

Safeguarding Policy

Issue	Date	Responsibility
1	14/07/2016	Karen Birch
2	24/08/2016	Karen Birch
3	23/11/2017	Karen Birch
4	November 2018	Emily Bowman
5	08/05/2019	Emily Bowman
6	29/04/2020	Emily Bowman
7	26/05/2021	Emily Bowman
8	28/07/2021	Emily Bowman
9	27/07/2022	Emily Bowman
10	21/07/2023	Caroline Frankland
11	25/10/2024	Caroline Frankland
12	09/07/2025	Caroline Frankland

Statements and Aims

Policy Statement

We recognise that the welfare of all children, young people and adults at risk, is paramount and that *all* have equal rights of protection. We have a duty of care when they are in our charge, and we will do everything we can to provide a safe and caring environment whilst they attend our activities. Additionally, no one should come to any harm through their contact with our organisation and, as part of that commitment, we do everything we can to ensure everyone feels safe and protected from any form of harm, abuse and neglect regardless of their role. This policy has been developed with reference to the Safe CiC templates.

Equal Opportunities Statement

We recognise that anyone can become subject to discrimination, harassment or victimisation because of:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity,
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Comments and actions that contribute to discrimination, harassment or victimisation are not acceptable and will be challenged. Such incidents will be recorded and shared with parents and carers, and the relevant agencies when necessary and appropriate.

We will:

- ✓ treat everyone with respect and celebrate their achievements,
- ✓ carefully recruit and select all staff whether paid or unpaid,
- ✓ respond to concerns and allegations appropriately.

When there are concerns about the welfare of any, child, young person or adult at risk, all responsible adults in our organisation are expected to share those concerns, without delay, with the Lead for Safeguarding (or the Deputy, if the Lead is unavailable).

Our policy is approved by our Board of Trustees and will be reviewed and updated annually. We will publish and promote this policy to all staff, paid or unpaid, freelance consultants, Creative Mentors, volunteers, trustees and youth board through induction, training and supervision. We endeavour to disseminate, as appropriate, this policy to all who come into contact with our organisation e.g., children, young people, adults at risk, their parents, carers, families and others, such as organisational partners and fundraisers. The policy is available on our website.

Policy Aim

As members of SAFEcic, we aim at all times to attain best safeguarding practice throughout all our activities with children, young people, adults at risk, their parents, carers and/or families. We endeavour to provide a safe and friendly environment and celebrate all achievements. We will achieve this by adhering strictly to this policy, guidance and risk assessments. Our organisation holds current Public Liability Insurance which covers all our activities.

Safeguarding Personnel

Lead and Deputy for Safeguarding

The responsibility of managing the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk can be both demanding and challenging, and therefore must be appointed at managerial level to personnel who are available whenever operational, which includes cover for sickness and holidays.

Our Lead for Safeguarding is:

Name: Caroline Frankland

Job role: Business Manager

Contact details: 07889 645112

We have one Deputy for Safeguarding:

Name: James Blyth

Job role: Programme Manager

Contact details: 07464 481363

All of our Safeguarding personnel can be contacted via safeguarding@themightycreatives.com

Their role is to oversee and ensure that our safeguarding policy, which includes Online Safety, is fully implemented and that we attain SAFEcic standards.

Their responsibilities are:

- ✓ monitoring and recording concerns
- ✓ making referrals to social care, or police, as relevant, without delay
- ✓ liaison with other agencies
- ✓ arranging training for all staff

The Deputies for Safeguarding should be available to support or cover for the Lead. They will also handle any complaints or allegations against the Lead for Safeguarding if appropriate. It is important that the Lead and Deputies for Safeguarding are unconnected.

Line of accountability for safeguarding

The responsibility for safeguarding at board or committee level is shared between members. Safeguarding is on the organisation's risk register. A Senior Member of the organisation at Board, Trustee, Governor or similar level should be appointed to take strategic responsibility for the organisation's safeguarding arrangements. This person should be unconnected to the Lead for Safeguarding and Deputy for Safeguarding and should have up to date and relevant training with the ability to develop knowledge, skills and expertise in safeguarding.

Senior Lead for Safeguarding

Our Senior Lead for Safeguarding is:

Name: Emma Leaman

Job role: Trustee

Why do we need a Safeguarding Policy?

All organisations that work or come into contact with children, young people and/or adults at risk need to have safeguarding policies and procedures in place.

Government guidance is clear that all organisations working with children, young people, adults at risk, parents, carers and/or families have responsibilities for safeguarding. It is important to remember that children, young people and adults at risk can also abuse and that such incidents fall into the remit of this policy.

To undertake these responsibilities, we:

- have senior managers and members of the Board of Trustees committed to safeguarding
- are clear about peoples' responsibilities and accountability
- have a culture of listening to children, young people and adults at risk
- undertake safer recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers working with children & young people and adults at risk
- have procedures for safeguarding children and young people and adults at risk
- have procedures for dealing with allegations against, and concerns about, any staff
- make sure staff, paid and unpaid, have mandatory induction and further safeguarding training, supervision, reviews and support
- have agreements about working with other organisations and agencies

What you need to do

We expect trustees, staff, volunteers, and contractors to have read, understood and adhere to this policy, related policies, and procedures. Please make sure:

1. You have read this policy - the policy and related documents are available on SharePoint and the policy published online at www.themightycreatives.com.
2. As a new member of staff or Trustee, you receive the Safeguarding Briefing and Introduction to Safeguarding Children Training Course, NSPCC online.
3. Volunteers will receive a safeguarding briefing prior to starting any programme of activity and will be asked to sign a code of conduct.
4. You are aware of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse.
5. You know what actions to take when you have concerns about a child.
6. You know who to contact if you have concerns or to make a referral and who your designated safeguarding leads are.
7. You carry out risk assessments for activity using the form, guide and training provided.
8. You have effective risk management and reporting systems in place for activity, as required by contractor's risk management procedures.
9. You always follow-through on our values commitment to keep children, and vulnerable adults safe from harm.

