



# **SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

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**Version 1.0**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This policy has been prepared to ensure the protection, well-being and safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in contact with 100 Homes, and those working with them.

Whilst 100 Homes staff and volunteers do not directly work with children and young people, the nature of our work means that we are frequently in contact with adults who are caring for very vulnerable children and young people. We want to ensure we are doing everything possible to ensure that children, young people and vulnerable adults connected to our work are safe at all times.

### **As an organisation we believe that:**

- Children young people, and vulnerable adults should be respected and valued as individuals.
- We have a responsibility to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults and report suspected or disclosed abuse to the appropriate statutory authorities
- We have a responsibility to support and train those who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults, and to provide ongoing support and supervision
- We have a commitment to best practice as far as our work with children, young people and vulnerable adults is concerned.

### **The legal context**

The Children's Act (1989) clearly established in law that the welfare of a child is always paramount and takes precedence over everything else.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that:

- Children must be kept safe from harm
- They must be given proper care by those looking after them
- They have the right not to be punished cruelly or in a way that belittles them

*To that end, this policy sets out guidance for our staff, volunteers, trustees and the general public that will ensure everyone is working in a way that is safe, respectful and upholds best practice for the welfare of children, young people, and adults.*

## **ABUSE**

As an organisation we have a duty to prevent abuse and to report any abuse suspected or discovered. Abuse can come in many forms:

### **Physical abuse**

**Actual or likely injury to a child or failure to prevent physical injury.**

Possible signs include unexplained injuries or those which have received no medical attention e.g. Bruising in unusual places, finger marks, bite marks, burns, scars, allegedly unnoticed fractures.

### **Sexual abuse**

**Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child.**

Possible signs include allegations made by the child or young person, preoccupation with sexual matters, sexual activity through words, play or drawings, severe sleep disturbances with fears and phobias, being sexually provocative with adults.

### **Emotional abuse**

**Actual or likely severe adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child.**

Possible signs include regression in behaviour, nervousness, sudden under-achievement, inappropriate relationships with peers/adults, attention-seeking, running away/stealing/lying, looking uncared-for.

### **Neglect**

**The persistent or severe neglect of a child or the failure to protect them from danger, leading to a serious impairment of the child's health or development.**

Neglect can take place pre-birth as a result of maternal substance abuse.

After birth, neglect includes the parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

Neglect can be really difficult to spot. Having one of the signs doesn't necessarily mean a child is being neglected. But if you notice multiple signs that last for a while, they might show there's a serious problem.

Children and young people who are neglected might have:

- Poor appearance & hygiene
- Health & development problems ➤ Housing & family issues
- Change in behaviour

### **Possible Indicators of Neglect:**

- children whose personal hygiene and state of clothing is poor ➤ untreated medical problems
- failure to thrive with no medical reason
- children who are constantly hungry and frequently tired
  
- poor concentration
- developmental delay
- frequent accidents and/or accidental injuries ➤ low self-esteem
- social isolation
- eating disorders
- poor skin tone and hair tone
- begging and stealing

**Domestic Abuse** - Witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse, and teenagers can suffer domestic abuse in their relationships.

**Sexual Exploitation** - Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. Children or young people may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol. They may also be groomed and exploited online. Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the UK for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

**Bullying and Cyberbullying** - Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else – such as name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening or undermining someone. It can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. It is usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally. Bullying that happens online, using social networks, games and mobile phones, is often called cyberbullying. A child can feel like there is no escape because it can happen wherever they are, at any time of day or night.

**Online Abuse** - With the ever-growing use of the internet, mobile telephones and online gaming (e.g. Xbox/ PlayStation), there has been a corresponding rise in the use of the internet and other electronic communication to target, groom and abuse children. Adults may target chat rooms, social networking sites, messaging services, mobile phones, online gaming sites and the internet generally. Children are particularly vulnerable to abuse by adults who pretend to be children of comparable ages when online and who try to obtain images or engineer meetings.

**Electronic Images** - The downloading, keeping or distributing of indecent images of children are all classified as sexual offences. Such offences are sometimes referred to as non-contact sexual offences. However, it must be remembered that children will have been abused in the making of the images. The texting of sexual messages and photographs can be particularly problematic and abusive amongst children and young people.

