

## **SECTION 15: Safeguarding Policy – Children & Vulnerable Adults**

### **15.1 Introduction and Background**

- 15.1.1 The principles and procedures espoused within this policy apply to all clients using or affected by the activities and undertakings of Connecting Communities in Berkshire.
- 15.1.2 Children and vulnerable adults are potentially more susceptible to being abused and this can occur in any section of our society. Abuse occurs in all groups, and in all classes. Children & adults may suffer abuse by a family member or family friend, by professionals, by those who are in a caring role and by strangers. It can take many forms – *see Appendix 1*.
- 15.1.3 Responding to and managing suspicions and allegation of abuse demands much of professionals. They have to be sensitive both to the individual's needs and to the distress which investigations are likely to arouse in families; these may be conflicting. They also have to recognise that our society embraces a variety of social practice, and be able to be both sensitive to and tolerant of customs and views which may be held by minority groups, whilst at the same time distinguishing what is an acceptable level of difference and what is not.
- 15.1.4 The Trustees of Connecting Communities in Berkshire takes seriously their responsibility particularly to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults; and commits to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements within the activities of their organisation to identify, assess, and support those who are suffering harm.
- 15.1.5 The policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Act 1989 and 2004; the Education Act 2002, and in line with government publications & Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 as a reference template.
- 15.1.6 This policy should be read in conjunction with Connecting Communities in Berkshire Lone Working and Health and Safety policy.
- 15.1.7 We fully understand that all staff and Trustees have a full and active part to play in protecting clients from harm, and their welfare is a paramount concern. Trustees will ensure that mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their responsibilities.

**At Connecting Communities in Berkshire the Trustees are committed to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and expect everyone who works for & with our organisation to share this commitment & discharge their responsibilities under this policy.**

## **At Connecting Communities in Berkshire; Nothing is too insignificant to be reported Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility**

We will assess the risks and issues inherent within the wider community when considering the well-being and safety of our clients & take all welfare concerns seriously encouraging individuals to talk to us about anything that worries them

Everyone using our organisation & who give or disclose a cause for concern, should know that they will be taken seriously. An individual should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, violence or harassment, neither should anyone ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

The starting point for the organisation is that there is a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, bullying, violence and harassment. They are never to be accepted and behaviours of their nature will not be tolerated. It is especially important not to pass anything off as "banter" or "just having a joke" as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment.

### **Mental Wellbeing**

Trustees & staff will be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that an individual has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Staff are not expected or trained to diagnose mental health conditions or issues, but may notice behaviours that may be of concern.

Where staff have a mental health concern about an individual, they should raise the issue by informing the CEO. It is the responsibility of the CEO to seek advice appropriate to the circumstances.

Wellbeing of staff is a priority within the organisation & staff & Trustees should be conscious of the wellbeing of colleagues within their daily routines & in the planning of work. Concerns should be brought to the attention in confidence to the Chair of Trustees.

### **Physical Health**

Staff may have concerns over the physical Health of an individual. They are not permitted to offer medical advice or a diagnosis. They may suggest action that might be taken to relieve 'physical stress', such as the CCB energy advice, local Food Banks or similar organisations.

## **Principles adopted by the Trustees of Connecting Communities in Berkshire**

- Protecting clients from maltreatment or unfair practice
- Ensuring that we provide a safe and secure environment for clients attending training, meetings, events etc organised by ourselves.
- Ensuring that resources are available and appropriate in assisting individuals requiring support at events/training sessions including access and appropriate facilities;
- Ensuring that communications are appropriate for the range of users of our services;
- Ensuring that individual needs are planned for and issues that may remain are discussed in advance.
- Responding appropriately where a disclosure is made or that staff or Trustees have concerns over the safety or wellbeing of an individual
- Take action to ensure that services & facilities provide opportunity for best outcomes
- Take action to ensure that all clients have the opportunity for best outcomes.
- To manage a work environment that is cognisant of the wellbeing of staff

This policy sets out the procedures and systems in place to ensure:

- We aim to prevent clients from being influenced by extremist doctrine
- We practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers who work within our organisation;
- We raise awareness of child protection and potential for support for vulnerable adults;
- We develop and implement procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse;
- We support those who have been abused/ where we are concerned about mental health, by directing them to appropriate services and if necessary enabling them to do so, reserving the right to notify agencies ourselves;
- We establish a safe & accessible environment in which clients are able to take advantage of services offered