We will endeavour to safeguard children and vulnerable adults by:

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them.
- Adopting this policy and adhering to associated policies and procedures

- Ensuring all necessary checks are made in the recruitment of all The Mighty Creatives workers, including trustees, staff, volunteers and contractors.
- Ensuring the appropriate permissions and risk assessments are completed and that effective risk management procedures are in place and signed off by a designated safeguarding lead.
- Sharing information about our safeguarding and child protection procedures with children, young people, parents and legal guardians, schools, other organisations and contractors so that roles and responsibilities are clear.
- Reporting disclosures and other concerns to agencies with responsibility for children and vulnerable adults, involving children, parents and legal guardians, school and organisational staff appropriately (see Safeguarding Briefing).
- Providing effective leadership to trustees, staff and volunteers through briefings and training.
- Providing effective management to staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.
- Maintaining up to date knowledge on best practice, current and forthcoming legislation and procedures.
- Promoting child protection and safeguarding throughout the organisation and across partnerships.

Definitions

Definition of a child/young person

There is no single law that defines the age of a child across the UK. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by the UK government in 1991, states that a child “means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier” (Article 1, Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989).

A child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday (16th in Scotland). In Scotland, whilst child protection procedures may be considered for a person up to the age of 18, the legal boundaries of childhood and adulthood are variously defined.

Definition of an adult at risk

There is no single law that defines an adult at risk across the UK. An adult at risk is a person over the age of 18 years (16 in Scotland) and is:

- having needs for care and support, and
- experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse and neglect and
- as a result of those care needs, is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

Related Policies

Data Protection

We will treat any personal information by which an individual can be identified, for example, name, address, and email, in accordance with the provisions of Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018), and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and will not share information with any third party, except where required by law.

Confidentiality

This policy is in line with government guidance about confidentiality and these details will be made available to all staff, children, young children, adults at risk, parents and carers.

We fully endorse the principal of the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk, overriding any obligations of confidence we may hold to others. No one working, or involved, with our organisation can promise absolute confidentiality. Individual cases will only be shared or discussed on a “need to know” basis.

Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is when someone raises a concern externally about a person or practice within the organisation, which will affect others in an illegal and or harmful way.

Our organisation promotes the sharing of any concerns regarding the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk as soon as possible with the Lead or Deputies for Safeguarding.

If individuals reporting their concerns within our organisation do not feel they have been acted upon then we support their right to report these concerns to the Local Authority Designated Office (LADO) (England and Wales only) social care services, the police, and /or the Charity Commission. They can also contact the [NSPCC dedicated helplines](#) and the charity [Protect](#) for advice and support

All media enquiries will be handled by our Chief Executive, Nick Owen.

Information Sharing

Timely and accurate written records play an essential role in safeguarding individuals, who may have suffered, are suffering or at significant risk of suffering harm. It is important that records are shared at the appropriate time when necessary. Within our organisation the decision to share written information, and with whom, will be undertaken by the Lead or the Deputy for safeguarding

Safer Recruitment

Our organisation is committed to safe recruitment in line with the relevant legislation and guidance from government for recruiting all staff, paid or unpaid. We do this by:

- advertising vacancies with a clear commitment required to safeguarding
- assigning all posts detailed job descriptions
- obtaining full personal details via an application form (not CVs) with particular relevance to previous work with children, young people and adults at risk
- when a candidate is selected for interview the relevant criminal declaration form will be sent for completion as set out by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, as amended
- always taking up two written references, one from the most recent employer or education establishment
- undertaking all interviews face to face, based on the job description
- ensuring at least one person on each interview panel will have undertaken Safer Recruitment training, in line with the relevant safe recruitment guidelines.
- having sound procedures and recording for interviewing to ensure we are satisfied, and can evidence that the applicant is appropriate and suitable

Any appointment will only be confirmed subject to:

- ✓ a satisfactory ID and criminal records check at the appropriate level, including [Certificates of Good Conduct](#) for foreign nationals and the [International Child Protection Certificate \(ICPC\)](#) for anyone who works with children and has lived in the UK and also travelled overseas
- ✓ ~~a follow up of written references by telephone if relevant to the vacant post~~

- ✓ a check of essential qualifications and any specific professional details
- ✓ confirmation of the [Right to Work in the UK](#) for employed personnel
- ✓ fitness to work as relevant

Disclosure and Barring Service checks

The Mighty Creatives Disclosure and Barring Service Policy outlines the policy and procedures for when Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are made. A central register is held.

When we DBS check

An Enhanced DBS, with a children's barred list check, will be required for all '[regulated](#)' activity, such as any regular unsupervised teaching, training, supervision or guidance working directly with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Contractors who work with TMC and directly with children, young people and vulnerable adults (for example as Creative Mentors) will all require Enhanced DBS Checks and preferably be part of the DBS Update Service. If a contractor is not registered with the DBS Update Service an Enhanced DBS Check provided by the contractor or another organisation, will only be accepted if the date of certification is within twelve months prior to the contract start date at TMC. If the date of certification is more than twelve months and the contractor is not registered with the DBS Update Service a new DBS check will be required prior to commencement of any work.

A basic DBS check will be required where all regulated activity criteria are met **apart** from the number of times the activity is carried out in a month.

If contractors who work with TMC are not carrying out regular, unsupervised work with children and young people, they will not need a DBS check.

At the current time, all TMC staff have an Enhanced DBS, and this will be monitored regularly. Decisions about when we DBS check will be made on a case-by-case basis and regularly reviewed.

Contracted organisations and individuals

All contractors, e.g. freelancers, consultants, and organisations in receipt of grants or contracts, must sign up to following statement:

If the activity involves work with children, young people, or vulnerable adults ("vulnerable people" aged 18 and under or people who need or may need community care services because of mental or learning disability, other disability, age, or illness, and who are, or may be, unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation), you must take all reasonable steps to ensure their safety. You must have an appropriate written policy and set of procedures in place at all times to safeguard vulnerable people. This will include procedures to check backgrounds and disclosures of trustees, employees, volunteers, or contractors who will have significant direct contact with vulnerable people with the Disclosure and Barring Service. You must make a copy of your policy and procedures available to us upon our written request.

What we do if we receive a positive DBS disclosure

The Mighty Creatives will make direct contact with the individual, or with the organisation's project manager, as required. The purpose of this conversation is to assess any risks attached to the individual involved working with children and young people or vulnerable adults. The conversation will also reinforce our processes and the next steps that will be taken.

It may be necessary for The Mighty Creatives and or the individual and or organisation to seek advice from [Nacro](#). They will be able to advise whether the conviction is seen as 'spent,' offer advice on how much information to disclose at what stage and give clear guidance as to what your responsibilities are and issues relating to confidentiality.

