



Developing your Safeguarding Policy, Practice and Procedures for Children and Young People

Resource Pack for Groups

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Introduction

The London Community Foundation places great importance on the safety of children and young people. As part of our commitment to this, any grant that we make to organisations that are working with children and young people may well be conditioned upon having satisfactory safeguarding policies and procedures in place.

The London Community Foundation has put together this guidance to assist small groups with developing their policy about safeguarding children and young people. It is designed to help you create safeguarding policies and procedures that are user friendly, practical and relevant for your organisation and the work it does.

Organisations and groups' policies, practices and procedures will not be identical. Each one will vary depending on the type of work it does, who it works with and provides activities for, or where and how it carries out its activities. You do not have to be an organisation that only runs projects specifically or regularly with or for children and young people to need a safeguarding policy. Every group that has the public using its activities that could include children, even if only occasionally, must show that you can deal quickly and effectively with any concerns about the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of children and neglect of children.

For more information about safeguarding children and young people and developing policies and procedures see www.safenetwork.org.uk

Definitions

Here are explanations of some terms used in this pack:

Children and Young People: Anyone under the age of 18, even if they are living independently.

Children and Young People's Service: For example in Lambeth the Children's Care and Support team is part of the Council providing family support and child protection services. Contact details are in the 'Further Help and Resources' section of this pack. You'll need to research the local details of your local Children and Young People's Services for your own procedures.

Child abuse: There are four main types of abuse: physical; emotional; sexual; and child neglect. It is always wrong and must always be stopped.

Child Protection: this is part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to actions undertaken to protect children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

DBS: The Disclosure and Barring Service is the government agency which replaced the Criminal Records Bureau and Independent Safeguarding Agency. It processes requests for criminal record checks to prevent unsuitable people from working with children.

LSCB: Local Safeguarding Children's Boards, which have a range of roles and statutory functions including developing local safeguarding policy and procedures and scrutinising local arrangements. As an example the details for the local Lambeth Safeguarding Children's Board and the London Safeguarding Children's Board are in the 'Further Help and Resources' section of this pack You will need to research the contact details for your local Boards.

Safeguarding Policy: This is the statement of intent setting out the principles the group will use to guide its decisions and plan of action.

Safeguarding Procedures: The particular courses of action that the group will use.

Safeguarding practices: The actual performance and carrying out of the procedures.

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

Working Together: Any organisation or professional that works with children has to follow guidance issued by the government in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' published in 2013. Schools, academies, colleges, police, social workers, probation, and health services should all have a consistent inter-agency approach to safeguarding.

Why have a Safeguarding Children policy?

Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places legal duties on a range of organisations and individuals to ensure their functions, and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (to which the UK is signed up) sets out the rights of children to be free from abuse.

Voluntary organisations play an important role in delivering services to children. Government guidance says they should have arrangements in place in the same way as organisations in the public sector, and that they need to work effectively with their Local Safeguarding Children's Board.

Paid and volunteer staff need to be aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, how they should respond to child protection concerns and make a referral to local authority children's social care or the police if necessary. It is also about protecting workers and volunteers and ensuring best practice in working with children and young people.

The action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play.

The welfare of a child is always paramount.

Developing a Safeguarding Children Policy for your group

Who should be involved?

A Safeguarding Children policy should be owned by the whole group. This means that staff, volunteers, parents, young people and children are all consulted and asked for their input and are informed of the development of the policy. Once the policy has been finalised, it must be signed by the Chair and the designated Safeguarding Children officer in the organisation. When new people join the group they should be given the policy at their induction and have a chance to ask questions about it so they know how to work within its guidelines and use the systems if necessary. Children and young people taking part in the activities or using the services must also be told about any codes of conduct or behaviour and the consequences of not sticking to them.

Getting Started

The first step is to draw up an implementation plan with the people who are to take lead responsibility for developing the policy. This should include:

- Identifying who must and needs to be involved in the small development group
- What tasks these key people will do
- Timescales

There is an example plan in **Appendix 1** of this resource pack.

The Policy

The following eight headings and their bullet points outline what should be covered by your policy. It does not have to be a long document, but it must contain these points.

1. The Policy Statement

- A positive statement that communicates what the organisation wishes to say about its approach to Safeguarding Children.
- For example: *Lollipop Children's Club believe that all children have the right to enjoy the activities of the Club in a happy, safe, secure environment.*
- Why the organisation has developed a Safeguarding Children Policy, for example: "to protect children and young people who receive (name of organisation)'s services." This includes the children of adults who use our services.
- Who the policy applies and relates to - i.e. all staff and volunteers, and people who use the project.

- The legal framework – this policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children.
- How the organisation recognises the needs of children from minority ethnic groups and disabled children and the barriers they may face, especially around communication.
- How the organisation is going to implement this policy.