The aims of this policy are:

- To support clients in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence;
- To provide an environment in which people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and feel confident, and know how to approach others if they are in difficulties, believing they will be effectively listened to;
- To raise the awareness of all staff of the need to safeguard others and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse;

- To provide a systematic means of monitoring those known or thought to be at risk of harm;
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
- To develop a structured procedure within the organisation which will be followed by all members in cases of suspected/reported abuse;
- To have clearly understood means to liaise other agencies, especially the Police and Social Care;
- To ensure that all staff who have access to children or vulnerable adults have been checked as to their suitability, including verification of their identity, qualifications, and a satisfactory DBS check (according to guidance) and a central record is kept for audit.
- To ensure that all staff understand their duty to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. Being drawn into terrorism includes not just violent extremism but also non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists exploit.
- To ensure staff have the skills to create safe spaces in which people can understand and discuss sensitive topics.
- To support the development of a culture that will not tolerate unacceptable & discriminatory behaviours & regards such behaviours as a serious breach of an individual's safety & wellbeing.

15.2.1 People who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. Their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.

We will be alert to the potential need for help by a person who:

- Is disabled and has additional needs;
- Has a special educational need;
- Is a carer;
- Is showing signs of engaging in anti-social, discriminatory or criminal behaviour;
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges, such as substance abuse, adult mental health, domestic violence.
- Is vulnerable through personal circumstances such as abuse/bullying or violence/harassment
- Is showing signs of neglect or is in danger of being in poverty.
- Is at risk of radicalisation
- Is at risk of sexual exploitation
- Is infirm through age or personal circumstance
- Is vulnerable & living on their own and maybe seen as potential for activities such as County Lines.

We will endeavour to offer support through:

- Liaison with outside agencies that support the people at risk such as Local Authority Safeguarding and Social Care.
- Notification with services relating to concerns over children's care will include the Education services of the Local Authority.

### **15.3. Procedures**

All clients are made aware our responsibilities in regard to protection procedures through publication of the Safeguarding Policy on the website.

Our Training Policy will seek to ensure the suitability of adults working with children and vulnerable adults at all locations at any time.

Community users organising activities for children will be made aware of and understand the need for compliance with these child protection guidelines and procedures.

Our selection and Recruitment Policy includes checks on staff and regular Volunteers' suitability including Disclosure and Baring checks in accordance with current legislation.

Our procedures will be reviewed regularly and up-dated as necessary.

The name of the Safeguarding Lead will be clear, with a statement explaining the organisations responsibilities in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse.

Contracts with external providers will comply with these policies.

### **15.4 Confidentiality**

We recognise that all matters relating to safeguarding are confidential. The Chief Executive Officer or Designated Safeguarding Officer will disclose personal information about an individual to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

However, all staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard and to balance the risk of sharing with the risk of not sharing.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise to keep secrets which might compromise a person's safety or well-being or that of another.

## **15.5 Information Sharing**

The seven golden rules of information sharing are:

- The Data Protection Act 1998, GDPR and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
- Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
- Information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where Seek advice from other practitioners if there is any doubt about sharing the possible.
- Share with informed consent where appropriate and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. Information may still be shared without consent if, there is good reason to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. Judgement should be based on the facts of the case. When sharing or requesting personal information, the basis upon which it is being done must be certain.
- Consider safety and well-being: Information sharing decisions should be based on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.
- Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: Ensure that the information shared is necessary for the purpose for which it is being shared, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
- A record must be kept of the decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. A record should also be kept of what has been shared, with whom and for what purpose.

## **15.6. Supporting Staff**

We recognise that staff working in the organisation who has become involved with a person who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.

We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the Safeguarding Lead and to seek further support. This could be provided by another trusted colleague, or a representative of a professional body as appropriate.

## **15.7 Allegations against staff**

All staff should take care not to place themselves in vulnerable positions.

We understand that a person may make an allegation against a member of staff. If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

The CEO on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Chair of Trustees.

If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the CEO or the Designated Officer, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of Trustees.

Managing allegations against staff will involve the Social Services team of the local authority of the complainant notified by the Chair of Trustees.

Suspension of the member of staff against whom an allegation has been made needs careful consideration and will involve consultation with the Chair of Trustees. All Trustees will be informed if suspension is considered appropriate.

Our training agreement for other users requires that the organiser will follow our procedures for managing allegations against staff.