With lead responsibility for child protection and as a designated safeguarding lead, the Business Manager will be informed of the situation, but at this stage does not necessarily need to know who the individual concerned is.

Who would we talk to next

Depending on the nature of the work to be completed, The Mighty Creatives may be required to inform the relevant partner organisation where any work is due to take place, this could include schools, other education settings, residential homes. These discussions would be with the relevant **designated safeguarding lead only** to share the contents of this disclosure. A discussion must be had with the individual concerned to make them aware of this and to discuss how they would like to handle the situation. It may be that this might take more than one meeting as the individual may wish to be consulted as to how much detail is revealed and at what point. If the individual is not then allowed to commence the work, following guidelines in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, the designated officer must meet with the individual concerned so they have a chance to state their case prior to a final decision being taken.

It is the designated safeguarding lead's decision as to whether the individual can work in their setting. Based on The Mighty Creatives knowledge of the offence and individual, we can choose to recommend to the setting whether we feel the conviction is relevant and will do our utmost to ensure that we do this in an anti-discriminatory manner. Details of the disclosure will be handled with discretion and through appropriate decision-making channels.

If the individual chooses to withdraw from the project, all paperwork relating to that person and their disclosure must be returned to them or destroyed.

The Disclosure and Barring Service

For enquiries about DBS checks and process please contact The Mighty Creatives Business Manager on 07889 645112.

The Mighty Creatives uses Aarons Department for the processing of DBS checks.

All concerns, and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously by trustees, staff and volunteers and responded to appropriately - this may require a referral to children's social care services, the independent Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for allegations against staff, trustees, and other volunteers, and in emergencies, the police.

For LADO contacts follow [this link](#).

If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to the police immediately by calling 999.

Induction and Training

We have a clear induction and training strategy with clear job descriptions and responsibilities and all relevant procedures.

All new trustees, staff and volunteers will be introduced to The Mighty Creatives Safeguarding Policy and procedures as part of the induction process. Staff receive a safeguarding briefing within their first 2 weeks. Volunteers will receive a safeguarding briefing prior to them undertaking any work with us. Trustees will undertake child protection training within their first 6 months and staff and volunteers within their first 2 months. Once a year The Mighty Creatives will deliver internal child protection briefings for all staff based on needs, updates on policy and practices and changes in legislation. Annually, trustees, staff and volunteers will be offered refresher training.

Creative Mentor Induction and Training

Our Creative Mentors undergo robust recruitment and induction procedures to ensure that they are well informed and equipped to deal with any safeguarding queries and disclosures. After successful recruitment, Creative Mentors undergo TMC's bespoke Safeguarding training as a compulsory part of their induction training programme. If they do not have a recent Safeguarding qualification from an approved provider (Local Authority, NSPCC, Virtual College or otherwise), they will also be asked to undertake training provided by NSPCC as an Introduction to Child Protection. They have annual Safeguarding briefings in the Autumn to provide ongoing support.

Our Creative Mentors also have a rich annual training programme informed by social pedagogy and Trauma Informed Practices, as well as access to Group and 1:1 Professional Supervision provided by Local Authority Educational Psychologists to support them in their role on an ongoing basis. This programme is responsive and shaped on the current needs of the Creative Mentors.

When needed, staff will receive further safeguarding training, at the appropriate level, as soon as possible. We also agree a probationary period of 6 months with clear goals and then carry out monthly supervision reviews, with the relevant line manager.

Updated safeguarding training is normally required every 2 years (online) or three years (face to face). Staff working directly with at risk groups will also undertake the free online government training for [PREVENT Channel](#) and [FGM](#)

Working Practices

Consent

When consent is required for any care, activity or intervention we will, unless it is an emergency, obtain consent from the individual if of sufficient age and or understanding, or where relevant the parent/carer or relative for a child, young person or an adult at risk.

Where relevant, we will ensure we fulfil our obligations under Child Care Law in terms of parental responsibility and Mental Capacity Legislation on supporting, where possible, the individual's right to make their own decisions. Any decisions made should be the least restrictive and recorded.

Staff Ratios to Children, Young People and Adults at Risk

There must always be a minimum of two responsible adults present for any activities.

Lone and One to One Working

We will avoid lone working, one to one working with children and adults at risk whenever possible to protect both individuals. A risk assessment will always be undertaken to ensure:

- ✓ the care or activity provided is suitable for one-to-one working,
- ✓ the lone worker has been recruited, trained and supervise to undertake this particular role,
- ✓ that health and safety issues have been identified and recommendations followed,
- ✓ safeguards are in place to protect individual's rights to safe working practice,
- ✓ safeguards are in place in relation to strategies for emergency situations,
- ✓ relevant business insurance is in place for use of personal vehicles
- ✓ accurate and relevant written recording is maintained following any care and activity, signed, timed and dated

Home Visits

Home visits can take part within the Creative Mentoring programme but will always be booked in advance.

Each home visit will be carefully planned and recorded and include:

- who is being visited
- the purpose of the visit
- who will carry out the visit
- the time expected to carry out the visit
- who will also be present during the visit
- members of staff paid or unpaid, and others
- any physical contact which may be required, and will be undertaken in line with the code of conduct within this policy.

All home visits will be made in a polite and friendly manner. Personal relationships or showing favouritism must not happen.

Any safeguarding concerns raised and any untoward incidences, such as no access or a child being at home alone, should be followed up, recorded and managed in line with this safeguarding policy.

Young People who work in our Organisation

All young people who are undertaking volunteer work, apprenticeships or work experience within our organisation/group are to be included within this policy and their safeguarding as individuals given the same importance as all young people we come into contact with. Any disclosures, observations of possible harm or disturbing behaviour must be reported to the Lead or Deputy immediately.

They will also require an induction program that includes their commitment to safeguarding within the remit of the safeguarding policy and in line with all staff induction.

In addition, information on the young person's contacts recorded as relevant e.g. parents, carers, school representatives and any supervisors, with emergency contact numbers.

We will check with the relevant local authority's education welfare team to see if an employment permit is required for any young people working with us and, in the cases of live performances, if a child performance licence is required.

