



Safeguarding policy and procedures

Guidance on working with children, young people and adults who may be at risk of harm

1 Policy and procedures

Introduction

This policy and procedures has been drawn up by researching the Department of Education, Department of Health and St John Ambulance examples of best practice in safeguarding policies. We have used a number of best practice examples to help us develop a comprehensive policy to help to:

- safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults we work with;
- safeguard staff and volunteers who work for us; and
- assure partner agencies and Commissioners that One in Four takes safeguarding issues extremely seriously and wishes to ensure that adults children and young people can be safe when they work with us.

Anyone who works with children and young people has a crucial role to play in shaping their lives. They have a unique opportunity to engage with young people in ways that can be affirming and inspiring. The Children Act 2004, The Children and Social Work Act 2017 – through the Stay Safe outcome of the Every Child Matters Change for Children Programme – places a duty on organisations to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children. This includes the need to ensure that all adults who come into contact with children and young people are competent, confident and safe to do so. One in Four wants to ensure that its personnel – who come into contact with children, young people and adults who may be at risk of harm – act professionally and provide a safe and supportive space, where young people, parents and fellow professionals can be assured that our staff and volunteers are striving to achieve the best outcomes for all through the interventions they provide.

One in Four takes seriously any allegation of abuse, whether emotional, physical, neglect or

sexual. One in Four recognises that some allegations are made maliciously, however the vast majority are genuine. We recognise that some adults will deliberately seek out opportunities to engage with vulnerable children and young people. It is, therefore, essential that we take all possible steps to safeguard children, young people and adults who may be at risk of harm and ensure that adults working with them are safe to do so.

Scope

This document is to ensure all people are aware of the policies and procedures that One in Four has in place to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults, and how they can expect any allegation to be dealt with.

Purpose

Some One in Four staff may come into contact with children, young people and adults who are likely to have a number of vulnerabilities, and you are placed in positions of trust when children, young people and adults disclose information to you or share their experiences. You are therefore expected to work in safe and appropriate ways, both inside and outside the organisation, in your contact and conduct when working in whatever capacity to assist children, young people and adults who may be at risk of harm.

Our guidance aims to:

- keep children, young people and adults who may be at risk of harm safe by being clear how we expect staff to behave and what constitutes acceptable behaviour;
- enable staff to be clear how they should behave, how we will monitor behaviour and how we expect them to know acceptable standards for themselves and others working with children, young people and vulnerable adults in the organisation;

- support managers and staff in setting clear expectations and be clear about the **code of conduct policy** and **code of behaviour policy** as part of our safeguarding procedures;
- be clear that if these standards are not adhered to, and we believe there is either unsafe or unlawful behaviours taking place, we will take this seriously and, where appropriate, discipline, dismiss or take legal action where necessary against staff and volunteers;
- support safer recruitment practices;
- minimise the risk of misplaced or malicious allegations made against staff when working with children, young people and adults who may be at risk of harm; and
- reduce the risk of trust being abused or misused.

Underlying principles

The welfare of the child or young person is paramount (Children's Act 1989). Adults must always act in the best interests of the child or young person. Safeguarding and Promoting the welfare of children is defined in *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2015).

It is the responsibility of all adults to safeguard children and young people and to promote their welfare. This duty extends to a duty of care for those who work with children and young people. Adults who work with children or young people are responsible for their own behaviour and actions and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.

Everyone should work and be seen to work in an open and transparent way. One in Four staff are expected to be honest with young people and any client, and non-judgemental in their approach. The same professional standards and values should always be applied regardless of race, gender, disability, sexuality, religious beliefs or any other protected characteristic.

All staff should continually review their practice in supervision, appraisal, training needs, and policies in the organisation.

Confidentiality

Staff may have access to confidential information about children, young people and vulnerable adults in order to carry out their responsibilities. In some circumstances, they may be given highly sensitive or private information. They should never use confidential or personal information about a child, young person or vulnerable adult (or their partner, carers, friends and relatives) for their own or others' advantage (including that of partners, carers, friends, relatives or other organisations). Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate or embarrass anyone.

Confidential information about a child, young person or adult who may be at risk of harm should never be used casually in conversation or shared with any other person except on a need-to-know basis. In circumstances where the identity of the child, young person or vulnerable adult does not need to be disclosed, the information should be used anonymously.

There are some circumstances in which workers may be expected to share information about a child, young person or vulnerable adult – for example, when abuse is alleged or suspected. This includes information required for a Serious Case Review following the death of a child or a life-threatening event. In such cases, One in Four will share information as required in line with One in Four's **child protection policy** and **risk management policy and procedures**.

The storing and processing of personal information is governed by the Data Protection Act 1998. If a worker is in any doubt about whether information needs to be shared with another organisation, the worker should speak with either their supervisor or the director and carry out an assessment in line with the **risk management policy and procedures**.

All clinical practice notes are to be stored securely in locking cabinets using a split system which is designed for minimising risk.

If another organisation requests the file of a child, young person or vulnerable adult, or records from their file or a particular incidence, the member of staff should refer the request to the Director who will follow the **confidentiality policy and procedures** and the **risk management policy and procedures**.

Duty of care

Adults are accountable for the way in which they behave, manage risk, use resources and protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm. All adults, whether paid or unpaid, have a duty to keep children, young people and vulnerable adults safe from harm, ie. physical abuse, sexual abuse emotional abuse, and neglect. Children, young people and vulnerable adults have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. Adults who are working in a position of trust with them are expected to ensure their wellbeing and failure to do so may be regarded as neglect.

When working with children, young people and adults who may be at risk of harm, it is important to recognise the difference between their right to confidentiality in accessing services and sharing information, and the need to ensure that they do not continue to experience unacceptable behaviour or abuse from anyone. Staff need to understand the level of responsibility that goes with their role and what sanctions may occur if they fail to maintain them adequately.

One in Four has a duty of care, not only to children, young people and vulnerable adults who access services, but also to its staff – under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, which requires employers to develop guidance on expected behaviours and safe working practices, and the Human Rights Act 1998, which requires that important principles regarding protection of individuals from abuse are clear. This relates particularly to state

organisations, and although One in Four is a charity, the principle does not differ – as many staff perform similar functions and are in positions of trust in the same way.