The following definitions should be used when determining the outcome of allegation investigations:

- **Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation;
- **Malicious:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive;
- **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation;
- **Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.
- **Unfounded:** there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made, that the person making the allegation misinterpreted the incident or was mistaken about what they saw or may not have been aware of all the circumstances.

## 15.8 Bullying & Abuse

Our policy on bullying acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under protection procedures. This includes all forms e.g. cyber, racist, homophobic and gender related bullying. We keep a record of known bullying incidents. All staff are aware that vulnerable adults with SEND and/or differences/perceived differences are more susceptible to being bullied / victims of abuse.

All staff are made aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), gender based violence/sexual assaults and sexting.

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated our policy on racist incidents is of nil tolerance and acknowledges that racist incidents may lead to consideration under protection procedures. We keep a record of racist incidents.

## **15.9 Special Educational Needs**

People with special educational needs and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges because:

- There may be assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the individual's disability without further exploration;
- People with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying without outwardly showing any signs; and
- Difficulties may arise in overcoming communication barriers.

**We identify people who might need more support to be kept safe or to keep themselves safe by regular monitoring by staff.**

## **15.10 Prevention**

We recognise that we can play a part in the prevention of potential harm by providing good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

As an organisation working within the community we will therefore:

Work to establish and maintain an ethos where individuals feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to;

Ensure that all clients know there is a person representing us to whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;

Ensure all staff are aware of guidance for their use of mobile/ social technology and can advise clients as appropriate.

Our Health & Safety policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our clients & staff.

## **15.11 Roles and Responsibilities**

We have a designated a Senior Leader for Safeguarding and a Trustee responsible for Safeguarding Peter Thorn.

Other staff will also carry responsibility for Safeguarding to ensure cover if the Designated Safeguarding Lead is not available.



### **15.12 All Staff**

Normal contact with will not necessarily enable staff to observe the signs of abuse. All staff should therefore:

- Keep the client's welfare as paramount;
- Establish and maintain an environment where individuals to feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to;
- Ensure individuals to know that there are adults whom they can approach if they are worried;
- Make it clear at disclosure that not all issues can be kept confidential as staff have a duty of care and must report any issues of alleged abuse or at risk behaviour;
- Report any issues to the members of staff responsible for Safeguarding
- Receive regular safeguarding and protection updates as required.
- Referring an individual to the 'home' authority Social Care if there are concerns about possible abuse or neglect. Anyone can make a referral and if for any reason a staff member thinks a referral is appropriate and one has not been made they can and should consider making a referral themselves, notifying the Chief Executive at the earliest opportunity.
- If, an individual is considered to be in immediate danger or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to the appropriate social care and/or the police immediately.

### **15.13 Designated Safeguarding Lead**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for safeguarding for the Connecting Communities in Berkshire. The key role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead is to:

- Manage referrals from staff ;
- Work with external agencies and professionals on matter of safety and safeguarding;
- Undertake training; attend training every two years; and in addition to formal training, knowledge and skills should be refreshed at regular intervals.
- Raise awareness of safeguarding and child protection amongst the staff and partner organisations;
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated person responsible for protection;
- Oversee the organisations liaison with Safeguarding and Social Care services and police if required;
- Liaise with the Trustee designated with responsibility for Child Protection and to act as Safeguarding Lead;
- Make referrals if required if there are concerns about possible abuse, to the appropriate Social Services Area Team, and acting as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns.

- Keeping written records of concerns even if there is no need to make an immediate referral;
- Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely.
- Liaising with other agencies and professionals.
- Ensuring that either they or the staff member attend case conferences if required;
- Organising safeguarding induction, and update training for all staff;
- Providing an annual report for Trustees, detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by the Safeguarding Lead, and by all staff; number and type of incidents/cases.

