

Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

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1. Policy Statement

At Help & Care we believe that everyone has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practice in a way that protects them.

In our duty to protect we will give equal priority to keeping all children and young people safe.

- We recognise 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 be protected 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.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 This Policy sets out the responsibility of all Help & Care staff in relation to any allegation of harm towards a child. This may be reported to Help & Care staff or witnessed by them whilst in their employ. Help & Care is committed to working with multi-agency partners to ensure we meet our responsibilities towards vulnerable members of our communities.
- 2.2 The main legislation which guides this policy is The Children Act 1989 and the associated guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (last updated 2018).
- 2.3 For the purpose of this policy, a child is defined as a person under the age of 18.
- 2.4 Harm is defined as:
“The ill-treatment or impairment of the health or development of a child”
(Children Act Section 31)
- 2.5 Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another person is also considered harm under Section 120 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002.

3. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this Policy is to define the responsibilities of all Help & Care staff to children and young people where there is an allegation of harm.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- 4.1 All Help & Care staff have a responsibility to promote the welfare of the child and respond to any allegation in the appropriate way.
- 4.2 Managers are responsible for providing advice and guidance to staff where an allegation of harm against a child is made.
- 4.3 Human Resources (HR) are responsible for advising on this Policy.
- 4.4 The Children's Safeguarding Lead is responsible for ensuring the dissemination of this Policy, and adherence to it.

5. Main Content

- 5.1 An allegation or suspicion of harm to a child may come from many sources, for example, when in discussion with a client or their carer, or when visiting a person in their own home.
- 5.2 Non-action is not an option. Any concern for the welfare of a child must be reported through the appropriate channels.
- 5.3 Where a staff member has a concern about the welfare of a child they should:
 - React calmly to the information that they are provided with.
 - Take details of the concern, but do not ask for evidence or use leading questions. Keep questions to a minimum, ensuring understanding is clear.
 - Take the concerns seriously.
 - Do not promise confidentiality. Make it clear that concerns must be reported to the appropriate statutory bodies.
 - Record what was seen or heard as soon as possible.
 - Discuss the matter with their Line Manager immediately.
 - Refer the concerns to the appropriate Children's Social Care Team within 24 hours.
- 5.4 Where a staff member has a concern that a child is at immediate risk, they should contact emergency services.
- 5.5 When reporting a concern, the following information should be provided:
 - Name, contact details and position of referrer.

- Name, date of birth and address of child (if known).
- Name, date of birth and address of parent (if known).
- Details of suspected harm, using the words of the person who raised the concern where possible.
- Details of person suspected of causing harm (if known).
- Any observations made by the staff member.
- Any other relevant information, including dates and times.
- Your relationship with the child, parent, carer etc., involved.
- A clear definition should be made between fact and opinion.

Refer to Appendix A – Responding to a safeguarding concern.

- 5.6 A full report on the concern should be made on the relevant reporting system.
- 5.7 The Help & Care Children's Safeguarding Lead should be advised of the concern and actions taken.
- 5.8 If a concern is received outside of Local Authority office hours, the Out of Hours Service should be advised of the concern. There should be no delays in raising a referral to Children's Services.
- 5.9 If the person who is alleged to have caused harm to a child has done so in a professional context (for example a Social Worker, General Practitioner, Teacher), the staff member who receives this concern must report it to their Line Manager immediately. The Line Manager will, in consultation with the Help & Care Children's Safeguarding Lead, refer the matter to the Local Authority for consideration by the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The LADO is a dedicated role within each Local Authority which considers allegations against staff who work with children and young people. This applies to all adults in a position of trust, whether they are paid, unpaid, agency workers, volunteers or self-employed.
- 5.10 If the person who is alleged to have caused harm is a member of Help & Care staff, volunteer or Board member, this will be reported to the Local Authority for consideration of the LADO.

6. Training

- 6.1 Safeguarding is everyone's business, and it starts with Help & Care employees and volunteers. Safeguarding Children and Young People training is mandatory for all employees and volunteers working in services and/or have regular contact with customers, their families or members of the public.
- 6.2 Help & Care's Statutory and Mandatory Framework sets out the expected and required levels of training for all Help & Care employees and volunteers.

- 6.3 Help & Care will ensure that a sufficient number of internal training events are provided and that access to E-Learning and external training events is available.
- 6.4 It is the responsibility of individual employees and volunteers and their Line Managers to ensure that training is accessed and updated in line with their personal development plans and training framework in line with their position/role. This will be monitored through Breathe HR.

7. Monitoring Compliance and Effectiveness

Help & Care's Children Safeguarding Lead will monitor this Policy on behalf of Help & Care to ensure the effectiveness of the organisation's duties and responsibilities.

Standard/Process	Monitoring and Audit			
	Method	By	Frequency	Report to
Safeguarding Concern Record Audit	All completed safeguarding records to ensure concerns have been reported and recorded correctly.	Head of Governance	Monthly	Governance & Oversight Group
Mandatory Training Compliance	Safeguarding – Dashboard to meet framework targets	HR Team	Monthly	Governance & Oversight Group
Learning from Serious Incidents	Audit safeguarding training and training plans to ensure recommendations are included.	Governance Team	Quarterly	Board of Trustees Leadership Team
Safeguarding Activity	Safeguarding Portal	Governance Team	Quarterly	Board of Trustees Leadership Team
Quality Assurance	Data collection and analysis; Audit of safe recruitment practices; Complaints; Disciplinary proceedings; Whistleblowing	Governance Team	Annual	Board of Trustees Leadership Team

8. Review, Dissemination and Implementation

- 8.1 Employees and volunteers will be made aware of this policy by a variety of routes including induction, their Line Managers, internal news, training etc.
- 8.2 Implementation of the Policy will be the responsibility of all employees and volunteers, with particular responsibility for Line Managers as documented in relevant sections. All new employees and volunteers are to complete relevant training within the timescale as stated within the Statutory and Mandatory Framework.
- 8.3 The Safeguarding Children and Young Person Policy will be reviewed every 3 years from ratification, and in accordance with the following on an as and when required basis:
- Legislative changes
 - Good practice guidance
 - Significant Serious Incidents reported
 - Changes to organisation infrastructure

9. Equality Impact Statement

- 9.1 This document has been assessed for equality impact using Help & Care's approved tool. The manner in which this Policy impacts upon equality and diversity will be monitored throughout the life of the Policy and reassessed as appropriate when the Policy is reviewed.
- 9.2 A copy of the Equality Impact Assessment can be requested from governance@helpandcare.org.uk.

10. Appendices

Appendix A – Responding to a Safeguarding Concern