As an employer, we also need to recognise that allegations are just that, and until proven otherwise, staff should be supported through the process too and offered appropriate support. In practice, this means that member of staff who has allegations made against them will be offered:

- support from an appropriate designated manager within the organisation who will not be involved in any investigation; and
- time-limited counselling sessions with someone external to the organisation, if required. This may be an already-identified and familiar external supervisor, if they have one in place.

The Health and Safety Act 1974 also imposes a duty on employees to take care of themselves and anyone else who may be affected by their actions or failings. An employer's duty of care and an adult's duty of care towards children should not conflict. This duty can be demonstrated through the use and implementation of these guidelines.

Context

Staff should be familiar with and know how to access One in Four policies. All policies are held on One in Four's computer system and are therefore accessible to all staff. All staff should be given a copy of this **safeguarding policy and procedures** and should sign up to the following policies and procedures before they can work with children, young people and vulnerable adults:

- safer recruiting policy;
- recruitment and selection policy;
- code of conduct policy;
- **code of behaviour policy** (including dress code);
- whistleblowing policy;
- disciplinary policy and procedures;

- grievance procedure;
- complaints policy;
- confidentiality policy and procedures;
- supervision and line management policy;
- lone working policy;
- personal safety policy;
- information sharing policy; and
- acceptance of gifts policy.

It is not possible to develop policies and procedures for every scenario, and staff are expected to use their judgement. If they believe that anyone is either at risk of being harmed or is harmed, and the policies and procedures do not cover that eventuality, they should immediately contact a member of the senior management team, their supervisor or the Director.

Definitions

Children and young people One in Four works with young people in two distinct age groups; under 18s and 18-25s. Young people aged under 18 will be legally viewed as 'children' for the purpose of this document. This is because there are legally-different definitions for under 18s and over 18s.

In practice, we would expect staff to work with 18-25s in the same manner and behaviour as they would for under 18s. Many of the over 18s we work with have experienced significant issues in their lives which mean they may still be vulnerable.

Staff means any persons who are employed, volunteer, are students on a work placement, or work in any way, whether paid or unpaid, for One in Four.

Allegation means any information, including a concern or complaint, which suggests an adult, who has contact or works with children, young people and vulnerable adults, has:

- allegedly behaved in a way that has harmed, may have harmed or intends to harm a child, young person or a vulnerable adult;

- potentially committed a criminal offence against a child, young person or a vulnerable adult; or
- behaved in a way that indicates that he or she is unsuitable to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Manager means any member of staff who has the responsibility for managing or supervising other staff and for whom the duty of safeguarding children, young people and adults who may be at risk of harm is an integral part of their managerial role.

Employer and organisation means One in Four.

Social contact

Staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact with children, young people or adults they work with, for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. If a child, young person or their parent or guardian seeks to establish a social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise their professional judgement in their response and be aware that such social contact could be misconstrued. Always seek advice.

Staff should never have secret social contact with children, young people or adults using our services and should not give personal details to any client they work with. If staff have any concerns about their social contact outside work they should speak to their supervisor at the first opportunity and record any relevant issues should any allegations be made.

One-to-one situations

Many staff are required to work with clients on a one-to-one basis and may therefore be more vulnerable to allegations and should recognise this possibility and plan their work accordingly. Equally one-to-one meetings may also make a child, young person or adult more vulnerable to those who seek to harm and exploit their position of trust. Every attempt should therefore

be made to ensure the safety of both staff and clients.

Staff should always report unusual behaviours such as a child, young person or adult being inappropriately affectionate, initiating inappropriate physical contact or using explicit inappropriate language, as they may be demonstrating that they are being abused by another person through behaviours. The needs of the child, young person or adult using our services are paramount and these behaviours may require further investigation to safeguard them.

Distress

Staff may be involved in managing significant or regular occurrences of distress and emotional upset. In such circumstances, they should be familiar with One in Four guidance on what is acceptable and not acceptable when comforting children, young people or vulnerable adults. This is particularly important when working on a one-to-one basis. Appropriate support and supervision should be available and sought.

For all other staff working with children, young people or vulnerable adults, there may be occasions when a distressed person needs comfort and reassurance. This should not take the form of physical contact, as this can be misconstrued if observed by others or misconstrued by the young person or vulnerable adult themselves (see section 'Appropriate and inappropriate physical contact').

Communication using technology

Skype counselling is available and is covered by the same policies and procedures as face-to-face work (Skype is only available for adult clients).

Communication between clients and staff, by whatever method, should take place within professional boundaries and staff should avoid

any personal subject matter. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, email, digital photography and videos, webcams, websites and blogs. Staff should not give their personal contact details to clients, including their personal mobile telephone number, unless authorised to do so for business purposes.

Staff should only make contact with clients for professional reasons. Text messaging is rarely an appropriate response in a crisis or risk of harm situation. However, it is recognised that in some circumstances, it may be the preferred way that young people and some adults wish to be contacted. If there is any concern around risk, then workers should speak to either their manager or supervisor.

Appropriate and inappropriate physical contact

There are some circumstances where it is appropriate for staff to have some physical contact with a child, young person or adult with whom they work – for example, helping them to wash their hands or if they have mobility issues. However, on the whole, this is not the case. Where such contact is required, it is crucial that they have the child, young person or vulnerable adult's permission and that the member of staff is professional and appropriate in their role and responsibilities.

Staff should maintain self-awareness of the dynamics of the relationship between themselves and the child, young person or client they are working with. When physical contact is made it should be in response to their needs at the time to protect them from harm, be of limited time and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Staff should use their professional judgement at all times.

Staff should not give a child, young person or vulnerable adult hugs or use other physical contact when they are distressed but should be verbally sensitive, ask them if they are all right and be empathic and sympathetic, depending

on the circumstances of a situation. Staff need to be aware that both a child, young person or vulnerable adult and others observing, could misconstrue their actions and they need to record any such situations to avoid allegations being made against them.

Extra caution may be required where it is known that a child, young person or adult has suffered previous abuse or neglect, as they may associate any physical contact with their past experiences. In the course of normal work, there should not be expectations for staff to come into physical contact with children, young people or adults. Staff need to be aware that where they are working externally, or alone one-to-one with a child, young person or adult, they may need to be extra cautious not to place themselves in positions which could be misconstrued or lead to an allegation being made.