2. Safe practices when recruiting new paid and unpaid workers

This should state:

- A written application form is to be completed for applicants to all posts, including volunteers. Ask on the form for any past convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings as well as any pending cases. Ask applicants if they have ever had any complaints of abuse against them.
- Face-to-face interviews will be held with anyone you may want to appoint, which will involve more than one person and use a transparent scoring system.
- Applicants must provide two referees; proof of identification; and original copies of any necessary qualifications before appointment.
 - Most people will need a DBS check if they will be caring for, in sole charge of, or supervising children. These will normally be standard or enhanced checks, unless the applicant is to be appointed to a 'regulated activity' when a barred check will be required (for more information see the DBS website). There is also a summary found here http://www.volunteering.org.uk/images/stories/Volunteering-England/Documents/Free-Information-Sheets/information_sheet_dbs_checks_2012.pdf

3. Induction and on-going Training for Staff and Volunteers

- All new paid and unpaid workers will have an induction and will work for a trial period before their appointment is confirmed.
- New staff and volunteers will be given copies of this policy and receive training about it to ensure they have an understanding of safeguarding.
- Supervision and support of all volunteers and staff will include monitoring of safeguarding practice and reviews of progress.
- The organisation will access further training and learning about safeguarding issues when these are relevant and required e.g. to update knowledge.

4. Running a safe organisation

- Keep an up-to-date risk assessment of your venue and its activities.
- Assess the risks of an activity in advance and take precautions to prevent accidents.
- Maintain an adequate ratio of children to adults and balance of males/females to ensure that children are safely supervised at all times (the Safe Network website, listed in the 'Further Resources' section of this pack, gives some recommended adult to child ratios).
- Carry out regular checks of any equipment, premises, or transport that you use.
- Make sure you have the right insurance policies; that they are up to date; and that they provide adequate cover.
- Have the signed consent of parents, guardians or carers for their children to take part in your activities. Keep a record of their contact details.
- Keep up to date information on each child's medical and dietary needs, any allergies or extra support needs they have.
- Have an accident book for recording incidents or accidents.

5. Measures to protect children at risk

- Appoint a named officer in your organisation who takes the lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. This designated person will ideally have a deputy. This person should undertake regular training and keep updated on Safeguarding Children issues and be the first point of contact for advice and support if a Safeguarding issue arises. This person will have knowledge of reporting procedures for incidents should they occur. Their contact details must be included in the policy.
- Create procedures for how your organisation will deal with situations where a child is in need of help and for situations where an allegation of abuse is made about somebody in your organisation.
- Develop a code of conduct which sets out the expected standards of behaviour of everyone in your organisation.
- Develop an anti-bullying policy which covers face to face, online or text bullying and is clear about how incidents of bullying will be responded to and dealt with.

6. Recording and storing information

- Keep a record of each contact that you have with a child, proportionate to the type of activity run by your group/organisation. Records must clearly distinguish between fact and opinion. They should be signed and dated by the person who makes them.
- Personal information, other than the individual's name, should be kept separate from information about other people.

- Make children and families aware that your group/organisation keeps records, their purpose and how you will use them. Give them access to these records unless it would be contrary to the child's best interests, as they have a right to ask to see any records that your organisation makes about them.
- Hard copies of records and any portable electronic equipment that holds or provides access to personal information must be stored securely. Unauthorised access to electronically stored personal and sensitive information should be prevented by the use of security measures, such as user names, passwords and encryption.
- Concerns that a child may be in need or at risk of abuse must be recorded and placed on file, together with a record of how the concerns have been dealt with. Any referrals made to a statutory agency about concerns for a child must be confirmed in writing within 48 hours.
- The organisation should hold a clear policy on time limits for retaining records before they are securely destroyed.

7. Links to other policies of your group

The Safeguarding Policy is not a 'stand-alone' document. It should clearly connect to and interlink with other relevant policies and procedures of your group and in particular to your Human Resources, Volunteering, Diversity, Health and Safety, ICT acceptable use, and Data Protection policies.

8. Policy Review

The Safeguarding policy should state the date that it was adopted and how often it will be reviewed and updated. It should say who is responsible for reviewing it. The review must include an assessment of how effective it has been and whether any changes are needed to improve how it is implemented.

The Procedures

Once your policy is written, you will need to create the procedures to implement it. Follow these sections as suggested by the Safe Network (see www.safenetwork.org.uk):

1. Purpose and aim of the procedures. Be clear about who they apply to, including those people who do not directly work face to face with children.
2. Describe the different categories of abuse (for more about these please see **Appendix 2**).
3. How to recognise signs of abuse (for more about these please see **Appendix 3**).
4. How to respond to suspicions of abuse. Give details about when the Designated Person must be informed and how to contact them with any concerns about a child.
5. How to respond to abuse allegations against a member of staff, or any other worker or volunteer. Give details about who to report allegations to.
6. How to respond if a child tells you about abuse. Give advice about what to do and say.
7. How to respond to allegations of abuse by a parent, carer, teacher, another child, or any other adult.
8. How to minimise the risks when photographing or using images of children in publications, video or online.

