

NEWPORT PARISH COUNCIL SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Newport Parish Council is the first tier of local government. It provides the community with a democratic voice and a structure for taking community action. The council makes decisions on issues that affect the local community and delivers services and facilities designed to improve the well-being of the community within its lawful remit.

This policy sets out how the council undertakes its responsibilities regarding safeguarding and child protection, with particular emphasis on the youth project (NGYP).

1.2 All children have the right to be safe from harm and abuse.

The council has a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It is committed to providing an environment where children can play, learn, develop and achieve and where they are safeguarded and are enabled to tell or communicate if they are being harmed in some way. This policy sets out how the council will create and manage this environment.

1.3 Definition of Safeguarding and Child Protection

In accordance with the Children Act 1989 and 2004, a child is any person under the age of 18. For the purpose of these procedures the reference to children therefore means 'children and young people' throughout.

The policy applies to council staff, agents, contractors, volunteers, and other professionals and/or partners that are involved in delivering services to children, young people and vulnerable adults on behalf of the council are fully aware of the fact that this policy operates in conjunction with council policies on bullying, equal opportunities, health and safety and data protection.

The reference to workers covers all categories throughout.

Workers should be fully aware that this policy operates in conjunction with council policies on bullying, health and safety, data protection, equal opportunities, grievance and disciplinary matters, complaints, risk assessment, photographs and images, trips, and recruitment of staff.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health or development
- ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances

Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Effective child protection is essential as part of wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The council aims to proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of children so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced. All council staff should understand their role in ensuring that good safeguarding practices support the welfare of children using the council's services.

1.4 Roles and Responsibilities

The council as a corporate body is responsible for ensuring that any deficiencies or weaknesses in arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children are addressed and remedied without delay.

Day to day operational responsibility rests with the Clerk to the council. The Clerk is responsible for the management of workers, the activities undertaken by workers and compliance with all council policies and procedures by workers.

The lead youth worker on the Youth Project is the Designated Safeguarding Officer for the Youth Project (NGYP) and reports directly to the Clerk to the council who manages the project on behalf of the council.

It is neither the role nor responsibility of those working with children on behalf of Newport Parish Council to assess, diagnose or investigate whether a child is at risk of or suffering harm or abuse. It is, however, the responsibility of all staff to be aware of the need to report any concerns about a child to the Designated Safeguarding Officer in the first instance as a matter of priority.

1.5 Reporting and Procedures

This policy sets out how to support disclosure of abuse and the procedures for taking accusations forward in a timely, supported and fair manner. **(Section 3 and Appendices 4, 5 and 6)**

SECTION 2 POLICY STATEMENT

2.1 General principles

The council is committed to protecting the welfare of all children using council services. The council understands its responsibility to comply with legislation, particularly to ensure that the welfare of children is paramount and will review its policy in line with changes in legislation and best practice guidance of East Riding of Yorkshire Council. However, effective protection for children using council services is the vigilance and forethought of all workers in preventing circumstances where abuse of trust could occur. It is the aim of the council to create a safe and secure environment where service users and workers can work together confidently with mutual respect.

The council also recognises its responsibility to ensure that appropriate action is taken when a child discloses that they are experiencing abuse or neglect, or if workers have a concern about the welfare of a child, and to ensure workers understand what might indicate this and what action to take.

2.2 Code of conduct and training

Workers are required to abide by the worker Code of Conduct **(Appendix 1)** and, as part of that Code of Conduct, are required to notify the council of any police record or other factor which may make that person unsuitable to work with children.

The council will ensure that the Code of Conduct and the safeguarding children procedures are continually monitored, developed and maintained and are appropriately communicated to all workers.

Relevant training and support for staff will be provided on an ongoing basis, and will cover information about their role, and opportunities for practicing skills needed for the work.

Dates of training will be recorded in order that training may be refreshed at the appropriate time. Training on safeguarding children, identifying and reporting abuse, and confidentiality of personal information will be given as a priority to new staff and volunteers, and will be regularly reviewed.

2.3 Safeguarding Staff

Youth Project

Designated Safeguarding Officer: Lead Youth Worker

Tel 0759546727

The Designated Safeguarding Officer for the youth project will be the person to whom any safeguarding concerns will, in the first instance, be reported to and who will then discuss and agree the appropriate action to take.

Role and responsibilities

- Establish contact with the Early Help and Safeguarding Hub (EHaSH)
- Provide information and advice on safeguarding and child protection to workers on the project
- Ensure that the council's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures are followed and particularly to inform EHaSH of relevant concerns about individual children
- Ensure that appropriate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing
- Liaise with social services and other agencies as appropriate
- Ensure that the Clerk to the council is informed immediately about any action taken and any further action required
- Ensure that an individual case record is maintained of the action taken, the liaison with other agencies and the outcome in the concern tracking form
- Advise on safeguarding and child protection training needs and liaise with the Clerk to the Council to ensure these needs are addressed
- For procedures to be taken see Section 3.4 below.