Personal living space

No child, young person or client that staff work with should be invited into the home of a member of staff. Under no circumstances should they be asked to carry out jobs or tasks in the personal accommodation of any member of staff. Staff should maintain their privacy and avoid putting themselves in vulnerable positions.

Behaviour management

All those we work with have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. Where clients behave in a manner that is disrespectful of others, they will be asked to modify their behaviour. If they refuse, they may be asked to leave the premises and workers will need to re-engage with them at a later date on why their behaviour was inappropriate and/or unsafe. If someone is behaving in a manner which could threaten other staff or clients, then appropriate action must be taken. The police or other emergency services may need to be called. If the situation is not deemed immediately harmful to others or the person themselves,

then this will require discussion with a manager and a plan of action determined.

Staff should not use any form of physical intervention except in exceptional circumstances that, unless doing so, would cause serious harm to an individual. This must be a last resort when other behaviour management strategies have failed. In this instance, the intervention must be reported to the manager and listed in the client's records.

Gifts, rewards and favouritism

Staff should be aware of the **gift policy**. Staff need to take care that they do not accept any gift that might be construed as a bribe by others, or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment.

If someone you are working with wishes to give you a small token of appreciation, eg. a seasonal gift or a thank you, this is acceptable as long as it is declared, appropriately recorded and your supervisor and manager are informed. However, it is unacceptable to receive a gift on a regular basis or for it to be of any significant value.

Similarly, it is inadvisable to give such personal gifts or rewards to children, young people or vulnerable adults, as this could be misinterpreted as gesture to either bribe or groom them. It might be perceived that a 'favour' of some kind is expected in return. Any reward given to a child, young person or client should be agreed practice within One in Four – for example, a voucher for participating in an interview panel. These rewards should be recorded and not based on favouritism.

Home visits

Generally, One in Four does not provide home visits, but if for some reason a counsellor has to visit a client at home, it is essential that appropriate policies and related risk assessments are in place (see **lone working policy**) to safeguard all people concerned.

A risk assessment should include an evaluation of any known factors regarding all living in the household, this includes pets which may be dangerous, such as dogs or snakes etc. Risk factors such as hostility, child protection concerns, complaints or grievances can make staff more vulnerable to an allegation. Specific consideration should be given to visits outside of 'office hours' or in remote or secluded locations. Following the assessment, appropriate risk management measures should be in place before visits are agreed. Where little or no information is available, visits should not be made alone (see **lone working policy** and **personal safety policy**).

Under no circumstances should a worker visit a child, young person or vulnerable adult in their own home outside agreed work arrangements.

Infatuation

Occasionally, a child, young person or client may develop an infatuation with a member of staff who is in a position of trust. Staff should deal with these situations sensitively and appropriately to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned. Staff should also be aware that such circumstances always carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and for allegations to be made against them as a result of such misinterpretation. Staff should make every effort to ensure that their own behaviour is above reproach.

A member of staff who becomes aware that a child, young person or client appears infatuated with them or another member of staff, should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with a senior member of staff so that appropriate action can be taken. In this way, steps can be taken to avoid hurt and distress for all concerned. All incidents or indications (verbal, written or physical) that may suggest someone has developed an infatuation with any member of staff should be reported and recorded and the member of staff should always maintain professional boundaries.

Making a professional judgement

Some professionals are bound by their professional code of conduct and expected to make professional judgements about whether to share information or not. In line with One in Four's **confidentiality policy and procedures**, secondees with professional backgrounds that require such judgement should always speak to their supervisor or the Director, to ensure that One in Four's **risk management policy and procedures** are followed. This will not mean that they are placed in a position of conflict between their professional judgement and a One in Four judgement. Where there is a clear case to follow local safeguarding policies and procedures, One in Four is already signed up to ensure this takes place.

Where no specific guidance exists, One in Four staff will always:

- discuss the circumstances that informed their action, or their proposed action, with a senior manager;
- report any actions, allegations, threats, incidents, accidents or misunderstandings to their manager; and
- record discussions in line with the **risk management policy and procedures**.

Power and positions of trust

As a result of your knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in your role, you are considered to be in a position of trust. A relationship between you and those you work with cannot be a relationship between equals. There is a potential for exploitation and harm of children, young people and vulnerable adults and those working with them have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage and gratification.

You should not use your position to gain access to information for your or others' advantage. You must not use your position to intimidate, humiliate, threaten, coerce or

undermine children, young people or clients. You must always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. You should be alert for 'hero worship', ideals and infatuation (see section 'Infatuations') and should report and record any incident with this potential.

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, where a person aged 18 or over is in a position of trust with a person under 18, is an offence for that person to engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of that person under 18, or to cause or incite that the person under 18 to engage in or watch sexual activity. Staff must not use their status and standing to form or promote relationships with children or young people which are of a sexual nature, or which may become so, or have contact out of agreed session times.

Photographs and videos

Working with children, young people or clients may involve taking or recording images (such as recording work with sand trays). This should only record the work and have no identifying aspects. One in Four staff who work with children in schools will need to ensure that permission is sought from parents, guardians and carers. If working in a college, permission also needs to be sought from tutors.

For example, the purpose of the activity and what will happen to the images once the activity is concluded should be made clear. Children and young people need to know where their pictures or images are stored and how they will be kept safe and only used for the purposes for which they gave their permission.

It is not appropriate for staff to have photographs for their personal use. Any member of staff possessing images of young people that they work with, should be able to justify the reasons why they have them. Images should never be taken in a one-to-one setting or in secret. Staff should not display or distribute images of children or young people,

unless they have consent to do so from the child or young person as well as their parents, guardians or carers, or take images of young people using any personal equipment.

Sexual activity

Any form of sexual behaviour by a member of staff towards a child, young person or client is both inappropriate and illegal. This will result in action being taken by One in Four. Children and young people are protected by the same law as adults in relation to non-consensual sexual behaviour. Children and young people are additionally protected by specific legal provisions regardless of whether they consent or not. This includes the prohibition on adults in a position of trust.

Sexual activity does not just refer to physical contact but may also include encouraging or engaging young people in watching sexual activity or the production of pornographic material. *Working together to Safeguard Children* (2010) defines sexual abuse as 'forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening'.