Codes of Conduct

We aim to provide a safe environment free from discrimination, upholding and promoting equality, diversity and inclusion. We undertake to:

- ✓ treat all children and young people and adults at risk with respect and dignity
- ✓ ensure that their welfare and safety is paramount at all times
- ✓ maintain professional boundaries both face to face and online
- ✓ always use the organisation's official email system, social media etc when contacting the at risk groups we work with
- ✓ always listen to individuals and take account of their wishes and feeling
- ✓ always act in a professional way and not accept bullying, swearing or other disruptive behaviour
- ✓ liaise openly with parents and carers
- ✓ only use physical contact if absolutely necessary
- ✓ avoid being alone with children, young people and adults at risk whenever possible
- ✓ listen to, and act upon, any disclosures, allegations, or concerns of abuse
- ✓ participate in approved safeguarding training at appropriate levels
- ✓ ensure restraint is only used as part of an agreed plan by staff trained in the use of the particular restraint or as an emergency action to protect from harm. All use of restraint will be reported and recorded by the member of staff concerned to the Lead or Deputy for safeguarding and to the relevant manager.
- ✓ follow our safeguarding policy at all times
- ✓ make activities FUN and enjoyable

Recognising Abuse in Children Young People and Adults at Risk

The following list is for guidance only. It is important to be observant, listen to what is being said and record. e.g. is what you are observing and being told about an injury consistent with the injury?

- Abuse related to faith or belief
- Alcohol and Substance misuse
- Bullying, harassment and sexual harassment
- Breast Ironing
- Carrying offensive weapons
- Child criminal and sexual exploitation including County Lines
- Child on child abuse, including sexual violence and upskirting
- Concealed pregnancy

- Criminal exploitation
- Discriminatory
- Domestic abuse, including "honour" based abuse
- Emotional
- Exploitive use of technology
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Financial or material abuse
- Forced marriage
- Gangs
- Gambling
- Hate and "mate" crime
- Hazing and initiation rites
- Hoarding
- Modern slavery
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Online safety
- Organisational or institutional
- Psychological
- Physical
- Radicalisation
- Self-neglect
- Sexual
- Sextortion
- Trafficking

Handling Disclosures

When a disclosure is made by a child, young person or adult at risk it is important to remember to:

- take what you are being told seriously
- stay calm and reassure
- do not investigate
- do not delay
- do not promise to keep it a secret

and always

- seek advice from the Lead or Deputy for Safeguarding
- make a careful recording of anything you are told or observe, date and sign.

A disclosure may come from someone telling you:

- they have or are being abused
- they have concerns about someone else
- they are themselves abusing or likely to abuse someone else

Remember not all disclosures are obvious. Some children, young people and adults at risk will be too frightened to directly disclose abuse but will make hints and even jokes to try and make an appropriate adult aware of the issue.

Responding to Concerns

Safeguarding Referral Flowchart

We ensure and emphasise that everyone in our organisation understand and know how to share any concerns immediately with the Lead or Deputy for Safeguarding. Everyone, including the Lead, Deputy and Senior Lead for Safeguarding, will deal with concerns using the following:

Step One:

If you are worried a child, young person or adult at risk has been abused because:

- you have seen something
- someone says they have been abused
- somebody else has told you they are concerned
- there has been an allegation against a colleague
- there has been an anonymous allegation
- an adult has disclosed that they were abused as a child
- a child, young person or adult say they are abusing someone else.

Step Two:

Check this safeguarding policy for guidance. Talk to the Lead or Deputy for Safeguarding without delay. If they are implicated, then talk to your **Senior Lead**

Step Three:

The Lead, Deputy or Senior Lead should refer the concern to the relevant adult's or children's social care service and/or the Police and follow up the referral in writing within 24 hours.

For England and Wales, in cases of allegations against a "person of trust" with a "duty of care" towards a child, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will co-ordinate the next procedural steps.

Under "whistle blowing", anyone can refer directly to the Police, social care services, the LADO for personnel child abuse allegations (England & Wales only), **relevant regulatory authorities**, or the NSPCC (child concerns only) and also the charity Protect for support when they are concerned the organisation is not managing safeguarding concerns appropriately.

**CONSULT,
MONITOR
AND RECORD**
Sign/Date/Time
*Include name and
job role*

When the concern is about the welfare of a child or adult at risk from schools, colleges, health providers, GP practices, prisons or social care settings, you should refer to that organisation's Lead for Safeguarding in the first instance. Inform the Lead or Deputy of your organisation that you have referred a concern.

Any consultations should not delay a referral.
In an emergency do not delay: dial 999

Record Keeping

At all times when required, and especially where there is a safeguarding concern, we are committed to keeping records which are:

- recorded on a safeguarding incident form
- of sufficient details of child, young person or adult at risk to identify individual who is subject of concern and any significant others
- accurate and factual/based on fact, as a true record of:
 - what has been monitored/observed
 - what has been said and by whom
 - what has given cause for concern
 - what action has and/or will be taken including the reason for those actions
 - the reason stated for no action being taken and by whom
- non judgmental
- timely within 24 hours
- signed, timed and dated by the writer and co- signed by the Lead or Deputy
- shared as appropriate by the Lead or Deputy for Safeguarding
- stored safely and securely by the Lead or Deputy for Safeguarding

Handling Allegations / Dealing with Complaints / Disciplinary & Grievance Procedures

Our policies and procedures are made available to everyone.

Where a complaint or allegation has been made with regards to any inappropriate behaviour or poor practice, the Lead or Deputy will, in all cases, discuss the situation with social care services (the LADO with regards to children England and Wales only) and / or the police before making an open decision about the best way forward.

In the case where the Lead is implicated, the Deputy should be informed. In the exceptional circumstances that both are involved, the person concerned will inform the Senior Lead. If there is a belief that the concern has not been taken seriously or acted upon then any one can "Whistleblow"

With regards to disciplinary and grievance procedures, we will take no steps until we have fully discussed and agreed a strategy with social care services and / or the police, (the LADO, with regards to children England and Wales only). Any investigation will override the need to implement any such procedures. Our management are responsible for making referrals to the relevant:

- criminal records service
- Regulatory Authority

Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Harassment

Bullying, harassment and sexual harassment can take many forms and include:

- physical violence including threats, verbal assaults and taunts, the destruction of property, extortion, unwanted sexual interest or contact
- indirect forms of bullying including ignoring a person and the withdrawal of friendship, malicious gossip and spreading rumours, abusive or oppressive graffiti, the use of social media, electronic messages and websites.
- motivation of prejudice against certain groups for example on the grounds of race, religion, gender and disability

Whether directed at children, young people, adults at risk, staff, volunteers, parent and carers, bullying, harassment and sexual harassment, physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse will not be tolerated. All such behaviour will be treated as a safeguarding concern when aimed at children, young people and or adults at

risk. If children, young people and/or adults at risk are engaging in bullying, harassment or sexual harassment it is also a safeguarding concern and should be reported to the Lead or Deputy for safeguarding.

