

CYP (children and young people)

Safeguarding Policy

The purpose and scope of this policy

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- to protect children and young people who receive Inclusive Response's services from harm. This includes the children of adults who use our services
- to provide staff and volunteers, as well as service users and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of Inclusive Response CIC including our Senior Managers and the Board of Directors, paid staff, volunteers, seasonal workers, agency staff and students.

Legal Framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidelines that seeks to protect children in England. The key pieces of legislation that you might be aware of are; The Children Act 1989 (as amended), The Children and Social Work Act 2017, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, The United Nations convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), The Equality Act 2010, The Children and Families Act 2014 and The Human Rights Act 1998.

Supporting Documents

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies, procedures, guidance and other related documents.

- Role description for the designated safeguarding officer.
- Dealing with disclosures and concerns about a child or young person.
- Managing allegations against staff and volunteers.
- Recording concerns and information sharing.
- Child protection records retention and storage.
- Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Safer recruitment.
- Online safety.
- Anti-bullying.
- Managing complaints.
- Whistleblowing.
- Health and Safety.
- Induction, training, supervision and support.
- Adult and child supervision ratios.

We believe that:

- Children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind.
- We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, their carers and other agencies is essential in prioritising young people's welfare.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting them.
- Appointing a nominated child protection lead for children and young people, a deputy and a board member for safeguarding.
- Adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Developing and implementing an effective online safety policy and related procedures.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently.
- Recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.
- Recording, storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance (more information about this is available from the *Information Commissioner's Office: ico.org.uk*).
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children and their families via leaflets, posters, group work and 1:1 discussions .
- Making sure that children , young people and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern.
- Using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents and carers appropriately.
- Using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately.
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise.
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance.
- Building a safeguarding culture where staff and volunteers, children and young people and their families and carers treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.

Definitions of Abuse

Physical: this involves (but is not limited to) hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, suffocating or other physical harm. Deliberately causing a child's ill health also constitutes as physical abuse.

Sexual: this involves forcing or enticing a child to participate in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non penetrative acts. Showing children pornographic materials, sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways also constitutes sexual abuse.

Emotional: this is present in virtually all child protection incidents but can also constitute abuse in its own right. It involves persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or torture causing, or anything that causes severe adverse effects on the emotional stability of a child. Emotional abuse also deeply affects children who witness or hear domestic abuse.

Neglect: is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical i.e. lack of food or clothing, emotional or psychological needs, so to have a severe impact on their health development or emotional stability.

Bullying: is the repetitive, intentionally hurting of one person or group by another person or group where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.

If you have concerns about an adult working with a child under the age of 18 years that you would like to report, please contact LADO central telephone number 0300 123 2044 or email on LADO@suffolk.gov.uk

Safeguarding Co-ordinator

All concerns must be raised with the Safeguarding Coordinator REDACTED who will follow the procedures set out by MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) and Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership. In the absence of the first safeguarding officer, please contact **the Local Authority**. The Designated Safeguarding Leads are available during opening hours to discuss safeguarding concerns.

Training

The Designated Safeguarding Leads (Level 3) will undertake safeguarding training every two years and knowledge and skills will be refreshed at regular interviews, but at least annually.

Additionally, all staff and volunteers will be given appropriate training on safeguarding and induction and this will be updated on a regular basis and at least annually.

Recruitment

Recruitment of staff is in line with the Safer Recruitment Policy. Inclusive Response CIC adheres to safe recruitment procedures, therefore ensuring that applicants are suitable to work with children. References will be sought for all staff who work directly with children and who are likely to have unsupervised access to children. All staff and volunteers will be required to have a Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS) before starting work.

Inclusive Response CIC will keep records to demonstrate the checks that have been done, including the reference number, date of issue and details of who carried out the check.

All adults working in the setting are provided with a copy of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures during induction, and the Directors ensure that the procedures are to be followed and are understood. In addition, all adults working with children should receive on-going training on safeguarding issues. All adults will have access to "Every Child Matters" and be required to read "What to do if you're worried a child is being abused" – (Gov).

Use of Mobile Phones and Cameras

Cameras and mobile phones are used to take photographs of the children during their time in activities. These photographs are used to update children's progress and are shared with the Parents/Carers. Relevant permissions are obtained from Parents/Carers that specify what the photographs can be used for. All photographs taken and printed off are for these purposes and then deleted from the camera or mobile phone memory. No images are ever stored electronically on a hard drive. The only exception would be if a Parent/Carer has agreed to use a particular photo for marketing/fundraising purposes and this has both the Parent/Carer and child's consent.

Visitors to the provision are not permitted to take photographs of the children in our care, unless previously agreed with Parents/Carers.