There are occasions when adults embark on a course of behaviour known as 'grooming' where the sole purpose is to gain the trust of a child, young person or vulnerable adult and manipulate that relationship so sexual abuse can take place. Staff should be aware that consistently conferring special attention and favour upon a child, young person or vulnerable adult might be construed as being part of a 'grooming' process, which is an offence.

Sexual relationships either in or out of the workplace should never be pursued. Any form of communication with a child, young person or vulnerable adult which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative – such as verbal comments, letters, notes, email, phone calls, texts, social networking – should be avoided.

Staff behaviour

All staff working with children, young people or vulnerable adults have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children, young people or vulnerable adults. They are expected to adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of the children, young people or vulnerable adults they are working with, as well as their peers and the public in general.

All staff behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, should not compromise their position within the work setting. There may be times, for example, when a member of staff's behaviour or actions in their personal life is under scrutiny from local communities, the media or anyone else. This could be because their behaviour is considered to compromise their position in their workplace, or indicate an unsuitability to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults or be in a role that gives them unsupervised access to these groups. Examples of such behaviour may include the misuse of drugs or alcohol; acts of violence, harassment and bullying; or conduct relating to discrimination.

Many staff within the organisation hold a professional status which is linked to a professional body (BACP) and would be expected to work within these guidelines in relation to their behaviour.

Staff who work with children, young people or vulnerable adults should not behave in a way that would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with them or act as a role model. They should never make (or encourage others to make) unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate, or might be interpreted as such. Consideration should be given to how their personal conduct will reflect on their activities with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

Staff dress and appearance

A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However, staff should consider the manner of dress and appearance appropriate to their role which may be different to that adopted in their personal life.

Staff should ensure they are dressed appropriately for the tasks they undertake. Those who dress or appear in a manner which could be considered as inappropriate could leave themselves open to criticism or allegations.

Clothing should not distract, cause embarrassment, give rise to any misunderstanding or contain political or other contentious slogans. Dress and appearance should not be discriminatory or cause cultural or religious offence. Where tattoos are visible, they should be covered up if they are likely to cause offence to others.

Unsuitable workers

If the allegation is about a member of staff, the Director should be informed immediately. The One in Four **disciplinary procedure** may be need to be followed.

Any worker whose behaviour does not comply with the policies, and whose behaviour is raising concerns amongst young people, their colleagues or fellow professionals, may call into question their ability and suitability to work with young people. If workers are unclear what that means, they should explore this issue in supervision so that they are clear about expected ways of behaving with young people.

This guidance will be made clear at induction when someone new begins to work in the organisation.

Listening to young people and clients

It takes a lot for young people to access services, and therefore staff at One in Four should be aware that it is important for them to make young people feel comfortable enough to be able to share their concerns with them. They need to feel they are actively being listened to and heard. It may take several visits before a young person feels able to share some of the concerns that are going on in their lives. It is our staff's responsibility to ensure that young people feel reassured we will take seriously anything they tell us; that we will act in their best interests; and that we will work with them, wherever possible, to reduce the harm that they are experiencing.

Young people should be listened to but not inappropriately interviewed and asked to repeat accounts. When listening to a young person's account, staff:

- should not interrupt a young person when they are recalling significant events
- should take notes and record details such as time, setting, who was present and what was said in the young person's own words – the account should be written down verbatim or as near as possible.
- should not make assumptions or interpretations about what a young person is saying
- should never make suggestions to a young person as to alternative explanations for a young person's concerns.

After listening to a young person's account, staff:

- should reiterate the **confidentiality policy** as explained to the young person when they first came in;
- should explain to the young person that they will need to share this information with a supervisor, the Director or a member of the senior management team, and it may have

to be shared with someone outside the organisation;

- should explain to the young person that you will work through this process with them;
- Should reassure the young person that you will keep them informed, wherever possible, of what will happen next.

A young person may be very anxious about what may happen next and how it may happen. It is important to reassure them and remember that they have told an adult because they want the behaviour to stop and need support in making that happen but their abuser may be someone they care about, such as a parent.

The **risk management procedure** should be followed and a written record of the time, concerns and action kept. This should have a review date on if an ongoing concern.

Sharing concerns, and recording and reporting incidents

Staff should be aware of One in Four policies concerning child protection and vulnerable adults in dealing with allegations against staff, and be aware that, where criminal activity is believed to have occurred, One in Four will contact relevant senior child protection officers in the local authority and police.

In the event of an incident occurring, which may result in an action being misinterpreted and/or an allegation being made against a member of staff, the relevant information should be clearly and promptly recorded and reported to senior management who will then talk to the relevant external agencies and officers.

Staff should feel able to discuss with their line manager any difficulties or problems that may affect their relationship with children and young people so that appropriate support can be provided or action can be taken.

It is essential that accurate and comprehensive records are maintained wherever concerns are

raised about the conduct or actions of staff working with or on behalf of a child, young person or vulnerable adult. If a concern is about a professional from an external organisation working with children, young people or vulnerable adults, staff should talk to senior management as soon as possible so that further action can be taken.

All staff should be aware of how to report and record incidents and managers should ensure that information about incidents and outcomes can be easily accessed by senior managers, including measures that have been taken to reduce risk.

Any incidents must be reported to the Director. The Director holds overall responsibility for issues involving the protection of children, young people or vulnerable adults.

If the issue requires a multi-disciplinary safeguarding meeting, either or both the director or manager, or a designated professional who may have more knowledge, will attend as required.

If in doubt, **always ask**.

2 How to recognise abuse

Introduction

Abuse is a form of maltreatment. It is the violation of an individual's human and civil rights, usually for gratification. Abuse can be self-inflicted or inflicted by another person or persons. In the context of safeguarding it is used to refer to any knowing, intentional or negligent act by another that causes harm or a serious risk of harm to another. Any form of abuse is usually perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent. However vulnerable people can also be harmed, damaged or distressed by acts of neglect or ignorance.

Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse.

Abusers are usually known to their victims and are trusted by them or dependant on them. An abuser will make every effort to establish trust and will seek to maintain the respect of friends and colleagues alike. Contrary to commonly-held belief, strangers very seldom abuse because without having gained trust they cannot be confident that their victims will not tell.

- Abuse may consist of single, multiple or repeated acts, either to one person in a continuing relationship or service context, or to more than one person at a time
- Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it. It may result in death.