We will:

- provide a culture of equality and respect for all with zero tolerance to any form of bullying, harassment and sexual harassment
- report all incidents of bullying, harassment and sexual harassment observed or disclosed, to the Lead or Deputy who will take the appropriate action
- take immediate steps to stop the behaviour and mitigate the effects of bullying, harassment and sexual harassment
- record all incidents with observations and witness statements, and action taken, signed, timed and dated

Online Safety

Why do we need to include Online Safety?

Modern digital technology has made access to information and communication increasingly easy for everyone. This is especially so for those who cannot always go out to socialise and rely on websites for social networking, watching films, downloading music, buying lottery tickets, shopping etc. Government guidance is clear, that all organisations working with children, young people adults at risk, families, parents and carers have responsibilities. It is also important to remember, children, young people and adults at risk can also abuse and such incidents fall into the remit of this policy

Online Safety Code of Conduct:

We expect everyone in our organisation to agree and sign up to our Online Safety code of conduct to:

1. use the internet and other forms of communication in a sensible and polite way.
2. only access websites, send messages or access and use other resources that will not hurt or upset anybody.
3. seek permission if they want to use personal information or take photographs of other people.
4. report any concerns to the Lead or Deputy
5. not maintain confidentiality if there is a concern about the welfare of a child, young person or adult at risk.

What are the Risks?

There are many potential risks including:

- accessing inappropriate or illegal websites.
- receiving unwanted or upsetting texts, e-mail messages or images.
- being “groomed” by another with a view to meeting the child, young person or adult at risk for their own illegal purposes including sex, drugs or crime.
- sharing nudes or semi nudes.
- viewing or sending unacceptable material such as inciting hatred or violence.
- sending bullying messages or posting malicious details about others.
- ignoring copyright law by downloading e.g. music, videos, homework cheat materials etc.
- overspending on shopping and gambling sites.
- being at risk of identity fraud for money transactions.
- inappropriate relationships or prostitution.

What else might be of concern?

A child, young person or adult at risk who:

- is becoming secretive about where they are going to or who they are meeting.
- will not let you see what they are accessing online.
- is using a webcam in a closed area, away from other people.
- is accessing the web or using a mobile for long periods and at all hours
- clears the computer history every time they use it.
- receives unexpected money or gifts from people you don't know.
- does not appear to have the money they should have.

A person who:

- befriends a child, young person or adult at risk on the internet or by text messaging.
- has links to children, young people and/or adults at risk on their social media pages especially if they work in a position of care such as a sports coach or care worker.
- is secretive about what they are doing and who they are meeting.

Social media

The [Online Safety Act 2023](#) and associated government guidance [A Guide to the Online Safety Bill](#) now makes social media companies more responsible for their users' safety on their platforms. This means children and adults will be protected online by making social media platforms:

- remove illegal content quickly or prevent it from appearing in the first place. This includes removing content promoting self-harm
- prevent children from accessing harmful and age-inappropriate content
- enforce age limits and age-checking measures
- ensure the risks and dangers posed to children on the largest social media platforms are more transparent, including by publishing risk assessments
- **provide parents and children with clear and accessible ways to report problems online when they do arise**

Such content should be reported to the service provider and if they do not respond appropriately the matter can be reported to [Ofcom](#).

- The data protection officer is responsible for the Digital Policy and Action Plan. The corporate and project use of social media tools are included in this policy in addition to use of IT equipment
- The Mighty Creatives staff, trustees, volunteers or freelancers are never allowed to accept as a "friend" a child, young person, or vulnerable adult they are or have worked with through The Mighty Creatives
- If social media is planned for use in a project or activity, a plan and risk assessment should be developed and shared with the lead designated safeguarding officer, prior to initiating.
- The Mighty Creatives contact details will always be included on social media sites so that any issues or concerns can be reported directly to The Mighty Creatives

- Any concerns regarding content generated by users on social media sites linked to The Mighty Creatives should be reported to the data protection officer.
- Online concerns can also be reported immediately to the CEOP.

The Mighty Creatives **website and Mighty Gallery and My Creative Track online**

- Children are advised that they should protect their own privacy online, The Mighty Creatives website and microsite includes The Mighty Creatives Privacy Statement
- The Communications & Marketing Manager is responsible for the team that administers The Mighty Creatives website and microsite in adherence to this policy.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO FOLLOW THE STEPS BELOW FIRST WHENEVER ANYONE IS AT RISK OF HARM

What do I do if I am concerned?

If you have any concerns, speak to the Lead or Deputy for Safeguarding.

Remember:

- do not delay.
- do not investigate.
- seek advice from the Lead or Deputy
- make careful recording of anything you observe or are told

Is a crime in progress or is anyone in immediate danger?

Yes



Dial 999 Immediately

N

Inform the Lead or Deputy for Safeguarding who will take the following steps, if not available, you must take

Is the concern about child sexual content anywhere in the world?

N

Ye



Contact the IWF
(Internet Watch Foundation)
www.iwf.org.uk

Is the concern about a person communicating with a child or adult for sexual reasons?

N

Yes, Child

Yes, Adult



Contact CEOP
(Child Exploitation and Online Protection)

Is the concern about a known person, non-sexual harassment or other potential crime?

Ye



Contact the local police

Record the concern and the Lead/Deputy for Safeguarding will liaise, await response, advise you and review Online Safety arrangements as necessary.