Online Safety

Inclusive Response CIC will ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place on all digital appliances to protect children from harmful online material.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

All staff and volunteers working with children will be aware of how children can be exploited and will act on any concerns immediately. This also includes recognising where older children may be at risk. If concerns are raised, they will follow their normal safeguarding referral route or in an emergency call the police directly. Information and risk factors regarding CSE should be shared with all adults working with children.

Prevent Agenda

All adults working with children should be aware of the Prevent agenda and how to identify and assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including extremist ideas that are part of the terrorist ideology.

Everyone should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Professional judgement should be used in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and appropriate action should be taken.

It is recommended that all adults working with children complete Prevent training.

Female Genital Mutilation

All adults working with children should be aware of female genital mutilation and the risk factors for young girls. All adults should respond to any concerns immediately either through following their normal safeguarding referral route or directly to the NSPCC FGM helpline, 0800 026 3550. Information and risk factors regarding FGM should be shared with adults working with children.

Breast Flattening

Breast ironing, also known as breast flattening, is the pounding and massaging of a pubescent girl's breasts using hard or heated objects to try to stop them developing, or to make them disappear entirely. All adults working with children should be aware of breast flattening and the risk factors for young girls. All adults should respond to any concerns immediately either through following their normal safeguarding referral route or directly to the police or the NSPCC. Information regarding breast flattening should be shared with all adults working with children.

Domestic Abuse

Seeing, hearing or knowing of a parent being abused is traumatic for children and can have long-term damaging emotional and psychological effects. All adults working with children should be aware of the impact of domestic abuse and where it is suspected that a child is at risk of harm

by witnessing or hearing domestic abuse, adults should follow safeguarding procedures. In an emergency, staff should call the police. Adults should also be aware of coercive control and the impact this will have on children's well-being. Information regarding domestic abuse should be shared with all adults working with children.

Peer on peer abuse

Children are vulnerable to abuse by their peers and such abuse should be taken as seriously as abuse by adults. Adults working with children should not dismiss abusive behaviour as normal between young people/children (however a child's age and stage of development will be considered). Adults should be aware of any incidences of peer on peer abuse and respond to these within their normal safeguarding procedures. Information regarding peer on peer abuse should be shared with all adults working with children.

Honour Based Abuse and Forced Marriages

Providers should be aware of incidences of honour based abuse and/or forced marriage. Honour based abuse can be described as a collection of practices which are used to control behaviour within families or other social groups to protect perceived culture and religious beliefs and/or honour.

Forced marriage is when someone does not consent and faces physical and/or psychological pressure to marry. Staff can respond to concerns by contacting Karma Nirvana <https://karmanirvana.org.uk/> or in case of emergency phoning 999. Information regarding honour based abuse and forced marriage should be shared with all adults working with children.

CAPACITY AND CONSENT

It is important to be alert to issues of cognitive capacity which can increase the vulnerability of people where they have a reduced ability to make informed decisions in the moment. This may be transient (e.g. due to fear, shock, injury, illness) or long term (e.g. due to learning differences, disability, mental health issue).

Whilst this is a complex issue, it should not get in the way of staff and volunteers genuinely seeking to ensure that all individuals are respectfully consulted in relation to participation in activities and/or sharing of information about them.

A young person aged 16 years or older is presumed in law to have capacity to consent, unless there is evidence to the contrary. Capacity and consent is not simply based on age however, particularly where learning and communication differences and disabilities are identified. You should also consider an individual's capacity to understand the consequences of giving or withholding their consent. They should not be treated as unable to make a decision until all practicable steps to help them have been taken.

When assessing a person's understanding you should seek to explain the issues using their preferred mode of communication and language. This should be done in a way that is suitable for them, considering all you know about them from your contact with them, particularly their age, language and likely understanding.

It is important to try and ensure they really understand the issues and are not just agreeing to what is proposed. If you are unsure whether they have the capacity to consent, then you should seek advice from your manager, the individual's friends, carer, another professional working with them or an advocate, where available, may be able to provide relevant information or advice where consulting these individuals does not increase potential risks.

The following criteria should be considered when assessing whether an individual has sufficient understanding at any time to consent, or to refuse consent, to sharing of information about them or participating in specific activities:

- ☞ Can the individual understand the question being asked of them?
- ☞ Are they taking an active part in the discussion?
- ☞ Can they rephrase the question in their own words?
- ☞ How would they explain it to someone else?
- ☞ Do they have a reasonable understanding of the risks or benefits of giving their consent or saying no?
- ☞ What do they think would happen if they agree to the action being suggested?
- ☞ Can they appreciate and consider the alternatives, weighing up one aspect against another and express a clear and consistent personal view? Encourage them to say out loud, or write down, their view of the pros and cons. You could recheck these views later on.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PROCEDURE

Dealing with concerns regarding children and young people in our care:

All adults working with children and young people are responsible for the safety and well-being of the children and young people. This includes protecting them from harm. If any person is worried that a child may be being harmed, or if a child discloses abuse, or if a third party expresses concerns to an adult in the setting, they must adhere to the following procedures:

1. Ask to speak with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator REDACTED, in private, if possible, be mindful of staffing ratios.
2. The Safeguarding Lead and the adult discuss the concern and decide what action needs to be taken. A decision will need to be made in relation to whether it is appropriate to make a referral to Children's services. During the discussion, full written details including dates and times, parties involved, any supporting information from other persons or explanations from parents/carers, will be recorded.
3. If no referral is being made, then a written record is to be completed and stored on the child's personal file. This written record should then be shared with parents/carers on collection.
4. If a referral is to be made, then the Safeguarding Lead must ring Suffolk County Council Customer First 0808 800 4005. The Safeguarding Lead will be responsible for providing as much information as possible to Children's services to aid their investigation. The referral must then be followed up in writing within 48 hours of making the referral.
5. Direction as far as what to do next will be taken from Children's Services.
6. All records will be kept secure and confidential and must be signed and dated.

Whenever possible, parents/carers need to be made aware that a referral is being made to Children's services, however in some instances this may not be appropriate. Concerns should not be discussed with parents/carers where there is a concern that this may place the child at risk of further harm.

In the event of disclosure from a child or young person:

- Listen to the child or young person carefully.
- Make no observable judgement.

- Do not question the child.
- Remain calm.
- Do not make promises that cannot be kept, such as promising not to tell anyone.
- Reassure the child or young person it is not their fault.

All concerns need to be kept as a clear written record, observation of the facts, not opinions. If a child/young person confides in you, record what they said, try to use the exact words. Do not begin to question the child/young person. This is important, for any investigations that may follow. Do not put pressure on the child /young person to respond but allow the child /young person to talk and always take what the child/ young person says seriously.

Dealing with concerns and allegations against staff members or any other person working with the children/young people.

Where there is an allegation made against a Director, you must inform the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) by telephone **0300 123 2044** or email LADO@suffolk.gov.uk.

Where there is an allegation about a member of staff, student or volunteer the following procedure is as below:

The Safeguarding Lead will be required to:

- Refer to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- Gather information.
- Take part in strategy meetings.
- Progress and liaise jointly with the LADO.

The concerns must be about the behaviour/language of:

- An adult, student or volunteer from the setting.
- An adult, student or volunteer from another service/setting received or attended by the child/young person.

The behaviour/language could take a number of forms, for example:

- Seeing an adult hit a child/young person.
- Observing an adult using inappropriate restraint or language.
- Witnessing the neglect of basic care needs of a child/young person.
- Inappropriate sexual comments to children OR adults in the setting.
- Excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities.
- Inappropriate sharing of images.
- Any other inappropriate behaviour or language.

Take notes of what you have heard or seen and what has been said – if it is not possible to take notes at the time, do so immediately afterwards. Keep the notes taken at the time, without amendment, omission or addition, whatever subsequent reports may be written. The notes should be dated and signed. The notes cover what you saw, who said what, what action you took, and the details of date, time and location and name of child/young person and perpetrator.

Allegation or Concern around quality of care and practice?

The Safeguard lead should determine whether the incident is an allegation of potential or actual harm or alternatively a concern about quality and care/practice or complaint.

If the information relates to a concern, allegation or suspicion that a member of staff, manager, owner, committee member, student, volunteer or carer who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child/young person, or may have harmed a child/young person.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Behaved towards a child/young person in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children/young people.
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children/young people.

Or where:

- Concerns arise about the person's behaviour with regard to Their own children/young people.
- Concerns arise about the behaviour in the private or community life of a partner, member of the family or other household member.

You should:

Report the matter immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Leads/Directors. If the Directors are subject of the allegation then report to the Local Authority (Suffolk County Council).

If you are the person to whom the allegation of harm by an adult working with children/young people, student or volunteer is reported, you must not investigate the matter by interviewing the accused person, the child/young person or potential witnesses, but should:

- Avoid asking leading questions
- Record the incident in writing, just recording the facts and include:
 - When did the alleged incident take place? (time and date)
 - Who was present?
 - What was said to have happened?
 - Sign and date the written record.
- If the allegation or suspicion involves a child or young person suffering, or at risk of significant harm, the referral to children's services must be made.
- Following the telephone referral, the Safeguarding Lead must follow up the concerns in writing to Children's services within 24 hours.
- The Local Authority Designated Office (LADO) can be contacted for advice about what to do next. Contact the LADO who will liaise with other agencies and advise the setting of next steps to be taken. **Please note that it is not appropriate for the LADO to be contacted directly by the person to whom the allegations are against.**

Whistleblowing

Please refer to the Whistleblowing Policy.