Types of abuse

Online abuse

Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the web, whether through social networks, playing online games or using mobile phones. Children and young people may experience cyberbullying, grooming, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or emotional abuse. It can take place anywhere and anytime.

Children can be at risk of online abuse from people they know, as well as from strangers. Online abuse may be part of abuse that is taking place in the real world (for example bullying or grooming). Or it may be that the abuse only happens online (for example persuading children to take part in sexual activity online).

Children can feel like there is no escape from online abuse – abusers can contact them at any time of the day or night, the abuse can come into safe places like their bedrooms, and images and videos can be stored and shared with other people.

Online abuse can include:

Online bullying or cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is an increasingly common form of bullying behaviour which happens on social networks, games, and mobile phones. Cyberbullying can include spreading rumours about someone, or posting nasty or embarrassing messages, images, or videos.

Cyberbullying includes:

- sending threatening or abusive text messages;
- creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos;

- ‘trolling’ – sending menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games;
- excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups;
- setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child;
- encouraging young people to self-harm;
- voting for or against someone in an abusive poll;
- creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name;
- sending explicit messages, also known as sexting; and
- pressuring children into sending sexual images or engaging in sexual conversations.

Online grooming

Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or trafficking.

Groomers can use social media sites, instant messaging apps including teen dating apps, or online gaming platforms to connect with a young person or child. They can spend time learning about a young person’s interests from their online profiles and then use this knowledge to help them build up a relationship. It’s easy for groomers to hide their identity online – they may pretend to be a child and then chat and become ‘friends’ with children they are targeting.

Groomers no longer need to meet children in real life to abuse them. Increasingly, groomers are sexually exploiting their victims by persuading them to take part in online sexual activity.

Online child sexual abuse

When sexual exploitation happens online, young people may be persuaded, or forced, to:

- send or post sexually explicit images of themselves;
- take part in sexual activities via a webcam or smartphone; or
- have sexual conversations by text or online.

Abusers may threaten to send images, video or copies of conversations to the young person’s friends and family unless they take part in other sexual activity.

Images or videos may continue to be shared long after the sexual abuse has stopped.

Sexting

Sexting is when someone shares sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others, or sends sexually-explicit messages. They can be sent using mobiles, tablets, smartphones, laptops etc – any device that allows you to share media and messages.

Sexting may also be called ‘trading nudes’, ‘dirties’ or ‘pic for pic’. The creating or sharing of explicit images of a child is illegal, even if the person doing it is a child.

Discriminatory abuse

Discriminatory abuse is when someone picks on a person because something about them is different. This can include unfair or less favourable treatment due to a person’s race, sex, gender reassignment, age, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, appearance or cultural background, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity.

Signs of possible discriminatory abuse include but are not limited to:

- harassment;
- offensive materials or graffiti;
- verbal abuse, gestures or statements which are unwelcome and intended as insults;
- threatening or obscene behaviour;
- jokes of a derogatory nature;
- bullying, offensive language or violence;
- excluding or treating differently; and
- preventing contact with particular individuals.

Domestic abuse

Abuse or violence in a relationship is about a pattern of behaviour that one person uses against another to intimidate them and get them to do what they want.

Domestic abuse is any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse. Domestic abuse will include emotional, psychological, physical, sexual and financial abuse between those who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender, sexuality, age, race, wealth or geography. Possible signs indicating this abuse can be found under the relevant headings in this section.

There are 11 things that are illegal for a person to do to their partner:

- share sexually explicit images of them;
- restrict their access to money;
- repeatedly put them down;
- stop them seeing friends or family;
- scare them;
- threaten to reveal private things about them;
- put tracking devices on their phones;
- jealousy that leads to violence;
- make them obey their rules;
- control what they wear; and
- force them to do things they don't want to.

Emotional or psychological abuse

Emotional or psychological abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a person that adversely affects their wellbeing or development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment, though it may occur alone.

Signs of possible emotional or psychological abuse include but are not limited to:

- delayed physical or emotional development or sudden speech disorders;
- compulsive nervous behaviour, eg. highly anxious or obsessive behaviour;
- excessive deference, need for approval, attention or affection;

- reluctance to have parents/carers contacted;
- fear in the eyes, avoiding looking at individuals, flinching on approach;
- ambivalence towards individuals;
- low self-esteem;
- unexplained fear or defensiveness; and
- threatening or aggressive behaviour.

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

Female genital mutilation (sometimes known as female circumcision or referred to as cutting) refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The practice is illegal in the UK. It is also illegal to take a female out of the country to do this.

FGM is usually carried out on females before puberty. A high-risk time is the six-week summer holiday which is sometimes known as the 'cutting season'. The procedure is traditionally carried out by a woman with no medical training. Anaesthetics and antiseptic treatments are not generally used, and the practice is usually carried out using knives, scissors, scalpels, pieces of glass or razor blades. Females may have to be forcibly restrained.

Signs of possible recent abuse include but are not limited to:

- severe pain;
- shock;
- bleeding;
- wound infections, including tetanus and gangrene, as well as blood-borne viruses such as HIV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C;
- inability to urinate;
- injury to vulvar tissues surrounding the entrance to the vagina; and
- damage to other organs nearby, such as the urethra (where urine passes) and the bowel burning.

Signs of possible past abuse include:

- chronic vaginal and pelvic infections;

- abnormal periods;
- difficulty passing urine, and persistent urine infections;
- cysts and the formation of scar tissue;
- complications in pregnancy and newborn deaths; and
- psychological damage, including low libido, depression and anxiety.

Financial or material abuse

Financial or material abuse is the theft or misuse of a person's property or assets.

Signs of possible financial or material abuse include but are not limited to:

- money going missing and/or having no cash available;
- small items disappearing regularly;
- unusual or inappropriate financial transactions;
- person is without belongings, clothes or services which they can afford;
- person managing financial affairs appears evasive or difficult;
- carer seeks to secure financial assets rather than provide personal care;
- recent or long-lost relatives or acquaintances expressing sudden or disproportionate affection for a vulnerable adult with money or property; and
- recent changes to their legal documents.

Neglect and acts of omission

Neglect is the continuing failure to prevent harm that damages or impairs health and/or development by not meeting a person's basic physical and/or psychological needs.