Minimising the Risks

We will:

- talk to children, young people and adults at risk about what they are accessing online.
- ensure everyone uses PCs, iPads and other technology in a general space where we can monitor what is going on.
- explain the risks of giving out personal details online.
- talk about how people can be anyone they want to be online, e.g. by using misleading emails, photographs of other people, telling lies about their age, hobbies, school.
- encourage children, young people and adults at risk to think carefully about what photographs or videos they use online. They can be used and tampered with by other people, or they may not be appropriate.
- advise children, young people and adults at risk to only text, chat or webcam to people they know in real life.
- talk about how to identify SPAM messages or junk mail and how to delete them. This also applies to messages from people they do not know, or opening attachments.
- discuss how people hide their identities online and the importance of never meeting new online “friends” in real life.
- make sure children, young people and adults at risk understand they can always talk to us, or their parents and/or carers, about anything that makes them feel uncomfortable.
- look on the internet together for information about how to deal with or report problems. e.g. [The National Crime Agency's CEOP Education](#)
- talk about how/when information or images get on to the internet, they can never be erased.

Other useful resources can be found at [Ofcom](#)

Safeguarding Practical Guidance

Photography & Filming Guidance

Both still and moving images are key to recording the successes and achievements of children, young people and adults at risk in their lives and activities. However, it is vital to remember that images (especially digital images) can be used, shared, stored and/or distributed inappropriately, and that their storage and use must comply with the UK GDPR.

It is therefore important to be clear about:

- explaining to parents and carers why caution is necessary
 - the purpose of images e.g. parent's and carer's own record, media and publicity etc
 - the content required when using a professional photographer
 - informing parents and seeking their consent for any publication or media use
 - publishing only necessary identifying details alongside individual's photos in newspapers, websites etc
 - taking photographs openly and away from sensitive areas (changing rooms, toilets, etc)
 - the suitability of clothing e.g. swimsuits
 - any group photos being taken only during the activity or on the premises
-

- all those taking photos signing a registration form, which also identifies the purpose and use of any images
- ensuring secure storage of all images
- identifying how long unused images will be retained
- identifying how long copies of published images will be retained

The above guidance applies to all still and moving images, however they are created (mobile phone, still camera, video camera etc). The type of equipment and the equipment's owner should also be recorded on the registration form.

Consent: participation, photography, and filming

Written consent from a parent or person with legal parental responsibility must be given for a child or young person to do the following:

- Be photographed or filmed if under 16
- Use ICT and internet equipment if under 16
- Take part in engagement activity if under 16

Use of photographs and videos

- Parents and legal guardians of children and young people will be asked to give their permission for photographs and filming to be taken
- Parents and legal guardians of children and young people must give prior written permission for the use of any photographs and video
- Images will not be identified with the child or young person's name unless specifically agreed.

The following guides/templates must be used:

- Photo Consent Guide
- Photo Consent Form Individual
- Photo Consent Form Group
- Contact Data Consent Form
- Participation Consent Form

Transport

We ensure that we:

- gain written permission from parents or carers to carry children, young people and adults at risk
- keep a register of who is being transported and who is driving, when to where and return, with collection and return times being specified
- provide all transporting and being transported with an emergency contact numbers
- plan journeys regarding time, distance and stopping points
- consider if another driver might be required or the possible need for extra supervision
- have emergency procedures in place

and we ensure that drivers:

- are recruited under safeguarding recruitment procedures
- are suitably qualified to drive the required vehicle
- provide proof of insurance regarding business use and comprehensive insurance
- can evidence the vehicle is roadworthy and suitable for transporting each individual
- provide suitable and age-appropriate seat belts, booster seats and wheelchair anchor points
- avoid transporting children, young people or adults at risk on their own

Activities, Events and Visiting Speakers/Activity Leaders

We will always ensure visitors and activities undertaken are risk assessed and we are committed to:

- ensuring that those who run activities have the expertise, knowledge and skills to do so properly
- completing a risk assessment which involves identifying risks and the means of reducing or eliminating those risks for all activities or events
- risk assessing any changes being made to activities or events involving children, young people and adults at risk
- having a written plan in place if the event or activity has to be cancelled
- having a written plan in place in case of emergency including contact numbers
- implementing the required actions identified by the risk assessment process and reviewing the effectiveness of these on a regular basis

The Late Pick Up of a Child, Young Person or Adult at Risk

If attempts to contact the parent and nominated emergency contact fail, then the supervising adult should wait with the child, young person or adult at risk with other staff, volunteers or parents wherever possible.

Staff, paid and unpaid, should avoid:

- taking the child, young person or adult at risk home or to another location
- waiting alone with the child, young person or adult at risk in a vehicle or at the venue
- sending the child young person or adult at risk home with another person, without parental consent
- leaving the child young person or adult at risk alone.

If all attempts to make contact fail, it may be advisable to contact the police for advice.

Child, Young Person or Adult goes Missing

If a child, young person or adult at risk goes missing from the group or organisation it should be reported to the police. Use 999 where there is a concern that they cannot be found or are vulnerable.

A missing person may be assessed as 'at risk' if they fit one or more of the following categories.

- is under 16
- has expressed feelings of suicide
- has dementia
- has been acting totally out of character
- has mental health issues
- is under increased stress
- has an illness or a physical disability
- has a learning disability
- is in need of regular medication/care

The Lead or Deputy for Safeguarding should be informed as soon as possible, and all details and actions recorded, signed, timed and dated.

First Aid

Our First Aiders have completed specific training as set out by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). They hold valid and up to date certificates of competence issued by an organisation whose training and qualifications are approved by the HSE.

The duties of a First Aider are:

- to give immediate First Aid to children, young people, adults at risk, staff or visitors when needed
- to ensure that an ambulance or other professional medical help is called when necessary

Our organisation undertakes to ensure there is always a trained First Aider on site at our venues or, if other venues used such as schools, that they have appropriate first aid cover.

We also provide training and guidance on dealing with hazardous materials such as blood, other bodily fluids and chemicals. We ensure sufficient equipment is available to deal with accidents or spillage.

All incidents will be reported and recorded in the First Aid and Incident Accident Books

Buildings and Venues

Safeguarding risk assessments will be carried out on all building and venues used by our organisation or by the host's venue management, such as schools

The safeguarding risk assessment should cover:

- access especially how people enter and leave the building
- signing in protocol
- use of keys
- toilets and changing rooms
- any outside space
- car parks
- any other relevant issues

SAFEcic Recommendations

In order to attain the highest standards of safeguarding practice, everybody needs to be vigilant in adhering to this policy and also assessing the risks of their own work and activities. These risk assessments will be carried out annually by the Lead and/or Deputy. However, it is the responsibility of everyone to draw attention to practices and procedures that they are unhappy or uncomfortable with.