Management Officer

Clerk to the council

Tel 07710288307

Role and responsibilities

- Overall administrative, management and operational responsibility for the council's services and staff
- First contact point, after the Designated Safeguarding Officer is informed, for all child safeguarding and protection issues
- Deputise for Designated Safeguarding Staff in their absence
- Lead on accusations against council staff/volunteers
- Perform periodic check of policy compliance with the Designated Safeguarding Officer, to initiate policy review and to highlight risks to the council
- Report to the council on all concerns of effectiveness and risk of the policies.

2.4 Working with parents and carers

The council is committed to a culture of openness and honesty. Wherever possible concerns about children will be discussed with their parents or carers and they will be informed if a referral to EHaSH is to be made. There may be occasions when it is not appropriate to speak to a parent or carer before contacting EHaSH.

This would happen when the Designated Safeguarding Officer judges that a child will be at risk of significant harm if the parent or carer is aware that a referral to EHASH is to be made.

SECTION 3 Responding to Concerns & Allegations

3.1. It is not the responsibility of workers to decide whether or not child abuse or neglect has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the Designated Safeguarding Officer or appropriate authorities so they can initiate inquiries and take necessary action to protect the child. This applies **BOTH** to allegations/suspensions of abuse occurring during the delivery of council services and to allegations or suspicions that abuse is taking place elsewhere.

All staff must be familiar with the procedures for each and every eventuality. This includes ensuring familiarisation with the Definitions of Child Abuse (Appendix 2), the Indicators of Child Abuse (Appendix 3) and Responding to Concerns & Allegations (Appendices 4, 5, 6 and 7).

Concerns may be raised directly by an abused child, or through the suspicions of staff or others. The 'accused' could be members of staff employed by the council, other workers delivering council services or outsiders.

In all instances recording accurate and detailed information is vital.

Information is strictly confidential and should be shared only with persons/authorities who need to know.

3.2. Workers duties and responsibilities

See Appendix 4 for procedures to be followed and appendices 6 and 7 for flowchart of procedures to be followed.

All suspicions and allegations **MUST** be reported appropriately. Personal feelings or misplaced loyalty to a colleague must not be allowed to interfere with this obligation.

Workers are expected to discuss any concerns they may have about the welfare of a child immediately with the Designated Safeguarding Officer, or with the Clerk to the council if the concern involves the Designated Safeguarding Officer and subsequently to check that appropriate action has been taken.

If the accusation is against a worker, concerns must also be reported to the Clerk to the council immediately.

If there is any doubt, you must report the incident; it may be just one of a series of other incidents which cumulatively cause concern.

Whatever the nature of the complaint, it must be kept confidential. You must not discuss the disclosure with any individual or party other than those identified in the flowchart procedures.

3.3 The Internet and the abuse of children

As technology develops, the Internet and its range of content services can be accessed through various devices including mobile phones, text messaging and mobile camera phones as well as computers and game consoles. As a consequence, the Internet has become a significant tool in the distribution of indecent/pseudo photographs and video clips of children.

Internet chat rooms, discussion forums and bulletin boards are used as a means of contacting children with a view to grooming them for inappropriate or abusive relationships, which may include requests to make and transmit pornographic images of themselves or to perform sexual acts live in front of a web cam.

There is also a growing cause for concern about the exposure of children to inappropriate material via interactive communication technology e.g. adult pornography and extreme forms of obscene material. There is some evidence that people found in possession of indecent photographs/pseudo photographs or films/videos of children are likely to be involved directly in child abuse themselves. When someone is discovered to have placed or accessed such material on the Internet, the Police should normally consider the potential likelihood that the individual is involved in the active abuse of children. In particular, the individual's access to children should be established within the family, within employment contexts and in other settings such as voluntary work with children or other positions of trust. It should be borne in mind that any indecent, obscene image involving a child has, by its very nature, involved a person, who in creating that image has been party to abusing that child.

Where there is suspected or actual evidence of anyone accessing or creating indecent images of children, and/or there are concerns about a child being groomed, exposed to pornographic material or contacted by someone inappropriately, via the Internet or other ICT tools, an immediate referral must be made to the Police and to EHaSH. Due to the nature of this type of abuse and the possibility of the destruction of evidence, the referrer should discuss their concerns with EHaSH. This will enable a decision to be made about informing the family and ensuring that the child's welfare is safeguarded.

3.4. Reporting an incident without safeguarding implications

An incident or accident may occur during a council run activity that does not have any safeguarding implications (e.g. a child falling over and grazing their knee, an altercation between two children). In this case the worker should use his/her professional judgement to decide whether a Child Protection Incident Form (Appendix 5) should be completed and what further action needs to be taken. Accidents must be recorded in the Accident Book.

3.5. Procedures to be undertaken by the Designated Safeguarding Officer and the Clerk to the council (Management Officer).

Management

Management will be pro-active in its approach to suspicions, disclosures and reporting of abuse.