#### **15.14 Trustee Responsible for Safeguarding**

Connecting Communities in Berkshire will ensure that all Trustees understand and fulfil their responsibilities, namely to ensure that:

- There is a Safeguarding Policy;
- They have procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers and to make a referral to the DBS if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have had they not resigned.
- A designated member of permanent staff holds Safeguarding Lead responsibility;
- On appointment, the Safeguarding Lead undertake Training & update themselves;
- All other staff have safeguarding awareness training updated as appropriate;
- Any weaknesses in Safeguarding are remedied immediately;

Safeguarding policies and procedures are reviewed regularly and that the Policy is available on the website or by other means

#### **15.15 Safer Recruitment**

**Trustees will ensure that there 'safer recruitment' principles are applied in the appointment of staff & volunteers**

*Connecting Communities in Berkshire is committed to the principles of safer recruitment.*

*Steps to safer recruitment:*

- *Ensure that you have an up to date Recruitment and Selection policy that describes the process and roles before you begin;*
- *Ensure that your organisation has a Safeguarding Policy and that a statement about the organisation's commitment to safeguarding is included in all recruitment and selection materials;*
- *Ensure that you have an up to date job description and person specification for the role(s) you wish to recruit to, that have been agreed with the recruiting manager;*
- *Ensure that you have an appropriate advertisement prepared that contains all necessary information about the role, timetable for recruitment and your commitment to safeguarding;*

- *Ensure that you have compiled a suitable candidate information pack containing all the required information about the organisation, role, recruitment timetable, safeguarding policy/statement and application form interview;*
- *Ensure that each application received is scrutinised in a systematic way by the shortlisting panel in order to agree your shortlist before sending invitations to interview;*
- *Ensure that all appropriate checks have been undertaken on your shortlisted candidates, including references;*
- *Ensure that all shortlisted candidates receive the same letter of invitation to interview, supplying them with all necessary information before you select your preferred candidate;*
- *Ensure that a face-to-face interview is conducted for ALL shortlisted candidates based on an objective assessment of the candidate's ability to meet the person specification and job description;*
- *Ensure that all specific questions designed to gain required information about each candidate's suitability have been asked, including those needed to address any gaps in information supplied in the application form before you formally appoint;*
- *Ensure that you are able to make a confident selection of a preferred candidate based upon their demonstration of suitability for the role;*
- *Ensure that your preferred candidate is informed that the offer of employment (including volunteer positions) is conditional on receiving satisfactory information from all necessary checks.*

### **Awareness of external influences**

Trustees & staff should be made aware of current concerns & potential for adverse influences that might place vulnerable persons in danger or be subject to those adverse influences. These should be reported to the safeguarding officer & CEO if staff or Trustees should become aware themselves.

**County lines** is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in illegal drugs into one or more importing areas], which may be a rural area or rural town, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line" to contact their users.'

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims

Vulnerable people can be a target for these gangs particularly where accommodation as a base for their activities is obtained through intimidation. Staff should be aware of the potential for abuse particularly with individuals living on their own or requiring social support.

The police should be informed if there are concerns.

## IMPORTANT CONTACT NUMBERS

CCB Designated Safeguarding Lead – Gemma Pearce, 0118 961 2000 & 07882 678204

CCB Chief Executive Officer – Tim Parry, 07738 887611

Other Useful Numbers Social Services		Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults
Out of Hours Emergency Number Berkshire West	01344 351 999	Email <a href="mailto:adt@bracknell-forest.gov.uk">adt@bracknell-forest.gov.uk</a>
Out of Hours Emergency Number Berkshire East	01628 683 744	
West Berkshire	01635 519 056	<a href="mailto:safeguardingadults@westberks.gov.uk">safeguardingadults@westberks.gov.uk</a>
Reading	0118 937 3747	<a href="mailto:CSAADvice.signposting@reading.gov.uk">CSAADvice.signposting@reading.gov.uk</a>
Wokingham	0118 974 6371	<a href="mailto:adultssafeguardinghub@wokingham.gov.uk">adultssafeguardinghub@wokingham.gov.uk</a>
Bracknell Forest	01344 351 500	
Windsor & Maidenhead	01628 683 744	
Slough	01753 475 111	<a href="mailto:Safeguarding.adults@slough.gov.uk">Safeguarding.adults@slough.gov.uk</a>
Other Useful Numbers Social Services		Safeguarding Children
Out of Hours Emergency Number	01344 351 999	Email <a href="mailto:adt@bracknell-forest.gov.uk">adt@bracknell-forest.gov.uk</a>
West Berkshire	01635 503 090	<a href="mailto:child@westberks.gov.uk">child@westberks.gov.uk</a>
Reading	0118 937 3641	<a href="mailto:CSPOA@brighterfuturesforchildren.org">CSPOA@brighterfuturesforchildren.org</a>
Wokingham	0118 908 8002	<a href="mailto:triage@wokingham.gov.uk">triage@wokingham.gov.uk</a>
Bracknell Forest	01344 352 005	<a href="mailto:mash@bracknell-forest.gov.uk">mash@bracknell-forest.gov.uk</a>
Windsor & Maidenhead	01628 683 150	
Slough	01753 875 362	<a href="mailto:Sloughchildren.referrals@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk">Sloughchildren.referrals@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk</a>
Police		
Emergency	999	
Non-Emergency	101	
Advice Lines		
NSPCC	0808 800 5000	

### 15.16 Communication of policy

The policy will be communicated via the website and to all staff and volunteers.

