



Hallgarth Residents Association Child Protection Safeguarding Policy

1. Introduction

1.1. This document is the Safeguarding Children Policy for Hallgarth Residents Association which will be followed by all staff and volunteers of the organisation and followed and promoted by those in the position of leadership within the organisation.

1.2. Individual agencies are responsible for ensuring that their employees are competent and confident in carrying out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting children's welfare.

1.3. We know that young people can be vulnerable to abuse by adults. The purpose of this policy is to make sure that the actions of any adult in the context of the work carried out by the organisation are transparent and safeguard and promote the welfare of all young people.

1.4. Principles upon which the Child Protection Safeguarding Policy is based:

- Children have a right to be safe and should be protected from all forms of abuse and neglect;
- Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility;
- It is better to help children as early as possible, before issues escalate and become more damaging; and
- Children and families are best supported and protected when there is a co-ordinated response from all relevant agencies;
- Voluntary organisations play an important role in delivering services to children;
- Voluntary organisations working with children are in a unique position to be able to observe signs of abuse or neglect, or changes in behaviour which may indicate a child may be being abused or neglected;
- Paid and volunteer staff in voluntary organisations need to be aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, how they should respond to child protection concerns and make a referral to local authority children's social care or the police if necessary;

- Paid and volunteer staff should make sure that they are **alert** to the signs of abuse and neglect, that they **question the behaviour** of children and parents/carers and don't necessarily take what they are told at face value. They should make sure they know where to turn to if they need to **ask for help**, and **refer** to children's social care or to the police, if they suspect that a child is at risk of harm or is in immediate danger (see section 3.3 Taking Action for further information).

2. Safeguarding Children & Young People

This section covers a collection of safeguarding measures which have been designed to safeguard children and young people from harm. They are as follows:

2.1 Safe Recruitment & Selection.

We have a policy and procedure which ensures that all potential paid staff and volunteers who work unsupervised with children:

- Complete an application form or a letter of application. This includes: address, evidence of relevant qualifications, the reasons why they want to work with children and young people, paid work and voluntary work experience and all criminal convictions;
- Provide two pieces of identification which confirm both identity and address;
- Undergo an interview (formal or informal) involving at least two interviewers;
- Provide at least two references which are followed up before a post is offered. One reference is from the last employer or an organisation that has knowledge of the applicant's work or volunteering with children or young people. If the applicant has not worked with children or young people before, then they should confirm this and give an alternative referee;
- Consent to a Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS) at the appropriate level (standard or enhanced). Agree to sign up to the DBS update service.

Furthermore the organisation complies with all other safeguarding regulations:

- We understand that a person who is barred from working with children or vulnerable adults is breaking the law if they work or volunteer, or try to work or volunteer with these groups;
- We understand that an organisation which knowingly employs someone who is barred to work with those groups will also be breaking the law;
- We understand that if our organisation dismisses a member of staff or volunteer because they have harmed a child or vulnerable adult, or would have done so if they had not left, we must make referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service/about>).

2.2 Management & Support of Paid Staff & Volunteers

All staff and volunteers who work unsupervised with children are provided with a job description (paid staff) or a role description (volunteers) outlining their main responsibilities. This includes a requirement to comply with our Child Protection Safeguarding Policy and procedures and ground rules for appropriate behaviour.

- All staff and volunteers who work unsupervised with children are supported through an introduction process during which safeguarding/child protection procedures are explained and training needs identified;
- If required, the organisation implements disciplinary and grievance procedures for all paid staff and volunteers, which comply with the ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) Code of Practice;
- All paid staff and volunteers who work unsupervised with children attend regular ongoing safeguarding training appropriate to their role;
- All paid staff and volunteers who work unsupervised with children receive an introduction, which includes information on all the organisation's policies and procedures.

2.3 Providing Safer Activities and Trips

2.31 Necessary arrangements

- People whose suitability has not been checked, including through a DBS check must not be allowed to have unsupervised contact with children;
- All paid staff and volunteers undertaking specialist roles, (e.g. taking children and young people off site on trips) are provided with appropriate training.

All activities are risk assessed to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent children and young people being harmed whilst participating in the organisation's activities.