It has a duty to support other agencies to ensure that both the child and the alleged perpetrator receive appropriate support through this procedure.

- For the child this should, if appropriate in the first instance be provided by their parents/carers who may need some support to do this.
- If a worker is accused, they should be encouraged to get support from a union representative, friend, or another identified worker.

When dealing with issues concerning abuse, the welfare of the child is paramount. However, workers must be treated fairly and with respect.

All information, reports and statements should be treated as strictly confidential and stored in a secure place with limited access to designated persons, in line with data protection laws.

Management will monitor active cases and report to the council on any areas of concern with policy or procedures.

The council will actively manage this policy to ensure it remains robust and effective.

Designated Safeguarding Officer Response - Reporting abuse or a safeguarding concern

Allegation of abuse by someone other than a member of staff/volunteer.

On being informed about a child who has disclosed abuse or abuse of that child is suspected or reported by others the Designated Safeguarding Officer should **follow procedures in Appendix 4 and Appendix 7 Flowchart 1.**

- If it is decided that the concern does need to be referred to EHaSH will advise on the course of action and will inform the referrer as appropriate within the bounds of confidentiality. The Designated Safeguarding Officer should complete the **Concern Tracking Form (Appendix 8)**. The Clerk to the council must be informed immediately if a referral has been made.
- If it is decided that the concern does not need to be referred to EHaSH then the Designated Safeguarding Officer should complete the **Concern Tracking Form (Appendix 8)**. This includes provision for monitoring and further actions to be taken. If there is any doubt or if at any time the circumstances change and the concern becomes more serious the Designated Safeguarding Officer **MUST** contact EHaSH.

Allegation of abuse by a member of staff/volunteer

On being informed about a child who has disclosed abuse or abuse of that child is suspected or reported by others the Designated Safeguarding Officer should **follow procedures in Appendix 4 and Appendix 8 Flowchart 2.**

Where there is a complaint against a worker, there may be three types of investigation.

- **Criminal** in which case the police are immediately involved
- **Safeguarding/Child Protection** in which case social services (and possibly) the police will be involved
- **Disciplinary or misconduct** in which case the council will be involved.

Concerns may arise when a worker may have

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved in a way that indicates s/he may not be suitable to work with children

When a concern has been raised the Child Protection Incident Form should be completed, recording the date and time of the observation or the disclosure, the exact words spoken by the child/staff/member/parent/volunteer or other person as far as possible, the name of the person to whom the concern was reported with date and time, the names of any other person present at the time and other background information. The Designated Safeguarding Officer must be informed. It is not appropriate at this stage to conduct formal interviews or take written statements from staff, as this could compromise a later Children's Social Care or police investigation.

Allegations of abuse by a worker must be communicated to the Clerk to the council immediately who will then initiate the required safeguarding procedures via the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer).

The Clerk to the council will contact the LADO who will consider, with the Clerk to the council (or DSO if the Clerk is unavailable), the most appropriate way forward. The Clerk will inform The Chair of the council.

It is essential that nothing is done to investigate the concern before contacting the LADO as this can contaminate evidence if a police investigation is deemed appropriate.

The LADO will clarify how the matter will be taken forward and what appropriate course of action should be taken. The council will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services inquiries. The individual would be suspended on full pay (advice from the LADO will support this decision). This overall decision to suspend is vested in the Clerk to the council in consultation with council members. Suspension is a neutral act and allows a full investigation of facts to take place.

A Referral to EHASH must be followed up in writing within 24 hours by completing a ERSCB Referral Form and guidance from the LADO must be followed.

Children's services have a legal responsibility under The Children Act 1989 to investigate all child protection referrals by talking to the child and family (where appropriate), gathering information from other people who know the child and making inquiries jointly with the police.

If the concern does not need to be referred, but involves other inappropriate behaviour by a worker, not related to safeguarding, then this will be dealt with through the council's Disciplinary Procedure.

Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries the council will implement its Disciplinary Process. The case will be examined to decide whether the worker can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision; especially where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such a case the Disciplinary Process must reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on the balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of the child should remain of paramount importance throughout.

In any case of staff suspension or dismissal relating to safeguarding the LADO will be kept informed.

3.6 Action to be taken if you receive an allegation about yourself

- Keep calm. Do not get involved in an argument which is likely to make the situation worse.
- Immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer and the Clerk to the council. The quicker that action is taken to investigate the allegations, the sooner the situation will be resolved.
- Complete the Child Protection Incident Form in Appendix 5).
- Ensure that no-one is placed in a position which could cause further compromise.
- Do not discuss the matter with anyone other than authorized persons.

3.7 Following an investigation

After a suspicion a child protection concern has been investigated, there may be strong reaction amongst **staff, parents and children and possibly among the wider community, which will need to be addressed.**

There may be issues of:

- Communication - if rumour or fact
- Guilt and blame - if suspicions had been around for some time
- Impact - on individuals, or the nature of what occurred and to whom
- Weaknesses in the organisation in terms of roles and post held

Careful thought will need to be given to the sharing of information and the provision of appropriate support.