### 15.17 Evidence of implementation

Our safeguarding Policy and Procedures will be monitored and evaluation;

- Client surveys and questionnaire;
- Scrutiny of range of risk assessments;

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#### Section 15 Safeguarding Policy

Created by P Thorn in April 2019. Updated by P Thorn August 2024

- Scrutiny of Trustee minutes;
- Review of client concerns.
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### **15.18 Review of Policy**

This policy shall be reviewed regularly by the safeguarding Trustees.

The Basis of this Policy is based upon 4 very clear steps:

- **Recognise**
- **Respond**
- **Refer**
- **Reflect**

## Appendix 1

### Recognising signs of abuse

#### Categories of Abuse:

- Physical Abuse;
- Emotional Abuse (including Domestic Abuse);
- Sexual Abuse;
- Neglect.

All staff should be aware abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

#### Signs of Abuse in Children & Adults

The following non-specific signs may indicate something is wrong:

- Significant change in behaviour;
- Extreme anger or sadness;
- Aggressive and attention-seeking behaviour;
- Suspicious bruises with unsatisfactory explanations;
- Lack of self-esteem;
- Self-injury;
- Depression;
- Missing from the expected setting;
- Age inappropriate sexual behaviour;
- Child Sexual Exploitation.

#### Risk Indicators

The factors described in this section are frequently found in cases of child abuse. Their presence is not proof that abuse has occurred, but:

- Must be regarded as indicators of the possibility of significant harm;
- Justifies the need for careful assessment and discussion with designated / named / lead person, manager, (or in the absence of all those individuals, an experienced colleague);
- May require consultation with and / or referral to Children's Services.

The absence of such indicators does not mean that abuse or neglect has not occurred.

In an abusive relationship the child may:

- Appear frightened of the parent/s;
- Act in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development (though full account needs to be taken of different patterns of development and different ethnic groups).

The parent or carer may:

- Persistently avoid child health promotion services and treatment of the child's episodic illnesses;
- Have unrealistic expectations of the child;

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- Act in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development (though full account needs to be taken of different patterns of development and different ethnic groups).

The parent or carer may:

- Persistently avoid child health promotion services and treatment of the child's episodic illnesses;
- Have unrealistic expectations of the child;
- Frequently complain about/to the child and may fail to provide attention or praise (high criticism/low warmth environment);
- Be absent or misusing substances;
- Persistently refuse to allow access on home visits;
- Be involved in domestic abuse.

Staff should be aware of the potential risk to children when individuals, previously known or suspected to have abused children, move into the household.

### **Recognising Physical Abuse**

The following are often regarded as indicators of concern:

- An explanation which is inconsistent with an injury;
- Several different explanations provided for an injury;
- Unexplained delay in seeking treatment;
- The parents/carers/partners are uninterested or undisturbed by an accident or injury;
- Parents/partners are absent without good reason when the person is presented for treatment;
- Repeated presentation of minor injuries (which may represent a "cry for help" and if ignored could lead to a more serious injury);

- Family use of different doctors and A&E departments;
- Reluctance to give information or mention previous injuries.

## **Bruising**

Children & vulnerable adults can have accidental bruising, but the following must be considered as non-accidental unless there is evidence or an adequate explanation provided:

- Any bruising to a pre-crawling or pre-walking baby;
- Bruising in or around the mouth which may indicate force feeding;
- Two simultaneous bruised eyes, without bruising to the forehead, (rarely accidental, though a single bruised eye can be accidental or abusive);
- Repeated or multiple bruising on the head or on sites unlikely to be injured accidentally;
- Variation in colour possibly indicating injuries caused at different times;
- The outline of an object used e.g. belt marks, hand prints or a hair brush;
- Bruising or tears around, or behind, the earlobe/s indicating injury by pulling or twisting;
- Bruising around the face;
- Grasp marks on small children;
- Bruising on the arms, buttocks and thighs may be an indicator of sexual abuse.

