is below 60% of the average.” [House of Commons](#), 2019

The impact of poverty can be devastating:

Families are unable to provide the basic needs like heat, food, bedding. In some families the child sleeps on a mattress on the floor with no sheets.

Mothers go without food so their children can eat. This then impacts on the parenting capacity and mental health.

[Buttle Trust](#), 2019

Extent of poverty

The COVID -19 pandemic has been a turbulent time when everyone has felt some instability and insecurity, but analysis of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation shows that many more people are at risk of being ‘cast adrift into poverty’.

- 4.2 million children living in poverty – an increase of 1/2 million in the last five years ([Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#), 2021).
- Nearly half of children in lone parent families live in poverty, compared with one in four of those in couple families ([Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#), 2021).
- It is estimated that 8.4 million people live in food poverty – defined as the inability to afford, or to have access to, food to make up a healthy diet ([sustainweb.org](#), 2019).
- Research shows that food bank users are more likely to have dependent children, with single parent households and people with disabilities being disproportionately affected ([Human Rights Watch](#), 2019)
- Work does not guarantee a route out of poverty, 2014 research showing that then nearly two thirds of all children in poverty lived in a working family ([CPAG](#), 2014)

Many of the groups who were already struggling with poverty have borne the brunt of the COVID pandemic, including part time workers, low paid workers, those in accommodation and hospitality services, lone parent families, black and ethnic minority households and those in rented properties.

In addition, fuel and food prices are increasing significantly in 2022, putting more households under pressure and at risk of falling into poverty. Food and fuel poverty is not necessarily neglect but can lead to

Impact on children

Poverty can impact in a number of ways. For children it may:

- lead to anxiety due to worries about their parents, siblings, being singled out as different
- impact on their educational attainment as they are in poor housing, or homeless with little or no space to concentrate
- lead to them not being able to take part due to lack of funds
- lead them into being criminally exploited as it appears to be way to make money
- lead to them being bullied for being different
- mean that they are hungry throughout the day and therefore not able to focus
- mean that parents are not able to focus on the needs of the children due to worrying about money (National Education Union, 2018)

Poverty and safeguarding

Parents struggling to make ends meet can feel anger or sometimes guilt at the unfairness they see impacting on their children. They do a tremendous job of minimising the impact wherever they can, and ensure their children are well cared for and feel valued.

Poverty can be a factor in children being at risk due to the stresses it creates in families and the limitations it places on choice, but by itself is not a safeguarding matter. However, poverty can lead to issues which are safeguarding matters:

- basic needs not being met (food, warmth, clothing)
- social isolation
- impact of stress within a household (including emotional abuse or domestic abuse)
- impact on home learning
- impact of long working hours (relationships, supervision)
- caring responsibilities
- self-esteem and emotional health issues (in child and parent)
- risk of substance misuse in areas of deprivation (in child and parent)

Where you have concerns that a child may be being neglected, consider what help you can offer and follow your safeguarding procedures.

Spotting the signs

Organisations working with children are in a key position to support children in poverty. Research tells us that often children and parents will not tell us what is happening and it is knowing the children that flags concerns in the first instance:

- tiredness
- persistent hunger (stealing food, taking extra food, an absence of food at lunchtime)
- poor concentration
- lower attainment
- non-attendance on school trips / involvement in school activities where there is a cost
- stress / anxiety

Youth Dream staff are asked to:

- Be aware of the effects of child poverty
- Support young people and families
- Sign-post to supportive services, ensuring that this is through as many different routes as possible (e.g. leaflets, posters, conversations, etc.)
- Assess the risk of “holiday hunger”, especially around Christmas were there are other commercial pressures as well
- Under go training on issuing food vouchers and issue food vouchers where needed
- Report any concerns of food or fuel poverty to your designated Safeguarding Officer – some concerns may reach a threshold of intervention, others may not – the Safeguarding Lead will make a decision with the Safeguarding Officer on action to be taken, if any