If the allegation against a worker is found to be demonstrably false then no further action will be taken. However, a deliberately false allegation made by child will be referred to EHASH and/or to the police.

SECTION 4 - Promoting Good Practice

It is important that both service users and workers can participate in council services in a safe and secure environment.

4.1 The Code of Conduct has been developed for the protection of both service users and workers. All workers are expected to adhere to Code of Conduct.

4.2 Consent

- Request written parental consent if staff are required to transport children in their cars. Workers should not take a young person alone on car journeys, however short except in the event of emergencies, when parents must be informed prior to the journey.
- Request written parental consent for any significant travel arrangements taking children offsite e.g trips organised by the NGYP
- Request written parental consent for the organisation to act in loco parentis in emergencies, e.g. administration of emergency first aid or other medical treatment if the need arises.
- Request written parental consent for the taking of and use of photographic images of the child. Parents of service users are not permitted to use their personal mobiles to take pictures during NGYP activities without permission (See Policy on Photographic and Recorded Images).

SECTION 5 Appointment of staff

It is important that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent unsuitable people from working with children. This applies equally to paid staff and volunteers, both full and part time.

5.1 To ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children recruiting procedures are detailed in the policy 'Staff Recruitment'.

5.2 An induction process will be set in motion from the start date of the new post holder during which:

- The job requirements and responsibilities should be clarified
- Copies of the Code of Conduct and all relevant council policies including Child Protection and Safeguarding will be provided
- Safeguarding Procedures are emphasised and explained and training needs identified e.g. basic child protection awareness.

5.3 Training

In addition to pre-selection checks, the safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help staff and volunteers to:

- Analyse their own practice against what is deemed good practice, and to ensure their practice is likely to protect them from false allegations
- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice and/or abuse
- Respond to concerns expressed by a child
- Work safely and effectively with children

All staff, volunteers and managers **must** undertake relevant safeguarding training.

This training will need to be refreshed every three years.

SECTION 6 – Implementation, Monitoring and Review of Safeguarding Policy

It will be the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Staff to establish and implement the strategy. This might include monitoring and reviewing:

- the number of allegations made and breakdown of 'no case', 'poor practice' and 'abuse' incidence
- the number of staff and volunteers trained in safeguarding
- feedback from staff and volunteers on the implementation of the policy
- reports from disciplinary and appeals panels
- identification of 'gaps' in the policy.

The council will be advised on any necessary changes to policy practice and procedure.

APPENDIX 1 CODE OF CONDUCT

This code details the conduct the council expects from all workers delivering the youth services of the council. The purpose of the code is to assist the council to protect children from abuse and reduce the possibility of unfounded allegations being made.

The role of workers

When working with or for children and young people, you are acting in a position of trust. You are likely to be seen as a role model and must act appropriately.

1. You are responsible for:

- prioritising the welfare of children
- providing a safe environment for children
 - this includes ensuring equipment is used safely and for its intended purpose
 - this includes having good awareness of issues to do with safeguarding and child protection and taking action when appropriate
- following council principles, policies and procedures at all times
- staying within the law at all times
- modelling good behaviour for children to follow
- challenging all unacceptable behaviour and reporting any breaches of the code to the designated safeguarding officer, or if necessary to the Clerk to the council.
- reporting all allegations/suspicions of abuse following council reporting procedures
 - this includes abusive behaviour being displayed by an adult or child and directed at anybody of any age.
- notifying the Clerk to the council of any police record or other factor which may affect your suitability to work with children.

2. You should:

- treat children and young people fairly and without prejudice or discrimination
- understand that children and young people are individuals with individual needs
- respect differences in gender, sexual orientation, culture, race, ethnicity, disability and religious belief systems between yourself and others, and appreciate that all participants bring something valuable and different to the group/organisation
- challenge discrimination and prejudice
- encourage young people and adults to speak out about attitudes or behaviour that makes them uncomfortable.

3. You should:

- promote relationships that are based on openness, honesty, trust and respect
- avoid favouritism
- be patient with others
- use special caution when you are discussing sensitive issues with children
- ensure your contact with children is appropriate and relevant to the work of the project you are involved in

- ensure that whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities with children and young people
 - if this isn't possible, ensure that you are within sight or hearing of other adults
 - if a child specifically asks for or needs some private time with you, ensure other workers know where you and the child are
 - if in another room leave the door ajar
- only provide personal care in an emergency and make sure there is more than one adult present if possible.

4. You should:

- listen to and respect children at all times
- value and take children's contributions seriously, actively involving them in planning activities wherever possible
- respect a young person's right to personal privacy as far as possible
 - in some cases it may be necessary to break confidentiality in order to follow child protection procedures; if this is the case it is important to explain this to the child at the earliest opportunity.