Signs of possible neglect include but are not limited to:

- poor health;
- being constantly hungry or thirsty;
- loss of weight or being constantly underweight;
- being tired all the time;

- lack of personal care; inadequate or inappropriate clothing;
- being dressed inappropriately for the weather, unkempt, dirty or smelly;
- untreated medical conditions;
- injuries that have not been treated or have been treated inadequately; and
- lack of respect for their privacy or dignity.

Organisational abuse

Organisational abuse is the mistreatment, abuse or neglect of children or vulnerable adults by an organisation or its personnel.

It can take place within settings and services that children or vulnerable adults live in or use, and it violates their dignity, resulting in a lack of respect for their human rights. It can take the form of an organisation failing to respond to or address incidents of poor practice brought to its attention.

Organisational abuse means that a culture is created where emotional, physical and sexual abuse become acceptable and can be regarded as the norm. As part of that culture all too often visits are discouraged and the involvement of relatives or friends are kept to a minimum.

Possible signs indicating this abuse can be found under the relevant headings in this section.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is an individual's body being injured or hurt due, for example to assault, hitting, slapping or pushing. Physical abuse can take many forms and the actions taken are intentionally hurtful and harmful.

Signs of possible physical abuse include but are not limited to:

- any injury which is not fully explained or inconsistent with the account given;
- unexplained bruises or welts on face, lips, mouth, body, arms, back, buttocks or thighs;

- bite marks;
- bruises in various stages of healing;
- clusters of bruises forming regular patterns, reflecting the shape of an object or fingers;
- unexplained burns, especially on soles of feet, palms and back; immersion burns, scalds, rope marks, electrical appliance or carpet burns;
- cigarette burns;
- unexplained fractures to any part of the body, especially in various stages of healing; multiple or spinal injuries;
- unexplained lacerations or abrasions to mouth, lips, gums, eyes or external genitalia;
- avoidance of physical contact;
- malnutrition, rapid or continued weight loss, insufficient food on premises, dehydration, complaints of hunger;
- incontinence;
- loss of physical functions due to misuse of medication; and
- restriction of freedom of movement.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is the involvement of the person in sexual activities which they do not want or truly understand, or to which they are unable to give valid or effective consent. This may involve rape, sexual assault, inappropriate sexual contact or exposure to inappropriate material.

Signs of possible sexual abuse include but are not limited to:

- significant change in sexual behaviour, language or outlook;
- overtly sexual behaviour, often inappropriate to age or development;
- bruising or other injuries on areas of the body normally covered – for this reason, they may only be noticed during activities such as swimming;
- torn or stained underwear;
- pain or itching, bruises or bleeding in genital or anal area;
- stomach pains or discomfort when walking or sitting down;

- sexually-transmitted, urinary tract or vaginal infections;
- pregnancy in a person who lacks capacity or who is very young; and
- self-inflicted injury or attempted suicide.

Specific safeguarding issues

There are specific types of behaviour that are abusive and can result in harm. Although abuse is most often caused by others, on occasions it may be self-inflicted. These include:

Breast ironing

Breast ironing – also known as breast flattening – is the process whereby young pubescent girls’ breasts are ironed, massaged and/or pounded down through the use of hard or heated objects in order for the breasts to disappear or delay the development of the breasts entirely.

It is believed that by carrying out this act, young girls will be protected from harassment, rape, abduction and early forced marriage and therefore be kept in education. Much like female genital mutilation (FGM), breast ironing is a harmful cultural practice and is child abuse.

Bullying

Bullying is behaviour that is:

- threatening, aggressive or intimidating;
- abusive, insulting or offensive;
- cruel or vindictive; or
- humiliating, degrading or demeaning.

Bullying can occur between children, adults or between adults and children. Bullying can take many forms. It can be physical, verbal or non-verbal. Mobile phones, the internet or instant messaging can be used to bully. Whatever form the bullying takes, many who are bullied will not tell anyone.

- Bullying can be inflicted by anybody whether as an individual or in a group
- It often occurs in circumstances where it is difficult for the bullied to defend themselves

- Bullies will usually pick on those they consider to be vulnerable and less able to protect themselves, such as those who are younger, different or disadvantaged in some way
- Some individuals may be picked on because of race, class, religion, gender, sexuality, disability or appearance. Others are bullied for no obvious reason
- It can leave those bullied feeling lonely, isolated and very unhappy
- Some children and adults have taken their own lives when bullying became too much to bear
- Bullying has an effect on everyone, not just those directly involved. Some feel they can only stand on the side lines and do nothing because if they intervene they run the risk of being turned on themselves
- Bullying causes much fear and misery and should never be taken lightly.

Cuckooing

Cuckooing is the process whereby criminal gangs target the homes of vulnerable people in order to use their premises for criminal activity.

Many of the victims are particularly vulnerable and criminal gangs may use threats and intimidation to gain access to the property to engage in criminal activity such as drug dealing, sexual exploitation etc.

Signs of cuckooing include but are not limited to:

- an increase in the number of visitors to what is usually a multi-occupancy or social housing property
- different people that you do not recognise coming and going at the property;
- new or hire cars parked outside the property;
- changes in the resident's behaviour (they might become reclusive, but you see other people coming and going from the property);

- changes in the resident's appearance (they may have visible injuries or look like they are in discomfort from hidden ones);
- signs of drug paraphernalia around the property ;
- disengagement with support services; and
- a local increase in anti-social behaviour.

Criminal exploitation: county lines

Criminal exploitation of children or vulnerable adults is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns.

Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs.

It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threat of violence. It can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults.

It is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Drug, alcohol and substance misuse

Misuse is defined as a pattern of habitually taking any substance which can cause harm for mood-altering purposes. Substances which can be identified as causing harm may be legal or illegal.

Signs of possible drug, alcohol and substance misuse include but are not limited to:

- unexplained change in personality or attitude;

- sudden mood swings, irritability, or angry outbursts;
- lack of motivation, lethargy or appearing 'spaced out';
- confusion;
- unexplained shortage of money;
- fraud, theft; and
- unexplained weight loss/gain.

Forced marriage

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage.

Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (for example, if they have learning disabilities).

Grooming

Grooming is the planned and deliberate act of manoeuvring another individual into a position that makes them more isolated. They become dependent and likely to trust the abuser, and more vulnerable to abusive behaviour.