13.00 Best Practice. What do staff and volunteers need to do?

Responding to suspicions and allegations

- In the first instance if a child discloses abuse to you, listen carefully to what is being said. DO NOT question the child. Tell the child that you have to share the information they are giving but that they will be safe. Use the '**Flowchart**'- **Appendix 7** for a step by step guide to good practice in dealing with any suspicions or allegations. A discussion with a member of the Safeguarding Team should then take place. In the event that a Safeguarding member of staff is not available then please contact the Chair of Trustees.
- After the discussion, make an accurate record of what has been said. Use **Appendix 8 - 'Record Of Concern'** to record brief details, which must be handed to a member of the Safeguarding Team or the Chair Of Trustees on the same day where possible. The written record shall then be filed with The Bridge Administrator.
- Should an adult disclose information to you, which suggests that a child is being abused or is at risk of abuse, you must immediately seek advice from a member of the Safeguarding Team. Remember in law the protection of children is paramount and overrides any confidentially bound by any other requirements or relationships.
- When there is suspicion of abuse, or actual abuse is disclosed, and this information is shared with Safeguarding Staff, they will, if necessary, liaise with MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) or if this is not possible, the concern should be reported to the Police Child Abuse Investigation Unit. See **Appendix 1 – 'Essential Contacts'**.

13.1 Making a referral – Safeguarding Staff

Consultation with a Parent

Where possible, concerns should be discussed with the family and agreement sought for a referral to MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) unless it is concluded that the process of discussing the concern may, either by delay or the behavioural response it prompts, place the child at increased risk. If the concerns relate to physical injury it is appropriate to seek an explanation from a parent or carer or from the child directly; the details should be recorded both on the '**Record Of Concern Form**' - **Appendix 8** and on the '**Body Map**' - **Appendix 9** if required. It is important that staff should not be seeking to carry out any examinations beyond recording what they see. Additionally, from a safe working perspective staff must not ask the child to undress.

Concern should not be discussed with the parent where:

- Sexual abuse is suspected.
- Where organised or multiple abuse is suspected.
- Where fabricated or induced illness is suspected.

A decision by any professional not to seek parental permission before making a referral to MASH must be shared and the reasons given recorded. Where a parent has agreed to a referral, this must be shared and confirmed.

- In urgent cases where there are immediate concerns, Children's Social Care must be notified immediately by phone via MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) or if this is not possible, then please dial 999.
- Safeguarding staff will make reference to **Appendix 10 - 'Checklist For Making Good Quality Referrals'**. In Child Protection cases parental consent is not required.
- If the child is known to have an allocated social worker, referrals should be made to her/him or in her/his absence the manager or a duty officer to West Sussex County Council Children's Social Care department. See **Appendix 1 - 'Essential Contacts'**.
- When making a referral it is important to ensure that the nature of the concern i.e. a Child Protection matter is fully conveyed.
- MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) must acknowledge all referrals in writing, within one working day of receipt. Where no acknowledgement is received within 3 working days, the referrer must contact MASH again.

14.0 Safer Recruitment

Youth Dream employs a wide range of skilled staff and volunteers all of whom will come into close working contact with children and young people. Our Safer Recruitment guidelines should assist staff to monitor their own standards and practice and reduce the risk of allegations being made against them and be used as the basis for their code of conduct/staff behaviour guidelines. It is essential that all staff are conscious of how they should conduct themselves to minimise the risk of finding themselves as the subject of any child protection processes.

All staff and volunteers, without exception, will be subject to a Data Barring Check (DBS). Under Youth Dreams Equal Opportunities Policy staff and volunteers must be fairly recruited and under the Disciplinary Procedure misconduct including any actions that affect a DBS, may be subject to disciplinary action.

All staff should be aware of the following Code Of Behaviour of things to do and not to do when working with children.

DO

- Read and follow the child protection procedures
- Respond to Safeguarding Staff with any concerns about child welfare/safety
- Respond to Safeguarding Staff regarding any concerns about the conduct of other staff/volunteers/contractors
- Record in writing all relevant incidents
- Work in an open and transparent way
- Discuss and re-open any incidents of concern or that might lead to concerns being raised about your conduct towards a child.
- Report to Safeguarding Staff any incidents that suggest a child may be infatuated with you or taking an above normal interest in you.
- Dress appropriately for your role.
- Only use e-mail contact with children via any authorised system unless your role requires more appropriate form of communication.
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with children.
- Where physical contact is essential for educational or safety reasons, gain the child's permission for that contact wherever possible.
- Allow children to change clothes with levels of respect and privacy appropriate to their age, gender, culture and circumstances.
- Avoid working alone with children. If this is not avoidable or your role requires one to one working ensure management are alerted.
- Be careful about recording images of children and do this only when it is an approved activity.
- Fully co-operate with any investigation into child protection issues in your organisation.
- Listen to children when they express concern (rumours) about staff which might appear to be just, and check facts vs fiction.
- Follow the Youth Dream Whistleblowing Policy and Public Interest Disclosure policies, when reporting concerns of other members of staff