5. Unacceptable behaviour

When working with children, **you must not:**

- allow concerns or allegations to go unreported
- take unnecessary risks
- smoke, consume alcohol or use illegal substances
- develop inappropriate relationships with children and young people
- make inappropriate promises to children and young people
- engage in behaviour that is in any way abusive
- give children your personal contact details (telephone number, email or address) or have them via a personal social media account
- act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive
- patronise or belittle children
- make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children.

6. Upholding this code of conduct

You should always follow this code of conduct and never rely on your reputation or that of the council to protect you.

If you have behaved inappropriately you will be subject to the council's disciplinary procedures. Depending on the seriousness of the situation, you may be dismissed. The council may also make a referral to statutory agencies such as the police and/or the local authority children's safeguarding board.

If you become aware of any breaches of this code, you must report them immediately.

APPENDIX 2 DEFINITION OF ABUSE

Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm, it commonly occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility and is an abuse of power or a breach of trust. Abuse can happen to a young person regardless of their age, gender, race or ability. The effects can be so damaging that if not identified and dealt with, they may follow the individual into adulthood.

There are four main types of abuse: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect. The abuser may be a family member, someone the young person encounters in residential care or in the community, including sports and leisure activities. Any individual may abuse or neglect a young person directly, or may be responsible for abuse because they fail to prevent another person harming the young person.

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a young person. Giving a young person alcohol or inappropriate drugs would also constitute child abuse. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer pretends or fakes the symptoms of or deliberately causes ill health to a young person whom they are looking after. (Munchausen's syndrome by proxy).

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a young person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the young person's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a young person that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on a young person as well as over protection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the young person participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another and/or it may involve serious bullying causing a young person to feel frightened or in danger. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a young person though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the young person is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact including penetrative (e.g., rape) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities such as involving a young person in looking at or in the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities or encouraging a young person to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Activities which might involve physical contact with a young person could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed.

Young people aged 16 -18 years cannot consent to a sexual relationship with an adult who is in a 'position of trust' to them (for example a teacher, youth worker, coach, or residential social worker) and any such relationship should be reported to Police Public Protection Investigation Unit or Children's Social Care Service.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the young person's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food shelter and clothing, failing to protect a young person from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of or unresponsiveness to a young person's basic emotional needs.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Other forms of abuse to be aware of include:

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) including internet abuse, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), exposure to domestic violence, Radicalisation (Prevent) and Self-harm and suicide prevention.

APPENDIX 3 – SIGNS OF ABUSE

Abuse is not always easy to detect. Signs that a young person is being abused may include:

- unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- an injury for which an explanation seems inconsistent
- the young person describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her
- another young person or adult expresses concern about the welfare of a young person
- unexplained changes in a young person's behaviour e.g. becoming very upset, quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper
- inappropriate sexual awareness
- engaging in sexually explicit behaviour
- mistrust of adults, particularly those whom a close relationship would normally be expected
- difficulty in making friends
- being prevented from socialising with others
- displaying variations in eating patterns including over eating or loss of appetite
- losing weight for no apparent reason
- becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt

Appendix 4 - Responding to Concerns & Allegations

1. When responding to concerns and allegations no worker should ever guarantee a child absolute confidentiality. Where there is a safeguarding issue the child should be made aware of the confidentiality boundaries of the service. If the decision is made to pass on information the worker should attempt to obtain the child's permission to do so (failure to obtain the consent will not constitute a reason for not passing on the information). Confidentiality becomes relevant to work with children, in respect of child protection because professionals may be assisting them to obtain medical advice or help and they may not wish to tell their parents. It is partly because of the complexity of these issues that the procedure requires immediate referral to EH&SH whenever a child protection issue arises.

2. If a child discloses to you abuse by someone other than a worker/volunteer

Procedure: Appendix 6 Flowchart 1

If a child approaches you about an issue of abuse, you must proceed with great care. The Code of Conduct (Appendix 1) specifies that a worker should not place him/herself in a situation where he/she is alone with a child. However, it is possible that a child will be unwilling to make a disclosure in anything but a one-to-one situation. The child's needs must take priority in this situation. Ask if the child would like someone else to be present but if he/she declines, * proceed, taking extra care with your behaviour and body language.

- * ensure that you are within sight of other adults,
- * ensure other workers know where you and the child are
- * if in another room leave the door ajar

You should adhere to the following guidance:

DO

- explain whom you will have to tell and why (e.g. the Designated Safeguarding Officer)
- remember that it is your role to listen, **not** investigate
- accept what the child says without interruption
- stay calm (the pace should be dictated by the child without them being pressed for detail)
- use open questions e.g. 'what happened next?' 'I've noticed that you don't appear yourself today, is everything okay?'
- note observable signs of abuse, e.g. bruising
- acknowledge how hard it was for the child to tell you
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you
- explain what will happen next. Find out when the child is next due to see the individual who is the subject of the complaint. (You will then be able to make a judgement as to the appropriate timing of your follow-up actions to ensure that the child remains safe.)