It is only through adopting SAFEcic policies and practices that we can all be confident we have done everything we can to safeguard the children, young people and adults at risk in our care.

Recognising signs of abuse

Suspicious

The Mighty Creatives trustees, staff, volunteers and contractors should be aware of the Signs and Symptoms of Abuse and should make sure they can recognise these in the children and vulnerable adults they come into contact with. Any suspicion of abuse must be shared with a designated safeguarding lead at The Mighty Creatives reported using a Reporting Disclosure Form (see appendix c) [and shared with the designated safeguarding lead at the school/setting.](#)

- If anyone sees or suspects abuse of a child or vulnerable adult, they should share this with the designated safeguarding lead.
- If they suspect that the person with legal responsibility is actually the source of the problem, they should make their concerns known to another designated safeguarding lead, and in schools, the Chair of Governors.
- The individual should make a note for record of what they have witnessed as well as their response.

Types of abuse

We acknowledge that there are five types of child abuse as defined in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2024) which is also defined in the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education Statutory Guidance, 2024 and 2025'. See appendix A for further information.

The Mighty Creatives understands that there are indicators of child abuse; however, these should not be considered as a definitive list, but used when considering the possibility of abuse in children. A full explanation of indicators is in Appendix B.

- Bullying including cyber bullying and cyber crime
- Children at risk of exploitation including child sexual exploitation
- Child sexual abuse within the family
- Compromised parenting, particularly in relation to babies and very young children
- Domestic Abuse and teenage relationship abuse
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Faith abuse
- Forced marriage, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and breast ironing
- Gangs, youth violence and trafficking
- Gender based violence/Violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- Hate including race hate, discrimination, including LGBTQI+
- Mental Health
- Missing children from education and home

- Online abuse/Sexting/harassment
- Private Fostering
- Preventing Radicalisation
- Substance and alcohol abuse

The Mighty Creatives understands that there are specific safeguarding issues, which we will ensure all trustees, staff, volunteers and contractors will be trained to understand, identify, report, and monitor these concerns.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic Abuse is rarely a one-off incident, but a pattern of power and control. It is any threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between adults who are, or have been in a relationship, or between family members. It can be psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional abuse.

Children living with Domestic Abuse in their home or who are caught up in incidents of Domestic Abuse, are victims, and this can seriously harm children and young people. Some children are physically harmed as they can get caught up in the incident, some children are witnesses to the abuse, or hear the abuse. The impact on children living in a household where there is Domestic Abuse is likely to influence their development and social skills. We will treat any disclosure of information relating to Domestic Abuse as a Safeguarding concern and we will follow local Safeguarding Procedures.

Emotional/Mental Health and Wellbeing

All trustees, staff, volunteers and contractors should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that trustees, staff, volunteers and contractors are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.

We acknowledge many children will have periods of feeling anxious, afraid and upset, and can develop phobias. However, some children will experience this more frequently.

Online Safety, Cyber Security

The Mighty Creatives will work with our partners to keep children safe when online.

We will ensure that we have information and processes to raise awareness of online safety and cyber security for all our trustees, staff, volunteers and contractors.

This will cover a range of online safety issues including:

- fraud and scams
- copycat websites, phishing e-mails

- identity theft
- cyberbullying/trolling, cyberstalking,
- online grooming, online radicalisation,
- offensive/illegal content including race hate
- child sexual exploitation online
- Youth produced sexual imagery (sexting, nudes, semi-nudes)
- Using social media platforms.

Cyber Security is a growing Safeguarding concern and we recognise the need to have procedures to ensure networks, data and systems are protected against Cyber threats and help keep our trustees, staff, volunteers, contractors and our beneficiaries safe, particularly when in relation to our CRM, remote learning platforms and remote teaching platforms and different delivery styles.

The Sending of Indecent Images from one child to another through Digital Media Devices, including nudes and semi-nudes.

In the latest advice for schools and colleges (UKCIS), this is defined as the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos, or live streams online by young people under the age of 18. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums. It could also involve sharing between devices via services like which works offline.

The motivations for taking and sharing nude and semi-nude images, videos and live streams are not always sexually or criminally motivated. This does not apply to adults sharing nudes or semi-nudes of under 18-year olds. This is a form of child sexual abuse and we will refer this to the police as a matter of urgency.

The Criminal Exploitation of Children

Criminal exploitation is child abuse where children under 18 and older where there is a vulnerable adult are manipulated and coerced into committing crimes.

County Lines is the police term for urban gangs exploiting young people into moving drugs from a hub, normally a large city, into other markets - suburban areas and market and coastal towns and using dedicated mobile phone lines or "deal lines".

Cuckooing is a practice where people take over a person's home and use the property to facilitate exploitation. There are different types of cuckooing:

Using the property to deal, store or take drugs

Using the property to sex work

Taking over the property as a place for them to live

Taking over the property to financially abuse the tenant

The most common form of cuckooing is where drug dealers take over a person's home and use it to store or distribute drugs. Children living in these properties are at risk of neglect and other types of abuse.

The Sexual Exploitation of Children

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a type of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity.

It can occur online, and many young people can be persuaded or forced to have sexual conversations by text or online, send or post sexually explicit images of themselves, take part in sexual activities via a webcam or smartphone.

Children and young people in sexually exploitative situations and relationships are persuaded or forced to perform sexual activities or have sexual activities performed on them in return for gifts, drugs, money, or affection.

All suspected or actual cases of CRE/CSE are a Safeguarding concern in which safeguarding procedures will be followed.

Forced Marriage/ Honour based Violence and Female Genital Mutilation

All suspected or actual cases of FGM are a Safeguarding concern in which Safeguarding procedures will be followed. This will include a referral to the police. If any trustees, staff volunteers and contractors are concerned about a child, they should contact the Designated Safeguarding Leads. This will also apply to suspicions of a child been subject to treats of or honour-based violence.

If there are concerns that a child may be or is subject to breast ironing, this is Child Abuse and Safeguarding procedures will be followed and in all cases.

Prevent and Counter Terrorism

The Mighty Creatives will ensure all trustees, staff, volunteers and contracts will adhere to their duties under Prevent, as detailed in the [Prevent Duty Guidance 2015](#), (also [Prevent Duty Guidance for schools](#)) to have due regard to the need to prevent people from becoming drawn into terrorism and to work with our partners to comply with any policies and procedures they have in place.