## **Bite Marks**

Bite marks can leave clear impressions of the teeth. Human bite marks are oval or crescent shaped. Those over 3 cm in diameter are more likely to have been caused by an adult or older child. A medical opinion should be sought where there is any doubt over the origin of the bite.

## **Burns and Scalds**

It can be difficult to distinguish between accidental and non-accidental burns and scalds, and will always require experienced medical opinion. Any burn with a clear outline may be suspicious e.g.:

- Circular burns from cigarettes (but may be friction burns if along the bony protuberance of the spine);
- Linear burns from hot metal rods or electrical fire elements;
- Burns of uniform depth over a large area;
- Scalds that have a line indicating immersion or poured liquid (a child getting into hot water is his/her own accord will struggle to get out and cause splash marks);
- Old scars indicating previous burns/scalds which did not have appropriate treatment or adequate explanation.

Scalds to the buttocks of a small child, particularly in the absence of burns to the feet, are indicative of dipping into a hot liquid or bath.

## **Fractures**



Fractures may cause pain, swelling and discolouration over a bone or joint.

Non-mobile children rarely sustain fractures.

There are grounds for concern if:

- The history provided is vague, non-existent or inconsistent with the fracture type;
- There are associated old fractures;
- Medical attention is sought after a period of delay when the fracture has caused symptoms such as swelling, pain or loss of movement;
- There is an unexplained fracture in the first year of life.

## **Scars**

A large number of scars or scars of different sizes or ages, or on different parts of the body, may suggest abuse.

## **Recognising Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise, as the signs are usually behavioural rather than physical. The manifestations of emotional abuse might also indicate the presence of other kinds of abuse.

The indicators of emotional abuse are often also associated with other forms of abuse.

The following may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Developmental delay;
- Abnormal attachment between a child and parent/carer e.g. anxious, indiscriminate or not attachment;
- Indiscriminate attachment or failure to attach;
- Aggressive behaviour towards others;
- Scape-goated within the family;
- Frozen watchfulness;
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence;
- Withdrawn or seen as a “loner” – difficulty relating to others.

## **Recognising Signs of Sexual Abuse**

Boys and girls of all ages may be sexually abused and are frequently scared to say anything due to guilt and/or fear. This is particularly difficult for a child to talk about and full account should be taken of the cultural sensitivities of any individual child/family.

Recognition can be difficult, unless the child discloses and is believed. There may be no physical signs and indications are likely to be emotional/behavioural.

Some behavioural indicators associated with this form of abuse are:

- Inappropriate sexualised conduct;
- Sexually explicit behaviour, play or conversation, inappropriate to the individual's age;
- Continual and inappropriate or excessive masturbation;
- Self-harm (including eating disorder), self-mutilation and suicide attempts;
- Involvement in prostitution or indiscriminate choice of sexual part

Some physical indicators associated with this form of abuse are:

- Pain or itching of genital area;
- Blood on underclothes;
- Pregnancy in a younger girl where the identity of the father is not disclosed;
- Physical symptoms such as injuries to the genital or anal area, bruising to buttocks, abdomen and thighs, sexually transmitted disease, presence of semen on vagina, anus, external genitalia or clothing.

### **Sexual Abuse by Young People**

The boundary between what is abusive and what is part of normal childhood or youthful experimentation can be blurred. The determination of whether behaviour is developmental, inappropriate or abusive will hinge around the related concepts of true consent, power imbalance and exploitation. This may include children, young & vulnerable adults who exhibit a range of sexually problematic behaviour such as indecent exposure, obscene telephone calls, fetishism, and sexual abuse against others.

Developmental Sexual Activity encompasses those actions that are to be expected from children and young people as they move from infancy through to an adult understanding of their physical, emotional and behavioural relationships with each other. Such sexual activity is essentially information gathering and experience testing. It is characterised by mutuality and of the seeking of consent.

Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour can be inappropriate socially, inappropriate to development, or both. In considering whether behaviour fits into this category, it is important to consider what negative effects it has on any of the parties involved and what concerns it raises about a child or young person. It should be recognised that some actions may be motivated by information seeking, but still cause significant upset, confusion, worry, physical damage, etc. It may also be that the boundary between what is abusive and what is part of normal childhood or youthful experimentation can be blurred. The determination of whether behaviour is developmental, inappropriate or abusive will hinge around the related concepts of true consent, power imbalance and exploitation. This may include children and young people who exhibit a range of sexually problematic behaviour such as indecent exposure, obscene telephone calls, fetishism, bestiality and sexual abuse against adults, peers or children.