- Employer's liability and/or public liability insurance has been taken out to ensure that all activities and services and all people taking part, are covered;
- All activities being provided are properly planned and organised. Planning ensures that the activities are: age-appropriate, appropriately supervised, take account of staff ratio and use qualified instructors;
- The organisation has a Photography Policy about taking and using photographs of children and young people and a consent form for the use of photographs and filming.

2.32 Transport

We ensure that our transport has:

- Appropriate insurance cover
- Tax
- MOT
- Appropriate seats (including booster seats and seatbelts)
- A first aid box
- Drivers hold the correct driving license

2.4 Bullying

Bullying will not be accepted or condoned. All forms of bullying will be addressed.

Bullying can include:

- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching etc;

- Name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing and emotional torment through ridicule, humiliation and the continual ignoring of individuals;
- Sectarian/racial taunts, graffiti, gestures;
- Sexual comments and/or suggestions;
- Unwanted physical contact.

Children from ethnic minorities, disabled children, young people who are gay or lesbian, bisexual or trans or those with learning difficulties are more vulnerable to this form of abuse and may well be targeted.

Everybody has the responsibility to work together to stop bullying – the coach/volunteer, the parent/guardian, the child/young person – and to commit to the early identification of bullying and prompt, collective action to deal with it.

Anyone who reports an incident of bullying will be listened to carefully and be supported, whether it's the child/young person being bullied or the child/young person who is bullying. A bullying report form will be completed and appropriate action taken.

Any reported incident of bullying will be investigated objectively and will involve listening carefully to all those involved.

Children/young people being bullied will be supported and assistance given to uphold their right to play and live in a safe environment which allows their healthy development.

Those who bully will be supported and encouraged to stop bullying.

2.5 Complaints Policy

We have a written Complaints Policy and procedure so that children and young people, and staff and volunteers can make any necessary complaint.

3. Child Protection

3.1 Immediate Action to Ensure Safety

Immediate action may be necessary at any stage in involvement with children and families.

In all cases it is vital to take whatever action is needed to safeguard the child or children concerned i.e.

- If emergency medical attention is required this can be secured by calling an ambulance (dial 999) or taking a child to the nearest Accident and Emergency Department;
- If a child is in immediate danger the police should be contacted (dial 999) as they alone have the power to remove a child immediately if protection is necessary, via their powers to use police protection.

3.2 Recognition of Abuse or Neglect

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may

be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Individuals within the organisation need to be alert to the potential abuse of children both within their families and also from other sources including abuse by members of that organisation.

The organisation should know how to recognise and act upon indicators of abuse or potential abuse involving children and where there are concerns about a child's welfare. There is an expected responsibility for all members of the organisation to respond to any suspected or actual abuse of a child in accordance with these procedures.

Abuse can take many forms and the following is a summary of the most common forms of child abuse as set out in *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2015)

3.21 Physical abuse

Physical Abuse - a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or 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.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of physical abuse:

- Children with frequent injuries;
- Children with unexplained or unusual fractures or broken bones; and
- Children with unexplained:
 - Bruises or cuts;
 - Burns or scalds; or
 - Bite marks.

3.22 Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse - 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 a child 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 a 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.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Children who are excessively withdrawn, fearful, or anxious about doing something wrong;

- Parents or carers who withdraw their attention from their child, giving the child the 'cold shoulder';
- Parents or carers blaming their problems on their child; and
- Parents or carers who humiliate their child, for example, by name-calling or making negative comparisons.

3.23 Neglect

Neglect - The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

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

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

Some of the following signs may be indicators of neglect:

- Children who are living in a home that is indisputably dirty or unsafe;
- Children who are left hungry or dirty;
- Children who are left without adequate clothing, e.g. not having a winter coat;
- Children who are living in dangerous conditions, i.e. around drugs, alcohol or violence;
- Children who are often angry, aggressive or self-harm;
- Children who fail to receive basic health care; and
- Parents who fail to seek medical treatment when their children are ill or are injured.