DON'T

- Take any action that would lead a reasonable person to question your motivation and/or intentions
- Misuse in any way your position of power and influence over children and/or parents
- Use any confidential information about a child to intimidate, humiliate or embarrass a child
- Engage in activities out of the workplace setting that might compromise your position with children or young people
- Volunteer to house children overnight
- Establish or seek to establish social contact with children or parents outside of the workplace or setting
- Accept regular gifts from children
- Give personal gifts to children
- Communicate with children in inappropriate ways, including personal e-mails and mobile telephones.
- Pass your home address, phone number, e-mail address or other personal details to children or young people.
- Make physical contact secretive
- Arrange to meet with children in closed rooms without other staff being made aware of this in advance.
- Use physical punishment of any kind
- Confer special attention on one child unless this is part of an agreed plan or policy
- Transport children in your own vehicle without prior management approval
- Take, publish or share images of children without their parents' permission.
- Access abuse images (sometimes referred to as child pornography) or other inappropriate material
- Allow boundaries to be unsafe in more informal settings such as trips out.

A Single Central Record is held by Youth Dream. It covers DBS checks, training and other notable information for all staff and volunteers.

15.0 Procedure for Allegations of Abuse against Staff

Please refer to the WSCC Guidance: *'Safer Working Practice For all Staff and Volunteers Working with Children and Young People'* held in The Bridge Youth Support Centre.

- Youth Dream takes the matter of allegation seriously, and will support both the young person alleging abuse and the accused to resolve the matter in the most appropriate way. However, try to be vigilant about your own actions with children and young people so that they cannot be misinterpreted e.g. do not be alone with a child without alerting others to the reason.
- In the event that a young person alleges that they have been abused (verbally or physically) by an adult working on behalf of Youth Dream, the following procedure should be followed to safeguard both the young person and the adult.
 - Immediately inform the young person that any allegation is a serious matter that has to be reported.
 - Ask another adult to be present while going through the reporting procedure with the young person.

- Reassure the young person that they are not being threatened; it is merely a procedure that has to be followed to make sure all the facts are correct and that everyone is safeguarded from abuse or false allegations.
- Explain to them that their allegations will be investigated and they will have an opportunity to present their case to an independent representative if they want to.
- Write down the nature of the allegation and verbatim details of the conversation, together with details of the circumstances of when and where the allegation was made. The report must be signed by the young person and the adult concerned.
- Within 24 hours contact Youth Dream Safeguarding Staff or Management. Any allegations made by a young person about a member of staff or volunteer must be dealt with promptly by the Chair Of Trustees using **Appendix 11 - 'Allegation of Abuse Report Form'**. He or she will make contact with WSCC Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) (see **Appendix 1 – 'Essential Contacts'**) who will investigate matters further.
- If the allegation is made away from any Youth Dream activity, and there is no opportunity to complete a report form then and there, complete a form as soon as possible with details and submit this to a Bridge Practitioner or Trustee without signatures of the young person or witness. When possible, and with a witness present, advise the young person that a record of the allegation has been lodged with the Management and that the young person will be contacted to ask if they wish to make a statement.

Appendix 12 gives Information for Employees and Volunteers regarding the Management of Allegations of Abuse against Adults who work with Children, from Pan West Sussex Local Safeguarding Children's Boards.

Copies of all Youth Dream Policies, Procedures and Guidance referred to in this policy are available at **The Bridge Youth Support Centre, C/O The Academy, Selsey, School Lane, Selsey, West Sussex, PO20 9EH.**

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____
Mike Nicholls **Chair of Trustees, Youth Dream Ltd**

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____
Debz Greenwood **Safeguarding Lead**

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____
Kim Long **Safeguarding Officer**