When writing your child protection procedures, it is useful to think about the ways that people in your organisation or group might raise a concern. For example, situations when:

- A child may disclose something that has upset or harmed them;
- Someone else might report something that a child has told them, or that they believe that a child has been or is being harmed;
- A child might show signs of physical injury for which there appears to be no explanation;
- A child's behaviour may suggest he or she is being abused;
- The behaviour or attitude of one of the workers towards a child may cause concern;
- A child demonstrates worrying behaviour towards other children.

Also, think about how you will:

- Keep a clear, written record of any concern identified.
- Ensure that any concerns are reported to a line manager, or the designated member of staff who is responsible for safeguarding, who will then decide what (if any) further action is required. – include the name and contact details of the person in the procedures.
- Produce guidelines about how and whether to discuss the concern with the child and/or family; and when to pass on a concern for further action to be taken to children's services, the police, or the NSPCC.

For further guidance about handling concerns of abuse, see **Appendix 4**.

Resources, further help and information

There is a lot of good advice, information and resource material available for free. That is why we have given website addresses in this section of the pack, so you can download and print off what you need. Please note that web addresses can change - although all of the links that follow are up to date and functioning at the time of publication of this pack. We have used Lambeth Borough as an example of local information but you can look up your local equivalent if you are in another borough.

- **To report concerns about abuse:**

Lambeth Children and Young People's Service:

Referral and Assessment Screening Team Mon to Fri 9.00am – 5.00pm Tel: 020 7926 1772; 0207 9267 856; 0207 926 6586; 0207 926 6583; 0207 926 6010; or 0207 926 7868

OR **Out of Hours Emergency: Tel: 020 7926 1000**

NSPCC: <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

NSPCC Child Protection helpline: 0808 800 5000

Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOPS) is part of the National Crime Agency and includes an online safety centre for reporting abuse: <http://ceop.police.uk/>

Internet Watch Foundation – to report child sexual abuse material on the internet
<https://www.iwf.org.uk/>

- **Helplines and advice services for children, young people, or adults**

Childline: <http://www.childline.org.uk/Pages/Home.aspx>

Childline free phone number for children and young people: 0800 1111

Citizens Advice, Lambeth: 1, Barrhill Road, Streatham Hill; 0844 245 1298; or
www.adviceguide.org.uk/england.htm

Family Lives is a national family support charity available 24 hours a day:

<http://www.familylives.org.uk/>

Family Lives helpline: 0808 800 2222

Family Rights Group <http://www.frg.org.uk/>

- **Further information, training and other resources:**

Children England: <http://www.childrenengland.org.uk/>

Child Protection in Sport Unit of NSPCC: <https://thecpsu.org.uk/>

Disclosure and Barring Service can be accessed through the gov.uk website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service/about>

Educare is a company which provides low-cost essential child protection training using e-learning as well as paper documents from its online shop. It is supported by charities such as 4Children and Kidscape: <http://www.educare.co.uk/>

Lambeth Children's Safeguarding Board: <http://www.lambethscb.org.uk/home>

London Children's Safeguarding Board: <http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/>

NCVYS is the network of community and voluntary youth organisations for England. 'Keeping it Safe' is its young person-centred approach to safeguarding and child protection. It offers a safeguarding quality assurance mark scheme for organisations called 'Sound Systems'. More details at: <http://www.ncvys.org.uk/safeguarding>

Safe Network has an enormous range of general, useful advice about all aspects of child protection and safeguarding, including some on more specialist aspects: <http://www.safenetwork.org.uk/Pages/default.aspx>

Safer Activities for Everyone is a Community Interest Company that is a provider of training on child protection and safeguarding: <http://www.safecic.co.uk/>

Thinkuknow is an online CEOP programme giving advice for young people, teachers and parents/carers. Abuse can also be reported through the website: <http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

'Working Together to Safeguard Children' Department for Education 2013
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/281368/Working_together_to_safeguard_children.pdf

Appendix 1

Example of a Policy development plan:

Lollipop Children's Club's Safeguarding Children Policy Development Group

Working Group

Eleanor – Chair

James– Treasurer

Khalid – Management Committee Member

Grace – Youth Worker

Meena – Youth rep

Implementation Plan

Action	Date to be completed by	Person/s to action
Meet together to draw up a draft policy statement	2 June	All
Register online with the Safe Network. Distribute their resources to group. Review child protection training available locally and nationally.	3 June	James
Contact borough Safeguarding Children's Board to get information on training available in borough and Safeguarding Children guidelines – distribute to group	10 June	Grace
All to meet to discuss information to date	18 June	All
Draw up a draft policy and discuss it with young people and workers	28 June	Khalid
Meet with group to adjust policy if needed	10 July	All
Write up final policy and distribute to group Review training needs of all.	15 July	Khalid
Group to agree final policy. Chair to sign policy and copies made to distribute to all group members. Add it to induction pack for new staff & volunteers.	28 July	Eleanor & all

Appendix 2

Definitions of abuse

There are four recognised types of abuse. It is important to know what they are and how to recognise them. Your procedures should contain this information. Most types of child abuse can take one or several of these forms, for example bullying and domestic violence are often both physical and emotional forms of abuse.

Physical Abuse

This is when a child is hurt or injured by a child or an adult. Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. It also includes giving a child harmful drugs or alcohol. Female genital mutilation is a form of physical abuse which is illegal in the UK. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child they are looking after. A person might do this because they enjoy or need the attention they get through having a sick child.

Emotional Abuse

This is when adults deny children love or affection, or constantly threaten or humiliate them. Sarcasm, degrading punishments and ignoring a child are also forms of emotional abuse and undermine a child's confidence and sense of self-worth. 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 serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

This is when a child is used sexually by an adult or young person. Sexual abuse can include kissing, touching the child's genitals or breasts, vaginal or anal intercourse and oral sex. Encouraging a child to look at pornographic magazines or videos is also sexual abuse. Bullying, racism and other types of discrimination are forms of child abuse. Like other kinds of abuse they can harm a child physically and emotionally. Sexual abuse includes sexual exploitation, such as forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution. Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/or females, by adults and by other young people.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born it may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care givers) or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Appendix 3

Possible signs of abuse

Physical signs of abuse:

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them,
- Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls or games,
- Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body,
- Bruises which reflect hand marks or fingertips (from slapping or pinching),
- Cigarette burns,
- Bite marks,
- Broken bones,
- Scalds,
- Injuries which have not received medical attention,
- Neglect-under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care,
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained stomach pains.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate physical abuse:

- Fear of parents being approached for an explanation,
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts,
- Flinching when approached or touched,
- Reluctance to get changed, for example, wearing long sleeves in hot weather,
- Depression,
- Withdrawn behaviour,
- Running away from home.

Emotional signs of abuse

The physical signs of emotional abuse may include:

- A failure to thrive or grow particularly if a child puts on weight in other circumstances: e.g. in hospital or away from their parents' care,
- Sudden speech disorders,
- Persistent tiredness,
- Development delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate emotional abuse include:

- Obsessions or phobias,
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration,
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults,
- Being unable to play,
- Attention seeking behaviour,
- Fear of making mistakes,
- Self-harm,

- Fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour.

Sexual Abuse

The physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- Pain or itching in the genital/anal area,
- Bruising or bleeding near genital/anal areas,
- Sexually transmitted disease,
- Vaginal discharge or infection,
- Stomach pains,
- Discomfort when walking or sitting down,
- Pregnancy.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming withdrawn or aggressive,
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people,
- Having nightmares,
- Running away from home,
- Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or developmental level,
- Sexual drawings or language,
- Bedwetting,
- Eating problems such as over-eating or anorexia,
- Self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts,
- Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about,
- Substance or drug abuse,
- Suddenly having unexplained sources of money or expensive gifts,
- Not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence),
- Acting in an inappropriate sexually explicit way with adults.

Neglect

The physical signs of neglect may include:

- Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children,
- Constantly dirty or smelly,
- Loss of weight or being constantly underweight,
- Inappropriate dress for the conditions.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect include:

- Complaining of being tired all the time,
- Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments,
- Having few friends,
- Mentioning being left alone or unsupervised.

Appendix 4

Guidance on how to respond to a person disclosing abuse

DO:

- Do treat any allegations seriously and act at all times towards the child as if you believe what they are saying.
- Do tell the child they are right to tell you.
- Do reassure them that they are not to blame.
- Do tell the child what you are doing, when, and who you have to tell, and keep them up to date with what is happening.
- Do take further action – you may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse – tell your nominated person immediately.
- Do write down everything said and what was done.

DON'T:

- Don't make promises you can't keep.
- Don't interrogate the child – it is not your job to carry out an investigation – this will be up to police officers or social workers, who have experience in this.
- Don't cast doubt on what the child has told you, don't interrupt them or change the subject.
- Don't say anything that makes the child feel responsible for the abuse.
- Don't do nothing – make sure you tell your nominated Safeguarding Children person immediately – they will know how to follow this up and where to contact for further advice.