3.24 Sexual abuse and exploitation

Sexual abuse- 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, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include 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.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual abuse:

- Children who display knowledge or interest in sexual acts inappropriate to their age;

- Children who use sexual language or have sexual knowledge that you wouldn't expect them to have;
- Children who ask others to behave sexually or play sexual games; and
- Children with physical sexual health problems, including soreness in the genital and anal areas, sexually transmitted infections or underage pregnancy.

Further information on Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

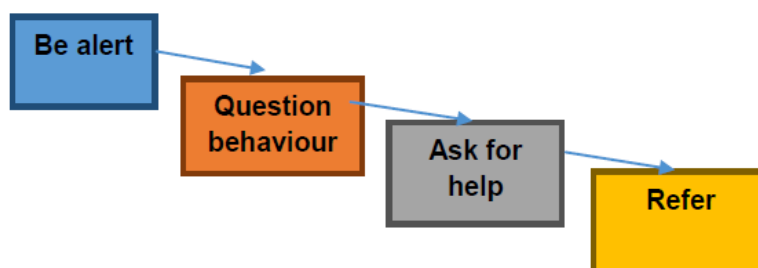
3.25 Further information on Preventing Radicalisation

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of an organisation's wider safeguarding duties and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse. During the process of radicalisation it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being radicalised.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people. As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff/volunteers should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.

3.3 Taking Action

There are 4 key steps to follow to help you identify and respond appropriately to possible abuse and or neglect.



It may not always be appropriate to go through all 4 stages sequentially. **If a child is in immediate danger or is at harm or risk you should refer to the children's social care and/or the police.** Before doing so, you should try to establish the basic facts. However, it will be the role of the social workers and the police to investigate cases and make a judgement on whether there is statutory intervention and/or a criminal investigation.

You should record, in writing, all concerns and discussions about a child's welfare the decisions made and the reasons behind those decisions.

The first step is to be alert to the signs of abuse and neglect, and to have read this policy.

3.4 When You Must Not Discuss Your Concerns with Parents/Carers

It is good practice to be as open and honest as possible with parents/carers about any concerns. However, you **MUST NOT** discuss your concerns with parents/carers in the following circumstances:

- Where sexual abuse or sexual exploitation is suspected;
- Where organised or multiple abuse is suspected;
- Where fabricated or Induced Illness (previously known as Munchausen Syndrome by proxy) is suspected (see Fabricated or Induced Illness procedure);
- Where Female Genital Mutilation is the concern;
- In cases of suspect Forced Marriage;
- Where contacting parents/carers would place a child, yourself or others at immediate risk.

These decisions should not be taken in isolation. Consult with your senior manager/line manager/designated safeguarding lead.

3.5 What to do if Children Talk to You about Abuse or Neglect

It is recognised that a child may seek you out to share information about abuse or neglect, or talk spontaneously individually or in groups when you are present. In these situations **YOU MUST**:

- Listen carefully to the child. **DO NOT** directly question the child;
- Give the child time and attention;
- Allow the child to give a spontaneous account; do not stop a child who is freely recalling significant events;
- Make an accurate record of the information you have been given taking care to record the timing, setting and people present, the child's presentation as well as what was said. Do not throw this away as it may later be needed as evidence;
- Use the child's own words where possible;
- Explain that you cannot promise not to speak to others about the information they have shared - do not offer false confidentiality;
- Reassure the child that:
 - they have done the right thing in telling you;

- they have not done anything wrong;
- Tell the child what you are going to do next and explain that you will need to get help to keep him/her safe;
- DO NOT ask the child to repeat his or her account of events to anyone.

If a child discloses information to you about abuse or neglect you must take action.

Contact your designated safeguarding person or if you cannot contact them go straight to the Cumbria Local Safeguarding Children Board
<https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/secure/LSCBContact>

If a child is in immediate danger of being harmed, the police should be called on 999.

3.6 Consult about your Concern

Because of your observations of a child, or information received you may become concerned about a child who has not spoken to you.

Ask a child why they are upset or how a cut or bruise was caused, or respond to a child wanting to talk to you. This practice can help clarify vague concerns and result in appropriate action.