DO NOT

- take sole responsibility for a situation where a child makes a disclosure;
- promise confidentiality
- ask leading questions e.g. 'did X hit you?' Asking leading questions may jeopardize any formal investigation
- make judgements or offer opinion
- have physical contact at any time
- disturb the child's clothing to investigate alleged markings
- take photographs
- discuss the disclosure with any individual or party other than those who need to know.

As soon as is practically possible complete, sign and date the **Child Protection Incident Form (Appendix 5)**. Use additional sheets if necessary. Make an accurate written record of what the child has said, being careful to use their own words as accurately as possible. Full details of observable behaviours and conversations must be recorded. Any opinions recorded must be accompanied by evidence/explanations. It must also be stated that these are opinions. If there are observable signs of physical abuse, accurately record site marks and give a brief description of their size, colour etc.

Inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately. Pass on all information disclosed to you by the child. The Designated Safeguarding Officer will then decide with you on the appropriate action to be taken. **If the Designated Safeguarding Officer is not available contact EHASH for advice.**

Whether the concern is about a situation not related to council services (e.g. at home or at school) or is about a worker where contact with the individual is a direct result of the council's activities, inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible.

A Referral to EHASH must be followed up in writing within 24 hours by completing an ERSCB Referral Form (available online at <http://www.erscb.org.uk/how-to-report-concerns>). Guidance from the LADO must be followed. The Concern Tracking Form should be completed by the DSO.

3. When abuse is suspected or reported by others

Concerns about the welfare of a child, including the possibility of abuse or neglect, may also be raised by behaviour or other indicators noticed by a worker, but not disclosed by the child. In these instances, it is equally important to take action, and these concerns should be raised and discussed as described in 2 above.

4. Suspected abuse of a child by a worker/volunteer

Procedure: Appendix 7 Flowchart 2

While it is difficult to express concerns about colleagues, it is important that these concerns are communicated immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Officer. All workers will be encouraged to talk to the Designated Safeguarding Officer if they become aware of anything that makes them feel concerned.

When a concern has been raised the Child Protection Incident Form should be completed, recording the date and time of the observation or the disclosure, the exact words spoken by the child/staff/parent/volunteer or other person as far as possible, the name of the person to whom the concern was reported with date and time, the names of any other person present at the time and other relevant background information. The Designated Safeguarding Officer must be informed. It is not permitted at this stage to conduct any interviews or take written statements from staff, as this could compromise a later Children's Social Care or police investigation. The Concern Tracking Form should be completed by the DSO.

Allegations of abuse by a worker/volunteer must be communicated to the Clerk to the council immediately.

The Clerk to the council will contact the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) who will consider, with the Clerk to the council (or DSO if the Clerk is unavailable), the most appropriate way forward. The Clerk will inform the Chair of the council, the DSO and EHASH.

It is essential that nothing is done to investigate the concern before contacting the LADO as this can contaminate evidence if a police investigation is deemed appropriate.

If the concern does not need to be referred to EHaSH, but involves other inappropriate behaviour by a worker, not related to safeguarding, then this will be dealt with through the council's Disciplinary Procedure.

If the allegation against a worker is found to be demonstrably false then no further action will be taken. However, a deliberately false allegation made by child will be referred to EHaSH and/or to the police.

Action to be taken if you receive an allegation about yourself

- Keep calm. Do not get involved in an argument which is likely to make the situation worse.
- Immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer and the Clerk to the council. The quicker that action is taken to investigate the allegations, the sooner the situation will be resolved.
- Complete the Child Protection Incident Form in Appendix 5).
- Ensure that no-one is placed in a position which could cause further compromise.
- Do not discuss the matter with anyone other than authorized persons.

Appendix 5 Child Protection Incident Report Form

1. Please indicate what you are reporting:

I have concerns that abuse may be occurring (complete sections 2 and 3)	
I was involved with an incident with a child (complete sections 2 and 4)	
I was a witness to an incident with a child (complete sections 2 and 4)	
I have received a disclosure of abuse of a child from a third party (complete sections 2 and 5)	
A child has told me that they are being abused (complete sections 2 and 5)	
I have received an allegation of abuse against myself (complete sections 2 and 4)	

2. Important information:

Your name:
Name of child concerned:
Capacity in which child is known to you:
Information relating to the child: (e.g. home address, school attended, date of birth)
Is the child aware of this referral? Yes No (if no, please explain why)
Is the parent/guardian aware of this referral? Yes No (if no, please explain why)

3. Concerns abuse may be occurring:

Please use the space below to record the concerns that you may have regarding a child or an adult who has contact with children. These may include a child being unusually distressed, being sexually aroused, appearing to be attracted to an adult, an adult appearing to be attracted to a child, a relationship that a child and adult are having, a change in a child's attitude or behaviour. Do not remove clothing to inspect a child if you do have concerns of physical or sexual abuse. Please also record any action you have taken. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

4. Incident with a child

I accidentally hurt a child.	
A child misinterpreted or misunderstood something I have done.	
I have had to use reasonable physical restraint.	
I was a witness to an incident.	