### **Abuse of Vulnerable Adults:**

The UK central government categorises and defines adult abuse in terms of:

- **Physical abuse** including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions.
- **Sexual abuse** including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented or could not consent or was pressurised into consenting.
- **Psychological abuse** including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.
- **Financial or material abuse** including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- **Neglect or acts of omission** including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
- **Discriminatory abuse** including racist, sexist, that is based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.
- **Domestic abuse** that is usually a systematic, repeated and often escalating pattern of behaviour by which the abuser seeks to control, limit and humiliate, often behind closed doors.
- **Organisational abuse** including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.
- **Modern Slavery** including human trafficking; forced labour and domestic servitude; traffickers and slave masters using whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment

**If you suspect a child, young person or vulnerable adult is being abused, please ensure you follow these guidelines:**

1. Do not delay – act quickly.
2. Seek an explanation of your concerns from the parent, carer of the child without raising the question of abuse.
3. Carefully make a hand-written, dated note of your observations, and pass to the Safeguarding Coordinator as soon as possible. Do not keep a copy of the notes.
4. Talk to the group/activity leader or to the Safeguarding Coordinator. Do not discuss with anyone other than this.
5. If you remain suspicious, you have a personal responsibility to refer to Social Care Services or the Police, although we would expect that the Safeguarding Coordinator would be informed of your decision.
6. Please note that it is not your role to interrogate or investigate suspected abuse and this could compromise any subsequent legal action that might be taken.
7. If there is a concern regarding the Safeguarding Officer, please contact the designated trustee.

**If a child or young person wants to talk about abuse**

- Find a quiet, appropriate place to talk.
- Accept what the child or young person says, keeping calm and looking at them directly.
- Let them know why you need to tell someone else, do not promise confidentiality, being clear about ‘no secrets’ is really important.
- Be aware that they may be being threatened.
- Listen carefully but never push for information. Do not ask leading questions or suggest abusive actions that may have happened.
- Don’t speculate or accuse anybody. Do not put words into their mouth or finish their sentences.
- Don’t make promises that you can’t keep.
- Reassure the young person that they were right to tell you.
- Let them know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens. Make sure you do this.
- Do not confront the person who is alleged to be responsible for the abuse.
- Make notes as soon as possible, writing down exactly what was said and when he/she said it. Record dates and times of these events and keep the hand-written record, even if these are subsequently typed up, for an indefinite period. These notes should be given to the Safeguarding Coordinator as soon as possible. Do not keep a copy.
- Report immediately to the Safeguarding Coordinator or, if they are not available, a the designated trustee. If neither are available, immediate contact should be made with Social Care Services.
- Offer ongoing support to the child/young person.

Any worker, staff or volunteer can bypass the procedures and share concerns with an outside agency – Social Care Services, Churches Child Protection Advisory Service or the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children – if they feel that the 100 Homes

is not dealing adequately with their concern or that people concerned (e.g. Trustee, Member or Employee) are implicated in some way.

**We wish to encourage people to voice their concern should they have any reason to do so. Please contact the Safeguarding Coordinator if any matter comes to light which you think needs acting upon.**

If any volunteer or staff member of 100 Homes has Safeguarding concerns about any child or young person, they should work through the following steps (please remember that even when they are in a foster home, a child could still be experiencing abuse):

**1) Is the child in immediate danger? – if so call the police – and let the Safeguarding Officer know**

*(Steps 2 to 5 will usually be taken by the Safeguarding Lead once a concern has been raised with them. However, where they are unavailable please take these steps and keep a written record of any conversations)*

**2) Is social care already supporting the child, or are they in the local authorities care? If so, contact the social worker for the child directly. If you do not know the social worker's details please contact the duty team.**

Nottingham City Council Safeguarding **0115 876 4800**

Nottinghamshire County Council **0300 500 80 90**

**3) Is the child or family in need of early help services?**

- For children not in the care of the local authority, for advice contact the Nottingham City Early Help Unit on 0115 876 3343 or Nottinghamshire County Council Early Help Unit on 0115 804 1248

**4) Make a safeguarding referral via Nottinghamshire or Nottingham MASH if child is at risk of significant harm**

- ➤ Gather as much information as you can beforehand including full names, dates of birth, addresses, school attended, ethnicity, religion, language