Developmental Sexual Activity encompasses those actions that are to be expected from children and young people as they move from infancy through to an adult understanding of their physical, emotional and behavioural relationships with each other. Such sexual activity is essentially information gathering and experience testing. It is characterised by mutuality and of the seeking of consent.

### **Organised exploitation and trafficking:**

Victims are trafficked through criminal networks – often between towns and cities – and forced or coerced into sex with multiple men. They may also be used to recruit new victims. This serious organised activity can involve the buying and selling of young people.

The following list of indicators is not exhaustive or definitive but it does highlight common signs which can assist professionals in identifying children or young & vulnerable people who may be victims of sexual exploitation.

Signs include:

- Underage sexual activity;
- Inappropriate sexual or sexualised behaviour;
- Sexually risky behaviour, 'swapping' sex;
- Repeat sexually transmitted infections;
- In girls, repeat pregnancy, abortions, miscarriage;
- Receiving unexplained gifts or gifts from unknown sources;
- Having multiple mobile phones and worrying about losing contact via mobile;
- Having unaffordable new things (clothes, mobile) or expensive habits (alcohol, drugs);
- Changes in the way they dress;
- Going to hotels or other unusual locations to meet friends;
- Seen at known places of concern;
- Moving around the country, appearing in new towns or cities, not knowing where they are;
- Getting in/out of different cars driven by unknown adults;
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- Contact with known perpetrators;
- Involved in abusive relationships, intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations;
- Hanging out with groups of older people, or anti-social groups, or with other vulnerable peers;
- Associating with other young people involved in sexual exploitation;
- Recruiting other young people to exploitative situations;
- Truancy, exclusion, disengagement with school, opting out of education altogether;
- Unexplained changes in behaviour or personality (chaotic, aggressive, sexual);
- Mood swings, volatile behaviour, emotional distress;
- Self-harming, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, overdosing, eating disorders;
- Drug or alcohol misuse;
- Getting involved in crime;

- Police involvement, police records;
- Involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership;
- Injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault.

## Appendix 2

### **Forced Marriage (FM)**

This is an entirely separate issue from arranged marriage. It is a human rights abuse and falls within the Crown Prosecution Service definition of domestic violence. Young men and women can be at risk in affected ethnic groups. Whistle-blowing may come from younger siblings. Other indicators may be detected by changes in adolescent behaviours. Never attempt to intervene directly as a school or through a third party. Always call either the Contact Centre or the Forced Marriage Unit 020 7008 0151.

### **‘Honour-based’ Violence**

So-called ‘honour-based’ violence (HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so called HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Where staff are concerned that an individual might be at risk of HBV, they must contact the Chief Executive as a matter of urgency.

### **Preventing Radicalisation and extremism – PLEASE SEE SECTION 30 – SAFEGUARDING AGAINST EXTREMISM for further details on our policy**

The Prevent strategy identifies that young people are more likely to be vulnerable to violent extremist or terrorist narratives. Public organisations have a duty of care to their clients and staff which includes safeguarding them from the risk of being drawn into terrorism. Being drawn into terrorism includes not just violent extremism but also non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists exploit.

Extremism - is ‘vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. The definition of extremism also includes calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas’.

Radicalisation - refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

The Prevent duty requires you to take action if you observe behaviour that concerns you. This means that you must be able to demonstrate both a general understanding of the risks affecting young people & vulnerable adults in your area of work.

Where staff are concerned that individuals are developing extremist views or show signs of becoming radicalized, they should discuss this with the Chief Executive.

## Recognising Extremism

Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:

- showing sympathy for extremist causes
- glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures
- making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies
- Evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups
- Out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships
- Secretive behaviour
- Online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles
- Intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality
- Graffiti, art work or writing that displays extremist themes
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views
- advocating violence towards others

Individuals who are most vulnerable to radicalisation and extremism may have:

- Feelings of anger, grievance and injustice
- Feelings of threat and insecurity
- Need for an identity, meaning and belonging
- Need for status
- Need for excitement, comradeship and adventure
- Dominance and control
- Susceptibility to indoctrination, group thinking
- Political and moral motivation
- Opportunistic involvement
- Family or friends support extremism
- Transitional period in life
- Group influence and control
- Mental Health Issues