Peer on peer abuse

Definition

Peer on peer or child on child abuse occurs when there is any kind of physical, sexual, emotional or financial abuse or coercive control exercised between children both on and offline. It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children/young people.

It is most likely to include but may not be limited to: bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying); abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers; physical abuse; sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; sexual harassment; non-consensual

sharing of nudes and semi nudes images and/or videos; causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent; upskirting; and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.¹

Spotting the signs and indicators

- Absence from school or disengagement from school activities.
- Social isolation and withdrawal from daily activities
- Physical injuries.
- Mental or emotional health issues.
- Becoming withdrawn – lack of self-esteem.
- Lack of sleep.
- Alcohol or substance misuse.
- Changes in behaviour.
- Inappropriate behaviour for age.
- Harmful towards others.

Additionally vulnerable groups to peer-on-peer abuse

- Those aged 10 and upwards.
- Girls and young women are more likely to be harmed and boys and young men more likely to have harmed.
- Black and minority ethnic children/young people often under identified as having been harmed and over-identified as having harmed others.
- Children/young people with intra-familial abuse in their histories or those living with domestic abuse.
- Children/young people in care and those who have experienced loss of a parent, sibling or friend through bereavement.
- Children/young people who have harmed others can be younger than their victims.

It is important to remember that as with all safeguarding issues, peer on peer abuse can impact on children and young people without these characteristics. It is therefore important to look at interlinking factors and not isolated incidents.

What we can do

- Follow TMC's code of conduct and ensure all children and young people are supported and know their rights.
- Understand your local community and the context in which children and young people are growing up.
- Ensure children/young people know the risks – where appropriate, talk about peer-on-peer abuse in an age-appropriate way.
- Ensure those working with children and young people understand the impact of peer/child on child abuse on children/young people's mental health as well as the additional needs/vulnerabilities of children/young people with special educational needs or disabilities, who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender; and/or have other perceived differences.
- Where appropriate, check children/young people have safe relationships – in their family, with their peers and with your staff. Create the environment where it is OK to talk, even about the most difficult things.

¹ Taken from <https://safeguarding.network/content/safeguarding-resources/peer-peer-abuse/>

- Spot the signs and know what to do – use the checklists above and be confident to raise peer on peer/child on child abuse as a possibility.

Historical or Non-Recent Child Abuse

Historical child abuse, sometimes referred to as non-recent child abuse, is when a child or young person experienced abuse when they were younger, or historically, that may or may not have been disclosed at the time. Because of the groups of children and young people we work with, hearing about historical child abuse is unfortunately common. This may be abuse that occurred prior to them coming into the care system, or abuse that took place whilst they were under a Child Protection Plan for example. It's important we know what to do when a child or young person discloses historical abuse.

We advise, that if a child or young person discloses or talks about historical abuse, that you respond in the same way you would if it was a disclosure of recent abuse and that you follow our normal reporting procedures. As part of this, we ask you to inform one of TMC's Designated Safeguarding Officers immediately. The DSO will then follow this up with the relevant parties to ensure that they are aware of this historical abuse and to take further action if needed. Whilst it may be that Children's Services are already aware of the historical abuse, it's important we share this information in the event that professionals are not aware and further action is required.

Appendix A Types of Child Abuse

- **Physical Abuse** - may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning/scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
- **Emotional Abuse** - is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
- **Sexual Abuse** and child sexual abuse within the family (CSIF) involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact or non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males; women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

- **Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may include a failure to:
 - Provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter.
 - Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
 - Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or
 - Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
 - Respond to a child's basic emotional needs
- **Bullying** and forms of bullying on and off line including prejudice based and Cyber Bullying is also abusive which will include at least one, if not two, three or all four, of the defined categories of abuse **[cross reference /refer to School Bullying Policy and similar other policies]**.

Appendix B Indicators of Child Abuse

Physical Abuse

Most children will collect cuts and bruises and injuries, and these should always be interpreted in the context of the child's medical / social history, developmental stage and the explanation given. Most accidental bruises are seen over bony parts of the body, e.g. elbows, knees, shins, and are often on the front of the body. Some children, however, will have bruising that is more than likely inflicted rather than accidental.

Important indicators of physical abuse are bruises or injuries that are either unexplained or inconsistent with the explanation given; these can often be visible on the 'soft' parts of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely, e.g. cheeks, abdomen, back and buttocks. A delay in seeking medical treatment when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern.

The physical signs of abuse may include:

- Unexplained bruising, marks, or injuries on any part of the body
- Multiple bruises- in clusters, often on the upper arm, outside of the thigh
- Cigarette burns
- Human bite marks
- Broken bones
- Scalds, with upward splash marks.
- Multiple burns with a clearly demarcated edge.

Changes in behaviour that 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 in hot weather
- Depression

- Withdrawn behaviour
- Running away from home.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse can be difficult to identify as there are often no outward physical signs. Indications may be a developmental delay due to a failure to thrive and grow, however, children who appear well-cared for may nevertheless be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents or carers. Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix or play with other children.

Changes in behaviour which can indicate emotional abuse include:

- Neurotic behaviour e.g. sulking, hair twisting, rocking
- Being unable to play
- Fear of making mistakes
- Sudden speech disorders
- Self-harm
- Fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour
- Developmental delay in terms of emotional progress.

Sexual Abuse

It is recognised that there is underreporting of sexual abuse within the family. School / College all staff and volunteers should play a crucial role in identifying / reporting any concerns that they may have through, for example, the observation and play of younger children and understanding the indicators of behaviour in older children which may be underlining of such abuse.

All Staff and volunteers should be aware that adults, who may be men, women, or other children, who use children to meet their own sexual, needs abuse both girls and boys of all ages. Indications of sexual abuse may be physical or from the child's behaviour. In all cases, children who tell about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important, therefore, that they are listened to and taken seriously.

The physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- Pain or itching in the genital area
- Bruising or bleeding near genital area
- 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 aggressive or withdrawn

- 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 overeating 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
- Not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
- Acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults.

Neglect

It can be difficult to recognise Neglect, however its effects can be long term and damaging for children.

The physical signs of neglect may include:

- Being constantly dirty or 'smelly'.
- Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children.
- Losing weight or being constantly underweight.
- Inappropriate or dirty clothing.

Neglect may be indicated by changes in behaviour which may include:

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