**5) Consider if advice should be sought from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) (if the concern is about an adult working/volunteering with children)**

## **Confidentiality**

All reports of safeguarding concerned made to the Safeguarding Officer will be treated with confidentiality, and it is expected that the reporting staff member or volunteer will treat it as such. Any concerns or risks will be shared on a need to know basis, decided by the Safeguarding Officer. The Safeguarding Officer will make regular Safeguarding reports to the Trustees via the designated trustee, headlining any concerns. More details will be made available to the Trustees in the case of a serious incident or notifiable event where there is or may be:

- Harm to people who come into contact with your charity
- Harm to your charity's work or reputation
- Loss of your charity's money or assets
- Damage to your charity's property

## **Storage of Safeguarding Recordings**

All recording of Safeguarding incidents and concerns, however small, will be kept indefinitely in a locked, secure location. Only the Safeguarding Lead and the designated trustee will have access to this.

## **Guidelines for appointing workers**

Care should be exercised in the appointment of workers, both voluntary and paid, who will have contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults. This will be done by:

- Asking the potential worker to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Check with the DBS. This will be updated every 3 years.
- Asking the potential worker to complete a form giving their name, current address and telephone number. These forms will be kept up to date by the Safeguarding Coordinator. Workers may be asked to produce their birth certificate or other proof of identity
- Talking to a potential worker and finding out about any past experiences which may affect their ability to work with young people
- Talking to others who may know the person
- Making all appointments, paid and voluntary, conditional upon the satisfactory completion of a period of probation
- Only confirming appointment after due review and consultation with the worker and any other interested party e.g. Other workers, leaders
- Taking references, particularly when the potential worker is unknown

**Note:** A previous criminal conviction or a record appearing on an individual's DBS check will not necessarily preclude them from working with 100 homes. However Individuals who have a previous record of abusing children or vulnerable adults will not be allowed to work

with children and young people or vulnerable adults. Nor will they be permitted to be present when youth and children's activities are taking place.

### **Support, training and supervision of workers**

All those working with children and young people will be expected to undertake regular training and updates in safeguarding issues. Workers should be clear about their roles and responsibilities. They should have read the safeguarding policy and accompanying policies which are available from the Safeguarding Coordinator.

All workers should be aware that their contact with foster carers, churches, children and young people puts them in a relationship of trust (i.e. In a position of power and influence) both within and outside the activity/group concerned.

Regular opportunities should be made for workers to meet together to review and plan their work, to share their experiences, to receive training and to talk about their relationships with the children and young people.

Where possible, those with overall responsibility for a group should take opportunities to observe those for whom they are responsible as they work.

A Safeguarding Coordinator will be appointed to have responsibility for the coordination and implementation of 100 Homes Safeguarding policy and procedures.

### **Good Practice and expectations of workers**

These lists aren't exhaustive, but do give you an idea of how you should be acting when working with children, young people and vulnerable adults in your role at 100 Homes:

#### **You should...**

- treat all people with respect
- provide an example of good conduct you'd like others to follow
- respect people's right to privacy
- encourage people to feel comfortable and care enough to talk about attitudes and behaviours they don't like
- remember that someone else may misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned
- be aware that even compassionate physical contact with a child or young person could be misinterpreted
- recognise that caution is required at times when you are discussing sensitive issues with Foster Carers and other members of the public
- Always act within 100 Homes Safeguarding policies

#### **You shouldn't...**

- discuss foster carers or their children in front of others
- have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults
- allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour
- make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures
- jump to conclusions about others without checking the facts first
- exaggerate or trivialise a person's welfare or abuse issues
- show favouritism to any individual
- rely on your reputation or that of 100 Homes to protect you

**If you have any questions or are unsure about anything contained in this policy please contact:**

**Zoe Bell – SAFEGUARDING LEAD – 07736 317399**

**Sonia Green – DESIGNATED TRUSTEE – 07526 769884**

thirtyone:eight – (advisory body for church safeguarding)  
helpline – **0303 003111**

NSPCC **0808 800 5000**

ChildLine (for children/young people) **0800 1111**

**Local Authority numbers**

Nottingham City Council Safeguarding **0115 876 4800**

Nottinghamshire County Council **0300 500 80 90**