Grooming occurs when someone builds an emotional connection with a child or vulnerable adult to gain their trust for the purposes of abuse or exploitation. They can be groomed online or in person, by a stranger or by someone they know – for example a family member, friend or professional. Groomers can be male or female. They can be any age.

The internet has created new opportunities for abusers to target the vulnerable. They do this by taking advantage of an unsuspecting individual and then proceed to groom. Because the internet is largely unregulated, it has become a significant tool for manipulation in the hands of an abuser.

Caring and concerned adults may also be groomed by the abuser, winning their trust, and as a result a situation which should cause concern becomes acceptable.

Those affected may not realise they have been groomed, or that what has happened is abuse and abusers will try to overcome a child or an adult's natural resistance in stages by:

- making and sustaining contact;
- offering gifts or rewards as bribes;
- using secrecy and possible threats so that they become isolated; or
- introducing them to abuse that appears natural.

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless (ie, without a permanent dwelling) presents a real risk to a person's welfare.

Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property.

Honour-based violence

Honour-based violence (HBV) encompasses incidents or 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.

Abuse committed in the context of 'preserving honour' often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators.

Modern slavery (human trafficking)

Modern slavery includes forced labour, domestic servitude or coercing, deceiving and forcing an individual into a life of abuse.

Signs of possible modern slavery include but are not limited to:

- physical appearance;
- isolation;
- poor living conditions;
- few or no personal effects;
- restricted freedom of movement;
- unusual travel times;
- reluctance to seek help;
- people who rarely come out of the house and speak little or no English;
- faces that can be seen at windows often looking stressed and never smiling;
- house or flat curtains closed during much of the day;
- excessive packaging of home delivery meals left outside a house;
- frequent visitors to residential premises;
- places where 'workers' appear underage or speak no or little English; and
- children collected at the school gate by different people each day who are clearly not the parents or grandparents.

In addition, further possible signs that indicate modern slavery can be found under the headings 'Emotional and psychological abuse' and 'Physical abuse' in this section.

Peer on peer abuse

Children can abuse other children. It can take many forms including: bullying; sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur online and offline. Evidence shows that girls, children with special education and needs disabilities (SEND) and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) children are at greater risk.

Peer on peer abuse tends to be experienced by children aged 10 and upwards, with those abusing them being slightly older.

Signs of possible peer on peer abuse include but are not limited to:

- physical injuries;
- drug and alcohol abuse;
- going missing;
- committing criminal offences
- disengagement from school;
- poor mental health;
- sexual health concerns.

Radicalisation

Radicalisation is defined as the process by which those who are vulnerable come to support terrorism or violent extremism and, in some cases, to directly participate in or support terrorist groups. There is no obvious profile of a person likely to become involved in extremism or a single indicator of when a person might move to adopt violence in support of extremist ideas.

The process of radicalisation is different for every individual and can take place over an extended period or within a very short time frame. It may follow experience of racism or discrimination. They believe that joining a movement offers social and psychological rewards such as adventure, camaraderie and a heightened sense of identity.

Signs of possible radicalisation include but are not limited to:

- changes in behaviour;
- sense of isolation or failure;
- expression of extremist views;
- use of inappropriate language – racist or hate terms;
- supporting violent methods and actions;
- accessing extremist material online, including through networking sites (eg. Facebook, YouTube); and
- travel for extended periods to international locations known to be associated with extremism.

Self-harm

Self-harm is the act of deliberately causing harm to oneself either by causing a physical injury or by putting oneself in dangerous situations.

Self-harm is primarily a coping strategy and can provide a release from emotional distress and enable an individual to regain feelings of control. There is no typical person who self-harms. It can be anyone.

Signs of possible self-harm include but are not limited to:

- covering up cut marks with clothing;
- frequent thoughts of helplessness, hopelessness, or worthlessness;
- shame, guilt, low self-esteem;
- unexplained injuries;
- fear;
- depression;
- loss of sleep;
- unexplained weight loss or gain;
- confusion;
- unexpected or unexplained change in behaviour; and
- feeling guilty.

Self-neglect

Self-neglect is neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

Possible signs indicating self-neglect can be found under the heading of 'Neglect' in this section.

Sexual exploitation

Sexual exploitation is a type of sexual abuse in which children or vulnerable adults are sexually exploited for money, power or status.

Some children and vulnerable adults are trafficked into or within the UK for this purpose. They may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship.

Abusers will use various means to gain compliance such as drugs, alcohol, gifts, threats and bribes.

Signs of possible sexual exploitation include but are not limited to:

- being missing from home or care;
- physical injuries;
- drug or alcohol misuse;
- involvement in offending;
- repeated sexually-transmitted infections, pregnancy and terminations;
- absence from school;
- change in physical appearance;
- being estranged from their family;
- inappropriate use of social networking sites and other media devices;
- receipt of gifts from unknown sources;
- recruiting others into exploitative situations;
- poor mental health, self-harm; and
- thoughts of or attempts at suicide.

3 Useful organisations

Action on Elder Abuse

A nationwide charity working to protect and prevent the abuse of vulnerable older adults.

Telephone **020 8835 9280**

Helpline **0808 808 8141**

www.elderabuse.org.uk

Age UK

Age UK offers a free, confidential, national phone service for older people, their families and friends, carers and professionals. They have a team of expert advisers who give advice and information that is reliable and up-to-date.

Telephone **0800 055 6112** (8am–7pm, 365 days a year)

Alcohol Change UK

A charity that helps with alcohol issues. Their vision is of a world free from serious alcohol harm.

www.alcoholchange.org.uk

Barnardo's

Works to transform the lives of vulnerable children and young people.

Telephone **020 8550 8822**

www.barnardos.org.uk

Beat

An eating disorder charity that can support anyone affected by an eating disorder.

Helpline (adult) **0808 801 0677** (youth) 0808 801 0711

www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk

Brook

Information on sexual health and support around relationships.

www.brook.org.uk

Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Command

Works across the UK tackling child sexual abuse and providing advice for parents, young people and professionals. Also see 'ThinkuKnow'.

Helpline **0870 000 3344**

www.ceop.police.uk

Childline

A free and confidential helpline for children and young adults in the UK. It offers help and advice plus volunteering and fundraising details.