Please provide further information, including any action you may have taken so far and the reasons for doing so. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

5. Allegation/Disclosure of abuse:

Allegation/disclosure received from:	
Allegation/disclosure received on:	
Name/s of person/s about whom allegation/disclosure has been made:	

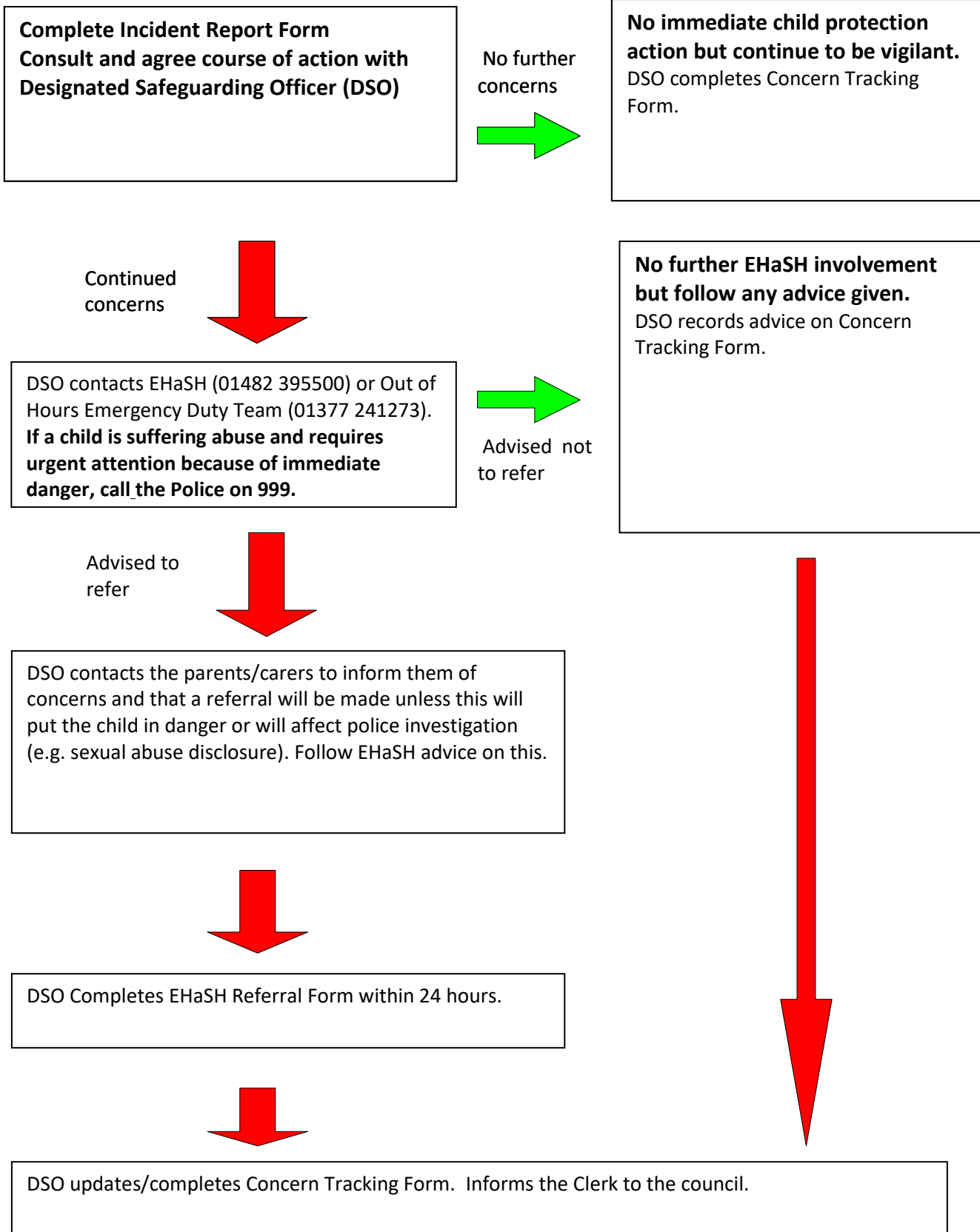
Please use the space below to record the details of the allegation or disclosure you received. This should be a factual account of the information you have received only. Do not include assumptions or opinions of others. Make sure you record details of dates and times and any other potentially useful information. If the disclosure has come from the child who is making the allegation/disclosure, the conversation should be recorded in their words. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please submit this report to the Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately.

Appendix 6 Flowchart 1

What to do if you have concerns about a child



Appendix 7 Flowchart 2

What to do if an allegation is made against a member of staff

Consult and agree course of action with Designated Safeguarding Officer and inform the Clerk to the council. If the allegation is against the Designated Safeguarding Officer, inform the Clerk immediately.