If you are concerned about a child you must share your concerns. Initially you should talk to one of the people designated as responsible for child protection within your organisation. In THE ORGANISATION the designated safeguarding people are:

Name	Contact Details
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If you are worried about a child and cannot contact a designated person, speak to another manager or go direct to Cumbria Local Safeguarding Children Board

If your concerns need a response during Weekday Office Hours, 8am - 5pm Monday-Thursday [8am-4.30pm Friday]

<http://cumbrialscb.com/professionals/hub/whattodoifyouhaveconcernsaboutachild.asp>

If urgent contact: 0333 240 1727

If your concerns need a response outside of Office Hours - Weekends, Bank Holidays, and between 5pm [4.30pm on Fridays] and 8am during the week

<http://cumbrialscb.com/professionals/hub/whattodoifyouhaveconcernsaboutachild.asp>

If a child is in immediate danger of being harmed, or if a child is home alone, the police should be called on 999.

If you believe there is a safeguarding concern which requires a social work response out of hours call the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on 0333 240 1727.

If a caller rings out of office hours, facilities will be in place to divert the call so no alternative numbers need to be provided.

3.7 Make a Referral

A referral involves giving the Cumbria Local Safeguarding Children Board, the Police, or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) information about concerns relating to an individual or family in order that enquiries can be undertaken by the appropriate agency followed by any necessary action.

Parents/carers should be informed if a referral is being made except in the circumstances outlined in Section 3.4.

However, inability to inform parents for any reason should not prevent a referral being made. It would then become a joint decision with the Cumbria Local Safeguarding Children Board about how and when the parents should be approached and by whom.

If your concern is about harm or risk of harm from a family member or someone known to the children, you should make a referral to the Cumbria Local Safeguarding Children Board.

If your concern is about harm or risk of harm from someone not known to the child or child's family, you should make a telephone referral directly to the Police and consult with the parents.

If your concern is about harm or risk of harm from an adult in a position of trust (see Section 3.8: Allegations against Adults Who Work with Children).

Information required when making a referral

3.77 Be prepared to give as much of the following information as possible (in emergency situations all of this information may not be available). Unavailability of some information should not stop you making a referral.

- Your name, telephone number, position and request the same of the person to whom you are speaking;
- Full name and address, telephone number of family, date of birth of child and siblings;
- Gender, ethnicity, first language, any special needs;
- Names, dates of birth and relationship of household members and any significant others;
- The names of professionals known to be involved with the child/family e.g.: GP, Health Visitor, School;
- The nature of the concern; and foundation for the concern;
- An opinion on whether the child may need urgent action to make them safe;
- Your view of what appears to be the needs of the child and family;

- Whether the consent of a parent with Parental Responsibility has been given to the referral being made.

Action to be taken following the referral

3.78 You must take the following action after making a referral:

- Ensure that you keep an accurate record of your concern(s) made at the time.
- Or if you contacted The Bridge Partnership via phone, **fill out an online form at <https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/secure/LSCBContact>**
- Accurately record the action agreed or that no further action is to be taken and the reasons for this decision.

3.8 Allegations against Adults who work with Children

If you have information which suggests an adult who works with children (in a paid or unpaid capacity) has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child; or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he may pose a risk to children. (Working Together 2015).

You should speak immediately with your line manager or designated officer who has responsibility for managing allegations. The senior manager will consult with/make a referral to the Cumbria Local Safeguarding Children Board.

If one of those people is implicated in the concerns you should discuss your concerns directly with the Cumbria Local Safeguarding Children Board.

3.9 Confidentiality

The organisation should ensure that any records made in relation to a referral should be kept confidentially and in a secure place.

Information in relation to child protection concerns should be shared on a "need to know" basis. However, the sharing of information is vital to child protection and, therefore, the issue of confidentiality is secondary to a child's need for protection.

For further information refer to '**Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners**', which provides guidance on information sharing for people who provide safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers. (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>)

If in doubt, consult.

3.10 Useful Cumbria Contacts

Worried about a child? In Cumbria all reports or enquiries concerning the welfare or safety of a child must go straight to the Cumbria Local Safeguarding Children Board.

If a child is in immediate danger of being harmed, or if a child is home alone, the police should be called on 999.

Referrals to the Cumbria Local Safeguarding Children Board

You can now simply **fill out an online form at**
<https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/secure/LSCBContact>

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