Helpline **0800 1111**

www.childline.org.uk

Citizens Advice

Helps people resolve legal, money and other problems by providing free, independent and confidential advice.

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Crimestoppers

Crimestoppers believe that everyone has the right to feel safe from crime. Whoever you are, wherever you live, from communities to companies. They also share advice on how to protect the people you care about from crime so everyone can feel safe.

Telephone **0800 555 111** (24 hours a day, 365 days a year)

www.crimestoppers-uk.org

Cruse Bereavement Care

The leading national charity for bereaved people in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Helpline **0808 808 1677**

www.cruse.org.uk

Daughters of Eve

A non-profit organisation that works to protect girls and young women who are at risk from female genital mutilation (FGM). By raising awareness about FGM and signposting to support services, they aim to help people who are affected by FGM and ultimately help bring an end to this practice.

www.dofeve.org

Dementia Friends

Alzheimer's Society's Dementia Friends programme is the biggest ever initiative to change people's perceptions of dementia. It aims to transform the way the nation thinks, acts, and talks about the condition.

www.dementiafriends.org.uk

Disrespect Nobody

A campaign promoting healthy relationships.

www.disrespectnobody.co.uk

Drinkaware/Drinkline

Telephone support for adults and young people. Offers free, confidential, accurate and consistent information and advice to callers who are concerned about their own or someone else's drinking

Telephone **020 7766 9900**

Helpline **0300 123 1110**

www.drinkaware.co.uk

Equality and Human Rights

Helps to promote equality and human rights, provides guidance and raising awareness of your rights.

Helpline **0808 800 0082**

www.equalityhumanrights.com

Family Lives (formerly Parentline Plus)

A free, confidential 24-hour helpline for parents concerned with a range of issues

Helpline **0808 800 2222**

www.familylives.org.uk

Gingerbread

Information, help and local groups for lone parents.

Helpline **0808 802 0925** (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm)

www.gingerbread.org.uk

Kidscape

Kidscape produces leaflets and booklets on bullying, and runs a helpline.

Telephone **020 7730 3300** (Mon-Fri)

Parent advice line **020 7823 5430**

www.kidscape.org.uk

Language Line

Immediate interpreter provision in 100 languages, 24 hour service.

Telephone **0800 169 2879**

www.languageline.com/uk

LGBT Foundation

A national charity that aims to achieve change with and on behalf of LGBT people and continue to meet their needs by providing vital and inclusive services.

Helpline **0345 3 30 30 30**

lgbt.foundation

Life Signs

A self-injury guidance and support network that helps raise awareness about self-injury and helps people who rely on self-injury.

www.lifesigns.org.uk

Mankind

A helpline service for male victims of domestic abuse or domestic violence.

Telephone **01823 334 244**

www.mankind.org.uk

Mermaids

Provides a helpline aimed at supporting transgender youth up to and including the age of 19, their families and professionals working with them.

Helpline **0344 334 0550** (Mon-Fri, 9am-9pm).
www.mermaidsuk.org.uk

Migrant Help UK

Supporting survivors of human trafficking and modern day slavery, Migrant Help provides specialist support programmes and a 24/7 confidential advice line for across the UK. Free helpline **0808 8000 630**
www.migranthelpuk.org

Mind

The leading mental health charity promoting understanding of mental health. Telephone **020 8519 2122**
Helpline **0300 123 3393**
www.mind.org.uk

Modern Slavery Helpline

To get help, report a suspicion or seek advice, phone their helpline. Helpline **0800 0121 700** (non-emergencies phone 101)
www.modernslaveryhelpline.org

National Domestic Violence

Gives information on housing, welfare, health and legal rights, refers women and children to refuges across the country, makes referrals to temporary emergency accommodation and helps to get support from the police. Free 24-hour national domestic violence helpline. Telephone **0800 970 2070**
www.ncdv.org.uk

Net Aware

Net Aware is a guide to the social networks children use, giving parents advice about features like privacy settings, safety and reporting problems.
www.net-aware.org.uk

NSPCC

Works to end cruelty to children in the UK by standing up for their rights, listening to them,

helping them and making them safe. Free 24 hour national helpline for information and confidential advice about all types of problems. Telephone **0808 800 5000**
www.nspcc.org.uk

Prevent

If you are unsure or suspicious about somebody's activities or behaviour, however insignificant it may seem at the time, please report your concerns to the anti-terrorist hotline. Hotline **0800 789 321**
www.gov.uk/report-terrorism

Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre (RASASC)

National freephone helpline for female and male survivors, partners, friends and family. Telephone **0808 802 9999**
Email **info@rasasc.org.uk**
www.rasasc.org.uk

Refuge

National charity that provides emergency accommodation and support for women and children experiencing domestic violence. Telephone **020 7395 7700**
Helpline **0808 200 0247**
www.refuge.org.uk

Respect

Information on national services for perpetrators of domestic violence. Helpline **0808 802 4040**
Men's advice helpline **0808 801 0327**
www.respect.uk.net

Samaritans

National free suicide helpline **116 123**
www.samaritans.org

Scope

Scope's Disablement Information and Advice Lines (DIAL) UK offer information and help for people with disability and their families.

Helpline **0808 800 3333** (9am-9pm)
www.scope.org.uk

Stonewall

Working for equality and justice for all lesbian, gay, bi and transgender people.

Telephone **020 7593 1850**

Helpline **0800 050 2020**

www.stonewall.org.uk

Talk to Frank

Friendly, confidential drugs advice.

Helpline **0300 123 6600** (24 hours a day, 365 days a year)

SMS **82111**

Email **frank@talktofrank.com**

www.talktofrank.com

The Silver Line

Confidential free helpline for older people across the UK, open every day and night of the year offering information, friendship and advice

Helpline **0800 4 70 80 90**

www.thesilverline.org.uk

ThinkuKnow

A programme from the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) that aims to help children stay safe online.

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

UK Safer Internet Centre

Helpline for professionals working with children and young people, specifically tackling the area of e-safety.

Helpline **0344 381 4772** (Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm)

www.saferinternet.org.uk

Young Minds

Support for anyone with concerns about the mental health of a child or young person.

Telephone **020 7089 5050**

Parents helpline **0808 802 5544**

www.youngminds.org.uk