Complete Child Protection Incident Form. The following information must be recorded:

- **the date and time** of the observation or the disclosure
- **the exact words spoken** by the child/staff member/parent/volunteer as far as possible
- the name of the person to whom the concern was reported
- the names of any other person present at the time
- wider relevant knowledge or background information

NB it is not appropriate at this stage to conduct formal or informal interviews or take written statements from staff, as this could compromise a later Social Care or police investigation



The Chief Executive/ Designated Safeguarding Officer must inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or EYDSO (Early Years Designated Safeguarding Officer) and Chair of Trustees of SMICP within one working day.



Decision to refer



Decision not to refer

Clerk to the council calls the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within 24 hours. The DSO and Chair of the council informed

internal disciplinary procedures to be implemented as appropriate and clearly documented.



Clerk to the council calls EHASH. Follows up with referral form within 24 hours



DSO completes Concern Tracking Form



EHASH, LADO the Clerk and the Police will agree course of action

The member of staff may be suspended on full pay. Suspension is a neutral act and allows full investigation to take place

LADO must be informed if the staff member has been suspended or dismissed.
DBS service must be informed if the staff member has been dismissed because of the allegation.

Appendix 8 – Concern Tracking Form

Details of child:

Name

Date of Birth

Address:

Name and Address of parent/carer

Contact Number:

Report of Initial Concern:

Reported by whom:

Date

Actions Tracked

DATE	CONCERN	ACTION TAKEN	BY WHOM

Appendix 9

Seven Golden rules of information sharing

'Information Sharing: Guidance for practitioners and managers' (2008) is aimed at supporting good practice in information sharing by offering clarity on when and how information can be shared legally and professionally in order to achieve improved outcomes. It can be especially useful in supporting early intervention and preventative work where decisions about information sharing may be less clear than in safeguarding or child protection situations. Below are the 7 golden rules of information sharing that this guidance recommends.

1. Remember that the Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information but provides a framework to ensure that personal information about living persons is shared appropriately.
2. From the outset be open and honest with the person (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.
3. Seek advice if you are in any doubt, without disclosing the identity of the person where possible.
4. Share with consent where appropriate and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, that lack of consent can be overridden in the public interest. You will need to base your judgements on the facts of the case.
5. Consider safety and well being: Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well being of the person and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure: Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those people who need to have it, is accurate and up to date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
7. Keep a record of your decision and the reason for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

Appendix 10

Considerations when Contacting another Agency/Service

Effective communication requires a culture of listening to and engaging in, dialogue within and across agencies. It is essential that all communication is as accurate and complete as possible and clearly recorded.

Accuracy is key, for without it effective decisions cannot be made and equally, inaccurate accounts can lead to children remaining unsafe, or to the possibility of wrongful actions being taken that affect children and adults

Before contacting another agency, think about why you are doing it, is it to:

- **Share Information**

To share information is the term used to describe the situation where practitioners use their professional judgement and experience on a case by case basis to decide whether and what personal information to share with other practitioners in order to meet the needs of a child or young person (CWDC 2009)

- **Signpost to Another Service**

The definition to signpost is to indicate direction towards. It is an informal process whereby a professional or a family is shown in the direction of a service.

If someone is signposted to a service it is because accessing the service may enhance the family's quality of life, but there would be no increased risk to the child or young person should the service not be accessed. No agency is responsible for the monitoring or recording of signposting.

- **Get Advice and Guidance**

Seeking advice and guidance at any time, making a general query or perhaps consulting with a specialist colleague within your own organisation (or from another agency) may enhance the work that you are doing with a child, young person or family at any stage. It could be that you want further information about services available or that you want some specialist advice or perhaps need to consult about a particular issue or query for instance to ask if making a referral is appropriate.

The name of the child and family should be anonymised at this stage unless agreement to share the information has already been obtained.

It is vital that you record that you have sought information and advice in your own records. The agency you are contacting may not record this information, particularly if the case is not open or active with them. It should be agreed between agencies in this situation as to who records what information.

- **Facilitate Access to a Service**

If you think that a family may benefit from a service then directing, signposting or facilitating is appropriate. For example, a family approaches your service and asks for some advice about leisure activities in the local area. You give them the information and directions to the nearest open access leisure centre.

- **Refer a Child or Family**

If you think that by not accessing a particular service, a child's situation could deteriorate then a referral is appropriate. However, a referral is only the start of the process.

You as the referrer have a responsibility to monitor that the service has been taken up and the child's situation has improved.

Sometimes you may need to draw on other support services, for example when an intervention has not achieved the desired outcomes and the child/young person requires more specialist or sustained support. A specific gap in services to meet a need or any level of concern warrants follow up and monitoring to ensure there is no risk to children.

At the end of the conversation both parties must be clear about the outcome and the next course of action.

Useful contact numbers

EHaSH: Office hours 01482 395500. Out of hours Emergency Duty Team 01377 241273.

If a child is in immediate danger then you must telephone Emergency: 999

Police non-emergency: 101

Designated Safeguarding Officer NGYP Gemma Wallace: 07595456727

Clerk to Newport Parish Council/Management Officer: 01430 441486 Mob. 07710288307

Chair Newport Parish Council Clyde Wilson: 07966287075